

THEATRE

WELCOME this day of calm with its surcease from rapturous melodrama and superlative sublimity.

The Devil is exorcised; not by petitions or conjurations, but through the odium of sheer neglect.

The play that promised to be the sensation of the time and to develop into a literary permanency has dwindled into a flicker. Its sulphurous sarcasm has succumbed to the cold water of popular disdain.

As a masterpiece of cynical wit it deserved a better fate. The history of this production may be taken as a pretty conclusive demonstration of the public's lack of interest in managers' quarrels.

There was as much of a fight over the American rights to "The Devil" as if it represented a public franchise with profits guaranteed. Volleys of ammunition were discharged in the way of speech and printer's ink. Allegations as to moral delinquency in respecting copyrights and royalties were exchanged. But the public looked the play over, smiled a little, applauded some and then yawned. More judiciously handled it might have been a great success, for there is no question of its originality of idea or its brilliancy of expression. But flamboyant exploitation brought it to the level of conventional melodrama in its bid for appreciation.

Many auditors were doubtless disappointed to find none of the trap-doors or tumbling imps customarily shown in satanic fantasies.

Mr. George Arliss cultivates the role by a display of sprightly temperament which, whether or not entirely appropos, is always engaging. Whatever may be the tragedy in progress among other characters, for him the play is distinctly though delicately comic. Though playing with human souls, the spirit he throws into his dealings with humanity is pranksome. He is more nearly a Puck than a Zamiel.

There is some room for doubt whether the Arliss production of the play is a version or a perversion. There is an oversupply of epigram of distinctly native flavor; excellent wit in many cases, but not good enough to excuse the hindrance to the action in the earlier portion of the piece. Some telling points made in the Stevens production are absent from this one; for instance, the dismissal scene, in which the Devil shows his profound knowledge of human nature as he gets rid of people one by one, and the delicious "blah, blah, blah" in which he typifies the emptiness of conventional discourse.

Ben Jonson wrote a play entitled "The Devil an Ass." It may not be as bad as that, but in this case he has not made the most of his opportunities.

A day of rest comes with especial welcome after a stage with "The Talk of New York" and "Fifty Miles From Boston." The idea seems to be that the talk of New York is made up of ancient and feeble slang. There is a crisp exhilaration in slang when it has the flavor of current thought to vitalize it. The collier of phrases can no longer be content with a ready-made vocabulary of last year's street lingo. He must be a word artist, a philologist, as well as a mimic. There is something positively sad in the use of a threadbare repertory of cold-storage badinage such as Mr. Victor Moore is burdened with in his new play. No fault should be found with the author, Mr. George Cohan, for the liberties he takes with the English language so long as they are smart and inspiring, in considering the same as to destroy the spirit of spontaneity upon which his style of work particularly depends. Mere speed and hubbub are too often the sole considerations in these two plays. The fetching lyrics and the irresistible melodies that Mr. Cohan has created should guide his endeavors away from the clatter with which his later productions are lumbered. His rural melodramas are "rural" chiefly in that they sound as if they might have been written by a farm-hand.

ACTORS DON'T WAKE UP EARLY.—When Thomas W. Ross was a young man he worked in a drug store in a Pennsylvania town. That same apothecary's shop has been dramatized and is seen in the second and third acts of "The Fortune Hunter," in which the actor is now starring. Ross was a hard worker, but he had a most disconcerting habit of falling asleep at his post and sleeping for hours. The proprietor would reach the store almost every morning and find Ross supposed to open up to find a line of customers waiting with prescriptions. Five times in succession the thespian-to-be was discharged, and appeared again with a sixth dismissal. He told one of his friends, who advised him to buy an alarm clock.

For some unknown reason he failed to do so, and a few days later appeared at his work two hours after time. He received his sixth discharge, and appeared to an acquaintance of the druggist, who advised him to buy an alarm clock, after which he interceded with the druggist. Again Ross was re-employed, and again he appeared late, but he was not caught by the owner. Five friends came into the place that day, and all advised him to get an alarm clock. Ross said he was superstitious, and believed in the gods of luck brought bad luck. Then, a week after, he got his notice again, and after declining fairly the promise was taken back once more. He went to a local jeweler and bought an intermittent alarm clock. It was guaranteed to ring for fifteen minutes, and, as the alarm sounded, if it didn't wake Ross he must be dead. The then youthful clerk took the timepiece home, wound it to its limit and placed it on a chair beside his bed. It began ringing furiously in the morning, and Ross turned over in his bed.

Finally he awakened thoroughly, turned off the alarm—and then went to sleep again.

It was at this period he learned that the firm could get along without him forever, and he went to New York, where in the space of a short time he became an actor. Later he explained his success in the profession by saying:

"Actors don't have to wake up early in the morning."

STAGE FRIGHT.—Francis Wilson says there is one thing that the dramatic schools accomplish, they give a man a chance to develop without the humiliation of public appearances. To be paraded "green" before the public is the worst fate that can overtake a serious-minded youngster who believes he has the making of an actor in him. A school gives him a chance to do so without dying of mortification in the attempt—and Mr. Wilson ought to know. The comedian spent three years in a stock company in Boston. He did every-

thing from understudying an echo and playing a tree in the foreground to pumping on at a moment's notice to fill the leading man's place when the leading man was recalled at that time comic opera was just beginning to be the rage in America. He saw his chance, and went after it, and succeeded in becoming a comic opera comedian. However, now that he has been accepted in straight comedy, he says, he will never go back to "Charles Frohm" employed when he began his career as a producer of plays in this country.

JOHN MASON'S "L. O."—Mr. John Mason of the "Witching Hour" company laughed heartily as he glanced at a card and read "Mr. John Mason, L. O."

"John Mason, L. O.," repeated the friend, glancing up questioningly.

"Sort of a practical joke on me," he said. "Many years back a group of fellows with whom I ran became interested in hypnotism and the possibilities of putting a person into a cataleptic state. Not one of them was more taken up with the fad than I. We started in right good earnest, and inside of a week the fellows who possessed strong hypnotic ability began to do small stunts to show off."

"One evening we attended a lecture by a widely advertised 'volunteer' from the audience, and after much darning and double-darling I ambled up on the platform to offer myself on the altar of scientific research."

"His professorship instructed me how to place my mental faculties in a receptive state and follow his suggestions. I did my best, and bless me if I didn't succumb. After I got properly under the influence the demonstrator forgot the awakening combination and couldn't get me out of the trance. My friends, becoming frightened at my continued unconsciousness, crowded around the professor and put him up in the air altogether. I was down and out for several hours before I finally came back into the land of the living."

"As an aftermath one of the crowd sent me a death certificate, made out in due form, wanting only the signature of a physician to make me legally a subject for the morgue."

"It became a standing joke among these fellows that Mason had died once, and in sheer self-defense it became necessary for me to inscribe my stationery

and cards with evidence that I was still to be considered a contemporary and not a thing of the past. So I adopted the letters 'L. O.' indicating I was a live one, and stuck to the practice for a number of years.

"I once dropped my degree sign now, but, once in a while I get a reminder from some one of the Old Hypnotic Guild, who wants to make sure that I am not planted in the limbo of dead things."

A JURYROOM PICTURE.—What happens in a juryroom after the jury have retired to it to reach their conclusion has always been a subject of interest with the public following the progress of a celebrated case. Occasionally the newspapers succeed in getting information showing how the members of the jury conduct themselves. Once in a while a tragedy has resulted from the inability of the jury to get together on a verdict. Every once in a while an instance occurs where a jury cannot agree and they stay out trying to reach a verdict for several days. During some times the jury, wearying of argument, turns to cards, songs and games, and other means of recreation when they are not busy arguing with the realists on one. Some juries have been religious and have resorted to prayer for the ones hanging the verdict. Any one who has ever served on a jury knows how difficult it is to make twelve men, good and true, agree upon the subject of the guilt or innocence of an accused person.

"The Call of the North," a play of the theme of "Circumstantial Evidence" at Chase's this week. The sketch is by Harrison Armstrong.

A YOUNG LEADING WOMAN.—To abandon life in a convent for the glow and excitement of portraying a leading feminine role in the support of a prominent star at a Broadway theater is an experience with few parallels, yet that is the story of Miss Ann Murdock, who will make her initial bow to a Washington audience tomorrow night at the New National Theater, when Robert Edeson and his company begin a week's engagement.

"The Call of the North" is in striking contrast to the other plays in which Robert Edeson has starred in the past few years, namely, "Ransom's Folly," "Strongheart" and "Classmates." All of the other transpires in the Canadian West, a region practically new to production on the stage.

The role of Ned Trent, free trader, suits the star admirably. Trent has, for the third time, been caught transgressing the rules of the Hudson Bay Company and is brought before the post factor, Golden Bret, for punishment. Trent is offered the alternative of suffering the punishment of being sent on "La Longue Traverse"—across the wilderness without food or any ammunition—or entering the employ of the company. The latter the American refuses and he is held captive until such time as the factor is ready to send him to his lonely death. With the sole object of obtaining a rifle, Trent works upon the feelings of the factor's pretty daughter. When he attempts to escape he is captured and taken before the factor, where, in a stormy scene, the entire story reaches its climax—Trent's real identity, his desire for vengeance on his father's account and the girl's real love for him.

The supporting company includes Ste-

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Miss Geraldine Farrar.—Miss Geraldine Farrar will give her only recital in Washington this season at the Columbia Theater next Wednesday afternoon, April 7, at 8:30 o'clock.

Miss Farrar made her debut in grand opera at the Royal Opera, Berlin, in 1898. She has been conspicuous among the world's greatest prima donnas from the first. Miss Farrar will be assisted by Mr. Albany Ritchie, the young English violinist.

Goodson Concert.—The first Washington appearance of Miss Katharine Goodson, the young English pianist, will be made at the concert of the Charlton-Smith series, Saturday, April 17, at the New Masonic Auditorium. Her program will be:

1. (a) Pastoral, E. minor, Scarlatti; (b)

Chase's.—Chase's this week will offer the Harrison-Armstrong Company in "Circumstantial Evidence," the Mirza-Golem Persian troupe, the Barrows-Lancaster Company, Sydney Deane and Company, Fred Sosman, Dave Jones and Harry Mayo, "Bimm, Bonna, Brrr," and the motion picture series, "Herring Fishing."

Academy.—Miss Marshall comes to the Academy tomorrow night at the head of the new musical show, "The Cowboy Girl." The dramatic part of the play is said to be of the better sort. Though the play possesses several rather sensational scenes, they are relieved by the comedy element and catch special music numbers.

"The Cowboy Girl" is from the pen of Lem B. Parker. Miss Marshall is supported by a large company.

Majestic.—The four acts of vaudeville booked for the Majestic this week include Whitley and Bell, comedy entertainers; W. L. Hall and his French Follies, coming direct from a four weeks' New York engagement at Hammerstein's Victoria Theater; Token, in his "Sins for Life," and New travelogues and illustrated songs and motion pictures are introduced.

New Lyceum.—"Pat White and His Gaiety Girls" is the attraction this week at the New Lyceum beginning tomorrow matinee. Mr. White is surrounded by a corps of comedians and singers, which includes: George T. Davis, William Jennings, Tommie O'Neill, Jake Malvern, John Wilson, Otto Malvern, Harry Wilson, Anna Grant, Mabel Webb, Margie Catlin, Myrtle King, Sophie Malvern, Gertrude Maher, Leona Allen, Martha Morton, Kitty Hess and Susie Winner. The vaudeville part of the entertainment consists of the five

Belasco.—John Mason and his itackett Theater company, in Augustus Thomas' play, "The Witching Hour," is the attraction at the Belasco Theater this week. Mr. Mason appeared in this play all last season and part of the present season at the Hackett Theater in New York, where it aroused much interest, not only as a play, but as a discussion of so-called telepathy. The particularly interesting telepathic witching hour in the play is 2 o'clock in the morning, but any other hour would have served the purpose. There is also found an interesting story, and a scrap of distinct character types, afford opportunity for good dialogue. A display of modern scenic splendor is promised. Mr. Mason will be supported by the original Hackett Theater company, including Russ Whittall, Amelia Gardner, Julia Hay, George Nash, Ethel Whittington, George Gaston, Parnell Pratt, E. L. Watson, Charles Balsar, T. P. Jackson, W. E. Butterfield and Henry Hadfield.

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by Wilfred T. Coleby, and is now being performed by Lena Ashwell at her own Kingsway Theater, in London. The season of this play, which presents in dramatic form an argument in behalf of the observance and perpetuation of the great social conventions, are all laid at the feet of the gods. The play is being performed at the Kingsway Theater, in London, England. The entire action of the play transpires in the course of twenty-four hours. Miss Manning plays the role of Freda Savell, whose falling intervention prevents a young girl of nineteen from placing herself in a seriously false position.

"The Follies of 1908."—"The Follies of 1908" is announced for next week at the New National. Miss Nora Bayes is featured this season and in her support are Bickel and Watson, Mile. Dagle (the dancer), Annabelle Whitford, Grace Leigh, William Powers, Arthur Deagan, Jack Norworth, Billie Reeves, Seymour Brown, William Schroder, Grace Russell, Polly Thorne, Evelyn Westbrook, Viola Bowers and others.

The present production of "The Follies" is in two acts and ten scenes and is from the pens of Harry B. Smith, who wrote the story, and Maurice Levy, who is responsible for the music.

"Big Sister's Beau."—Chase's Easter week holiday bill will be filled with novelties, including Anna Laughlin and Joseph E. Howard, in "My Big Sister's Beau." The other attractions will be Hal Davis, supported by a fine company, in Edmund Day's comedy, "Pals"; Frederick Voelcker, the violin virtuoso, in "Twilight in the Studio," accompanied on the piano by his wife; May and Flo Hengel, in songs and dances; Howard and Howard, in "The Thespian and the Messenger Boy"; Ed Galt, in "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge"; and Zarrill brothers. The motion pictures will show "Lady Chauffeurs."

"The Fool House."—The Four Huntings, a team known at one time in the circus world and later in vaudeville, have been provided with a musical vehicle, "The Fool House," and open an engagement of one week at the Academy Monday, April 12. Each of the Four Huntings has a special line of work. Lew Hunting is a comedian, and Tony is a grotesque dancer, while Mollie Hunting and John Hunting are provided with suitable parts.

In the Spotlight.—The George Evans Honey Boy Minstrels and "The American Idea" brought their seasons to a close last Saturday night.

Lionel E. Lawrence has secured the road rights to play "The Prince Chap," and will make a tour of the south under his own management.

Miss Isabel D'Armond, who recently left "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge," has joined "The Beauty Spot," playing the part of the western girl.

Miss Rose Stahl left New York yesterday for London, where she will begin an engagement in the Vandover Theater, April 15, in "The Chorus Lady."

Hurtig & Seaman have made arrangements to give "The Wizard of Oz" an early production in London. They have purchased the English rights from the Fred Hamlin estate.

Miss Louise Dresser has been engaged as a member of the cast which Manager Charles Dillon is forming for "The Candy Shop," which will be put on in New York for a summer run.

Messrs. Liebler & Co. have sold to Dr. Carl Merzbach of Berlin the German rights to Mr. Cleveland Moffatt's play "The Battle" now at the Savoy Theater, New York.

One week's rest at Atlantic City was enough for George Cohan and he resumed his place at the head of "The Yank company in Philadelphia last Thursday night.

One of the plays to receive Charles Cohan's attention early in the fall will be "The Harvest Moon," by Augustus Thomas. The play will be produced in September.

Kathryn Osterman will appear next season in a new play entitled "A Woman of Today," written expressly for her by Arthur W. Stone and Roy K. Moulton. It is a comedy in three acts, dealing with finance.

Marie Doro is about to begin an extensive tour to the Pacific coast, and for this purpose Charles Frohm has substituted "The Morals of Marcus" for "The Richest Girl" in which Miss Doro has been starring this season.

Madge Lessing and Fred Wright, jr., have bought the entire rights (barring the English and American) of "The Naked Truth." This play, it is stated, will be taken to London some time during this spring.

Joanna Howland, who succeeded Ada Lewis in "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge" for Chicago last Thursday to become the leading woman of Richard Carlisle's production of "A Boy and a Girl."

After a long season with the Belasco Stock Company of Los Angeles, Florence Oakley has resigned from that organization and will start for the east this week. Miss Oakley will be seen next season in New York under the direction of a prominent theatrical firm.

Otis Harlan is to be a star next season in a musical farce called "The Broken Idol," the production to be made in New York early in August. This will be the first time Mr. Harlan has starred since his days with the famous Hoyt farces.

Miss Beulah Lurion, in leading support for the late Sol Smith Russell during the last two years of his stage career, is an leading woman for the Odeon Stock Company of St. Louis, has been engaged to play in New York in the repertoire of the new Irish stock company of New York.

"The Third Degree" will finish its season in New York its business being large, and in the fall three companies presenting this piece are to start on tour. Charles Klein, the actor, who has started for Europe shortly and promises to return early in August with a new play.

Louise Le Baron has been re-engaged as prima donna of the Castle Square Opera Company in Boston for the spring and summer season. Prior to this engagement she will go to Montreal, where for two weeks she will sing leading roles under the baton of the French conductor of the Manhattan Opera Company.

Among the twenty-three dramatic compositions registered at the bureau of copyrights last week is one by Billie Burke entitled "Western Nature Studies." There are also two sketches by Lester Koenig and "The United Kingdom of America, or 2,000 A. D.," by George M. Von Schrader.

Before the end of the season Tim Murphy will produce in New York a new play, entitled "The Boy." The management will be William C. Brady and Louis F. Werba. The piece is by the author of "Cupid and the Dollar," in which Mr. Murphy is appearing on tour.

Manager John W. Gates has an original play entitled "The Catspaw," which will be given its first public hearing in Buffalo next Monday. It is by Franklin Sca-



THOS W. ROSS and MARY RYAN in "THE FORTUNE HUNTER."

ROBERT EDESON in "THE WITCHING HOUR."

JOHN MASON in "THE WITCHING HOUR."

SUE MARSHALL in "THE COWBOY GIRL."

MISS HAY in "THE WITCHING HOUR."

EVELYN RUSSELL in "THE WITCHING HOUR."