



There are times when a farce has to be taken seriously. The first few performances, however, are not to be taken seriously. They are fraught with suspense for the promoters. While this style of play is regarded as the broadest of humor, its effects often depend on the most delicate contrasts, and the mechanism of the story has to be adjusted with a nicety that makes the author akin to that of the engineer. Its service to thought and endeavor may be slight, but the contrivance is elaborate and ingenious. "The Blue Envelope" in its travels goes over a route that is made joyous by several bubbling comers. Between them are arid places in the conversational journey, but the play has in its favor the fact that some of the comic episodes linger in recollection, and tempt the auditor to try to describe them to a friend. There is no surer way to get to the heart of the author than to tell him about something that happened in the way of a comic scene. He is compelled to go to satisfy his curiosity as to whether anything you described as you did could possibly be as entertaining as you said it was.

The fine effects in "The Blue Envelope" are dependent chiefly on the work of W. J. Ferguson, an actor with a remarkable career. Few men have had the compliments that Ferguson has enjoyed. It is related that Richard Mansfield said of him, "Ferguson is the greatest actor in America—next to myself." This was when he was playing with Mansfield in "Beau Brummell." The occasions for complaining of modesty in an actor are not many; but the actor seems to arise in the case of this eminent, though unstarred, player, who for years has gone on content to apply the utmost fineness to roles of subordinate rank. Yet his performances have always been characterized by a subtle unction and a temperate buoyancy that give them a distinction. "The Blue Envelope" follows a precedent in presenting a story whose moral is obscure. If the farce is the outgrowth of any old morality play, the hardships and embarrassments of the spouse who undertakes a surreptitious turn on the primrose path of dalliance are lost sight of in the appeal to the sense of the ridiculous.

It is not often that a singer still young in professional experience meets a greener test than that which Gretchen Hood met when she sang with the San Carlo Opera Company on Wednesday afternoon. The singers in the cast were gifted performers, seasoned by experience and accomplished to the last detail in technique as well as in vocal expression. It was an audience of confident judgment on the part of the management to place her thus in evidence, for the slightest imperfection could not fail to be emphasized by the high quality of her surroundings. No Margaretta was ever more gently beautiful in appearance or more free from self-consciousness. She sang with a security that matched the ease of her stage presence, revealing a voice whose sweetness and flexibility made it seem the expression of nature itself rather than of skill.

The San Carlo singers have made a place for themselves among the music lovers of Washington, their performances having created a sincere enthusiasm far beyond that which most organizations essaying to do in the tour have aroused. The assemblage of so remarkable a list of singers is an achievement which shows the keenest discernment of quality on the part of the management. The San Carlo performances represent grand opera for grand opera, and are not to be regarded as commercial exploitation of ready-made reputations.

The songbirds are recognized as the siren of the stage, and every while grand opera was paying the city a Lenten visit, announcements were made of more opera of all kinds and caliber. The Columbia Theater will give musical comedies and the National will offer the standard productions of which the Abnora has become known and esteemed. The possibility that the supplementary theatrical season will be quite as interesting as the regular season is by no means remote.

An interesting company. There are some interesting young people of the stage in "The Poor Little Rich Girl." Leonie Dana, who has the title role, has acted since she was two years old. Her father, James H. Dana, is a well-known actor and was the original child with Faversham in "The Squawman" and in many New York productions, including "Passers-By" and "The Piper." Leonie Dana, the snake woman of the play, is the daughter of George K. Faversham, a famous actor, and is a rather than impersonator, in Rice's "Evangeline" and kindred frivolities of the century ago. The story deals with the deceitful nurse, was trained in advance agent. Ella Rock, the society huntress, is a Philadelphia who leaves with Elsie Jane in musical comedy.

Eric Jewett is the son of Henry Jewett, the only male survivor of Mansfield's original "Arms and the Man" cast, who has recently been making Shakespearean revivals in Boston. Palmer Collins, the sympathetic old Horace grinner, acted with Sir Henry Irving and the late-bearing Hattie Wood, and was stage director of the San Francisco company that included Charles Richman, Gladys Hanson, Charles Cherry and Rose Coghlan last summer. Joseph A. Bingham, the fat-headed policeman, has blown his whistle at every performance of the Eleanor Gates fantasy for the past three seasons. Mignon Leris appears here with Digby Bell in vaudeville. Mona Alphonse, impersonating the King's English, and the late-bearing Hattie Wood, has circled the globe as ventriloquist and magician.

Al Brady, the puffy bear, has impersonated all sorts of animals, and was the admirable Tige in over a thousand of his hundred performances of "Buster Brown." Treville Foster has played children in "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "The Blue Bird" and "The Little Boy in the Window." He is a little thief in "Within the Law" and last, but not least, the courteous young man in "The Show," is Frank Young, a son of the dramatizer of "Ben-Hur."

Karl Jörn. Karl Jörn's father was a mechanic in the city of Riga, Russia, where Karl was born. He was a neighbor of the author, having lost their child persuaded the Jorns to let them adopt Karl, and they lavished upon him all that love and wealth could give. His foster-parents were patrons of grand opera, and he had a voice and his good fairies had it cultivated. He made his first appearance in opera at the town of Freiburg, Germany. Later he sang with the opera companies in Vienna, London, Berlin, Paris and other European capitals. Six years ago he came to this country as a member of the Metropolitan company. A year after getting here he applied for his first leading part, and now he is a full-fledged naturalized American. He owns and lives on a large farm in Bremen, Pa., where he fills operatic engagements, and he works there from sunrise to sunset, and in the winter he works in the neighborhood. He does a good deal of his own mowing and haying, and his wife, who is a native of the same town, is a devoted housewife. He is the Karl Jörn of whom they have read in new letters from New York city.

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Salambo, princess and priestess, a lovely woman with a woman's preference and susceptibilities, prefers the love of a handsome slave to that of a rich man, the warrior selected for her by her father, and the slave, Matho, dares much to win her, and does so in the end by the art of his slave, Splendide. The settings and scenes in the picture are beautiful. There are crowds of actors and actresses, battles, temple scenes, all the constituents of a vast film spectacle of stupendous proportions.

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Children With Star Names.—What's in a name? In a first glance of the program containing the cast of artists who appear in "The Things That Count" might lead one to suspect that the play is to be presented here with an almost all-star cast, for the program includes no less than four names which have adorned the Great White Way in electric lights. However, are the stage names selected by the four juvenile characters in the play who have chosen, to tell them, to put up the slippery ladder to fame and fortune by the footlight route, the names of well known stars? They are Grace Douglas, who plays Dulci; Maxine Elliott Hicks, as Blawack O'Donovan; Elsie Ferguson, as Eleanor Gates; and Nick Long, Jr., as Mickey O'Donovan. These children are all said to be so clever that their more illustrious predecessors may well feel proud that they are the ones who have selected to perpetuate their names before the public.

Klaw and Erlanger will present Eleanor Gates' celebrated play, "The Poor Little Rich Girl," at the New National, this week, starting tomorrow evening. This play is foremost among latter-day contributions to the stage and has engaged much attention. It can for a night moon in New York and has had notable success on tour from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is a big play for men and women and intensely interesting. The author, Eleanor Gates, has taken novel ideas and handled it with striking ingenuity. She tells a story of present-day society and at the same time shows wonderful exuberance into dreamland. She calls it a play of fact and fancy. There is a combination of sentiment, humor and spectacular splendor, and the dual action is absorbingly entertaining. There is shown the neglect of a child, Gwendolyn, by her parents, which she has taken up with worldly ambitions. The child falls desperately ill through an overdose of opiate given by deceitful nurse. In her delirium she goes to places her fancy had created, such as "The Bell Tower," where every body rides hobbies. There she meets "the two-faced thing," the "snake in the grass," the organ grinder, who makes "tongues in his languages" the footman who murders the "King's English" after furious combat; together with no other curious creatures born of the child's fevered imagination. A powerful domestic drama is acted at the same time wonderful adventures in the land of fantasy are depicted. Actual persons are shown as being and are visible in both forms, and real actions are merged into the strange and wonderful world of a child's mental pictures. Gwendolyn's dreams are visualized while vital drama is played. "The Poor Little Rich Girl" is strong in emotional quality and merit. Its story is fascinating and it is massive in its play.

A big cast is called for and each person has a dual character. Among the thirty members of the company are Leonie Dana, Ella Rock, Yvonne Fortesque, Helen Gurney, Suzanne Rowe, Margaret Houck, Mignon Leris, Nellie Preston, John W. Young, Paul Collins, Eric Jewett, Harry Linkey, James Bryson, Joseph A. Bingham, Al Brady, Albert Berman, and others identified with the success of the play.

"The Things That Count" which will be presented under the management of William A. Brady at the Belasco Theater this week, had a run of over eight months at the Playhouse, in New York city, last season.

"The Things That Count" is a play that concerns itself neither with the problems of the hour nor with the problems of tomorrow, but employs characters natural and familiar to every one. The main interest attaches to an old couple well past the meridian of life. They are interested in love and charity, and associated with a benevolent organization of benevolent society, they are none too familiar with these virtues when they are presented in the abstract. The love thread of the play is carried by a young actress, left to her own devices by her husband's death, and a young physician, who was the husband's best friend. Throughout the three acts there is a hint of Christmas and the spirit that goes with tinselled fir trees and holly. The play opens in the morning room of a home on Washington, and the two remaining acts pass in a New York tenement house in the fact to give many stirring battle scenes. Moreover, the religious life of Carthage is shown in several episodes. In respect of its presentation, settings and acting "Salambo" is declared one of the greatest motion pictures ever made. It includes also a wonderful love story.

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