FROM BROADWAY COME NEW YARNS FOR THE NEW YEAR'S AMUSEMENT

More Talk of Broadway

Continued on Following Page.

infancy. The radio, spiritualism, even the art of the magician, were employed to dazzle and mystify the audience, who sat delightfully bewildered through the three acts, trying to guess who the arch-crook of the play might be.

To sketch the story would be an unkindness to the many persons who are certain to see it before it leaves town. The joy of seeing it is to experience trying to forecast who is the mysterious *Zeno*, master criminal, who murders *Arthur Hampton*, rifles the Hampton safe and by the use of the wireless becomes the despair of the detectives. But actually the action moves so rapidly that one has no time for diagnosis, lest the rapid changes are missed.

The seance scene is one of strong appeal. The stage is enveloped in darkness, except for a ghastly green light which floods the face of the medium, who sits in the center of the room surrounded by observers, all handcuffed to their chairs. All the doors and windows have been locked and sealed. There is an outcry. Chairs are overturned. Lights flash. Two of the party are missing; the others still locked to their chairs.

The three acts are full of this sort of thing, holding the audience in an unusual state of suspense until the playwright, as a sort of concession, finally discloses the answer just as the curtain falls. "Zeno" would thrill an audience of mummies.

It was said that "The Tiger Lily," the play in which Sessue Hayakawa, film star, expected to be incarnated, would serve a term at the National, but this appears to be an item that is juicy but untrue.

Incidentally, the claim is made for "The Tiger Lily" that it has a larger body of shareholders than even "The Last Warning," hitherto the world's supreme example of Broadway's community spirit in putting on a show. The Japanese piece has niches in it for Lee Shubert, Walter Jordan, George Nicolai and Jules Murray.

"Partners Again," another example of the American theater, will seek cordial relations with England soon. It will open in London during February, with Bobby Leonard, who played *Potash* in the first reel of this serial over there, and Phil White sneering enthusiastically at each other. Charles C. Cochran will clap the comedy into the Apollo Theater there. It is interesting to note that "His Honor, Abe Potash," which cleaned up in New York but sank on the road, has been the only one of the four Montague Glass comedies which did not justify itself financially.

"The Lonely Heart," a play by Edward Sheldon which was tried out last spring on tour with Basil Sidney having a heart, is to be presented after all by the Shuberts, after having been run through his typewriter again by the author.

In connection with Rachel Crothers's new play, "Mary the 3rd," a story is told of an actor who had a temporary engagement in the piece during rehearsals—let us call him Jones for mercy's sake. Despite the temporary character of Jones's employment his agent was so eager to have it known that he'd landed a job that he sent out a premature announcement about the play, getting its name wrong but little recking so long as he got the actor's name mentioned. And now that the play is all set for a production Jones is out of the cast.

The play which Daniel Kusell is soon to set to box office music is a translation of another of the increasing group of stories which reach the stage after having served an apprenticeship on the screen. It is James Oliver Curwood's yarn, "The River's End," in which Lewis Stone went double on the films in a dual role under the direction of Marshall Neilan. It had an earlier dramatization, at which Ray Long and Julian Johnson, magazine editors, officiated, and it was given into the care and keeping of A. H. Woods. Woods rehearsed the play and then put temptation away from him. The rights to it reverted to the author, and now Kusell, producer with Lawrence Schwab of "The Gingham Girl" has brought it to pass in dramatic form again.

David Warfield as *Shylock*.

MY DEAR SIR:

NEW YORK A LA PARIS.

To the Dramatic Editor:

In presenting "The Love Child" to New York we feared greatly that the original characters and situations as created by Bataille would be reported from your columns and others, the B. C. stations of our dramatic batteries, as "graze short" or "graze over" or even "lost." So we elevated our plane of sight and dropped a bracket fire on the gallery and the stalls.

Since several plays from the French have so soon departed from these parts, we changed our locale before we came in rather than after—and every day in every way your are getting Bataille and Bataille.

In your Sunday musings I read about my owlish manner and viscous speech, depressing fear, and all. I thought the word was "vicious" instead of "viscous" and it didn't worry me. I caught that cold and possibly the depressing fear while attending my father's funeral a week before we opened and added to it by playing to some Esquimos, about as many as are generally gathered together, in Providence.

But it's salvo fire at the Cohans and the range is well over 10,000—because, I think, we changed our aiming point from Paris to New York.

SIDNEY BLACKMER.

NEW YORK, December 27, 1922.

MISS BROAD TELLS ALL.

To the Dramatic Editor:

May I say a word for myself now—and make the startling remark that ever since I have played *Juliet* it has been nothing short of a hindrance to me! Artistically it was the realization of my choicest dreams; financially it spelled ruin. Had it not been for the encouraging advice and interest of such men as Emanuel Reicher, Winchell Smith, B. Iden Payne, Richard Ordynski, Arthur Hornblow, Benjamin De Casseres, and others, I daresay I might have given up and gone "back to the ribbon counter."

In my youthful enthusiasm I had led myself to believe that all an actress needed was to approach a manager, produce credentials of a praiseworthy *Juliet* performance (opposite so excellent an actor as Walter Hampden), and—well, the rest would be easy. But, alas! how often have I been coldly scanned by a manager and sent home with the weighty and consoling remark: "Well, this part doesn't require exactly a *Juliet!*" . . . So that soon I began to feel that Providence was not so merciless after all when she keeps most actresses yearning until they are the "proverbial fifty" before she sends them the chance to play that greatest and loveliest of all roles.

However—thus in the past. Now a new day seems to have dawned, and we can only pray that the revived interest in Shakespeare's immortal play, as well as other worthwhile plays, comes from the heart of the people, not as a fad that must soon blow over.

The testimonials I have been receiving in the press for the interpretation of that beautiful character *Juliet* have been the most cherished Christmas present I have ever received, for, as it looks now, it may lead to my participation soon in an Elizabethan production of "Romeo and Juliet." What gift could be dearer to the heart of an actress?

BERTHA BROAD.

The Message of the Violets

In the current issue of Variety, the Seventeenth Anniversary number of that theatrical weekly, many players and playwrights have inserted "cards," according to an ancient custom, and some of the scene may suspect will be a little puzzled and even annoyed by the card thus inserted by the authors of "Merton of the Movies." It follows:

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS
from
GEORGE S. KAUFMAN
and
MARC CONNELLY

ON TOUR:
"The Birth of a Nation."
"Peg o' My Heart."
"Patty at College" (two companies).
"Macbeth."
Seven Little Peppers and How They Grew" (five companies).
"The First Year" (three companies).
A Musical Version of "Aida."

IN NEW YORK:
"Rain."
"Liza."
The Minsky Brothers.
Kaufman and Connelly's "Music Box Revue."

IN PREPARATION:
"Yvette."
"The Red Dawn."
"The London Follies."
"The Survival of the Fittest."
"First Is Last."
"The Forty-niners."

IN LONDON:
"Loyalties."
"Phi-Phi."
"Decameron Nights."

IN AUSTRALIA:
"Ladies' Night."
"Ben Hur."

Tales of the Two-a-Day

Vaudeville

PALACE—Roszika and Yancsi Dolly, Vivienne Segal and Harry Carroll, Mabel Ford.

CENTRAL—"Main Street Follies," with Morris and Campbell; Fred Ardath, La Follette.

BROADWAY—Moran and Mack, Margie Coates, the photoplay "Kick In."

RIVERSIDE—Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra, Ruth Roye.

EIGHTY-FIRST STREET—Jack Norworth, Constance Talmadge in the photoplay "East Is West."

COLONIAL—Vera Gordon, Paul Specht and his Monte Carlo Orchestra.

LOEW'S STATE—Phil Baker, Lon Chaney in the photoplay "Shadows."

PROCTOR'S FIFTH AVENUE—Ben Welch, Borden and Dwyer.

PROCTOR'S TWENTY-THIRD STREET—James Thornton, Dottie Clair's Minstrels.

PROCTOR'S FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET—Sarah Padden, Taylor, Howard and Them.

PROCTOR'S 125TH STREET—Mignon, Lane and Freeman.

ONCE upon a time a vaudeville orchestra played "The Rosary" during a spirited act showing a bull fight, and the director afterwards explained that he chose the incidental music on the ground that the toreador was praying that he wouldn't be killed. At any rate, the B. F. Keith College of Music, housed in the Regent Theater Building, at Seventh avenue and 116th street, is in the field to prevent such lack of liaison between the stage and the orchestra pit. S. W. Lawton, the dean of the new college, and his assistants are conducting daily classes for vaudeville and motion picture orchestras, and sooner or later every musician in the B. F. Keith, the B. S. Moss and the F. F. Proctor houses must go to school. An example of the influence of badly chosen incidental music is the well known vaudeville feature "Topics of the Day," made up of merry excerpts from the newspaper and periodical press. For a long time musical directors accompanied the "Topics" with jazz, ragtime and brassy numbers with great volume of tone, thinking that pep was the thing to go with humor. "Topics of the Day" didn't score as well as expected and there was much anxious study to find the reason. Dean Lawson was detailed to the musical end of the situation and reported that the orchestras were killing the comedy. He laid out a program of Chaminade, Grieg, Victor Herbert, &c., in light and dainty numbers with muted brass and strings, and the "Topics" registered great popularity and laughs and are now a stanch standard feature of Keith bills.

"Wow" has taken the place of "stomach laugh" in the argot of the two a day. "I would rather have a few 'wows' in my monologue than a series of titters and giggles," said a headline comedian the other day. "By 'wow' I mean what we used to call a 'stomach laugh,' but in the general uplift of vaudeville that term has been canceled.

All the Keith comics are preparing for after pieces and high jinks at the special midnight shows to-night. Many a joke and antic that has waited long for a hearing will be tried out in the new comedy which will augment the regular programs.

Little publicity has attended the staging of a Fokine ballet by Gertrude Hoffman, who is presenting it in Shubert vaudeville. Miss Hoffman has long been a devotee of the Russian ballet, and it should be recorded that she was among the first American dancers to appear in New York in a Russian ballet. This took place in the summer of 1911. The place was the Winter Garden and the impresario Morris Gest. Out of this somewhat oddly mixed show sprang a series of ballets, in which Miss Hoffman appeared on tour. Everything was done in an extravagant fashion. There was an enormous company with a huge orchestra and all of the other things that add to the expense of such an undertaking. Since then she has played in several Broadway pieces, appearing always in between times in condensed revues. Not until this season, however, has she been able to get back to her first ideal.

The Elusive Bootleggers

After "The Bootleggers" closed here it did not storm Pittsburgh, as planned, but is being hopefully recast by Charles Capehart. William A. Page said that he did his best to bring liquor back to New York, but New Yorkers did not cooperate completely. Page says he is not downhearted, and to prove that, he is starting on his next work, called "The Snow Bird," concerned with the technique of sniffing.

One week, when one of the characters in the play was called "a dirty Dago" a party of men of Italian aspect jumped up in a box and denounced the play as a slur on the Italian race. A policeman had to be called to quiet them, and the incident is said to have caused more excitement than the play itself.

Another interesting occurrence was the fact that two of the players last week threatened to quit because of the jazz orchestra. The Hotel Astor recalled its jazz band, which opened with the show in the cabaret scene, and another band was imported from Greenwich Village, which made sounds characteristic of the village. The first night it palpitated the singer got out of tune with it, grew angry and afterward threatened to quit. One of the company who was an admirer of the miss declared that if she left he would do likewise—but the play managed to fill out its booking nevertheless.

This play, by the way, is said to have had its origin in an actual story, similar to the poisoning feud in the play. It was told to Charles Capehart, advertising agent, who became so impressed with it as an aspect of bootlegging that he commissioned Page to write a play around it for an advance royalty of $1,000. The piece seems to have stimulated other plays of the same color. Jay Barnes, who did the early publicity for the show, has just submitted to a rival advertising agency, the J. P. Muller Company, a play which he wrote with a Philadelphia newspaper man named Williams, and which is intended to make history with the title of "The Speak-Easy."

Constantin Stanislavsky, coming here with the Moscow Art Theater.

Williams Learns From His Son

Continued from Preceding Page.

You're all so keen to tell the truth that you produce a lie—an illusion, a mistake at least."

"Naturally, we hit hard. We have to think how long our arms have been held."

"What do you think of the children in the play? Are they untrue in their approval of their parents' divorce?"

"Not at all. They represent a generation that will go us one better—and they will have a darn sight easier time of it because we will understand them better than your crowd understood us, excepting a few, as you have proved."

"Do you believe what one of the characters in the play says: 'Parents don't belong to themselves, they belong to their children?'"

"Sure. If people will take on the responsibility of parenthood that is their hard luck."

"Then if the parents belong to the children, to whom do the children belong?"

"To themselves."

"I see. Then you have both. Where do we come in?"

"You don't. You go out."

"I see. You make it all very clear to me."

"Why not?"

A. H. Woods Plays Hunches

A. H. Woods will take another trip to Europe in February, on which he will probably manage to read another bale of plays and drop them quietly overboard. It is interesting to note that Woods has acquired a sizable fortune exploiting plays on the hunch system. At bottom Woods does a play because he feels he is fated to do it, or the high gods decree it—probably only Conan Doyle could explain it plainly. His brother and chief associate, Martin Herrman, has what might be called the same psychic quality, though Herrman denies he is going to become a medium on the strength of it. He has exceptional ability at reading the thoughts of callers who come into his office and of being able to guess the first question on their lips, even though it has been some time since he last offered them one of the Woods house cigars. Perhaps it's this almost clairvoyant power that makes him enjoy sitting in on a card game and trimming the bunch more than going to a theater.

Technic for Those Who Care

By ELMER RICE.

Mr. Rice is the author of "On Trial" and "It is the Law," now at the Ritz Theater.

IT is not the function of the playwright to write about the theater. If he is wise, he is content to stick to his craft and leave the task of analysis in abler hands. There is no dearth of able—or at any rate of willing—hands. The theater of to-day does not suffer from lack of publicity. By the day, week, month and quarter it is exposed to the public gaze in attitudes of varying degrees of decency. It is discussed in terms of histrionism, social ethics, technology, aesthetics, finance and pure scandal.

And yet, to the playwright, the forest seems to be somewhat obscured by the trees. It is difficult (for the playwright) to escape the conviction that in any theatrical situation the play is the central fact. It is not that the art of the actor and the art of the technician are receiving undeserved attention, but rather that the splendors of the new era of stage production sometimes makes us lose sight of what is happening in the realm of dramatic craftmanship.

Unless I am very far wrong, dramatic technic is undergoing a profound change—is in fact in process of revolution. Just what the ultimate effect of the revolution will be it is difficult to foresee. In fact it would be rash to be a prophecy upon what must seem to the lay theatregoer very scanty evidence.

But for a long time some of us have felt—vaguely at first, then with increasing definiteness—the limitations of the current dramatic convention, that is to say the realistic (or naturalistic) technic created, or at any rate vitalized, by Ibsen and brought to perfection by Hauptmann and Galsworthy. This method is, of course, too familiar to require exposition or analysis. It is, in a word, the dramatic representation of ordinary (or extraordinary) objective experience, intensified and selected, to be sure, but having always the pattern of "reality." And to a generation of theatergoers accustomed to it, this idiom must seem not only satisfying but inevitable.

But of course nothing is inevitable. The theater, too, is subject to evolution. Ibsen, who seems so right and so safe to-day, was a profaner of the temple forty years ago. His method was denounced as blasphemous. He was inundated by a flood of the most extraordinary adjectives. Inundated but not submerged. Even in his own lifetime the tide turned. To-day he is almost respectable enough to be admitted to the Hall of Fame. In the theater he has become a classic.

And that, I think, is the point. Classic connotes dead. I do not mean to say that Ibsenism is dead. I merely suggest that it is moribund. It has lost its vitality, its impetus. There may be great realistic plays written next year or fifty years hence, but they will be applications of a formula, not spontaneous creations. When I saw 'Loyalties,' I could not help feeling that the very perfection of its technic stamped it as belonging to the past.

The reason for the decadence of Ibsenism is not far to seek. Ibsen was a product of the political and philosophic dogmas of his time. The social and intellectual upheaval which was created by the industrial revolution and the promulgation of the evolutionary theory was the basis of Ibsen's work. He was the prophet of a world rudely awakened to external reality.

But we have gone beyond that. Bernard Shaw boasts somewhere that he is almost unique in possessing normal vision and that therefore he sees life as it is. But even the best pair of eyes cannot see all of life. The microscope and the telescope have taught us that. The new psychology has shown us hithertofore unsuspected springs of human action and the war flagged us into a realization of devastating and imponderable social forces. Here is a new and fertile field of dramatic material. The dramatist of to-day—or at any rate of to-morrow—must build not upon Darwin and Karl Marx but upon Freud, J. P. Morgan and Billy Sunday. He must escape the limitations of objective externalism and seek to capture the dynamic forces that lie behind it.

Is this all theory? I offer in evidence Eugene O'Neill. I find in both "The Hairy Ape" and "The Emperor Jones" a striving for a new form of expression. And years ago Theodore Dreiser in his "Plays of the Natural and the Supernatural" gave us a dazling glimpse of a new theater. New plays are coming out of Europe. There is "From Morn to Midnight," for example—so brilliant a sky rocket that we almost forgive the thud of the stick. And "The World We Live In," a play without plot, situations or characters, and yet an amazing and thrilling dramatization of society. Who can doubt that there will be others to follow?

But, as I began by saying, a playwright should stick to his job and not indulge in theories about the theater.

Stage Hand Turns Critic

Everybody has had his point of view expressed with regard to a play except a stage hand. A sample viewpoint by one is herewith submitted

THAT most popular expletive "damn" did not occur once in his speech. But there was emphasis nevertheless in the words of William Sherry, stage hand at the Klaw Theater, who took a moment off from manufacturing mystery to describe his impressions of "The Last Warning."

"Of course the feelings of the back stage crew in regard to a play are always quite different from those of the audience," he explained. "We are in the inside and we get to a point where we can dope out a hit before three rehearsals have passed. That is we think we can.

"Now when we watched 'The Last Warning' we thought it was pretty poor stuff. If they had offered me ten shares of it I would have said, 'No, thank you, I prefer my weekly salary of fifty-five bucks. I'm sure of that.' You see we only picked up bits here and there and had no way of telling what it was all about. As a matter of fact we found out later that this was the very thing that made the show. It was the fact that no one could possibly dope out the mystery unless he watched it carefully from the beginning to the end.

"After the success of the first night I nearly fell dead. I guess I was kind of ashamed too because I hadn't been a better prophet. Stage hands, you know, kind of take pride in knowing a good show when we see one. We judge things pretty quickly too. We watch to see if the thing moves fast and if it has good laughs, and we get so that we can gain a general knowledge of the story even if we never wait for any scene to be completed."

Mr. Sherry stopped a minute and looked thoroughly embarrassed.

"After all," he said, blushing violently. "I'm not used to talking so much. But if you want me to wander on I will."

"Yes, yes; go on!" we cried avidly.

"A play of this sort gives us boys a lot of extra work. We are kept pretty busy looking after the trick scenery, the tarantula effects and the special furniture. That table in the rehearsal scene we worked out more than twenty different ways until we got it to work exactly as it should. And we try all the other effects out before every single performance in order to be absolutely sure that they will go right.

"People I know who have seen 'The Last Warning' are always asking me if I don't get scared at the strange supernatural effects, the haunting business and the mystery, but I laugh. I never was afraid of the dark, and I never expect to be. So far as I am concerned all that ghostly business means just turning on and off the lights. I have to buy a lot of extra electric light bulbs, especially green ones.

"I get a lot of pleasure, too, out of watching the excitement of the audience and hearing them laugh. All of us make a happy crowd back here. We have our pleasant little chats with William Courtleigh and Marion Lord, though we never fail to say 'Mr. Courtleigh' and 'Miss Lord.' Our life would be perfectly happy if the grips would be more careful with the ground cloth and would stop ruining the day for the property man."

THE SUBWAY CIRCUIT.

MONTAUK THEATER (Brooklyn)—Irene Bordoni in "The French Doll."

TELLER'S SHUBERT THEATER—"Diana Comes to Town" with Charles Ruggles.

MAJESTIC THEATER—H. B. Warner in "Bull Dog Drummond."

SHUBERT - RIVIERA THEATER (Manhattan)—"Just Married," with Vivian Martin and Lynne Overman.

Raymond Hitchcock has already been measured for whiskers for *King Lear*, which he threatens to revive with a comedy twist in Keith vaudeville.

Miss Taylor in 'Humoresque'

The critic of the *Gazette-Review* of Atlantic City, whose "Humoresque" opened recently, had this to say regarding Laurette Taylor:

It is quite impossible to imagine her in the part until after you have seen her, and then it seems as natural to her as anything else she has done. She has the real gift of adapting herself to the character rather than exploiting her personality through the medium of the roles she portrays. And that after all is what we mean when we speak of acting. In these days of "types" such versatility as Miss Taylor displays is rare indeed.

"Humoresque" is the sort of play that some people object to as "talky." It is essentially a characterization and offers little trouble to the outliner of plot.

The play is excellently cast with an attention to detail that suggests the author's voice in the choice of players. Miss Taylor becomes completely for the moment the adoring little Jewish mother who lives in and for her "wonder child," and Lutha Adler as the son, though a little pompous at first, warmed up to his part and did splendidly the temperamental climaxes of his concert and his leave taking. Sidney Carlyle was a compelling figure from the rising of the curtain until the falling—and yet he said not more than a dozen words. As the tragic man-child, whose reflexes were wrong, who laughed when he should have cried, and whose mind never grew with his body, he moved silently and tragically through the play.

The first act was as delightful as mother with a swarm of squabbling joyous, irresponsible children could make it. The second act dragged a little. It is astounding how cold the burning patriotism of an eager young soldier can leave the American audience of to-day, and how far removed we seem from the anxieties of so recent a war.

"Humoresque" is pitched in the proper key for success—and in the proper dialect.

The Passing Shows

Play.	Presented.
Kiki	Nov. 29 '21
Chauve Souris	Feb. 4 '22
Abie's Irish Rose	May 23
Ziegfeld's Follies of 1922	June 5
Whispering Wires	Aug. 7
Blossom Time (2d eng.)	Aug. 7
The Old Soak	Aug. 22
The Gingham Girl	Aug. 28
So This Is London!	Aug. 30
Better Times	Sept. 2
Sally, Irene and Mary	Sept. 4
Why Men Leave Home	Sept. 12
Greenwich Village Follies	Sept. 13
The Awful Truth	Sept. 18
Spite Corner	Sept. 25
Loyalties	Sept. 27
The Lady in Ermine	Oct. 2
R. U. R.	Oct. 9
Music Box Revue	Oct. 23
The Fool	Oct. 23
The Last Warning	Oct. 24
Seventh Heaven	Oct. 30
Six Characters in Search of an Author	Oct. 30
The World We Live In	Oct. 31
Up She Goes	Nov. 6
Rain	Nov. 7
Merton of the Movies	Nov. 13
Little Nellie Kelly	Nov. 13
The Love Child	Nov. 14
Hamlet	Nov. 16
Liza	Nov. 27
The Bunch and Judy	Nov. 28
It Is the Law	Nov. 29
Listening In	Dec. 4
Our Nell	Dec. 4
Fashions for Men	Dec. 5
The Doormat	Dec. 7
Gringo	Dec. 14
The God of Vengeance	Dec. 19
The Red Poppy	Dec. 20
The Merchant of Venice	Dec. 21
The Masked Woman	Dec. 22
Johannes Kreisler	Dec. 23
Rose Briar	Dec. 25
Secrets	Dec. 25
The Egotist	Dec. 25
The Lady Cristilinda	Dec. 25
The Tidings Brought to Mary	Dec. 25
Glory	Dec. 25
Why Not?	Dec. 25
The Clinging Vine	Dec. 25
Romeo and Juliet	Dec. 27

'The Egotist' in a Nutshell

The traits of the various characters in "The Egotist" were artfully delineated by the author, Ben Hecht, in his stage directions to the players. These illuminating comments have been taken from his manuscript and inserted in Leo Ditrichstein's program at the Thirty-ninth Street Theater so that the spectator almost knows which personages to laugh or weep over before the curtain rises. Here they go:

SALLY JENKINS of the *Courier*. A newspaper woman, a special feature writer for a morning sheet. Domestically she is Mrs. Edward Jenkins—a woman whose first youth, talents and ambitions have evaporated and left behind a sort of maudlin enthusiasm.....MISS MAIDEL TURNER

MANNY EPSTEIN, a youth who was probably a successful newsie as a boy and has grown up into a theatrical press agent.....MR. JACK BELGRAVE

HELEN TARBELL, wife of the peculiarly aggravating Felix Tarbell. A contained, capable mannered woman, somewhat cold but not intimidating; a sane female who has weathered some eleven years of marriage with a phrase maker.....MISS MAUDE HANAFORD

MARGARET SCHMIDT, a widow of forty odd, with an obsession to regulate the affairs of others....MISS CATHERINE CARTER

MR. GORMAN, a theatrical manager of the type most easily recognized and accepted as a Broadway theatrical manager by the audience.....MR. EARLE MITCHELL

FELIX TARBELL, a man of forty odd. An egotist with a vocabulary; with an attitude—always an attitude. A dramatist by profession—a poseur—a gentle comedian, and in the presence of others a man amused at the spectacle of life.....MR. LEO DITRICHSTEIN

EDWARD (Bud) JENKINS, a well meaning, vacuous type of newspaper man who seeks to matriculate in saloons, MR. ALBERT MORRISON

NORMA RAMON, an actress. An interesting creature given to moods which, if verging on the artificial, are nevertheless fetching. In short, a pretty gal with a semi-theatrical soul. Life to her is a continuation of whatever second act climax she happens to be playing.....MISS MARY DUNCAN

SING, the long suffering Chinese servant of the temperamental Norma.....MR. ALEXIS POLIANOV

VIRGINIA HANSEN, an actress friend of Norma's—just graduated from the movies.....MISS CARLOTTA IRWIN

MURPHY, a butler, this time as always—"age 55"..MR. M. A. KELLY

RICHARD COLLINS, a broker, a business man....MR. LEE MILLAR

Author of 'Rose Briar' Takes Pen and Play in Hand

By BOOTH TARKINGTON.

When "Rose Briar" was in Baltimore during its preliminary tour Booth Tarkington, on request, became the reviewer of his own play, and the resulting review, first published in the Baltimore Sun, is herewith reproduced.

YEARS ago, in Paris, I saw a play of which the present singular opportunity reminds me. The heroine (I think she was the heroine) had insisted upon taking her little dog into an opera box; the dog had misbehaved, barking during the singing, and the heroine and her party had been asked to leave.

They returned to her apartment, followed by a reporter who wished to interview the heroine, a celebrity, about her ejection from the opera house. But she declined to speak to him and so did all the others of her party, except one. This was an old actor who was hoping for a bite of supper, but gladly postponed the bite in order to talk to the reporter.

"What sort of a dog is it?" the reporter inquired. "And what did he do that caused the scandal?"

"I was born at Amiens in 1858," the old actor replied. "I had talent, had always longed to go upon the stage, and my parents kindly gave their consent.

"At the age of 17, I made my first appearance as *Zimra* in the tragedy of 'Zobeide' and scored a triumph. My next role, similarly a triumph, was *Tartuffe*, the following year pursuing my success."

Thus the old gentleman continued and, in answer to the question about the dog, favored the reporter with a complete autobiography expurgated of all reverses.

A playwright, asked by a newspaper to review his own play, must necessarily exercise as much self restraint as he can, without endangering his health, and yet the opportunity is one the present writer has long awaited. Indeed, I think it is a very general theory among playwrights that it would be a good thing if they could write their own reviews.

We feel that we could do it a great deal better than the professional dramatic critic can; we feel that our review would display a sunniness and optimism—a sweetness of nature, in fact—too often unhappily lacking in the critics' reviews. We think the world would be a happier place and that there would be fewer disagreements; for, if critics were supplanted, audiences would be the only people left who might disagree with us.

I realize that I am taking up too much space with my preamble; but as this is the first critical review of a play I have ever written, it seems helpful to realize a little natural embarrassment and hesitation by leading up to my actual estimate of "Rose Briar" in a spacious and dignified manner.

It seems to me that one should begin the estimate by saying, "The faults of the play are obvious," but I had an experience once that warns me off. A very capable critic began a review like that and I wrote to him, for the play was mine.

I said that I knew there were great faults in the play—so did the manager and five experts we had employed to help us find the faults—but none of us could discover what they were, though we knew they existed. At last had come a ray of light; here was a man to whom the evasive faults were obvious. For heaven's sake would he please write and tell us what they were so that we could remedy them?

His reply was disappointing. He said he had used the wrong word. For "obvious" he should have used the word "obscure." This makes me afraid to begin my critical estimate in a traditional manner. Also there are reasons why it would not be well to begin it in an effusively original manner. Yet it must be begun, of course, and by the same token it must be developed and concluded.

Perhaps a certain amount of caution was not misplaced. Therefore:

The curtain at the Ford's Theater rose at about 8:30 last night in its accustomed manner and the lovely Miss Billie Burke and her most excellent company presented the comedy of "Rose Briar." It was over at about 11.

Miss Billie Burke in "Rose Briar."