

THRILLS PILE HIGH IN "MADAME X" DRAMA

"Madame X" Makes a Strong Appeal to Elemental Emotions.

DOROTHY DONNELLY HOLDS ATTENTION

Excellent Cast Engaged for Bisson Play—Large Audience Greeted Opening.

A strong financial as well as an artistic advantage lay in the selection of mother-love as the theme of "Madame X." The wisdom of the choice has been proven by the play's remaining on Broadway one entire season and by attracting a capacity audience to the Belasco last evening.

The theme is universal. Neither youth nor age, station nor stage of education, personal predilection nor dramatic tastes bar anyone from its enjoyment. The author, Alexander Bisson, showed the skill of a neurologist in cutting through all veneer to reach the elemental emotions and a capable cast, with Dorothy Donnelly's name always in the forefront, set heart strings in motion and made them all vibrate to this primal passion.

The strange story has become familiar in the past season. It deals with the casting off of his wife by an indignant husband and her subsequent return after twenty years of hardships, drug addictions, mesalliances and shame. It shows her in all her misery with the love of her child increased and brings her face to face with him as counsel for her defense after she has murdered her lover to keep her identity secret. As her husband sits on the bench, she remains silent in the prisoner's dock when asked to plead for her life, while her son makes a hypothetical defense for her act that curiously fits the facts.

Drives Point Home. This is melodrama. The author sacrificed nothing, the expense of a large and excellent company, the introduction of extraneous characters, even dramatic canons in the accomplishment of his emotional effects. Laws of stagecraft are only aids to bring the audience and playwright to a better understanding, but this writer chose to break some of them to drive home his point. He succeeded. "Madame X" is a canonic handkerchief drama—flimsy lace creations will be of little service while the young Florio is pleading his unknown mother's case.

There has been little effort to conform to modern stage traditions. The soliloquy, long abandoned, is revived, asides are spoken loud enough for all on the stage to hear, parallel cases to the main theme are drawn in order to gather climactic force, the historic "comedy relief" is gaudied on rather cruelly in spots.

But all this is an afterthought. The audience might easily feel it in the theater were it not for Dorothy Donnelly, and a splendid company. The appeal to the emotions leaves little room for the play of reason, and it is not until the play has been pronounced unsuspecting of the truth, whether a physician would be likely to leave a patient whose condition he had just pronounced critical to the stage audience, that she alone, whether the young attorney could have presented to the jury by any reasonable chance a plea so coincident to the facts as the audience knew them.

Effect of Play. The play is not meant even to be probable. It leaves no lasting impression of verity. Its characters, not its incidents, are lifelike. Its effect is that of a poem, a symphony, with mother love for its theme, and if the materials do not bear analysis it should be remembered that they are merely agents to produce the desired impression.

Had she not chosen to remain playing a wide variety of roles and gradually perfecting her art rather than a mere gracious personality, the name of Dorothy Donnelly today might be emblazoned on the huge electric light sign of some inconsequential comedy. The stage has benefited by her wisdom. Though her name does not even appear in the title page of the "Madame X" program, plays which have been kept as character work was contributed by Harry C. Bradley, porter of the "Three Crowns" inn. Two characters provided with lines designed to be funny at ill-timed occasions were played better than they deserved by W. H. Denny and Maurice Drew. The work of Robert Peyton Gibbs, as Noel, and Charles J. Wilson, as a physician, was acceptable. J. R. HILDEBRAND.

LIVE BILL AT CASINO; STATUES MAKE HIT

"A good bill and not a dead one on it" was the general opinion expressed by those who attended the Casino last night. The hit of the performance was the St. Gaudens Living Masterpieces in bronze, a series of poses, by two men and one woman in the nude, representing several famous allegorical groups. Thompson's two clever little fox terriers were enthusiastically applauded, and the "Littest Girl," once the vehicle of Robert Hillier, was well liked by Messrs. Babcock and Harcourt. Flo Dillon, comedienne, sang several popular songs; Delaney and Waldman, one in black face, added to the work the total number of jokes and danced well. The Novelty Trio sang.

ARCADE—Amusements. The announcement of the decision of the management of the Arcade, to give out complete election returns in the building tonight, has met with popular favor. No admission will be charged for entrance to the building. Special attractions have been booked to add to the interest in the skating auditorium. A program of music has been arranged by the orchestra in the ball room where dancing will be the order until midnight.

ELSIE FERGUSON GIVEN WELCOME ON RETURN



ELSIE FERGUSON AND HELEN MACBETH, In New Play at Columbia.

Washington Girl Seen in "Ambition" at the Columbia. Play Saved From Being Melodramatic by Finish-Work of the Star.

Elsie Ferguson, whom everybody liked in "Such a Little Queen," is at the Columbia this week in a new play called "Ambition," by Eyrone Ansley.

A large audience welcomed Miss Ferguson and her capable supporting cast last night, although "Ambition" does not permit one to see Miss Ferguson in the light, piquant mood which the new star can so daintily interpret. "Ambition" calls for considerable emotional acting on the part of Miss Ferguson. Her work was consistent. If she were seeking such, there are scenes which might be made to border close upon real melodrama, but the play "gets across" without those jarring notes that probably would be in evidence were the leading role in some less capable hands.

"Ambition" teaches womanhood that her place is in the home and not the workshop.

Miss Ferguson interprets the role of Jane Spear, who places art above matrimony, and declines to marry Hubert Field, a successful New York lawyer, played by Frank Mills. Jane Spear is not an artist; she simply imagines she is one. Field persuades an old art dealer to buy Jane Spear's paintings as soon as they come from under her brush. Field attends to the monetary matters with the old art dealer. Jane Spear, believing that the public craves her work, paints feverishly, and puts matrimony and Field further in the background. One day, while poking around in the

art gallery, Miss Spear finds her paintings. They are hidden in a corner, unframed, unkept and unhung. She sees through the whole plan, and the art room scene is virtually the climax of the play.

As has been said before, there is a bit of melodrama throughout "Ambition." During the progress of the play, Jane Spear's brother, played by William Harrigan, gets in trouble and is accused of murder. He is defended, of course, by Field. After the brother is acquitted, Jane abandons her ambitious ideas for a career, sanctions the long delayed announcement of the engagement, and resigns forever afterward as a happy queen—one always associates the word queen with Elsie Ferguson—of an attorney's household.

Frank Mills, as Hubert Field, gives a natural, likable interpretation of the faithful attorney. Horatio Winslow, the old art dealer, is played by Grant Stewart. The role affords excellent opportunities for character work, and Mr. Stewart makes the most of them.

Miss Beatrice Prentice is seen as Daisy, the housemaid, who has a craving for drink. This reminds Jane Spear and her brother also have inherited the love of drink, and the battle against the demon rum is an underlying current of "Ambition." Helen MacBeth, on the program as "Jane's dearest friend," has a most engaging personality.

The minor parts are well acted. Ida Glenn plays the part of the landlady; Lawrence Eddinger that of Winslow's clerk; Harry McClain that of a detective; and Stuart Robson, Jr., that of a hotel waiter. The play is entertaining throughout and Miss Ferguson, a former Washington girl, added to her laurels as one of the new stars last night.

drilled. The costuming is particularly good. Alia Phipps, as the "Widow," played the leading female role and sang several songs in a pleasing manner. Miss Vera Don Carlos, patterned after Marie Dressler, made an individual hit. The added attraction is Felix Adler, the fun genius, whose unique songs won favor, the audience giving him half a dozen encores.

LYCEUM—"The Rector Burlesquers." "The Rector Burlesquers" are providing the current entertainment at the New Lyceum Theater this week. The production, under the direction of Morris Wainstock, consists of a company of sprightly funmakers and comely showgirls. "A Trip to the South Pole" is the title of the principal burlesque. Among the members of the company are James Francis Sullivan, George Johnson, Joseph Fardo, Annie Senette and Lalia Jopsy.

The vaudeville acts include that of the Brinza Trio, Italy's troubadours; Lydia, the vocalist, and Annie Senette. A special attraction is Ayesha Hara, Russian dancer.

BYRNE IN BUENOS AIRES. BUENOS AIRES, Nov. 8.—On his tour of Central and South America, James Bryce, the British ambassador to the United States, is here today. He was received by President Alcoriza yesterday.

NEW GIBSON PLAY SEEN AT ACADEMY

Author Provides Some Unconscious Humor for Society Folk.

Preston Gibson's "drama of contemporary social life," "The Turning Point," had its Washington premiere at the Academy last night. A number of society folk were present. The audience didn't lose many opportunities to show appreciation. When Aline Anderson, betrothed to Fred Ferguson for business reasons, clasps her hands and groans, "I want to be with real people—people with good hearts and souls in their body," the house rocked.

Mr. Gibson portrays the adventures of Brent Breckenridge, a young Southerner, easy going and without ambition. He has been forced to sell the home of his fathers to Frederick Ferguson, who has been tipped off beforehand that coal abounds in the land. However, the New York capitalist obligingly overlooks the fact that there is no outlet to the coal lands except through another piece of Breckenridge's property, and his money gets that of a number of his friends sewed up in the coal company which he immediately organized.

Gets Expert Opinion. For a right of way through this property he offers Breckenridge \$1,000, which Breckenridge first accepts and fifteen minutes later, after having received a great deal of sage advice from a very young lady, Aline Anderson, refuses to keep his verbal contract, which appears to be perfectly correct.

The audience is here tipped off by Mr. Breckenridge, whose cardinal virtue is modesty, that this is the turning point.

In the meantime Fred Ferguson, the villain, has been working overtime, and is selling Mr. Ferguson's coal company, a happy queen—one always associates the word queen with Elsie Ferguson—of an attorney's household.

The Turning Point. In the meantime, Aline Anderson, the young lady who awakened Breckenridge to his possibilities, and who is supposed to be desperately in love with him, finds that her own money has been tied up in the Ferguson Coal Company without her knowledge. Forthwith, upon the suggestions of her mother, she asks her betrothed to give her the money out of his pockets. He organizes a coal company and creates a furor in the financial world.

Breckenridge, having turned the point, goes to New York from his farm down in Virginia, takes a number of the crafty lions of Wall Street by the man and shakes the money out of their pockets. He organizes a coal company and creates a furor in the financial world.

When the curtain goes down on the last act, Ferguson has dropped from the scene, probably out somewhere trying to get the price of a sandwich, which seems like a poor reward after having peddled most of Mr. Gibson's cute little risqué quips across the footlights.

ALICE LLOYD WINS CHASE'S AUDIENCE

Dainty English Comedienne Sings and Dances Way Into Hearts of Vaudeville Patrons.

In truth it is Alice Lloyd week at Chase's, for this famous English comedienne's performance in the list of attractions offered.

Miss Lloyd, whose inimitable style wins her audiences as soon as she makes her appearance, sings six or seven catchy songs, each with a change of costume, and puts just enough personality in each to make it interesting without resorting to the extreme style of many singers to win applause. Her principal songs were "Three Ages of Women," "Mr. Cupid," "Ship Ahoy," and "Splash Me."

The Four Konez Brothers, in sensational hoop spinning, diabolo flying and boomerang throwing, present one of the best acts of the kind seen at this theater. Verona and Alvin Verdi, in violin and cello duets, offer a pleasing musical combination. They are assisted by the eight dancing Toodles, again presents a musical comedietta entitled "Joyland."

TO CROWN GEORGE JUNE 25.

LONDON, Nov. 8.—King George has issued a proclamation naming the date of the coronation as June 25.

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"GIRLIES" ATTRACTS CROWD TO NATIONAL

Musical Show Proves Diverting, With Many Good Features.

The first appearance in Washington of Frederic Thompson's "Girlies" proved a lodestone that drew a full house at the National last night.

Fresh from its pronounced New York success, "Girlies" opened here with but few changes, and proved as entertaining and diverting as had been expected.

A couple of well-known funmakers, a big chorus of girls and men, a number of musical hits, several specialties, attractive, if abbreviated costumes, is the sum total of "Girlies" stock in trade. The humor is genuine, the songs tuneful, and the chorus is good to look at and can sing. Refined burlesque might not be a bad definition of the production. Men predominated in the audience, but the majority of those who were among those who were looking for a naughty show, "Girlies" is full of ginger, as one person was heard to remark.

Good for Laughter. That "Girlies" is good for all the laughter one feels like indulging in goes without saying when one takes into consideration the fact that the cast is headed by Joseph Cawthorne and Maud Raymond. These two are a whole show in themselves. Cawthorne's dialect is a fearful and wonderful thing. His tongue twists and rolls the English language out of all resemblance to the original.

One of the biggest song hits of the half score is his "Life Is Just a Merry-Go-Round," with "You Will Read It in the Papers," had second. This, of course, in addition to his concertina. Maud Raymond, she of the "coon songs," has but three numbers, but to hear her "This Good," makes life quite worth living, for the time being at any rate.

Tuneful Musical Numbers. All told, there are a score of musical numbers, many of them decidedly catchy, which give the show girls plenty of chance to show. The costumes are fetching, and the "girlies" are even better looking than might be expected.

Among the numerous encores, the Rubie specialty comes in for the heartiest applause. This trio, which has been seen here in vaudeville, has an eccentric turn hard to equal.

The burlesques introduced in the second act proved popular. The "Kicking of a Kingdom into Kingdom Come" was a specialty, and the "Kicking of a Kingdom into Kingdom Come" was a specialty, and the "Kicking of a Kingdom into Kingdom Come" was a specialty.

All in all, "Girlies," while a trifle slightly spoiled, is very palatable, and can be highly recommended.

TO VOTE ON LIQUOR LAW.

LYNCHBURG, Va., Nov. 8.—Upon petition of the "wet" Judge Christian has ordered a local option election for Lynchburg to be held Friday, December 2. Lynchburg in December, 1908, voted dry by a majority of one.

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COSMOS Continuous 11 to 11 p.m. Admission, 50c Reserved Seats, 50c. Robert Hillier and Co. Lyric Comedienne, Helen Chipman—Dainty Comedienne. Cement and Bechel—Songs and Sketches. Beauty and Her Beauty—A Delightful Novelty.

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