

VERSATILITY IN ACTORS

BY FRANKLIN FYLES.

New York, March 9.—Is any man an actor who is not a mimic? Is any actor an artist who cannot imitate a personality unlike his own? If the right answer is no, few of our stage celebrities deserve their prosperity. Are there other American players of real renown than Mansfield and Goodwin who can disguise themselves completely in an assumed character? Are not such men as Lackaye and Dixey examples of "versatility" inadequately rewarded? Yet there are a hundred of their equals in diversity of talent who get nothing at all beyond wages. I don't think it was ever otherwise. The old-time stock companies did not develop anything like the amount of mimical ability that modern memory imagines. Edwin Booth and Edward A. Sothern were about the only great actors of the past in this country who could, over any of their individualities with more than a make-up, Forrest and Jefferson were unvarying in all but externals. No matter how they looked, and no matter how they spoke, they were always themselves. So are Gillette, Crane, Drew, Hackett, Bellevue, Collier, Warfield, the present Sothern and the dozens of notable extravaganza comedians.

The subject is suggested by the Broadway reappearance of Francis Wilson and Lawrence D'Orsay, extreme cases of unalterability. They give proof that a star actor's purse, if not his pride, gains if he either can't or won't alter his peculiarities with his changes of role. They take the new names of Sibley and Killie in "The Mountain Climber" and "The Embassy Ball," but in no role are they variants from the Wilson and D'Orsay who were in "Cousin Billy" and "The Earl of Pawtucket." Again Wilson is a perky, jumpy, artie little chap, with a glib tongue and legs that want to dance as they used to in comic opera. Again D'Orsay is a slow, inert, drawing, silly-ass fellow. If either were anything else he would displease his audience.

Wilson in the "The Mountain Climber," moreover, is abogus Alpine hero, as he was in "Cousin Billy," and for a futher safety in his management, he is one of the thousand comely husbands who lie to their wives as to where they go away from home. Sibley is a Londoner who makes annual visits to Paris, and while lolling on the boulevards, low levels, sends to his wife long accounts of dare-devil deeds on the mountain tops of Switzerland. She proudly puts his tales into a book that makes him a celebrity, and compels him to go to the Alps and back, and to make his own up. He bluffs and wins. Moral: When you have told a bold lie, stick to it bravely—if you are an actor in a play—and if your vice is as funny as Wilson's, it will be rewarded by the money of many audiences.

Probably when "The Mountain Climber" goes hence on a tour it will be billed as original with its translator, as was done with Krass and Neal's "Are You a Mason?" but the German play was performed here lately and audaciously halted at the certainty of exposure. The fraudulent Alpine adventurer is changed to an Englishman for Wilson, and our funny comedian does the rest. Sibley, the wealthy merchant, is Caddy, the jallbird of "Ermeline," washed clean, with whole garments instead of tatters, and a liar instead of a thief, but the mannerisms of comicality are precisely the same. Caddy pretended to be a nobleman, and you can't have forgotten his mixed pleasure and misery as the honored guest at a ball, where he wore the title and clothes of the man he had robbed—how he strutted with vanity and shivered with fright—how in pantomimic tricks quite as much as in clownish jokes he was funny. And you see Sibley at the reception given by his wife to glorify him as an Alpinist, accepting with glee the adulation of genuine mountain climbers, posing proudly as the performer of feats belonging to an actual hero of the glaciers, and at the same time shaking with a palsy of dread that will be exposed, you won't miss one of Caddy's grimaces or capers. Wilson's ways are as effective now as they were then. It is curious how differently serviceable an actor's bag of tricks may be. Take the venerable John H. Stoddard. His fixed peculiarities were adaptable to very dissimilar purposes. As the character before retiring from the stage was the pious Scotchman in "The Bonnie Briar Bush." But I retain an equally vivid impression of his irascible lawyer in "The Long Strike" and his cruel undertaker in "Hose Michel." Each was a masterful personation, yet there wasn't a bit of alteration for either of them in Stoddard's own air, or jerky gesticulation, and none in his quick, crisp elocution, although he was an expert in dialects.

A ball was shown in "The Embassy Ball" as the play was performed in Washington last autumn, but the dance is merely mentioned in the new spring version presented in New York. In the meanwhile, Augustus Thomas has endeavored to rewrite the comedy improvingly. As before it permits Lawrence D'Orsay, in the guise of a hawhaw, bah-jove, silly-ass military attaché of the British embassy at our Capital, to lounge and dawdle in a morning suit, an afternoon suit, an evening suit and an army uniform, all correct to a nicety and fitted with a decision to his own geometrical shape. But the same playwright who cut, sewed and pressed a role that suited him well in "The Earl of Pawtucket" has not done as good a job for a second season.

"I said to my dear friend, Augustus Thomas," spoke D'Orsay before the curtain, in exactly the broad a pronunciation and heavy swell manner that he gives to his stage characters, for he is that same in private life. "I've been a silly ass, doncher know, in two plays, deah boy. Can't you give me a bit avva a chance, thawres a good fellow. He said, 'Nawch, I'll be just yourself.' Now, I can't quite see that as a compliment." Which seemed to prove that D'Orsay good-humoredly regards himself as more an exhibit than an actor.

How exacting we have become in the fifty years since the elder Sothern made his fame as Lord Dundreary in "Our American Cousins." Sothern's English swell was a wild caricature of an idiot outfit, with a lip in his draw, a near sight so blinding that he was constantly losing his single eyeglass and colliding with chairs and tables, and a gait that frequently he came two skips on one foot and then two on the other. We wouldn't have Dundreary now in anything but a burlesque. D'Orsay's Captain Kellie may seem exaggerated, but he is D'Orsay himself only slightly accentuated, and he goes far to make his present exhibition an entertainment. He blun-

ders into four betrothals simultaneously, is unconsciously numerous while some of the other characters are witty, and he finally lands in marriage with the one girl he loves. It is a whim and novelty by Thomas to have all the servants in "The Embassy Ball" played by negroes. One is a grey and black oil burner, two neat brown housemaids, one is a hotel porter and three are bellboys. So there will always be a chance to popularize the play with negro ditties or a cakewalk, after it has had its fashionable day.

Not a bit of white skin is visible in "The Redskin," but the rascally principal young squaw is so very light that she is called a lily admirably—until her fair complexion is detractingly scribbled to the visit of a paleface to the tribe awhile before her birth. That white blotch on Adulola's red "scutcheon" is the theme of a drama containing naught else than aboriginal humanity. The big chief Lonawonda, of the Ockothesea a century and a half ago, who is not the father of his wife's daughter, is so grandly posed and so sonorously spoken by Tyrone Power, that he might be Edwin Forrest's Metamora, but years have passed since Forrest's declamatory force moved people to admire his impersonation of a Pennimore Cooper Indian, and several of our humorous critics have likened "Furor" toward a certain image from the front of a cigar store—an easy and not pertinent joke, for a wooden Indian would have to be fitted out as a talking machine, with a hundred discs of loquacity, to stand for this statuette old warrior.

There are two tways to look at "The Redskin," and the two views are so different that I shall try to put both before you. Donald MacLaren meant his play to be, and many agree with him that it is, an idyllic, poetic transcript of life among the Indians before we started them downward from native nobility toward actual civilized degradation. The craft is in good imitation of Belasco's. A curtain painted mistily with buffalo hunts and war-path encounters gets us into a sympathetic atmosphere. The action begins with a vow-swear of right savage warriors, at the tepee of their chief in a forest, and it passes through five other settings which in dramagraphic art has hardly been surpassed. A romantic tragedy of the young squaw's love is started by the chief's killing of the one who tells of the girl's illegitimacy, and is progressed by a combat in which that hateful talebearer slays her lover. All of that is acted skillfully. A savage rite at the stake where a culprit is to be burned is danced and sung by Sioux from the Rosebud agency thrillingly. At the end, in the allegorical manner of Belasco, the dying visions of Adulola are shown in beautiful illusions, the girl lying couched beside a river, on which her imagination sees her dead lover come in a canoe to carry her to happy hunting grounds. The first audience applauded mightily.

"I hope that's on the level," said William A. Brady, the producer, with tears running down his face and dripping into his shoes, "and that I won't wake up to-morrow morning with the same old sickening thud. I know that if we deserve it we'll get it, but I hope to God we don't." On the second night, Mr. Brady appeared before the curtain in an equal yet different state of emotional agitation. Most of the morning journals' reviews had taken that other view of the play which I referred to. Mr. Brady was exceeding wroth. He had been unable to see any fun in the printed ridicule. He declared war on the humorists and vowed that, if he couldn't drive them out of town, he would himself go away to make productions.

The case as I see it is that the writers whom Brady berated haven't lied about "The Redskin" nor had they told the whole truth. The simply had taken one comic view and left the other out. The worst fault of the play is its diction. MacLaren is an actor, and he has cleverly put together an actor's theatrical piece. As an author he is a novice, and as his pen couldn't be original, he set it to copying. His transfers from Shakespeare are amusingly apparent. Adulola has a garulous old nurse like Juliet's to coax and wheedle; she is compelled to choose a husband from a set of wooers, as Portia was, and like her she listens one after another to their proposals. And the lover of her choice, whose father is slain by the tribe's king, talks like Hamlet about avenging his sire. But MacLaren's squaw Juliet and Portia and buck Hamlet are not Shakespearean in language, not even Cooperian, but more like Ned Buntline's dime Indian fiction, with occasional resemblances to modern melodrama for the populace. MacLaren's source of dramatic devices however is David Belasco, from whose best work in "Darling of the Gods" and "The Girl I Left Behind Me" he has taken several situations.

Brady is a kind of Belasco stage director, too. Just as Belasco in "The Girl of the Golden West" has worked over the seemingly wornout border saloon into new theatrical values, so Brady in "Redskin" has handled a dozen Sioux, after they had been exhibited the world over by Buffalo Bill for years and years, in a way to make a ghost dance a thrilling sight in MacLaren's play. They are as assembly made as the Filipinos were at the St. Louis fair, but that isn't what makes them count; they are so presented as not to seem anextraneous shown, but an integral part of the drama. Really, the bare feet and ankles of an imitation young squaw, are the nudities that look like interpolations. Some girls have been bathing in a bush screened pool. As the curtain of water and wrapped themselves in blankets. A party of bucks come along. The girl in the pool screams in apprehension. They think she is drowning and go to rescue her. She begs them to throw a blanket to her instead. When she emerges she is blanketed, but the ends of her arms and legs stick out, and who knows that, in her agitation, she won't drop the blanket?

At the further end from Broadway of the Forty-second street block, that holds seven theatres, including two of the Syndicates' and two of the Independents making faces at one another from opposite sides, is a house which cost so much to build that it bankrupted Henry French. It is the finest structure of the seven, save one, yet it is given over to coarse melodramas made to sell at ten to thirty cents. "Chinese Charlie" is new there, and it makes no more noise on the stage than its ardent admirers do in the parquet, to say nothing of the gal-

lery. Truth to tell, it is what the press agent might call a turbulent, tumultuous, tremendous triumph. What is it? Awful rot? Of course. I suppose that skill of a sort was required in the making of the stuff, although I can't discern it. Charlie is a good fellow gone bad with opium in the Chinese quarter and Nellie is a nice working girl who cures him by the love treatment. But that is accomplished before the curtain has been up five minutes. From then to the play's end he and she are pursued by his cousin Dick, aided by a malevolent mistress.

Situations! By my careful count Charlie, or Nellie, or both, are cornered thirteen times to be killed, and every time he saves her, or she saves him, or the funny Jew, the comic Irishman or the ubiquitous detective saves them both. And it is always done by getting the drop on the villains with a pistol. I kept tab on the number of pistol drawings. Twenty-three. So easy for the playwright, too. He didn't mind tying himself up in a knot of plot, for at the sight of a pistol it untied itself. Only once is a pistol fired, and that is to kill wicked Dick when the play has lasted long enough. Nor has the author needed to worry himself as to probabilities. He doesn't have to give any explanation, for example why the same Irish policeman is on duty in Chinatown, in a criminal court, in a theatre, in the Tombs prison, in a subway railroad station and at a race course. All the characters are moved from place to

place in that same arbitrary fashion. "Chinatown Charlie" must be seen to be believed. And after seeing what it is, I still wouldn't know why it is if I hadn't taken note of the audience's enthusiasm. Its owner has seventeen melodramas on tour. "We manufacture," he said to me, "the goods that sell."

CALIFORNIA RATES—TODAY. Colonist rate of \$25.00 to San Francisco, Los Angeles and intermediate points via the Salt Lake Route. 153 South Main. Phones 1988.

DIAMOND COAL. Sold only by Citizens' Coal company Removed to 153 S. Main. Phone 49. Eat your lunch in the Palm garden at the Royal.

Anderson Insurance Agency HUGH ANDERSON, Pres. Established 1871. FRANK K. POZ, Secy. 168 South Main St., Salt Lake City. P. O. Box 977. Telephone 195. Fire, Life and Accident. Actna, of Hartford \$14,949,529 Fireman's Fund, of California 6,202,587 Alliance, of England 62,886,133 Franklin Fire, of Philadelphia 3,998,373 Citizens of Missouri (Policies guaranteed by Hartford) 726,012

I WILL Guarantee IF YOU WOULD PROTECT YOUR HOUSE. DO IT NOW. Hamlin Paints BOTH PHONES. If It Happens It's in The Herald

CHAMBERLAIN MUSIC CO. JOHN M. CHAMBERLAIN, Proprietor. 51 Main street. Successors to Vansant & Chamberlain. Reliable pianos and organs at low prices. Every customer is a friend made by square dealing. Come and see us and we will prove it to you.

SEE THE Columbian Optical Co FIRST Have your eyesight sharpened. You can then see America and Europe. 259 So. Main St.

YOU SHOULD STOP THAT COUGH RIGHT NOW. And to do it right you must of necessity have some of the celebrated Peerless Cough Drops 5c and 10c per Box. We have also the finest Horsehound Candy ever produced, at 40c per pound. Get the worth. It'll do you good. We always keep a fine stock of wines and liquors on hand for medicinal purposes.

A. C. SMITH, The Old Reliable Druggist, 142 Main St. Clayton Music Co. Leading Music Dealers 109-11-13 So. Main St. SALT LAKE CITY

Newest Things in Draperies Now Being Shown at Dinwoodey's! Each Spring Our Showing of New Goods Has Been in Keeping With The Reputation of This Store and this Year We Surpass Previous Showings. COME IF ONLY TO LOOK. SEE WHAT 1906 OFFERS THAT'S NEW. LACE CURTAIN SHOWING! New and Pretty Designs From the Best Makers CLUNY'S—Marie Antionette styles. A fine showing to choose from. RENNAISANCE CURTAINS in a variety of styles, ranging from \$2.75 to \$75.00 a pair with any number of pretty patterns between. BRUSSELS and ARAB NETS are from \$2.75 to \$125.00. We show this spring the largest line with the greatest variety of styles and pretty designs ever displayed in this city. Sash Curtain Nets; new effects and a big variety to make choosing good. PORTIERES. The Best Selections Can Be Had Early. New Designs in Silks, Tapestries and Imported French Velours, in every pretty shade and coloring to match paper or decorations. MADRAS ART GOODS. Novel Patterns for Window Decorations in Bedroom, Library and Dining Room Designs, and a Number of Odd Conceits in ART GLASS EFFECTS for Hall Windows. Newest and Most Unique.

Crex Prairie Grass Furniture. Crex grass furniture is of good design. Grass doesn't seem to be a very substantial article out of which to make furniture but when we tell you about Crex Grass Furniture you will understand its usefulness. The frames are made of toughened hardwood and are built as strong as it is possible to make them. The arms and rolls are fashioned of linen thread. Then the long prairie grass is dried and twisted, after which it is woven around the frames, already solid making an exceptionally strong and light piece of furniture. Chairs, Rockers, Setees, Couches, Porch Swings, Desks, Tables and Waist Baskets. Are carried, and in addition to the very extensive showing we have in stock we will order from catalogue for you if you so select. Choosing is Best Now and Reservations Will Be Made and Delivered at Your Order. In Our Factory we re-upholster furniture, making pieces always as good as new, and in many cases better.

Universal Stoves and Ranges. These have been sold by us actually do save fuel and are more economical on that account they cost no more than the ordinary range. We will demonstrate this when you call. The Superb Universal. SUPERB IN QUALITY FINISH AND OPERATION. EVERY RANGE WARRANTED. The body is of best, extra heavy, cold rolled polished steel. Strongly riveted and interlined with asbestos, preventing radiation of heat, making the range more durable and saving coal. SUPERB UNIVERSAL. The Finest, High Grade Range Made. Complete With Reservoir and High Closet or High Closet and Hot-Water Connections—\$75.00. The Crown Universal. Is compactly built and takes little room in a kitchen, easy to keep clean. Has a square, high, warming closet, 6 holes and is a dandy little range. Price \$35.00. The Capital Universal. Is similar to the Crown, but has more nickered finishings. Has high, warming closet, and a reservoir or can be set up with hot water attachments. Price \$48.00.

Carpet and Rug Department. For an artistic floor covering nothing answers the purpose quite as well as a good rug. It is hygienic, easily cleaned and always looks fresh and bright. We can make them up from carpet pattern designs especially for that purpose. Or we have the complete rug in one piece. Choosing is best right now. The best and prettiest are always snapped up first. You can choose your rug or carpet now, and a small deposit will hold it until you are ready for it. Tapestries 9x12, \$15.00 to \$20.00. Body Brussels, 9x12, \$30.00 up. Axminsters, \$24.00 to \$30.00. Wiltons, \$38.00 to \$55.00. The above are from the best American factories which we are pleased to say lead in rug production, the only exception being fine Turkish Rugs of which we carry a full stock. Smaller sizes in good designs, are also shown. A Complete Carpet Display. Greetings You at This Store. Tapestries, Velvets, Brussels, Axminster Wiltons and ingrains from 25c to 90 a yard. We make to order, or overhaul and clean mattresses. If you open a Dinwoodey made mattress you'll find it honest all the way through.

H. Dinwoodey FURNITURE COMPANY