

Types Carry "Romance of the Underworld" Mayor Starts Inquiry Into Firemen's Row

Tragic Scenes Liven Clever Play at Court

Author Shows Master Hand in Making Four Acts From Original Playlet

By WALTER ANTHONY

Paul Armstrong's skill in extending a short story into a long play has had some splendid demonstration in our midst, even before we saw "A Romance of the Underworld" last night. Salomy Jane is probably the finest bit of play writing of American make, founded by one man on another man's story. Armstrong, in his "Alias Jimmy Valentine," did for O. Henry's story what he had previously done with Bret Hart's "Salomy Jane's Kiss." He stretched a short plot into an evening's drama.

Now he comes with his own, "A Romance of the Underworld," in which he treats himself as kindly as he has treated his illustrious predecessors. He has made of what was once a 20-minute sketch, a four act drama, and the only evidence in the piece, at the Court, of attenuation is the fourth act, which is superfluous. Otherwise, one would hardly recognize in the full grown drama the vaudeville infant we saw last season at the Orpheum.

Armstrong has performed a dramatic feat of no mean skill in remaking his thought. He has more than amplified the material in the sketch. He has reconsidered it, made it over, changed its plot direction deftly and with involved new material, which seems as inherent to the action as though the piece were originally conceived in the terms of the drama.

GOOD MEASURE GIVEN

The secret of the superfluous fourth act is a trade secret. Without "A Romance of the Underworld" would witness its final curtain shortly after 10 o'clock, and that would be deemed insufficient entertainment for a two dollar bill, so Armstrong has tacked on a fourth act for good measure.

It is merely a matter of trade. Managers would hesitate to book even a compact three act play that sent audiences out of the theater at about 10 o'clock. Personally I should have preferred it that way, and would willingly have foregone the tableau in the fourth act, which discloses the heroine in the hero's arms after 15 minutes of unnecessary delay. She was in his arms safe enough at the conclusion of the third act, which frees her brother, makes a hero out of him and a Solomon come to judgment of the youthful lawyer.

If Armstrong could have left one slender thread loose in his skein of things to tuck where it belongs in the fourth act, he would not so have marred an otherwise splendid bit of "type" drama. Offhand, I would suggest he might have permitted O'Leary, the perjurer, the escape in the melee that follows the thrilling finish of the trial in the third act. A fourth might then be devoted to O'Leary's efforts to avoid punishment.

POLICE COURT CHARACTERS

However, this fourth act is scarcely worth the pains of so much midnight work. It is soon over and it is superfluous to say more of it. It is keen, shrewd and, at times, quaint, dialogic and action; it is so filled with youthful exuberance and wholesome optimism. The characters are picked up in a police court scene in which newspaper reporters are not overlooked. Armstrong's correctness of mental vision in respect of police court types is unimpeded by the slightest myopia. He sees his personage clearly and reproduces them with fine fidelity. The dope fiend, the motley jury, the quarrelsome contestants late from brawl, the "dip" and "red" who are in the judge, into whose ken also floats, on a sordid sea of graft, chicanery and perjured testimony, the opening of Mr. Elliott and his fair sister. To the salvation of Elliott's good name and the successor of his pretty relative comes Tom McDermott, formerly a newspaper man, but now a lawyer, who has yet to lose, or get, or both, his first case.

ALL "TYPES" ON HAND

What indirection of action is exhibited in the first act is more than compensated in the introduction of the "types" and their troubles. An Italian, whose wife, Levita, who is interested, Nixon, an ex convict and hired perjurer, two fighting but neighborly fishermen, a German who owns a delicatessen store, a hearded Scot who thinks poetry died with "Bobby" Burns, a "shoplifter" who pleads a baby as an extenuating premonition for her crime, and many more, are introduced. The culmination of the action involving the clearance of infancy from the book of Elliott's life is reached in the third act, where a courtroom scene is staged with an impressive no sensation is the word—climax that thrills with the excitement of conflicting wit. It is different from any other courtroom scene I have ever witnessed on the stage, or elsewhere, for that matter, but it has the illusion of reality in every line.

Holbrook Blinn wears good clothes in "A Romance of the Underworld." It said he was a lawyer, not a newspaper man any more. He is, indeed, somewhat debonaire, secure, calm, confident and has an air of chivalrous deportment that American playwrights like to give to American youths. His ready wit, quick judgments, correct sympathies and his certain intuitions are united to a somewhat sophisticated manner, at once charming, theatrical and fabulous. Blinn "gets away" with the role by an easy adjustment to the necessities of an easy adjustment to the experience that is scarcely ever wanting, even in the smallest detail.

UNDERSTUDY DOES WELL

The role of the heroine, Daris Elliott, was played by Anna McDonald, who has understudied the part with Beatrice Nichols, who is ill in Los Angeles. It is perhaps presumptuous to say that Miss McDonald is as good as Miss Nichols in the role, for I have never seen Miss Nichols. It is not presumptuous to say that Miss McDonald gives a smooth, sympathetic and girlish impersonation, impressing the grace of a pretty personality on the audience and making the most of a type which, apparently he does not so well understand how to draw for the theater as he does the "Dago" Annie variety. Scenically the production is effective. The thunder storm scene in the third act is realistic enough to introduce the novel climax with appropriate and extensive thrills.



'MAN FROM HOME' TRULY AMERICAN

"Alcazar Family" Is Pleased Beyond All Question by Homely, Wholesome Play

By MARY ASHE MILLER

American idiosyncrasies and homely American virtues, all quaintly humorous with a leaven of foreign weaknesses and wickednesses, are delightfully set forth this week at the Alcazar in "The Man from Home."

It is a good play, well acted, and it has a tremendous appeal to the average American audience. Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson knew they were perpetrating a "best seller" sort of an affair when they wrote "The Man from Home," beyond a doubt, and the Alcazar audience knew it last night and were ready with vociferous applause.

James Durkin has the requisite amount of deliberate, democratic certainty of movement in all critical moments and makes the "Man" a very real character. None of the delightful humor of the lines is lost in their interpretation by Durkin, and it is to be counted as one of his decided successes.

Just one thing, though. If he stopped smoking for a moment, just while he made love, for instance, he would be more convincingly attractive. Maude Pealy is Ethel Grainger-Simpson, the girl just saved by a narrow margin from complete expatriation of herself and nearly a million dollars by the timely arrival of Daniel Voorhees Pike, the "Man," in Sorrento, Italy. She plays it with the requisite amount of original scorn for her young guardian, merging gradually through the four acts, by way of submission, awakening, and finally good, vigorous temper, into affection for him even to the point of being "sweet Genevieve," a favorite of the middle west a decade or two ago, to signify her acceptance of him. She does it cleverly, daintily and naturally.

Thomas Clatterton, who was a favorite at the Alcazar when it was in Sutter street, won a hearty welcome when he reappeared as a member of the company last night. His "made good," Grace Carlyle played her part very pleasingly.

Charles Ruggles did one of his character parts as the young English nobleman with no more sense than a man from Indiana would expect him to have under the circumstances. He had the house with him throughout the evening.

Louis Bessonson was a very grand duke, with a beard and an air of dignity most impressive.

Edmond Lowe as the earl of Hawcastle is a good looking villain, and Louise Miller is a properly nervous Russian convict. All the rest are excellent in minor parts and the play is well worth seeing.

"A LION'S HEART" IS FILLED WITH THRILLS

Brand New Melodrama Stirs Audiences at National

Filled with thrills and sensations from the opening of the prologue until the final scene in the last act, "A Lion's Heart" is a brand new melodrama, opened for the week to a crowded house last night at the National theater. The spectacular play by E. E. Tilton captured the audience and held it spellbound during the last two acts, when the villain gets his just deserts and the hero and heroine issue victorious over their enemies.

The play centers around a great lion tamer and his wife, Louise. Louise elopes with the villain, the part which is taken with success by Norman R. Foster.

Many years later the wife is saved a life of shame through the generosity of her deserted husband. Tragic scenes are done by the excellent cast, as Pierre Risado, the lion tamer; Norman R. Foster as Gussard Dobre, the villain; Miss Adeline Fildes as Louise, the lion tamer's wife, and Harry McLennan as Dick Lorrimer, the life of the play, and received hearty and well deserved applause.

WHIST PARTY AND DANCE AT PALM COURT HALL

OAKLAND, Oct. 28.—A whist party and dance will be given on Wednesday evening at the new Palm Court hall, Piedmont avenue, near Forty-first street, by the members of St. Leo's Catholic church. The affair is for the benefit of the St. Vincent's orphanage at San Rafael. Miss Josephine Ryan is one of the active workers on the committee, which comprises the following: H. S. White, H. J. McDonnell, William J. Kieffer, Leo J. McCarty, James J. Johnson, Joseph P. Lacey, T. W. Brooks, Alex. Duffer, Thomas Kelley, Alex. Waters, John F. Smith, G. E. Archambault, W. J. Wears, A. E. Champion, Hubert J. Quinn, James Egan, J. Flynn, Doctor Smythe, Doctor Slaviich, J. J. O'Donnell, W. E. Dean, Joyce, B. T. Connelly, William Hogan and D. W. Starratt.

MAYOR STARTS INQUIRY INTO FIREMEN'S ROW

Reasons for Suspension of Lieutenant Frank Smith Will Be Investigated

Hickering over a laundry permit that has already occupied several hours of the time of the board of supervisors on various occasions took the headline position on the program of the board yesterday afternoon, but ended nowhere except in a re-referring of the entire matter to the fire committee of the board.

Mayor Rolph reported to the board that he had demanded an investigation by both the civil service commission and the fire commission into the case of Lieutenant Frank Smith of the fire department, alleged to have been suspended without cause as a result of political spite, and said that the investigation was under way. "I would suggest," said Supervisor Nolan, "that you extend your investigation to some other departments where former administration men are still in power and are doing injustice to men who were favorable to this administration."

MAYOR SUBMITS VETO

The mayor's letter to the board vetoing the lower Market street agreement with the United Railroads was read and a special meeting of the board was called for tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock to take up the amendments to the agreement proposed by the mayor.

A letter from City Attorney Long was read to the board, in which Long set forth a legal reply to misleading statements circulated by those opposing the proposed charter amendment on consolidation. The opinion was a reply to a circular headed, "Did You Vote for Hetch Hetchy Bonds?" and containing the statement that the adoption of the consolidation amendment would instantly nullify the unsold Hetch Hetchy bonds. Long pointed out that there was absolutely no basis for such an assertion. His letter was referred to the publicity committee of the board for circulation.

As a result of the question raised by Auditor Boyle as to the correctness of the bill for services filed by John R. Freeman, the water expert, the board ratified its own approval of Freeman's claim and also retained him to appear as one of the city's representatives at the hearing next month on the Hetch Hetchy question before the secretary of the interior.

Another resolution was passed continuing Bion J. Arnold, the street railway expert, in the city's employ until his final report has been filed, which will be before the end of the year.

WILL CLEAR CIVIC CENTER

The city attorney was authorized by resolution to take the necessary steps to clear away as expeditiously as possible all buildings upon the two square blocks fronting Van Ness avenue which form the new city hall site.

The final preliminary legal step in the Stockton street tunnel matter was taken with the adoption of a resolution transmitting the assessment district list for the tunnel to the tax collector.

Ready for Hetch Hetchy Hearing

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28.—Mayor Rolph of San Francisco today notified the interior department that the city would file its brief in the Hetch Hetchy valley case November 15 and would be represented at the final hearing before Secretary Fisher at Washington November 25.

The case involves the city's rights to the Hetch Hetchy valley in Yosemite national park for use in connection with a great municipal aqueduct scheme.

The present water supply contractors for San Francisco, a number of national and local organizations interested in the scenic preservation of the Yosemite, John Muir and other naturalists are expected to attend the hearing.

MARRIAGE LICENSES IN REDWOOD CITY

[Special Dispatch to The Call] REDWOOD CITY, Oct. 28.—The following marriage licenses have been issued here: Harry R. Dorr, 43, and Florence Campbell, 41, both of Denver; Orville C. Hayes, 25, and Jennie Dodge, 24, both of San Francisco; Morris S. Jensen, 27, Fulton, Sonoma county, and Julia L. McGarvie, 21, Burlingame.

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Want to Trade, Buy or Sell? Use CALL Want Ads

WOMEN SHARPEN AX FOR HICKEY

800 Fair Suit Club Victims Seek Further Revenge on Jailed Swindler

Eight hundred irate women gathered yesterday afternoon in the Auditorium annex to formulate plans for the further downfall of Charles W. Hickey, head of the Great Eastern Woolen Mills, who, it is said, realized more than \$10,000 with his clothing lotteries.

Hickey was sentenced by Judge Shortall to six months in the county jail and to pay a fine of \$500, but that returns no money to the women who were invited to pay \$18 for a \$35 suit which was not forthcoming.

What was done yesterday will remain a mystery for the present, as no definite steps were decided upon. It was said that no desire existed to permit Hickey to get wind of their plans, so all save those vitally and financially interested were excluded.

Three women under suspicion of being spies for Hickey were summarily ejected, one of them, it was claimed, being Mrs. Cahill, a sister in law of Hickey. These so-called spies were indignant at the charges, one saying she had received her suit but her sister had not. The leaders of the anti-Hickey party said the suspected ones had been in court at the trial of the accused man and had been particularly friendly and confidential with him.

When asked to produce their contracts they were unable to do so satisfactorily, and were in consequence put out.

Evidence was given by dozens of women on the methods of obtaining their money, and addresses were made outlining tentative plans of action.

MERCHANTS' EXCHANGE TO HOLD A REUNION

OAKLAND, Oct. 28.—The weekly meeting of the Merchants' Exchange will give precedence tomorrow evening to a reunion of the members of the exchange and invited guests at Lincoln hall. The night will be a special "ladies' night" and an interesting program has been arranged, including dinners for the larger concerns.

WARRANT ISSUED FOR ARREST OF INN KEEPER

OAKLAND, Oct. 28.—Evidence that liquor was being sold at Hunter's inn near San Leandro without a license has been obtained by District Attorney W. H. Donahue, and a warrant for the arrest of the proprietor was issued today by Justice of the Peace D. W. Toffelmier at San Leandro. Members of the board of supervisors, acting on the suggestion of women's clubs and civic centers, resolved last week that no new license should be issued for the place, regardless of changes of management or other conditions.

HUSBAND ORDERED AWAY

Redwood City, Oct. 28.—Carl Siracusa, who shot and slightly wounded his wife, Rose Siracusa, following a quarrel in their San Mateo home several months ago, was ordered to turn over all property to his wife and to leave the state by Judge George Beck today. Siracusa was charged with assault with a deadly weapon.

TRIAL POSTPONED

Salem, Mass., Oct. 28.—Because of the continued illness of juror John W. Carter, the trial of J. J. Ettore, Arturo Giovannitti and Joseph Curcio for the alleged murder of Anna Lopizzo was postponed today.

IRRIGATION BRINGS RICHES TO STATE

State Secretary's Report Shows Great Increase in California Crops

SACRAMENTO, Oct. 28.—Agricultural figures compiled by Frank Jordan, secretary of state, for the biennial publication of the state blue book illustrate the enormous increase in crops in several counties of the state due entirely to the development of irrigation.

Merced county, according to statistics, has made the most rapid strides in irrigating its land and has the greatest proportion of its area in farms.

Humboldt county leads the state in butter production with 25,235,232 pounds, which has resulted in placing it in second place in butter production with 5,166,550 pounds annually.

Jordan's figures show that 2,500,000 acres in the Sacramento valley and 7,360,000 acres in the San Joaquin valley are capable of irrigation and that there is water enough, now flowing into the sea to cover this acreage in Sacramento valley to a depth of 1 1/2 feet and in San Joaquin to 20 inches.

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