

In the Mimic World

Charles Frohman's press agent quoted him in an interesting fashion the other day regarding the quickness of the theatergoing public to scent out the failure of a new play. Says Mr. Frohman:

"A play is produced. I am back on the stage—never in front the first night. Things seem to work smoothly enough and the actors are all elated. Friends crowd around me between the acts, and offer their congratulations. I am in doubt, however. I do not trust their judgments. A critic comes to me, a man of distinction, and expresses his belief in success. I say nothing. I value his opinion, but in this instance I waver. Then, at the last moment, some ordinary individual approaches. I wait for him to speak. He hesitates an instant and then says:

"—Well—

"I do not care for the finish. He has smelled out a failure, and I believe him to be right. Just why I could not tell if my life depended upon it. I know that he is a man of no pretense to critical acumen. He is neither literary nor particularly well versed in the drama, but the thing has not pleased him; it has not struck him; his hesitancy of speech tells me that, and in his lack of enthusiastic approach I read his thoughts, and, as I have said, I believe him, rejecting the well-meant encouragement of all the others."

This is all very true whether Mr. Frohman or his press agent said it. It

solicited opinion as a reflex of that of the multitude.

But to be a frank, sincere opinion, it must be involuntarily, if not unconsciously, expressed, and not the result of deep reflection or "thinking too precisely on the event."

As for the justice of the public's verdict, that is another and a broader question. On the theory that might makes right, it is not to be disputed, though this is not to say that worthy plays worthily acted have not met with cruel indifference. To mention an example that at this very instant occurs to me: What shabby treatment was accorded the delicious and fragrant "Rosemary," which Oda Skinner presented in the Twin Cities some four seasons ago. It was well high in the popular estimation, and no attempt to explain the people's apathy toward that play will be made in this column.

On the other hand, the public is quick to appreciate inherent strength and greatness in a drama. Nothing that is strong play, couched in dignified language, uttered or inscribed in denunciation or disparagement of "The Sign of the Cross" could make the people disloyal to that drama. Some writers and skeptics scored it unmercifully, but the people nevertheless flocked to see it. Why? Because it is a remarkably strong play, couched in dignified language, pervaded by a reverent spirit and surcharged with intense dramatic power. Those who could not appreciate

were engaged to portray, so that the public may expect a performance that is true to life in every particular. Mr. Sully's engagement in "The Old Mill Stream" is for four nights and Wednesday matinee.

HANFORD AT METROPOLITAN.

Shakespearean Actor to Present "Taming of the Shrew" and "Much Ado."

Charles B. Hanford, accompanied by Miss Marie Drofna and, it is said, a competent company, will appear at the Metropolitan opera house Tuesday, Friday and Saturday of this week. Hanford is recognized as a capable exponent of Shakespearean drama and his appearance here will be an interesting theatrical event.

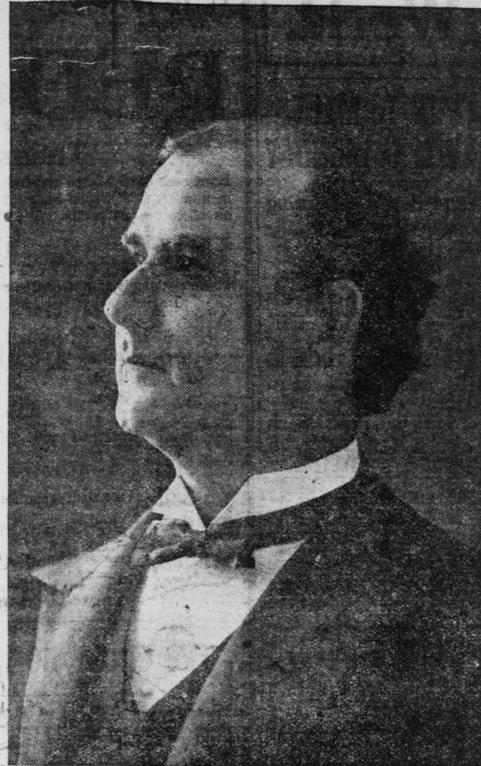
Mr. Hanford will open his engagement Thursday night in "Taming of the Shrew," preceded by the one-act play, "The Old Guard." This bill will be repeated Saturday night. Friday night and Saturday afternoon Mr. Hanford will present "Much Ado About Nothing." Miss Drofna will appear as Katherine in the "Taming of the Shrew" and as Beatrice in the latter play.

Mr. Hanford is a student as well as an actor and his productions, in acting and equipment, bear evidence of careful study. The sale of seats for Mr. Hanford's engagement will open tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

"HEART OF MARYLAND."

David Belasco's War Drama to Be Presented at the Grand.

David Belasco's effective war drama will be the attraction at the Grand



C. B. HANFORD
Who Will Appear in Shakespearean Comedy at the Metropolitan.

given in Chicago in June, 1890; during their New York engagement which closed a short time ago the Bostonians sang "Robin Hood" for the 1,800th time.

The company this season includes Henry Clay Barnabee, W. H. MacDonald, George B. Frothingham, Josephine Bartlett, Grace Van Studdiford, W. C. Weedon, Harold Gordon, Olive Seletta Moore, Sabery d'Orsell, Allen C. Hinchley, William M. Dorrington, Campbell Donald, John J. Martin, George M. Wall, Carrie E. Mills, James E. Miller and Florence, with a large chorus and special orchestra.

CRITICS TOOK THE WRONG POINT OF VIEW

Their Comments on "The Judgment of King Solomon" Explained.

Dore Davidson, an actor-dramatist, is responsible for a play which, when it receives its formal production, is likely to start a lively controversy. It is entitled "The Judgment of King Solomon."

A single performance of the drama was given more than a month ago in New York, and the space given it by the critics on that occasion and nature of their comments was a fair indication of the discussion that is bound to follow a more pretentious production.

Shortly after the appearance of the New York criticisms the following interesting defense of Mr. Davidson's play appeared in the columns of the Kansas City Star:

"In the criticism on the Biblical drama, 'The Judgment of King Solomon,' recently presented at one of the New York theaters, a mistaken view was taken. They were entirely misled by the title and endeavored to give the character of King Solomon far greater prominence than was intended by the adaptor, Dore Davidson. The character of the King was only used as a basis upon which to build a strong and effective story of maternal affection.

"The main ideal intended to be brought out was the contrast between

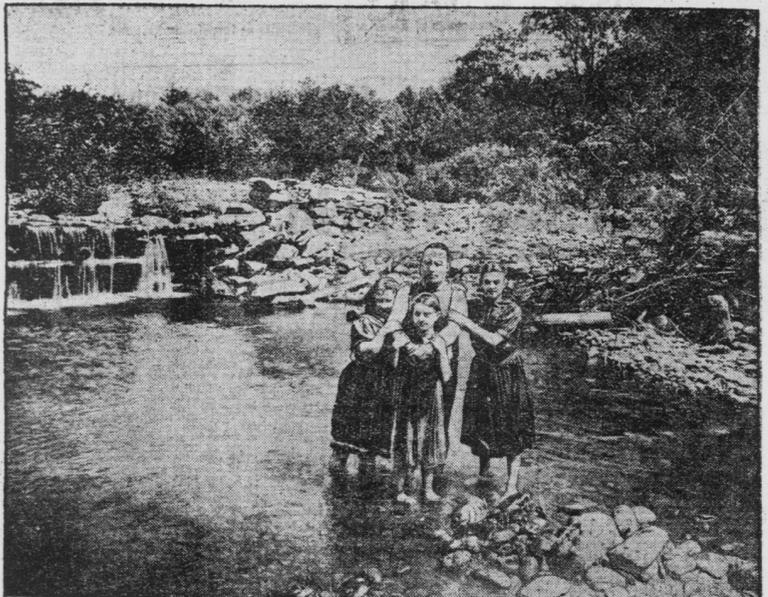
the two women, one actuated by tender, self-sacrificing love, the other with equal rights, only ambitious and greedy for power. The title given was merely to emphasize the 'judgment' scene and the verdict of King Solomon for the possession of the child in dispute.

"The view taken by the critics was evidently founded upon their childhood familiarity with the old Bible story and was largely influenced by the word 'judgment,' and caused them to believe that the lines of the play were wholly drawn upon that historical incident in King Solomon's life, whereas the author made him distinctly secondary and took advantage of that period given up by him to licentiousness and consequent repentance, to weave a story of strong dramatic power which culminated in the great judgment scene.

Any other handling of the theme would have weakened this great climax and made it of little value by reason of the public's familiarity with the subject as recorded in the old testament. As it is constructed, this scene is intensified by the fact that the King was involved in the hands of the court intrigue which left him practically helpless in the hands of the court favorites who surrounded him and made it easy for them to practice any deception upon him which would forward their own ambitious designs.

The object of the performance as given by the stock company was distinctly in the nature of an experiment and it was never expected that under the circumstances it would call forth such a great amount of criticism from the pens of the most noted critics of New York city. This was a great tribute to both the historic and literary merit of the play.

The performance was the result of one week's rehearsal, according to the system of stock theaters, and Mr. Davidson may feel justly flattered at the reception it received both from the press and the public. It must be conceded that the critics were most generous in their praise of the play and are correct in their denunciations when their point of view is considered. The space allowed was not generous. The



DAN SULLY
In "The Old Mill Stream" at the Metropolitan.

is one of those hard facts that seems to bear the comment that a professional dramatic critic's opinion is of no substantial value—to a producing manager, however interesting it may be as an exhibition of the critic's mental idiosyncrasies or disorders.

For the people know what pleases them and what does not please them. Theirs is not to reason why; theirs is but to go or stay away—and they know how to stay away from the clearest kind of a show that doesn't suit them.

The author or manager who could tell in advance what would capture the fickle and elusive public need not write or produce a great play to win a fortune. Witness how many mediocre efforts have met with astonishing prosperity, and how many a worthy creation has expired for lack of sustenance. Yet who shall say the people are at fault?

The absolute futility of attempting to predict the success or failure of any untried play or opera has been demonstrated many times. Dire failures of the most promising achievements have been followed by the surprising triumphs of what were regarded as mere makshiffs to fill in time.

Just one instance of the latter feat is afforded by the case of Augustus Thomas' idyl of the South, "Alabama," which was pigeonholed in Manager Palmer's desk for nearly three years, because it was not regarded as a possible success—not even up to the last rehearsal.

In a general way it is easy enough to enumerate the essential, human qualities of a successful play, but to know whether the untried play possesses these qualities, in advance of the

and admire that play deserve the pity of all who could—and that means a large measure of condoleance.

—Fred G. Hunt.

"THE OLD MILL STREAM."

Daniel Sully Will Present His New Play at the Metropolitan.

One of the most picturesque spots in the state of New York is that neighborhood that embraces the Catskill mountains—immortalized by Washington Irving's tale of "Rip Van Winkle."

Dan Sully, the actor, has an extensive farm right in the heart of these famous old mountains—in Mink Hollow, Ulster county.

His new play, "The Old Mill Stream," is laid at his own home, and every character that appears on the stage is taken from real life. The actor's farm extends about a mile and a half along the banks of a beautiful river that is the joy of the sportsman who delights in angling for the speckled beauties that have made the stream famous. The water is used for milling purposes about a half mile below Mr. Sully's home. The damming up of the water, with this object in view, was the means of starting considerable litigation between the owner of the mill and the farmers along the banks of whose grounds the river ran. This furnished Mr. Sully with the idea for his new play, "The Old Mill Stream," that will be produced at the Metropolitan tonight.

It has been said that "truth is



"HEART OF MARYLAND"
At the Grand.

great person's chance to behold it, is past the divination of any single individual being. The same that is expected to entrance the audience is coldly viewed, the situation calculated to thrill the spectators arouses but mild interest, the lines counted upon to provoke shouts of laughter or storms of applause, evoke little more than a snicker, or scarcely the tribute of close attention. The play has not reached them. It lacks atmosphere. It is destitute of that indefinable quality that imparts natural life and color to any play could ever hope to command.

But considering only what Mr. Frohman is pleased to term the "ordinary individual," it is fair to accept his un-

stranger than fiction," and in this case the axiom is verified. The plot of the play, involving as it does three families, is called from real life. Every incident in this play is taken direct from the book of actual fact. The drama tells three distinct love stories that vitally concern the destiny of three families whose names are inseparable from the history of Ulster county, New York state. It is in three acts, and the central character, played by Mr. Sully, is that of a big-natured Irishman, who combines the duty of postmaster, justice of the peace, country storekeeper, philosopher and general adviser to the community. He's a sort of a money-lending qualities of that gentleman.

The character is said to fit Mr. Sully's quaint style of acting like a glove. The character is the embodiment of human nature, tears and smiles. All the other actors of the company have parts suited to their abilities. They rehearsed the play up at Mr. Sully's farm last summer, where they had a chance to study the characters they

IMPERIAL BURLESQUERS.

Harry Williams' Organization This Week's Attraction at the Star.

A burlesque company that is most sure to create a sensation is due at the Star this week. It is known as Harry W. Williams Jr.'s Imperial Burlesquers. The fun commences with a new up-to-date comedy trifle in two acts, entitled "Two Old Sports," detailing some events that are likely to happen in actual life. It tells a funny story, and the situations are better imagined than described. Following the introductory first part comes the vaudeville olio, which contains several acts out of the ordinary. Among them are the two comedians, Kelly and Adams, grotesque acrobats and dancers, who are fun-makers of great talent; the flexible Venus, Etta Victoria, in a marvelous contortion act; Ford and Dot West in their laughable comedy, entitled "The Water and the Maid," the unctuous comedian, Cliff Gordon, in his original German monologue, and Perry and Randall in their new act, entitled "A Vassar Boy."

The closing act of the burlesque shows the entire company on board the yacht Imperial, bound for Africa. Both acts of the burlesque are said to be up-to-date and brim full of funny situations.

The principal comedy parts are handled by James F. Leonard, Cliff Gordon, Ford West and E. E. Perry, and at the head of the feminine contingent are Edna Urdine, Grace Forrest Burke, Patti Carney and the Sheldon sisters.

"THE BOSTONIANS" ARE COMING.

They Will Appear in Their Favorite Opera, "Robin Hood," and Others.

"The Bostonians," after an absence of five years, will return to St. Paul for an engagement of four performances at the Metropolitan opera house, beginning Thursday evening, Jan. 23; they will appear in their favorite opera, "Robin Hood," for two performances and will give two presentations of their latest production, "Man of Marian," the successor to "Robin Hood."

The revival of "Robin Hood" by the Bostonians is recognized by musicians and by the public generally as an important event; it is of especial interest to St. Paul players and patrons of the Metropolitan opera house in particular, as it will be remembered that the Bostonians opened that the later in "Robin Hood," Dec. 29, 1890. The first performance of this opera was



Imperial Burlesquers
FARCE COMEDY AND TRAVESTY
The Imperials at the Star.

AMUSEMENTS.

METROPOLITAN
L. N. SCOTT, Lessee and Manager.

TONIGHT FIRST HALF OF WEEK. WEDNESDAY MATINEE.

THE EMINENT ACTOR

MR. DANIEL SULLY
IN A NEW PLAY

THE OLD MILL STREAM
A ROMANCE OF THE CATSKILLS.

Night Prices—25c, 50c, 75c, \$1. Matinee—25c and 50c.

THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY | THREE NIGHTS. SATURDAY MATINEE.

CHARLES B. HANFORD

Accompanied by Marie Drofna and a Superb Company, in Two Grand Productions of Shakespearean Comedy.

Thursday and Saturday Nights "Taming of the Shrew"
Preceded by the One Act Play, "THE OLD GUARD."

Friday Night and Saturday Matinee "Much Ado About Nothing"
PRICES: Night—25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00. Matinee—25c, 50c.

SUNDAY, JAN. 25, FOUR NIGHTS WEDNESDAY MATINEE

The Augustin Daly Musical Company in the Anglo-Chino Musical Comedy

SAN TOY
Original New York Production and Company of 100 People.
A Play that Broke all Records at Daly's New York and London Theaters.

Seat Sale Opens Thursday 9 a. m. Secure Your Seats Early

THURSDAY, JAN. 29—Three Nights—Saturday Matinee

THE BOSTONIANS
ROBIN HOOD & MAID MARIAN

FEBRUARY 5, 6, 7, MR. WALKER WHITESIDE

Presenting Three New Scenic Productions of Shakespearean Plays

"MERCHANT OF VENICE," "HAMLET," and "RICHARD III."

GRAND TONIGHT
And All This Week

JACOB LITTON, PROP. THE L. HAYS, MGR.

David Belasco's GREAT PLAY

THE HEART OF MARYLAND

THE GREAT BELFRY SCENE
REVEALS THE TRAP
STRONG SITUATIONS
EXCITING CLIMAXES

Presented by DAVID BELASCO'S CO.

Miss Alma Kruger as Maryland Calvert
Mr. Tefft Johnson, Mr. Herbert Bostwick, Mr. B. J. Murphy and a strong cast.

Week of Jan. 25th

ANNE BLANCHE
IN
A LITTLE OUTCAST

AMUSEMENTS.

STAR THEATRE MATINEE DAILY. EVENINGS AT 8:15

Matinee Today—All Week

Imperial Burlesquers. 10, 20, 30 cents

Another Big, New Show. NEXT WEEK....."Irwin's Big Show"

author only regrets that their extensive review was not delayed until the production is made at a Broadway theater, of which there is some prospect.

COMING ATTRACTIONS.

David Warfield, in his latest success, "The Auctioneer," is underlined at the Metropolitan opera house for an engagement of four nights and matinee, beginning Sunday, Feb. 1.

Walker Whiteside is announced as the Metropolitan's attraction for a half week, beginning Thursday, Feb. 5. He will present a repertoire of Shakespearean plays, including "Hamlet," "Richard III." and "Merchant of Venice."

Following the engagement of "The Heart of Maryland" at the Grand opera house a melodrama entitled "A Little Outcast" will be presented for one week. The play is said to be brim full of surprises, but with a love story pure and simple. The story is built about the vicissitudes of a young clerk, and passes in swift action from stately mansions to crime-infested haunts in the city of New York. Scenically, the production is said to be striking for its elaborateness and attention to detail. The company includes Miss Anne Blanche, a decided favorite with St. Paul theatergoers, who assumes the role of "Bob," the newsboy. John F. Nicholson will be seen as Paul Weston, the principal male character.

February will witness the appearance at the Grand opera house for the first time in a number of years of Joseph Murphy in his two Irish plays, "Sham Rhu" and "Kerry Gow."

Startling electrical effects, beautiful scenery, gorgeous costumes, pretty girls and catchy music are the principal features of Williams and Walker's

new musical comedy. It is called "A Little Outcast." The company is said to be the best and largest these comedians have ever organized. "A Little Outcast" is underlined for appearance at the Grand in February.

William A. Brady's production of "Lover's Lane" is underlined for appearance here at the Grand in March.

Lovers of vaudeville will doubtless be pleased to learn that the celebrated Orpheum show is to be seen at the Grand in February. This organization is said to offer a strong variety bill. McIntyre and Heath, the creators of the "ham tree" are still the headliners, and with Nat Willis, the well known tramp comedian, the Milano trio, instrumentalists; Long and Cotton in their sketch, "The Critic and the Lady," and the three Navarro, form a group of clever entertainers.

"Von Yonson" is announced for a week's engagement at the Grand in the not far distant future.