

THE BOX OFFICES OF BROADWAY

WHO Keeps Them Going? Is it the \$2.00-a-Seat Percentage of 2,000,000 people in New York? Brander Matthews says so. But the fact is we all do as much as we can afford to keep up these Box Offices.

BRANDER MATTHEWS says in the North American Review that Broadway as a play-street does not represent either America or the whole of New York, but merely that part of 2,000,000 people in New York who can afford to pay two dollars a seat. This is a very unmathematical statement. Broadway has about 50 theatres. Divide 50 into 2,000,000 and you get 40,000 people per theatre. Compare that to, say, Toronto, which is our most typical theatre city, and Toronto should have about eleven theatres, whereas it has all it can do to support three theatres, two vaudevilles, two burlesques, and two large picture houses and a lot of small ones.

Brander Matthews ignores the fact that no play could possibly run for a whole season, night after night, in New York, if it depended on the part of New York's theatre-going 2,000,000 who can afford \$2.00 a seat. Of course the average New York house is a small one compared with theatres in Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Toronto.

Now a Broadway audience, says Mr. Matthews, is not truly representative of the American people as a whole, because it is a very special gathering. It represents not the six million inhabitants of New York, but the less than two million inhabitants of Manhattan; and of these it represents mainly those who can afford to pay two dollars each for their tickets. Nothing less democratic can easily be imagined; and nothing less truly American, since a majority of the dwellers in Manhattan who can afford two dollars for their theatre-tickets are either foreign-born or the children of alien parents, whereas the people of the United States as a whole have either inherited or assimilated Anglo-Saxon ideals of conduct.

By THE MUSIC EDITOR

But unless New York managers could sell tickets to more than the \$2.00-a-seat percentage of 2,000,000 a lot of these houses would have to turn the long run shows on the road to get the people. Anybody who goes to New York theatres at all knows that when Maude Adams, for instance, performs a whole season in one theatre she doesn't depend on the regular New York patrons of that theatre to make the crowd. The regular patrons of any one theatre in New York—if there are such—are sure to see all of any one show they want to, no matter how good it may be, in the first week. And any first week of a season is pretty well able to use up most of the patronage that New York can give to all the new plays for that season if everybody went that week.

Where then does Broadway get its night after night new crowds to see the same play for a run of forty weeks, more or less? Why, from all over America. It's the floating population who regard New York as the biggest show on earth, that really keep New York theatres. New York is the first-time centre of play productions for more than half the United States and a part of Canada. Anybody in Canada who can afford to go to New York more than once a year, does he refuse to go to a new show because next season he will run a chance of seeing it in his home Canadian town? Not very likely. He prefers to get ahead of the "folks back home," so that he can go back and tell them all about it; and next season when "Johnny Get Your Gun" comes to town he says to mother and the girls, "Oh, yes, that's a good show. I saw it last season in New York."

What Brander Matthews was really driving at in his article was an ex-

planation of why New York gave such a boost to the Little Theatre Movement; because, as he says, a lot of people who want good things can't get them in New York at any price, and because they can't afford \$2.00 a seat to see anything. That part of his argument may be all right. But his "dope" on the Broadway problem is, we fear, pretty much wrong.

Ysaye, the Maestro

YSAYE is back in Canada. He played in Toronto last week. If there is one great violinist who can always keep on coming back to this country it is Ysaye. This great master is the world's greatest violinist, and he is also a man of ideas, a scholar, a philosopher—in his own way—and a man interested in public affairs. He is to Belgium what Paderewski is to Poland. He is to the world of music in a large way taking the violin as his medium, what Paderewski is at the piano. In the great common world between the violin and the piano these two great masters meet. And the world will be the poorer when either of them leaves it.

Viggo Kihl Recital

MR. VIGGO KIHl, the brilliant pianist of the Toronto Conservatory of Music Piano Faculty, will make his first public appearance this season at a recital to be given in the Conservatory Music Hall on Wednesday, November 21st.

His programme is as follows:
Bach Concerto in the Italian style; Brahms' Variations and Fugue on a theme of Handel; Chopin: Nocturne Op. 55, Etude, Op. 10, No. 8; Mazurka A flat major, Op. 59, No. 2; Etude, E major, Op. 10, No. 3; Barcarolle, Op. 60; Liszt; Au lac de Wallenstedt; Moszkowsky; La jongleuse; Glazounoff; Blumenfeld: Valse de Concerto.

GOVERNMENT SHOULD LEAVE WHEAT ALONE

(Concluded from page 20.)

much for the machinery which you need?" Or to the farm help and say, "You have got to work for so much next year, or to the grocer or butcher or the many other business places where the farmer deals, and tell them that they could not charge him over a certain price for his necessities? No, they certainly did not. They let the manufacturers of machinery, binder twines, wagons and all other persons with whom the farmer deals, add on as much to the former price as they wish.

Look at the price the farmer pays for coal around here, \$10.50 for soft coal, \$15 for hard coal. Yes, a farmer needs coal as well as the M. P.'s do. He is only human; he feels the cold of winter as well as they.

Then again the farmer had to pay hired help from \$60 to \$75 per month this summer. And besides, a great many would not work unless he agreed to keep them for eight months. Besides such a wage they had to board them and lodge them. For harvest help the wage was \$4.50 per day, and the helper had to be hired for at least a month or he would not come.

Besides this expenditure there next comes the thresh bill. And this is no small amount. When you have to pay

a thresher \$22 an hour for threshing your crop, you can not afford to sell it at the lowest price, especially when everything else is at the very highest.

And on top of all the doings of the hen-brained M. P.'s the Government turns to the farmers of Canada, and especially the West, and tells them that the country needs all the wheat that can possibly be raised. And asks them to grow or raise as much wheat as they possibly can next year. Yes, sure, raise all you can, Mr. Farmer, and give it to us. You don't need any pay for your work. All you did was put the seed into the ground and sat around and watched it grow. Yes, certainly. It does not cost you anything to live. Why the ground, the land for the wheat, gets itself ready; it is no trouble to you. Why shouldn't you just hand your crop over to us and let us make the money out of it. Oh, yes, it sounds very nice.

Well, dear friends in the Government, I would like to give you a little tip. Unless things are changed from the way they are running now, and unless the set price of wheat is done away with and the old system of letting the demand set the price restored, "there is going to be a mighty SMALL

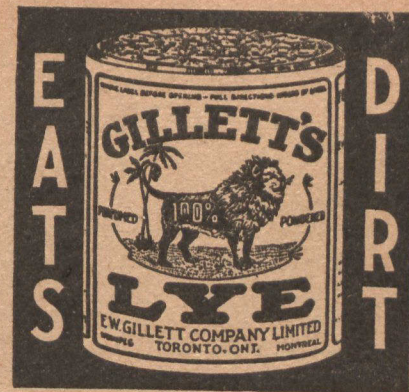
crop of wheat had from Western Canada next fall. We do not have to raise wheat to make a living. There is a grist mill at many of the towns along the line, where we can haul what grain we have raised, which will be enough to supply ourselves with flour. On the other land which we have broken we can raise flax, barley, oats or other things besides wheat. Of course horses like oats. They are very fond of green sheaves, or sheaf oats. The pigs, which we will raise sufficient of for our own use, will use the barley raised, and I think there will be no difficulty in getting rid of our flax.

Now, dear sirs, if you would like a large crop of wheat from Western Canada next year, it is up to you to get busy and do something to encourage the farmers which you have discouraged by setting such a measly small maximum price for wheat.

I and others will see to it that the majority of the farmers of the West are appealed to to raise only enough wheat for their own use, unless something is done, and done soon.

Yours truly,

WILBUR K. MARSH.



Grace—"I told him he mustn't see me any more."
Her Brother—"What did he do?"
Grace—"Turned out the lights!"

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