

Music and the Drama

THE GRAND.
Today, matinee and night,
..... "Mrs. Temple's Telegram."
Tuesday "Primrose's Minstrels."
Wednesday "Piff! Paff! Pouf!"
Thursday "The Volunteer Organist."
Friday "Way Down East."
Saturday, matinee and night
..... "The Way of the Transgressor."

BENNETT'S VAUDEVILLE.
All Week, First-class Vaudeville Acts

At the Grand this afternoon and evening, "Mrs. Temple's Telegram" will be the attraction. It is distinctly the most high-class offering in this city so far this season, and will no doubt draw the patronage of our best theatergoers. Harry Conner, Miss Allison Skidmore and a number of no less noted artists, go to make up a cast of players eminently suited to their respective roles. To miss this attraction will be to regret it for many days after.



HARRY CONNER.
With "Mrs. Temple's Telegram" at the Grand Today, Matinee and Night.

ter it has gone and it would be well for those of our theatergoers who enjoy a really high-class performance to secure seats.

The George Primrose Big Minstrel Company, with George himself at the head of the procession of artists, comes to the Grand at specially reduced prices on Tuesday evening next, when the local theatergoers will have a view of the finest minstrel organization on the side of the coast. London is ripe for just such a treat of black-face fun, and Manager Turton is congratulating himself that George Primrose—the king-bee of minstrelsy—has been the one selected to deliver the goods. The new act alone is said to be the best this famous minstrel has ever had. It is entitled "Twilight on the Old Plantation," and is in two scenes. The first represents a negro cabin with its tangled growth of wild flowers; the second, a fascinating view of a cotton field a-bloom. By a clever manipulation of the lights many wonderful and inspiring sights are produced. Mr. Primrose appears in a new soft-shoe dance that is absolutely unique, and is assisted in this by a score of dancers. This one act is stated to invite the loftiest consideration of the most exacting critic and is a revelation of skill in dancing and high art scenic accessories. The staging and costuming are noteworthy features, and the old essentials of minstrelsy, such as the jubilee melodies, the "come and cotton" enchanting tunes and the songs of home and mother have not been overlooked.

There will be something doing all the time at the Grand Opera House next Wednesday evening, after B. C. Whitney's musical cocktail is uncorked. His way it is thrown at the audience makes them feel like "Piff! Paff! Pouf!" says a noted reviewer. There is evidently no lacking in the performance, and a time of spirited fun, music and frolic may be counted upon during "Piff! Paff! Pouf!" stay in town. Up-to-the-minute comedy and real fun is promised, and judging from the list of principals, the laughing atmosphere looks exceedingly bright. The following stage favorites are among the principals: Fred Graham, Dorothy Osterman, R. E. Graham, Dorothy Maynard, James Devlin, Lulu McConnell, Walter H. Clouston, Evelyn Dunmore, Harry Stuart, Mae Elwood, Martin Chessman, Lisle Bloodgood and others, including the "Great Pony Ballet" and the American Beauty Chorus.

The Victoria, B. C. Times of a recent date says of a concert given in that city by Mr. Watkin Mills and his

talented company, who will appear at the Grand shortly:

"The Victoria audience, as a rule, is a pretty self-composed body. It is neither hysterical nor sensational in its expression of appreciation, but a good performance can always make the applause ring true. This assuredly was the case last evening, when Watkin Mills and his talented associates gave their concert at the Victoria Theater. The place was crowded, as the event was one remote from uncertainty; everybody knew that the name of Mills was synonymous with excellence. The programme, in its general arrangement, was wholly in keeping with the other features of the concert. It was generous and well-balanced, but, of course, it was not deemed sufficient by the audience, who sorely taxed the liberality of the performers by their insistent demands for encores. It is very difficult to select the most capitalizing number of an altogether charming programme.

"Miss Gertrude Lonsdale and Miss Edith Kirkwood, the contralto and soprano, shared honors, one might say the premier honors, with Mr. Mills. Both were in good voice, and excelled particularly in the cycle, Miss Lonsdale's "Fairies" and the "Ship That Sailed into the Sun," and Miss Kirkwood's "If No One Ever Marries Me" and "The Swings," were gems, and had to be repeated several times. Harold Wilde, tenor, was another host in himself, his tones being as clear as a bell, and produced with the true artist's ease. Edouard Parlovitz, the pianist, had to nearly double his contributions to the programme. The Chopin "Scherzo in B flat minor," in expression and technique was a treat.

Much homely humor is found in Wm. B. Gray's beautiful new production, "The Volunteer Organist." Its characters being drawn from a locality in Vermont that seems to be quite apart from the rest of the world, are many of them rare studies. The eccentricities of the rural Vermonters are, while clearly drawn, not one whit exaggerated. Like the Irishman, the humor of the Vermonters is spontaneous and it bubbles out in unexpected places at unlooked-for times so that one is actually at a loss as to whether one is laughing with glee or to let one's sympathy go out to some of the other characters. The Grand patrons will have an opportunity of witnessing the piece Thursday night, January 11.

With an entire new scenic production, and with the original cast "Way Down East" will be seen at the Grand on Friday evening next. The popularity of this celebrated rural play does not wane. Local managers consider it a looking and clamor to get it on their list of attractions. Acknowledging the merit of the play, there are other factors that have had much to do with its success. Foremost is the fact that Manager Brady has kept the cast up to its original standard. Every year he has had a new cast of actors, and the play has been given in every way has given the play the same care and attention that he would a new production. That these things count in the long run is evidenced by the continued success of the play.

Percy G. Williams, the well-known booking agent, has been talking as follows to the New York Telegraph: "Vaudeville is having what seems to be a great boom, but which is nothing of the sort. It is the result of a steady growth, which I believe will continue for many years to come. I think the new year will see the steady development of feature acts, acts with either big effects or novel laugh-getting ideas as a foundation. We are gradually learning what vaudeville means to the people and we know that we cannot spend too much money to secure what will please our patrons."

Mr. F. F. Proctor, the big New York manager, has also been saying: "I look for a great year. Vaudeville has developed wonderfully during the past twelve months, but I look for an even greater development during the next twelve. The improvement will be in all lines and in all directions. Salaries are higher than they have ever been before, managers now paying \$3,800 a week for a vaudeville programme where two years ago they would have thought \$1,800 a big price. Of course the shows are better now than ever before, but we will be able to make them better still. Laughter will be the chief end and aim of the vaudeville audiences."

A sumptuous scenic production of the new melodramatic sensation, "The Way of the Transgressor," will be given at the Grand on Saturday afternoon and evening next, at popular prices. This is the latest novelty in theatricals, and it has proven a great success, because it is radically different from anything hitherto attempted. The entire performance is full of surprises, there being a rapid series of changes from the grave to the gay. The plot is an in-

teresting one, not strained or illogical but a truthful tale of happenings to people of the present day. Incidental to the performance will be given a number of costly vaudeville acts. The supreme novelty of the whole production is the introduction of four highly educated dogs, who play parts in the drama in such a masterful manner that those who see them are prone to say that they must be endowed with a human brain.

A splendid bill of vaudeville has been secured for the coming week at Bennett's, when a diversified galaxy of his farcical, dancing, magic and acrobatic acts will be presented. The headlines will be Ferguson Dupres and Company, who will be seen in an exceptionally clever musical comedy sketch entitled "Training a Husband." The piece is said to be full of witty dialogue, and amusing situations, much of the fun arising from the actions of a well-meaning but indiscreet servant, Charlie, played by Mr. Ed. Higgins. The piece is said to be cleverly handled in its presentation, and has been the laughing hit on every bill.

A clever gymnastic act will be presented by the Three Sensational Zoelers. Their marvelous acrobatic work on a flying trapeze has made for them a high place in the vaudeville world, and their services are constantly in demand. They are performing



at the Madison Square Garden in New York this week, where they are the acrobatic hit of the show.

A mystery sure to arouse much local interest will be created by the engagement of a prominent London lady who will render local selections next week. The mystery will be as to the identity of the fair singer. She will wear a mask at every performance, and will be driven to and from the theater in a closed cab; the mask not being removed until she reaches home.

Hyde and Heath will present a novel comedy singing sketch entitled "A Load of Hay." Introducing singing, dancing and six changes of costume, with a great military and electrical finish. Special scenery and electrical effects are used in the presentation of this act, and it is said to be the best of its kind in vaudeville.

Hillman, the magician, will present his original and interesting act, introducing some mysterious feats of modern sorcery.

An amusing travesty act will be presented by Tom and Gertie Grimes, and the American Trio will offer a refined character sketch.

As a special added attraction one of America's foremost monologists has been secured to amuse next week's audiences. William Tomkins is known by vaudeville theatergoers all over the United States as one of the funniest comedians on the stage. "Tomkins' topical talks" are likely to make a very large hit at Bennett's, where high-class comedy is enjoyed and appreciated.

The bill will be completed by some clever comedy dancing by Eddie Higgins, and a series of new and interesting moving pictures.

The daily matinees at Bennett's are constantly gaining in popularity, especially with the ladies, who find it a pleasant way to spend a few hours of an afternoon.

The high tone of refinement maintained by the management well warrants the calling of it a "popular family theater."

It is declared by a number of newspapers that the most difficult individual in this world to please with theatrical entertainment are the San Francisco critics. Arnold Daly had to submit to their displeasure as Mansfield recently did and just as Crane, Drew and other well-known actors have on various occasions. One critic, the dean of the tribe, was unable to find any merit in Daly's acting until he appeared as Napoleon in Shaw's play, "The Man of Destiny." He discounted his praise, however, by finding fault with the young actor's "make-up." A few days after the article appeared Daly was a guest at a dinner at the Bohemian Club, of which the critic is a prominent member. During the evening Mr. Daly was called upon for a

speech, and in the course of his remarks said: "One critic whom you all know very well singularly enough praised my 'make-up' as being too homey." He said it was absurd when one remembered Napoleon's physical beauty. As regards this I wish to say that my make-up was copied from the famous soldier was a young man of twenty-six or seven. He was long and haggard. Napoleon did not cultivate that picturesque and impressive Hyperion look that curled over upon carefully considering the matter I have come to the conclusion that the distinguished critic has confounded Napoleon with Madame Recamier."

Augustus Thomas is to make radical changes in "The Embassy Ball," in which Lawrence D'Orsay was to star this season, but which proved disappointing. It is thought the weakness of the play lay in its confusing political story, which will be revised.

"The Belle of Avenue A," in which Edna Pay is starring, will close its tour Jan. 14. Another company may play the piece through the western circuit. A new musical comedy will be secured by Manager Woods for Miss Fay.

ter or the worse during your experience on it?"

"In the broad sense in which you ask me to answer this question I can say that the French stage is much more moral today than it has been since I knew it. It has made great strides as a moral preceptor and as an exemplar of that peculiar word decency. This progress of the French stage—and I think it reaches all over the civilized nations—has been one of marked benefit to the mass of people. The progress has not been made for art's sake alone, but for the benefit of humanity and the great public."

"Do you believe with John Oliver Hobbes that the so-called immoral French plays are not written for French consumption, but for the transient population of Paris?"

Mme. Bernhardt shrugged her shoulders as only a Frenchwoman can. She waved her hands. Mr. Mayer looked worried. And then the divine Sarah said:

"I know of no immoral French plays. How could there be?"

"Who do you think is the greatest living dramatist?"

"That is an unfair and an unengaging question to ask. If I should answer you candidly and honestly it would mean a flood of trouble for me. I have a great respect for many dramatists. The writers in France are today at the flood almost of their ability."

PRIMROSE MINSTRELS, WITH LONDON'S GEORGE AT THE HEAD.

Sarah Bernhardt Speaks Her Mind on Many Things

She Talks Interestingly of the Stage, of Plays and the Players.

Here are some questions that a New York interviewer asked Sarah Bernhardt and her answers thereto:

"Do you think in this age of commercialism that dramatic art should bow to the prevalent spirit? Should the business interest be brought forth in the drama, rather than the idea of love and tragedy?"

"There is no such thing as putting any one line of thought first. Art always comes first. If business interests suggest art or can be made art, why then have commercial plays. If love or crime suggests better art, then write your play about them. No one can tell how to write a play or what to write about. If it is a real author and writer, from his soul it makes little difference what the stage setting is. He can write quite as convincing comedies as he can overwhelming tragedies. It all depends upon what he has in his soul and what he has to say."

"Have you read any of Bernard Shaw's plays, which are just now receiving such conspicuous notice in this country?"

"If you refer to 'Mrs. Warren's Profession,' I have never read it. I have read 'Candida' and 'Man and Superman.' I read them in English, and believe me, I could not find, hard as I tried, a trace of immorality in either of them."

"You do not think that Mr. Shaw's plays have an immoral influence?"

"No, I do not think they have. I do not think that any play can have an immoral influence. I realize that this is quite a broad proposition, quite a difficult question to answer satisfactorily to the American public. It is to my mind without the realms of possibility that a play which could be put on in America would have an immoral influence. If the play contains immoral ideas the fact of its exploitation on the stage makes a lesson of morality. This, however, is a subject for the church and not for the stage. I believe it has also become a subject for the law in New York."

"Do you think the French stage has changed in its moral tone for the bet-

ter or the worse during your experience on it?"

"In the broad sense in which you ask me to answer this question I can say that the French stage is much more moral today than it has been since I knew it. It has made great strides as a moral preceptor and as an exemplar of that peculiar word decency. This progress of the French stage—and I think it reaches all over the civilized nations—has been one of marked benefit to the mass of people. The progress has not been made for art's sake alone, but for the benefit of humanity and the great public."

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Reducing these figures to a general basis representative of the business of a theater in the downtown district of Chicago, the general totals have a broader meaning for the layman.

The average downtown theater in Chicago has a seating capacity of 1,400 distributed from orchestra circle to the galleries. In such a theater there will be 800 seats selling at \$1.50 each, 300 seats averaging 80 cents, and another 300 seats averaging 40 cents—a total of \$1,500 a night, with all seats filled, and a total of \$10,920 for a week of seven days.

But this average Chicago house with the 1,400 seats is doing good business if the average for the week is \$3,000 at the box office. When the week's sale is \$7,000 the theater may expect to give its 65 per cent of gross receipts to the playing company, as indicated in the above distribution. If the returns of the box office be the house limits through an engagement and the attraction be some special star whose "drawing" capacity is unquestioned, always, as in the case of Bernhardt, Mansfield, and others of the class, the theater may have agreed to give even 85 per cent of the gross receipts to the company. Ordinarily, for the ordinary company which may or may not bring \$5,000 a week, the basis of a contract is 50 per cent to house and company.

This in the \$5,000 a week company business on the 65 per cent basis, the company will get \$3,250. The house's share will be \$1,750, and out of this the lump distributions for the week will be:

Gross receipts for week.....\$1,750
To salaries account.....\$450
Rental.....\$200
Advertising.....\$150
Taxes and insurance.....\$75
Heat and light.....\$75
Miscellaneous expenses.....\$75

Net profits.....\$1,200

In all these figures of the theater income, one item has not appeared, that of the theater programme. Incidentally, this is a source of income rather than of expense. There are two prominent printing companies in the city which are pleased to compete for the privilege of printing all the programmes a theater may want, these not only to be free of cost but a source of profit, averaging about \$150 a month to the house.

In this work the contracting printing company pays the lump sum for the privilege of supplying the theater, looking up the advertising which shall make this feature of a programme the printing company's source of profit.

Counting the house profits on a successful \$5,000 week at \$545, however, does not include the item of repairs and decorations which confront the theater manager at regular intervals. There is wear and tear on a theater's chairs, carpets, draperies and wall decorations, out of the proportion to that in most public places. The manager of a 1,400 seat house in downtown Chicago counts upon spending at least \$15,000 in decorations every two years. An orchestra chair itself may cost him \$10; a gallery chair at \$2.50 is reasonable. Carpeting may cost \$3 to \$4 a yard, and need be renewed every year. Breakages of many kind serve to annoy

"You mean your President—you mean Mr. Roosevelt?"

"Is he your ideal of the ideal man?"

"This word strenuous is new to me. I think I understand its meaning. I imagine that the American public also understands its meaning. When you put it in plain and unadorned French it means a manly man. That is a person that no one can contradict. Am I a republican or a democrat, you ask? I am a democrat."

THEATRES NOT GOLD MINES; MARGIN OF PROFIT SMALL

Insight Into The Receipts and Expenditures of a Chicago Playhouse.

Chicago, Jan. 6.—As an indication of how little the theatergoing public knows of a theater management it needs to regard only the distribution of the \$3 that go for a pair of orchestra seats. This money inevitably goes into the box office. But what is its after distribution? In what percentages? And where?

In the beginning it may be conceded that the company which appears in a good play of its kind adapted to the house's clientele, will receive 65 per cent of the gross receipts of the box

and to tax the management of a house until it becomes a necessary condition that every little while some play is produced under normal conditions, which, instead of bringing him \$5,000 a week, double that sum, and leaves the house with more than \$1,000 to the good each week for a month or more. Companies that will promise these \$10,000 a week plays are to be cultivated by the manager of the theater when he maps out his "season" in the interest of a variety of performances, to suit all tastes. It is so much more promising to give 65 per cent of the proceeds of a \$10,000 a week performance than it is to pledge 50 per cent of a possible \$4,500 a week business. And there are instances in Chicago theatrical history where a good company in a good house has played to \$200 a night houses.

A good theater has its own clientele which will come to it regardless of the performance billed there. It is akin to the situation out of which a man buys a novel because of a publisher's imprint on the title page. And in this comparison the position of the publisher in bringing out a book and that of the theatrical manager who opens up his house to a new production is identical. The theater manager occasionally discovers that a play has failed miserably in his house; why it failed, neither he nor the company manager can guess!

It is through the clientele that his house has established that the theater manager finds much leverage with companies seeking his playhouse. Here he may eliminate a good deal of the element of chance. For instance, he will have come into business touch with certain companies whose appearance in his house means standing room only for the period of the stay. They are \$10,000 a week companies without a single element of chance that they fail of the mark. But to reach this they must play in the house with the clientele that has accepted them in the past. One of these companies that had played in a certain house with much success became dissatisfied with the terms of the house and the next season chose a better theater, only to lose money miserably. Since then it has returned to the old place, glad to get the 60 per cent of gross receipts. One Chicago theater has booked a single attraction for a term of years aggregating 26 weeks of performances, and these 26 weeks have aggregated \$263,000 sales at the box office.

It is this type of play which the manager is anxious to get into his house always. But in the interest of the variety which he may wish to have in his season's plans he must take on some plays in which he has all of a gambler's risk. How great this risk in the new plays may be suggested in the experience of Charles Frohman in a period of 20 years. In that time Frohman has produced about 35 plays a year, putting thousands of dollars into some of them that they have not returned 1,000 cents to him. Some have been enormous successes, but others that have been staged in houses of his knowledge and experience have run two or three nights only to be buried past resurrection.

Occasionally in the dull summer season the theater manager has a proposition from some company which is disposed to forego a play. The occasion comes from the fact that a play which has run in Chicago extends itself in a territory within at least a 500-mile radius of the city. The billing of the city, newspaper criticisms and comments, the chance country visitor—all are aids in making the play known to the resident of the small and large cities within this radius. To have a play in a territory within a city which has made a name for itself in a territory of 2,000,000 is precedent enough.

On this basis the company manager may go to the theater manager in the dull season, contracting with the house to make good the house expenses for a week or two weeks' performance and dividing the proceeds above expenses on a basis of 50 per cent. Frohman without this the house would be closed—always a bad thing for a house. "In the season"—and there is a chance for some unexpected money with all the expenses of the occasion made good.

As a business proposition for the investment of mere idle capital the theater is not an attractive thing. A theater that costs \$250,000 may be altogether another thing than a theater that costs another \$250,000. Without a standing and a clientele any theater is all risk. One may have these attributes almost without the asking; another may never have them. One manager may become a millionaire; a hundred may die in poverty. There are theaters in Chicago where the theater investment, regardless of other sources of income from building rents, reaches to \$500,000. To be an investor in the best sense such a theater, with all its risks and chances, must net \$25,000 a year clear to its owner's pocket.

George Ade has sailed from New York for Europe and expects to pass the winter in Egypt. His actress, Tennant of "The College Widow" company, telegraphed a New York paper during the past week denying most emphatically the reported engagement between her and Mr. Ade.

An extravaganza entitled "His Majesty" is to have its first presentation in Philadelphia February 12. Its author and composer is Shafter Howard, and Nelson Roberts is looking after the details. The piece was produced privately a year ago in New York and made such a good impression that ample backing has been secured to give it an elaborate staging.

Notwithstanding the many stories circulated about Mme. Schumann-Hook, the differences existing between her and F. C. Whitney have been satisfactorily adjusted and she will once more be seen as the star in "Love's Lottery," commencing Jan. 28.



THE SONG HIT, "CORDELIA MALONE," IN "PIFF! PAFF! POUFF!"