

development of the city is being hampered, that real estate sales are almost at an end and that business is dull, all of which is due, to some degree, to the weight of the yearly levy. We have all agreed that something must be done. The opportunity has come to mitigate conditions.

"I have managed to land a proposition," he continued, lapsing after a slight pause into a more unconventional and confidential tone, "which should relieve the situation to some extent. Every year the deficit in our light department grows. The chance has now come for the establishment in our city of a plant which will be able to furnish power at a much cheaper rate, which will sell us on a meter basis, rather than by the peak load and which will be a boon to our industrial future. If the deal goes through we can lower the price of light to the consumers and we can wipe out that deficit."

"And what will the present company say to this?" asked Alderman Deavitt.

"Not a word," replied the Mayor. "There is nothing in our agreement with them which will prevent us buying all but one horse power from the proposed company. When the agreement was made, they thought they had all the water power in the district controlled. They missed one bet."

The committee waited. They all knew that the Mayor was just as anxious to tell as they were to learn. "The bet they missed," said he, "is at the water works. Power can be generated just below the reservoir. Energy is being wasted there every minute. I had thought of going into this matter, but until now I have never had the time. But others have been busy and this afternoon there will be another meeting at which Mr. McDermott and Mr. Jamieson, a capitalist and an engineer from the east, will attend. They are behind the project and will be able to furnish full details. I'll expect you back at three."

Had any doubts, any suspicions, any fears been aroused by the Mayor's brief outline of the Consumers' Power Company proposition, as it came to be called, they were dispelled at the afternoon meeting. McDermott the quick, the witty, the affable,

the affluent was not to be denied. They all liked him. And Jamieson, Phillip Jamieson, a little taciturn, rather technical, fulfilled their idea of an expert electrical engineer. He had the situation at his finger ends. The difficulties which must be overcome he compared to those he had met in Mexico and Japan.

As the two talked, the members of the Industrial Committee saw their fondest dreams realized. They saw the sub-divisions they had not dared place on the market yet opened, and bright with electric lights. The city solicitor was instructed to draw up an agreement to be submitted to the people for ratification as soon as possible. By this agreement the city was to exempt the property of the company from taxation, the company was to be given a site, not to cost more than fifty thousand dollars, the first bond issue of \$100,000 was to be guaranteed by the city and the city was to have first claim on all power generated at a price not exceeding twenty-one dollars a horse power. The company was to be incorporated with one-half the capital stock of one hundred thousand dollars paid up.

"It seems to me," said Mac, carefully eliding any easy expressions, "that the agreement if consummated can only result in mutual benefit. The city is amply protected. Although you give us the site, it is yours until our plant is erected. By issuing debentures to cover the cost of the site, you spread the expenditure over a long term of years, and what you save in your light department should create the sinking fund to meet these debentures ten years from now. With cheaper power the city might easily install an ornamental lighting system on a local improvement basis in the business district on the down-town streets would become avenues of brightness at night. This alone would give an impetus to the retail trade. It is merely a matter of conservation of natural resources; more than that, of turning these resources to useful ends. Had the Council been narrow there would have been little chance of this going through, but broad-minded men see farther and fare better than those who are unable to grasp the complexities of such problems as this.

The agreement went through the Council without a dissenting voice. The day for the vote of the people was set.

The result was sure. The newspapers carried on a brisk campaign with "Cheaper Light, Cheaper Power and a Greater New Birmingham" as the slogan. The city was removed from the east just far enough to have caught the western spirit of progress at any cost. Yet on the eve of polling day there came a feeling of unrest. The by-law seemed all right, but who were these men behind it, the promoters? No one knew. No one had enquired. The feeling began to spread.

Having felt the suspicious attitude, Mac and Phil were a trifle uneasy as they sat in their sitting-room at the hotel, awaiting the result. Jimmie Barr, of the *Times*, had promised to telephone as soon as the ballots were counted. The polls had been closed for two hours. The vote had not been heavy according to earlier reports. Occasionally they each glanced anxiously at the telephone.

"Mac, you don't suppose that any of these trusting aldermen have turned sour on us and have had the wires hot? It wouldn't do us any good to have the gilt scraped off this little brick. You have the time right on all these trains out of here?"

"It's too late now for them to start anything," replied Mac, reassuringly, and then with a touch of irritation in his voice, he added, "I wish you'd get off the idea, Phil, that we are putting something across on this bunch. This is good business. The more I think of it, the more I feel that we have fallen over something just a little bigger and a little better than we thought, and along lines that are more than legitimate. They're legal. I think, that properly handled, the Consumers' Power Company will pay."

Phil sat up in alarm. "You don't mean that you are thinking of sticking up in this lonely burg to push that thing through? You'll be joining the Board of Trade next and the Boost New Birmingham Club."

He laughed, but it was a nervous laugh and under

(Continued on page 30.)

Toronto—"My Own Town"

Something About the City Where He Spent Part of His Boyhood Affords Pleasant Memories to a Leading Character in the Oriental Play "Kismet."

By VIRNA SHEARD

CANADIANS who have been fortunate enough to see the wonderful Oriental play, "Kismet," staged by that master of stage-craft, Harrison Grey Fisk, and running to crowded houses at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, since Christmas, will recall vividly the beautiful though fearsome figure of the "Wazir Mansur"

that so stimulates the imagination from the first scene in the Bagdad bazaar. They may not have recognized the player who took that role, or have gone so far as to look his name up on their programmes; yet something may have struck them as vaguely familiar in his voice, face or personality.

Hamilton Revelle, who has become celebrated as the "Wazir" of the ancient city conjured for us from a thousand and one years ago, spent a long period of his boyhood in Toronto; and in those "high and far-off times," as Kipling would call them, was well known to many, at least by sight. Although he be-

longed to England, quite recently I heard him refer to Toronto as "my own town."

Mr. Revelle—sometime leading man for England's beloved actors, Sir John Hare, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Cyril Mancee and the late Augustus Harris, has played during several winters in New York. No matter what the role for which he is cast, Broadway audiences greet him with enthusiasm, for they delight in the quality of his speaking voice and the charm of his presence.

It is said that in "Kismet" Otis Skinner, the star, may play the Bagdad beggar for as many years as Joe Jefferson played Rip Van Winkle, and be assured of success. If this be so it is equally true that

Hamilton Revelle, Mr. Skinner's leading man, could continue to play the "Wazir Mansur" for a like period.

Adolph Klauber, the critic, has written, "Mr. Revelle never looked more magnificent or played with greater skill and ease" than in "Kismet."

At least he made an unforgettable picture as he passed through the strange kaleidoscopic dream-city, with the two weird and sinister attendants ever in his wake—the ebony sword-bearer clothed only in the dappled golden leopard-skin that made his gleaming body more deeply black, and the glittering grotesque figure of the mis-shapen one on whose face was written malevolence towards all who walked upright. Truly in those olden days, seemingly brought so near, men knew how to value the force of contrast, and to use it.

We can hardly hope to see these two great actors together in the play of "Kismet" for very long, neither is it likely to be taken upon the road in all its original strength and wonder of setting.

Mr. Revelle returns each summer to England and his home is an historic house called "Elm Grove," at Hampton-on-Thames. His mother, who was a noted beauty and is still very lovely to look at, lives most of the year at Elm Grove and is always there when her son returns. There is a rose garden near the old house and an elm woods where the nightingales sing in April. The house where David Garrick lived and died is almost opposite, and the present drawing-room of Mr. Revelle's home was a room where Garrick often sat and smoked with players from London.

Almost a year ago when England was *en fete*, Hamilton Revelle was Sir George Alexander's star guest at the St. James' Theatre, London, and was selected by him to play the part of John Worthing in "The Importance of being Earnest," a role particularly belonging to Sir George himself. Mr. Revelle assured me that he played it with many misgivings and much fear and trembling, and he will not admit that at any moment he was satisfied with his own performance. However, I prefer to take the verdict of the English papers and critics. One and all gave him the highest praise for his render-

ing of a part that, while apparently light and easy, is most difficult and exacting and requires a versatility and charm of voice and manner that are direct gifts of the gods.

Hamilton Revelle is—like most successful men—an indefatigable worker, even during so-called holidays. He is a water colour artist of a high order and understands photography to such a degree that, as he laughingly says, he could make a very good living with his camera if all else failed. It is certain that Toronto people will welcome Mr. Revelle gladly whenever he returns to what he has so tenderly called "my own town."



Elm Grove at Hampton-on-Thames Where Hamilton Revelle Spends His Summer Vacations; Almost Opposite the House Where David Garrick Lived.



Hamilton Revelle.