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CANADA is increasing her knowledge of the plays and works of Mr. George Bernard Shaw, and will soon be able to pass an examination in the Shavian philosophy. During this week Mr. Forbes Robertson and Miss Gertrude Elliott are playing the satirical comedy "Caesar and Cleopatra" at the Princess Theatre, Toronto. The production is most luxurious as a spectacle, though in all probability it falls short of Mr. Beer-bohm Tree's "Antony and Cleopatra" now dazzling London audiences with its "barbaric pearl and gold." The play, like all other dramas by Mr. Shaw, defies classification or conventional discussion. The word "delightful" has been overworked in describing it, but it does justice to the merely amusing side of the play. If one had not seen Mr. Forbes Robertson as "Hamlet," his appearance as "Caesar," according to Shaw, would not be so perplexing. As it is, the performance leaves the average spectator in doubt as to whether the dramatist means to "guy" the historical Roman or the present-day theatre-goer. The title of one Shaw play might be the motto for them all—"You Never Can Tell."

Mr. Shaw has jumbled ancient history and customs with modern methods and even modern colloquialisms until the bewildered auditor comes to the conclusion that the mixture is intended to be just amusing and gives up looking for a "moral" or a startling philosophy. Mr. Shaw is not even shocking, which is usually his aspiration. To be condemned by those who have any regard for the fundamental decencies of life is his highest joy, but this time he fails to excite any stronger sentiment than amusement.

Mr. Forbes Robertson plays the difficult part of a mock-heroic Caesar exceedingly well, but the majority feel that his ability is wasted in such a flamboyant role. Miss Gertrude Elliott is a naive and girlish Cleopatra, to whose charms it is not easy to adjust traditions of the "Serpent of the Nile." She is bewitching in the "Sphinx scene," but again memory bids us think of the gentle Ophelia of three years ago. "Caesar and Cleopatra" is well worth seeing, but it is to be hoped that two such artists as Mr. Forbes Robertson and Miss Elliott will return to us soon in more dignified drama.

* *

Mr. E. S. Willard, one of Canada's favourites, is having his most successful American tour, according to all accounts. In the states of the Middle West he is greeted with enthusiasm. He may come to Canada this spring. What has become of "The Cardinal"? We should be glad to see it again, even if we were obliged to go without "The Professor's Love-Story."

* *

While Miss Gertrude Elliott has been presenting a unique "Cleopatra," her more illustrious sister Miss Maxine Elliott, has continued her triumphant

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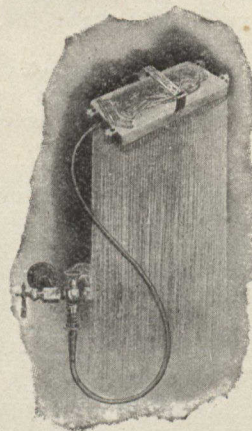
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