

# In the World of Amusement

## General Gossip

The country is suffering from a severe case of vaudeville and pictures. Each day multiplies the number of houses added to this form of amusement. Some of these are new theatres, but for the most part they are those which in other seasons were devoted to "legitimate" entertainment.

Vaudeville managers are naturally gratified at this condition of affairs. There is no other footlight amusement which can be operated at so little expense.

The present vogue is developing a new form of vaudeville—the travelling company. At least it is, for the most part, a new form of vaudeville for the larger cities.

Years ago Col. Hopkins had his Trans-Oceanics—an organization of vaudevilleans; the second form was the burlesque company, in which the numbers of the vaudeville portion of the bill, or "olio," became members of the cast of a closing ensemble. But the small towns became weary of the traveling vaudeville show and it practically went out of existence.

It has remained for William Morris to revive it. His experiment with a "show" headed by Harry Lauder proved so highly successful that The White Rats have begun organizing traveling companies with artists and pictures, and "legitimate" circuit managers are coming to their aid with offers of houses.

Whether the experiment now being made by the White Rats proves finally successful or not remains to be seen, but a majority of the individual members of the order are to be complimented upon the loyalty they are displaying. It has been conclusively shown where members of the order have refused high salaries to play for their "own" companies at an inferior price.

For many years the devotees of the stage have been endeavoring to convince the public that their shrine was as important to civilization and progress as the pulpit. Discussions pro and con have occupied the press, speakers and essayists have argued the matter and both sides have claimed a victory more or less decisive. It has remained for one of our foremost playwrights, however, to come boldly forward in defence of the stage as a greater factor than the church in

ied experience has fitted him to judge upon the subject without bias. And it was no less a person than Mr. Thomas, who, at a recent meeting of the Actors' Society, bravely proclaimed: "The stage is more important to civilization than the church."

We are glad to give our concurrence here. We believe that the great majority of Americans so believe. We beg to submit this address to Mr. Thomas' assertion. We believe the time is coming when theology will be based upon actual human experience rather than the suppositional experience of Divinity.

We may be wrong. We are not above that. But we believe that history will sustain us in the statement that whensoever the church has been the paramount influence, civilization has camped. The stage stirs the mentality and where the mentality is active, the physical forces cannot sleep.—Chicago Show World.

Mr. Frank Ormsby, the tenor has filled many important engagements last season, winning for himself a position in the very front rank of oratorio and recital singers. Wherever he appeared, it was with the greatest possible success. He has sung for the New York Oratorio Society, The Apollo Club, of Chicago, the Cecilia Society of Boston, the Century Club of Buffalo, the Bethel Club of Memphis, and many others. He has sung the tenor parts of the "Children's Crusade," "Messiah," "Elijah," "Agnus," "Hymn of Praise," "Martyr of Antioch," "Samson and Delilah," "Creation," and "Judas Macabaeus," besides these works he has given many recital programmes, made up of numbers by the best American, English, German and Italian composers. The Harmonic Society is fortunate in securing an artist of such quality and of such varied experience. Hamiltonians have too few opportunities of hearing singers of this calibre and they should show their appreciation by turning out in large numbers at the concert on Feb. 23rd.

Besides hearing Mr. Ormsby, they will hear a fine chorus, an excellent orchestra and Mrs. J. Paskin McDonald and Ruthven McDonald. The "Seasons" is just full of dramatic choruses, charming solos, duets, trios and the orchestra is full of dainty bits of melody. There is not a particle of dry-as-dust music in the work, nor is there a moment



JENNINGS AND RENFREW.  
Parody artists at Bennett's next week.

of blank verse, and Miss Lasche should make a charming Juliet. The cast of characters is as follows: Romeo, Joseph Selman; Mercutio, Thaddeus Gray; Paris, Campbell Stratton; Capulet, Lawrence Barbour; Benvolio, Stuart Beebe; Tybalt, Albert Tavernier; Friar John, Douglas Dumbrell; Peter, F. J. Sager; Friar Laurence, Mr. Tavernier; Apothecary, Stuart Beebe; Page to Paris, Kathryn Shay; Lady Capulet, Miss Claudia Lucas; Nurse, Miss Eugenie Du Bois; a guest, Miss Mildred Herman, and Juliet, Miss Elfreda Lasche.

Although Romeo, in green room estimation, is generally regarded as an inferior part to that of Juliet, it has been played with great success by many distinguished actors. Barry, the "enchanted lover" of the English stage, about a century ago, was much admired in the character. Mrs. Giber, Mrs. Siddons and Fanny Kemble won much of their fame by their performance of Juliet. Miss Maude Adams and Miss Julia Marlowe have recently shown American audiences embodiments of the character, which in beauty, fidelity and passionate earnestness have never been surpassed by any representative of the part who have appeared in this country. Miss Lasche should be exceptionally pleasing in this role. Mr. Selman has appeared many times as Romeo, and is particularly happy in the reading of blank verse.

Bartley Campbell's great drama "The Galley Slave," will be the attraction that will follow "Romeo and Juliet" at the Savoy.

Photographs of Miss Mildred Herman will be given every lady who attends the souvenir matinee Tuesday next. The following Tuesday photographs of Douglas Dumbrell will be given. Mr. Dumbrell is a local boy, and has been doing consistently good work with this company.

There has been a great demand for photographs of Miss Lasche and Mr. Selman and the management will shortly issue a series of photographs of these favorites in their favorite character.

## At Bennett's

Theatregoers at Bennett's next week will have an opportunity of seeing one of the most discussed sketches in vaudeville, Edward Davis' latest offering, a tragedy playlet, entitled "All Rivers Meet at Sea." Mr. Davis, who left the pulpit for the dramatic stage, and later turned to vaudeville, was one of the first artists of note to successfully introduce the tragic element into vaudeville. His great sketch, "The Unmasking," was presented over a thousand times in the varieties. Discussing his latest offering he said: "The tragic note is still dominant, and I suppose whatever success may have come to me, will be due to my efforts for days and days, and maybe for years."

When it isn't full of interest. To open the programme the chorus will sing, "God Save the King," "O Canada," by Lavallee, and the orchestra will play De Albert Ham's March Militaire "Canada," which proved such a success at the tercentenary celebration in Quebec.

One of the most talented child actresses of the year is little Elsie Graves, who appeared recently at Her Majesty's theatre in London as "queen of the fairies" in an elaborate production given by Berleham Tree.

It was a strong cast, Ellen Terry, Stella Patrick Campbell, and Viola Tree being among the women performers, but little Elsie made the hit of the piece. She danced with the most exquisite grace and read her lines with a genuine sense of humor.

She made such a hit with the audience that at the end of the performance Mr. Tree himself escorted her to the front of the stage and introduced her. It was her first performance, and London critics declare they never saw a child give a more finished performance or one so full of promise.

## At the Savoy

With the presentation next week of Shakespeare's great love tragedy, "Romeo and Juliet," the Selman Company will produce one of the most ambitious offerings it has attempted during its Hamilton engagement. The play will be elaborately staged and costumed and should afford this talented organization ample opportunity to display its ability. Rehearsals have been conducted with more than ordinary care under the direction of Lawrence Barbour, and the result should be a smooth and pleasing performance. A clever interpretation of the title roles by Mr. Selman and Miss Lasche is assured. Mr. Selman is said to have exceptional ability as a reader

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of wonderful ability, and have an artistic offering that will be thoroughly appreciated by those who enjoy real high-class entertainment. The violinist plays classical numbers with the softness and deftness of a master and one of them is very clever with the guitar.

The Bootblack Quartette, singers, dancers and comedians, will be seen in a bright and amusing number. This is one of the best known singing organizations on the Keith-Proctor circuit.

A musical skit, "Five Minutes Late," will be presented by Burt, Kern and Irwin, a trio of musicians and comedians. Jennings and Renfrew will be remembered by many for the hit they scored the first season at the Savoy. They are clever parodists and their material is always original, because it is of their own compositing.

## Elgar Choir

The enterprise of the Elgar Choir executive, in arranging for two concerts this season, has met with the hearty approval of music-lovers, generously signed subscription lists having been handed in to the secretary this week. The second concert has so far appealed most to the choir's patrons and the reserved seats have been fully subscribed for. This leaves the first night's concert, on February 17, as the only opportunity now open for others who desire to hear the choir, and they should not fail to place their names on the lists remaining open, and can be found at the Nordheimer and Anderson music stores and the Conservatory of Music.

To admirers of choral song, no more delightful programme could be offered than that being prepared for the Elgar Choir's first night. There are fascinating compositions by Mendelssohn, Brahms, Verdi, Palestrina, Grechaninov, Bridge, R. S. Ambrose, Voght, Paul Ambrose and MacDowell, and their performance by the choir of 120 voices will be a source of greatest pleasure to those who attend. The number include works for full choir, ladies' voices and men's voices, giving a great variety of styles. Altogether, the programme is an advance on former seasons' concerts, and should not be missed by lovers of refined participating. The choir will be assisted by the eminent New York baritone, Claude Cunningham, whose work is known to Hamiltonians. He sang the Eljah solos when that oratorio was given by the Centenary Church choir, and subsequently appeared in concert here on both occasions, creating much enthusiasm by his beautiful voice and expressive singing. His numbers at the Elgar concert will be worthy of the occasion. The unsubscribed seats for the concert on February 17 will doubtless be soon taken up. Now is the time to subscribe.

## At the Grand

An excellent play is to be presented at the Grand on Monday night, when "The Three of Us" will have its first presentation in Hamilton. Though its scenes are laid in a Western mining camp, it is a high class drama of real life. The title originates from three of the principal characters, Rhy MacChesney and her two young brothers, Clem and Sonnie, and it is around them the plot revolves. Rhy MacChesney is the mainstay of the family. She is cheerful, hopeful, and level-headed, who holds a mining claim against the advances of her neighbors and the nagging persuasion of her worthless brother, Clem. The story is a most interesting one, and appeals to all classes. The company presenting the play is headed by Miss Janet Waldorf, whose portrayal of Rhy MacChesney is said to be a delightful piece of acting, and the other members of the cast give able assistance.

Since "Salambo" was produced at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York it is said that no musical production has had such gorgeous artistic setting as the three acts of "The Golden Butterfly," which will be seen at the Grand the week after next, with Grace Van Studdiford. The garden scene is aglow with soft color and sunshine, blue sky, green lawns and flowering hedges, a chateau with marble terraces leading down to the ultra-marine waters of the Danube, on which the guests embark in gaily decorated boats. The Hungarian grape harvest is an artistic triumph, and it is true to nature in color and action.

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The masses of foliage, silver, green and brown, the great clusters of purple, red and golden grapes, the gayly adorned girls and the picturesque costumes of the men and the tinkling of the horses' bells as they are driven past with great baskets piled high with grapes, and the singing of the harvesters, is one of the most beautiful and unusual scenes ever offered the public. The second act



"THE THREE OF US,"  
Which will be seen at the Grand on Monday.

is very piquant and pretty, in the big green room with its flaring lights.

"Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain" is the introductory line of Ireland's greatest poem. The deserted village has inspired many playwrights to take Ireland as the subject of their labors, and in "Rory of the Hill," which will be presented at the Grand next Wednesday matinee and night, the author still clings to its traditions. It is a comedy drama laid in the Emerald Isle, and introduces its auditors to the life and laughter of the land of the Shamrock. Bernard Daly, the young actor-singer, heads the company engaged for the production of the play, and will sing a number of new songs. Seats will be on sale on Monday.

"Laughter-loving" and "mirth-com-

ing" the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, where the top price is one dollar. This is due to an arrangement the Shuberts, who book the theatre, have with Klaw & Erlanger, not to play any attraction there at a higher scale.

"The Merry Widow" company, which Henry W. Savage is sending to the Grand the week after next, is the only light opera organization on tour, besides "The Golden Butterfly," which carries a complete orchestra. Mr. Savage, who is recognized as the foremost American producer of light opera, has always insisted on having the orchestral part of the programme as nearly perfect as possible. The orchestra of eighteen pieces, which he will bring to this city, has been drafted from the membership of his famous English grand opera orchestra. It rendered the haunting and alluring mel-



WALTER HAMFDEN AND FRANK MILLS.  
As Manson and the Vicar, respectively, in "The Servant in the House," which is coming to the Grand.

municating" are two of the titles that have been given to the clever comedienne, Kathryn Osterman, who will be seen at the Grand shortly in her delightful comedy, "The Night of the Play," garbed in her \$1,000 cloth of gold costume, which is declared to be the handsomest gown on the American stage. Miss Osterman will surely win the admiration of the fair sex. The play itself stands alone in the field of high comedy, being infinitely superior, with more genuine laughs, more intricate situations, which develop in a perfectly natural manner, than any comedy which has yet been presented in this city. Kathryn is a really clever comedienne.

"The Servant in the House," which is to be presented at the Grand next Monday week, by the Henry Miller Associate Players, from the Savoy Theatre, New York, is the only play in America in which anything approaching the figure of Christ appeared. Needless to say, this is done in a perfect spirit of reverence, else it would never have been tolerated, much less endorsed, as it has been, by clergymen and theatre-goers in general. This remarkable drama has been called America's Passion Play. This designation probably is deserved, as nothing more nearly approximating the Passion Play of Oberammergau will ever be permitted in the United States. Another unprecedented fact in the career of "The Servant in the House" is that it wins both the religious and the non-religious elements.

Hilda Spang, the English actress, who has been at the head of the Lyceum Theatre Company in New York for several seasons, comes to the Grand next Friday and Saturday in her new play, "A Man and His Mate." The company supporting Miss Spang is a particularly strong one, gotten together especially for the New York engagement. No actress on the American stage receives so much attention from the magazines as Miss Spang, who is considered one of the most brilliant women before the footlights. The fact that she is to play here at dollar prices is owing to her engagement to

odies of this most sensationally successful of all modern light operas during its recent triumphant run of eighteen weeks at the Tremont Theatre, Boston. The orchestra is under the direction of Augustus Barrett, the widely-known English conductor.

The company which will present "The Merry Widow" in this city is the New York production. It comes here almost direct from its conquests in the United States. It is headed by the fascinating Viennese prima donna, Lina Abarbanel, who literally had Boston at her feet during the long run there. That duo of clever comedians, Oscar Fegman and John Thomas, are also members of the cast, which includes Charles Meakins, Harold Blake, William C. Wilson, Anna Bussert and Carolyn Sedley. The entire scenic production will be brought here intact.



OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN,  
The New York theatrical man.

Other Dramatic  
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HILDA SPANG.  
Who will be seen in "A Man and His Mate," at the Grand next Friday and Saturday.

the exertion of a civilizing influence over mankind. Augustus Thomas has had a wide experience. He may justly be termed the foremost American playwright. But that is a climax. It is worth while to first consider some of the scenes preceding his rise. He is the son of a St. Louis physician. He had a public school education and then served as a page-boy of the Forty-first Congress. Then, for six years he was a railroad worker. Then he went into newspaper work, rising to the position of editor—all this before he began to write American plays for American people. We believe that this var-



THADDEUS GRAY.  
Who will appear at the Savoy next week as Mercutio in "Romeo and Juliet."



HOCKMAN BROTHERS,  
in their novel comedy, "Detective Detected," at Bennett's next week.