

## Mr. Gerard Leads Opera Audience In a Great Outburst of Cheering When News Reaches Metropolitan

News of President Wilson's address to Congress was carried to theatre audiences throughout Broadway last night by Herald bulletins and by the Evening Telegram, and in each instance was received with an outburst of enthusiasm exceeding any patriotic demonstration New York has known in years.

There have been many remarkable demonstrations in the Metropolitan Opera House, but none to equal the patriotic outburst of a crowded house when the National Anthem was played twice just before the opening of the last act of "The Canterbury Pilgrims," while those standing occupants of orchestra seats, parties in the two boxes and all in the upper galleries joined twice in singing "The Star Spangled Banner."

The first information that the President had declared to Congress that a state of war existed reached the crowd that had gone to the opera house by the special edition of the Evening Telegram. The papers spread from the lobbies and lower corridors to the main body of the house and then to the parterre boxes.

### Newspapers at Opera

In the first tier of boxes, occupied by the stockholders of the Metropolitan Opera and Real Estate Company and their friends, an ultra-conventional place, was the unusual spectacle of a newspaper being read. Mrs. Oliver Hartman, who, with Miss Eliza Maxwell, was in box No. 6, owned by Mr. William K. Vanderbilt, was the first to unfold a copy of the Telegram. In a moment she waved the newspaper in the air and passed it to a friend in an adjoining box.

The thirst for important developments that all had expected spread rapidly through the parterre row. Men of the various parties hurried to the street, and in a few moments scores of copies of the Telegram with news from Washington were being unfolded, spread out carefully over the wide rails of the boxes and read.

All of the members of the party with Mr. and Mrs. John Sanford in box No. 81, including Miss Michael M. E. Hartman, had a paper each. Mr. J. Stewart Barney bought copies of the Telegram for all his guests in box 29. Half the persons in the orchestra seats buried their faces in the papers. Thus the news from Washington spread through the opera house.

As soon as Gullio Gatti-Casazza, general manager of the opera company, heard the news from Washington he asked Arthur Bodansky, conductor to play "The Star Spangled Banner" just before the curtain was raised on the last act.

Many in the great audience realized what was coming when they saw Mr. Bodansky stand erect in the conductor's box and motion to all the men of the orchestra who can play while standing to rise. By the time the first notes of the national anthem had been heard half the audience had stood.

By the time the first bar of the stirring song had been played many in the house found their voices, and before the close three thousand men and women had joined in one of the vocal outbursts of patriotism New York has witnessed. A din of cheers and hand clapping followed, and continued for several minutes.

### Mr. Gerard Calls for Cheers

The enthusiasm subsided for a moment. Then Mr. James W. Gerard, the recalled Ambassador to Berlin, advanced to the front of box 17, where he was with Mrs. Gerard and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Iselin. The audience saw him, and remained silent.

Mr. Gerard raised his hand and cried in a voice that rang clearly through the house:

"Three cheers for President Wilson."

Three vocal roars followed.

From one of the boxes came the cry "Three cheers for Mr. Gerard," and the response was unanimous.

But the real spirit of the demonstration came when from far up in one of the galleries a man's voice piped:

"Three cheers for our allies."

Then the audience, unusually the personification of conventionality, lost control of itself. It howled for the allies and continued yelling long after the last of the three cheers had found accentuation in that vocal din. Men advanced to the front of the boxes in the two rows and waved their hands over their heads. Women cried as they waved the tulle scarfs that adorned their evening costumes.

Even that was not the end of the extraordinary demonstration of patriotic feeling. Mr. Bodansky waved aloft his baton and a second time the orchestra struck up the national anthem. This time every one present sang in full voice from first note to last.

The audience was not satisfied. A voice called for "three cheers for the army and navy." This was responded to with another patriotic roar.

With that the opera patron seemed to have exhausted their impulse. Gradually the lights were lowered and the performance of "The Canterbury Pilgrims" was resumed after a delay of nearly half an hour.

### Mme. Ober Faints

The demonstration in the auditorium had its effect "back stage." Mme. Margarete Ober, one of the leading members of the cast, singing the role of The Wife of Bath, fainted, while the patriotic outburst was at its height and was unable to appear in the last act.

The only explanation given by the opera house management for Mme. Ober's collapse was that she became hysterical. It is known that Mme. Ober, who is an Austrian by birth, possesses friendly sentiments for the Central Powers.

In the Astor Theatre Mr. Clifton Crawford stepped before the curtain at the close of the first act of "Her Soldier Boy" and read the first bulletin as follows: "Special bulletins from

the New York Herald, half-past eight. President Wilson has just gone before Congress and declared that a state of war exists between the United States and Germany. He said this would mean that the United States would act in co-operation with the Allies, and recommended that Congress call for 500,000 volunteers."

As the audience began to cheer the theatre orchestra started to play "The Star Spangled Banner." Mr. Crawford stood at the salute. Spectators jumped to their feet and sang the anthem to orchestral accompaniment.

The moment they finished a man in the third row threw his hat high in the air and shouted:—"Three cheers for President Wilson!"

"Hear Hear!" exclaimed others. "Now—Hurrah! Hurrah. Hurrah!" exclaimed the leader, and every one present instantly followed him, the cry reverberating from parterre to gallery.

"Dan" Quilkin read the same bulletin in the Winter Garden. Spectators stood up, cheering and shouting:—"The Star Spangled Banner" was started. Half of the spectators sang, the rest continued to cheer. Then the organ played "America" and every one joined in the song.

One or two patriotic allusions to the United States in "Our Betters," in the Hudson Theatre, started immed-

iate applause, and the lines at the close of the play, when one of the characters said of European mobs, "They're not worth bothering about, I'm sailing for America tomorrow," three curtain calls followed.

The reading of Herald bulletins started other demonstrations in the Globe Theatre, the Casino, the Princess, the Thirty-ninth Street, the Shubert and the Forty-fourth Street, while in the Strand one of the largest audiences of the season applauded vociferously after Mr. Alfred Jones, manager of the theatre, finished reading the news.

There was great enthusiasm in the Gaiety Theatre when two men, seated in the second row of the orchestra, in the middle aisle, appeared with copies of the Evening Telegram. They stood, holding the newspapers high above their heads that the audience might see the headlines. Then they proceeded toward the back of the theatre, the entire house cheering. The orchestra started "The Star Spangled Banner" and the whole audience joined in the demonstration continued several minutes.

The audience that participated in the demonstration was of fashionable consequence. Mr. Reginald de Koven, composer of the opera; Mrs. de Koven and the Duchesse de Chaulnes were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Edmund L. Baylies in box No. 53. Mr. and Mrs. James Lowell Putnam and Mr. and Mrs. Newbold Morris were with Mrs. William Post in box No. 23.

Mrs. James Russell Soloy, Mr. and Mrs. Gouverneur Morris Carnochan and Mrs. Stuart Duncan and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor were in box No. 17. Mr. and Mrs. William Fitzhugh Whitehead and Mr. and Mrs. Allen Gouge were guests of Mr. Robert Golet in box No. 1.



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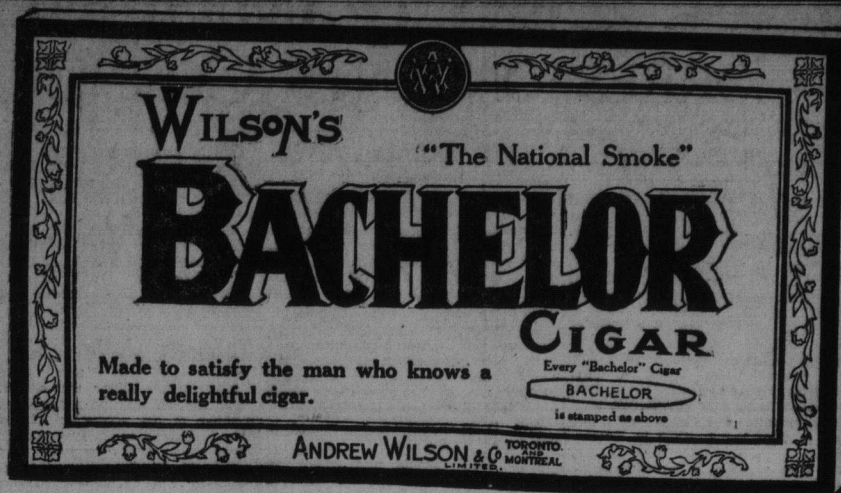
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