

AT THE THEATRES

At the Royal Alexandra

Premier Performance of Judith Zaraine

To witness a play such as "Judith Zaraine," which received its first performance at the Royal Alexandra yesterday afternoon and evening, as once invited the question whether the political and social conditions that form its dark background are really attributable to the United States at this period of the republic's history. That is not a trite saying which discards modern business to war as ruthless, as disregardful of moral rights, of family and individual happiness and of the stability of the state as that of any victim of ambition who has waded through slaughter to throne.

that neither impaired Judith's essential womanliness nor her loyalty to the ideal for which she was willing to die. Miss Ashwell is supported by a small but highly capable company. To Chas. Waldron as David Murray, the strenuous of the play, and to Mabel Russell, Eddie makes a hit, but it is not his old stuff which goes the best, but a copying of Nora Bayes and Jack Norwood's lovelorn and Jack Norwood's method of kidding the other actors on the bill. Eddie's new songs, while good, are not so good as the old ones. Mabel helps Eddie a lot.

At the Princess

A. E. Matthews in "The Importance of Being Earnest"

Brilliant Irishmen have always made the English stage scintillate with their wit, and since Richard Brinsley Sheridan a generation has never passed without contributions of a memorable character to the British drama from Ireland. While Oscar Wilde has nothing to add to the list, his play "The Importance of Being Earnest" is a gem of a play, and in many respects a forerunner of the Shavian cut, and in the paradox and topsy-turvy whimsicality of his dialogue he has nothing to learn from his successors. Those who know society and the world of fashion cannot fail to be intensely amused with the satire and jest of "The Importance of Being Earnest."

At the Grand

"Way Down East"

"Way Down East" has been presented in this city many times, but the popular old rural play was never before given here with the scenic equipment and farm appurtenances as used in the production at the Grand Opera House. It is also a question whether a more able company has presented the play since it was first produced.

Two large audiences witnessed the performance yesterday and the enthusiastic manner in which the pretty story of New England life was received testified to the popularity of the play, and showed that there are still many Toronto theatregoers who can be won when they are offered a wholesome drama.

The story is well known. It is one of the plays which is never forgotten. It retains its old friends, who have loved it for many years, and creates new ones. Its merits are familiar to the theatregoers of three generations at least. It is a play which attracts the best of rural plays. Its native pathos and unsophisticated humor, its snowstorm, and the real live horses and cows of its farmyard scene draw tears and laughter.

At the Gayety

Al. Reeves' Beauty Show

Manager J. J. Henry of the Gayety Theatre has made a New Year's resolution to make this show better than ever this year, and he has certainly begun well by securing Al. Reeves and his famous Beauty show for the opening week. Al. Reeves has one of the best shows in burlesque, farce, and comedy, and he has secured one of the sprightliest and classiest choruses ever seen on the boards of the theatre, and every song has a swing.

Al. Reeves opens the show by introducing each girl in the company by card to the audience. Then puts on the skit, "The College Tour," introducing Andy Lewis and Steve Hickey, who make good in a sprightly plot. Lydia Uynier plays her part as the injured wife to perfection. "Conology" revised introduces Toronto's old favorites, Al. Reeves. He is just as good and better than ever. "Give Me Credit, Boys," sung by Mr. Reeves, had the house. The American ragtime, sung by Mae Busch, was well received. Mary Brandon, the American toe dancer, can dance. The olio was well up to the mark.

The clever English comedian who made a hit in "The Importance of Being Earnest," at the Princess Theatre last night. cloak room or form an alliance with a handbag. But John has provided himself with an imaginary brother, Eton, and is impersonated by his friend Algernon Moncrieff, much to John's mortification, and the delight of his ward, Cecily Cardew, in setting right these complications. The characters get off such gems as these: "Girls never marry the men they flirt with. Girls don't think it right."

The success of angel cake and trifle and such light fare is in the cooking, and the company at the Princess is a most excellent one. A. E. Matthews as Algy has the insufferable conceit and the west end accent which carries off the character of Hamilton Revy. He is also excellently suited to the part of Worthing. The girls are done with particularly clever ingenuities, and Irene Penney and Jane Oaker are admirably adapted to the parts. Ellyth Winthrop as Lady Bracknell is altogether artificial in a caste where the utmost naturalness is necessary to sustain the true note of burlesque, but she makes her points in good style. Florence Edney, Robert Rees, Frederick Raymond and Albert Tavernier were all quite good. The crowded houses yesterday betokened a good run for the week.

At Shea's

Clarice Mayne at Shea's. All odds the best bill since the opening of the new house, is to be seen at Shea's this week. Clarice Mayne, a beautiful woman with a sweet voice and a varied list of songs, is billed as a hit. Her songs serve the place by reason of the brains

mark. The Busch-Deyere four, introducing Billy Busch, the marvelous cornet soloist, in illustrated solos and songs are all to the good.

At the Star

"Miss New York Jr." The Star enjoyed a large patronage yesterday which spoke volumes for the Miss New York Jr. Company, which has put on several sketches, all well received.

In the first burlesque the scene was laid at a summer resort in Newport, R.I., in "The Mother's Last Wish." John L. Black made a decided hit. James Fairburn as Lem, a college lad, also deserves mention. "Paying the Penalty," a Parisian Apache dance and burlesque, was unusual in scenic effects. The final skit, "Slow Town Junction," is the best comedy of the whole performance. Will H. Cohen, the celebrated Hebrew impersonator, is fully up to the standard. Billy S. Newton as bellhop and train announcer evoked much applause by his original stunts and difficult impersonations. Ray O'Dell, Sophie Frank and Pearl Black were favorites, while Ada Corbett in her imitations of Harry Lauder was specially good.

THE SHEEP INDUSTRY.

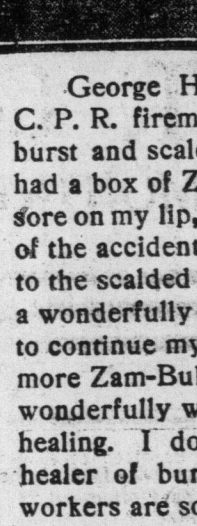
The impression is evidently gaining ground amongst the breeders of pure bred sheep in Canada that the only prospect of securing for themselves a steady annual market for their surplus stock lies in the direction of the encouragement and development of sheep raising as a business in our own country. A year ago they were confronted with quarantine restrictions imposed by the United States, which created conditions for which they were not prepared, and which, in the end, depressed sales in a marked degree. During the greater part of the past season the market has no doubt been a buoyant one, but latterly the feeling of confidence in a continuous demand for Canadian sheep in the United States has steadily declined. The reasons were none too satisfactory for Canadian breeders, and it was evident that the outlook for a steady or increased trade was not particularly encouraging.

It may seem most natural that Canada should be able to obtain a firm and advantageous foothold in the markets of the United States for her sheep and wool, but it is now quite clear that, until the trade policies of the two countries become more firmly established, the Canadian sheep raiser has no market so largely on the United States for his export market, rests upon a very unstable foundation. Fortunately, however, other and very encouraging outlets are available. It may be noted at this point that the home market is not unworthy of consideration. This year not more than five carloads of lambs were shipped to East Buffalo from Ontario, while in 1907 almost 100 carloads were shipped to that city. The Toronto and Montreal markets have absorbed practically the whole output during the past season, and at prices equivalent to that paid for similar grades in Ontario. Buffalo, a fact in itself indicating the strong and growing demand for mutton on the Canadian market.

Notwithstanding the proximity of the United States, the safest outlet for the Canadian product is still to be found in the British and, possibly at an early date, in the European markets. The English wool market is the centre of distribution for the product of the great wool producing countries of the world, including Australia, New Zealand and Argentina. If the sheep industry in this country can ever be developed to reasonable proportions, it is not to be expected that any more natural or reliable market can be found for surplus Canadian wool. In addition to this, when the extent of the industry may make possible the necessary grading and sorting of the product, such that it may be placed upon the British market in attractive condition, the prices realized, may be found much more remunerative than those at present obtained.

It is clear also that the great and natural outlet for our surplus meat products, including those of mutton and lamb, is to be found across the sea. The producing power of the land is unable to yield sufficient for the necessities of the crowded populations of long inhabited countries. Great Britain has a deficit of 100,000,000 lbs. of meat per annum, and it seems probable that she is shortly to have competitors in the market for foreign meats. There is a movement in the British market, in many ways, which will eventually result in the opening up of these countries to a chilled and frozen meat trade. A steady market is with-

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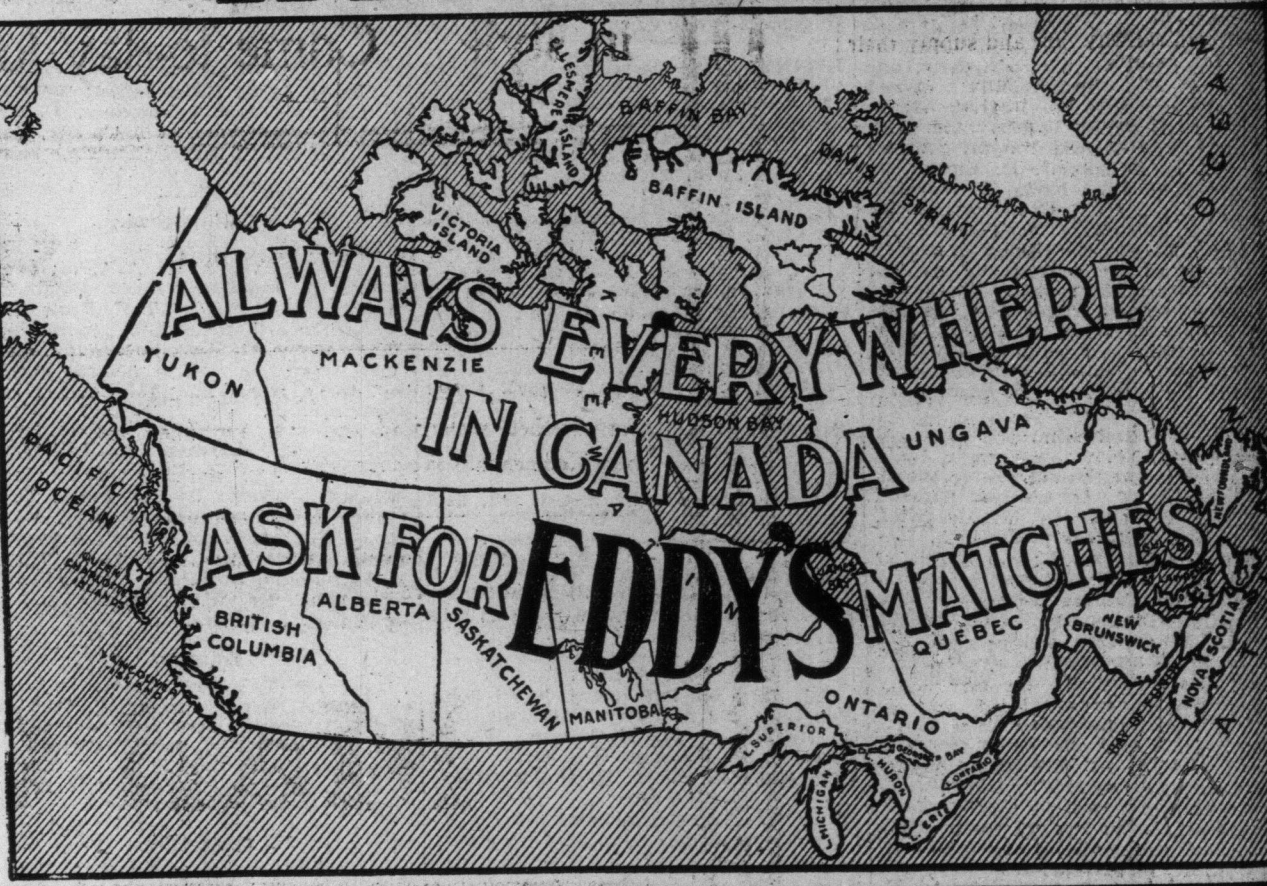
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The breeders of pure bred sheep, therefore, if our argument holds, would do well to direct their best energies to the development of the sheep industry in our own country. As a matter of fact, a strong local demand is the safest market in the long run. A material increase in the sheep population of the country would create a thoroughly healthy home market for breeding sheep, and one much to be desired. The opportunities in this direction may well be worthy of somewhat careful consideration.

It is fortunate that, at this time, the federal government is interesting itself in the sheep industry of the Dominion and is making a thorough investigation with a view to the adoption of a policy which may lead to its general encouragement and development. There is reason to believe that sheep raising in Canada may become at no distant date a decidedly profitable industry, and the minister of agriculture has undertaken a measure which we may expect to be productive of much good result. We learn that the members of the investigating commission, having completed their researches in the United Kingdom, are to spend the next few months in studying conditions in the Dominion, and are now engaged in interviewing a number of the prominent sheep breeders of Ontario. We are hopeful that they may meet with the full co-operation of sheep raisers and farmers generally in the prosecution of their work.

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