

In the World of Amusement

General Gossip

Not a few people of Hamilton who had the pleasure of meeting Mr. R. Kennedy Cox when he visited in Canada a few years ago will be interested in the announcement of organization of the "Cobline Attractions Syndicate Limited," in England. The object of the syndicate is to take over and exploit contracts which have been entered into by Messrs E. D. and J. Maundy-Gregory. These contracts include the London production of the comic opera "Dorothy," "The Cherub and the Houseboat," a new and bright little comedy by Mr. R. Kennedy Cox, and "Cleopatra," a spectacular play on a very large scale, adapted by Mr. Cox from the novel of the same name by Rider Haggard. Sir Charles Wyndham, well known as a critic in writing to the author of "The Cherub and the Houseboat," mentions the fact that he has read the play twice, the only reason for reading it the second time being the deep interest it aroused. The production of "Cleopatra" is to be exceptionally strong. It will have a cast of 170 with extraordinary effects, original ballets and an especially brilliant and spectacular production of the Court of Cleopatra. From descriptions of this spectacular play it is predicted that it will make a hit in America some day.

The Denver Republican, in an editorial on "The American Dramatist," the other day remarked that "the most oddball of United States industries, the United States drama, seems to be doing fairly well," basing its conclusion on the then current bills in New York theatres. Last week the theatre of New York furnished new evidence that this discovery is well based. In twenty-nine metropolitan theatres devoted to attractions of the better class there were running with presumed prosperity twenty American dramas and other pieces, while the foreign contributions, to the public, which formerly and for many years—were dominant, numbered but nine.

The Republican, commenting upon the showing made during the week to which its article applied, said that it would thus appear that there is no truth in the oft-made assertion that American managers are not partial to American-made plays. Then it asked whether the American playwrights, on this exhibit, are justifying the confidence managers and producers are placing in them, and answered by saying that when their work is compared with that of foreign dramatists "one can only answer in the negative," adding:

The best American drama has been able to develop in all these years is an Augustus Thomas—and it must be admitted that Augustus Thomas is far from an Arthur Wing Pinero or a Henry Arthur Jones. Clever sketches are common in American plays. In that the American drama is unexcelled—but the public is getting no plays that are vital because they teach as well as show. Perhaps the American dramatist is going to do better. It is to be hoped so. But at present he seems to be frittering away magnificent opportunity. Managers are eager to produce his plays, but he has little or nothing worthy of production.

Without assuming the pre-eminence of any single American dramatist, or detracting from the distinction of the foreign examples named, it may be said that the Republican is too pessimistic in its survey of the field.

It is exceptionally encouraging in relation to the successful American plays now running in New York to note that a majority of them are by young authors who were unknown before the examples of their work now on stages were produced. And those works will compare favorably with the earliest efforts of the most notable dramatists now before the public, native or foreign.

It is true that in constructive workmanship, in the delineation of character, and in the mere finesse of writing American authors fall below the mark set by the cleverer among foreign authors. As to foreign authors, for the purpose of legitimate comparison, it is well to confine comment to the British. And of course the younger and newer American authors show these shortcomings most clearly.

But the very cleverness of British authors has come to such a refinement that their critics and public are now complaining that they lack vitality. That is to say, they do not deal with humanity in that intimate and moving manner that results in real drama.

The new American plays, on the other hand, disclose just the qualities that contemporary dramas in Great Britain lack—direct and forceful dealing with dramatic subjects and characters of human interest.

These elements are the first essential in drama. It requires a dramatic instinct to seize them. The older dramatists are prone after a time to lose sight of their legitimate place and pay too much attention to lesser and merely ornamental matters. The younger dramatists, it is to be hoped, will acquire polish and keep the lack of their elder contemporaries in mind.—New York Mirror.

Nothing better demonstrates the kindly, humorous side of "dear old Grandpa Haydn" than his three toy symphonies. The number three, which will be given by the conservatory faculty Wednesday evening at their Haydn evening, under the directorship of W. H. Hewlett, is a composition of rare musical merit and unique interest. It is written for two voices (Mrs. Sanderson and Mrs. Geo. Allan) and piano, with toy instruments—quail, cricket, owl, cuckoo, nightingale, rattle and two toy trumpets. The ensemble promises an item of unusual attractiveness. In addition to this there will be choral work, string quartette and solos.

Miss Elfreda Lasche, the brilliant young actress who has scored a great success with the Selman Stock Company at the Savoy Theatre, asked by a young aspirant about the pitfalls of the stage, said: "These terrible pitfalls of the stage."

"Boosh. Talk to any woman who has her way to make in the world, either in other professions or in the trades. Every woman is subject to trials. Still, insult is not danger or temptation by any means. The stage has nothing new to offer. It rests either on resisting or yielding with the girl herself. What

may tempt one will have no effect on another. Stage life even with the most successful, is not always a rosy path, for the way is thorny, steep and rugged. Then that great black gulf yawning beyond the footlights makes our hearts leap with a nameless joy, the overture dances through our brains and the rolling up of the curtain is like the opening of a beautiful flower. If you feel all these things, your fate is sealed; if every fibre in your body calls out 'act-act-act,' you must act. God has given you a talent, and you must develop it. Then enter into the old commonplace stage door and success enter with you."

And Elfreda Lasche rushed away to answer her cue.

At the Grand

Grace Van Studdford, who is undoubtedly one of the best comic opera prima donnas on the American stage, comes to the Grand early in February in De Koven & Smith's latest success—"The Golden Butterfly." Speaking of the production the Tribune, of Chicago, where the opera is now being presented, says: "The Golden Butterfly" is a real comic opera which has a real heart interest story with a real plot and characters who are not simply puppets to dance when the string is pulled. Throughout the musical numbers are not merely to give an opportunity for a soprano or tenor solo, but in each and every instance to carry on the action of the opera. The production of "The Golden Butterfly" marks a distinct era in real comic opera.

Ambitious woman writes a play, husband opposed to the stage, must not be told, wife seeks help of a poet to produce her effort, husband gets jealous, husband gets jealous, and comes to the Grand early in February in De Koven & Smith's latest success—"The Golden Butterfly." Speaking of the production the Tribune, of Chicago, where the opera is now being presented, says: "The Golden Butterfly" is a real comic opera which has a real heart interest story with a real plot and characters who are not simply puppets to dance when the string is pulled. Throughout the musical numbers are not merely to give an opportunity for a soprano or tenor solo, but in each and every instance to carry on the action of the opera. The production of "The Golden Butterfly" marks a distinct era in real comic opera.

"Way Down East" comes to the Grand next Saturday, matinee and night. Manager Wm. A. Prady once



MISS KATHRYN SELMAN, A popular member of the Selman Stock Co. at the Savoy.

again brings the grand old play here to the original cast and an entire new production. It is doubtful if there is a play before the American public today that has stood the test of time that "Way Down East" has. Now in its twenty-second year, the public demand for the play is just as great as it was five years ago, and in many cities the box office returns are greater. It is little wonder, for there is everything in this play to attract all classes, and many managers assert that during an engagement many new faces, strangers in the theatre, are seen. Aside from the main theme of the play—love and its power to subvert enemies and tear away barriers—there is plenty of lively comedy to lift up the level of the story. The boy, Hi Heller, is a host in himself, and Seth Holcomb, Martha Perkins, the constable, the professor and Kate make a quintette of delightful companions for any time. All of the scenic adjuncts seen heretofore are still well represented in the production, and

Why "the Lines" Are Often Changed.

"Plays are not written, they are re-written," once remarked Dion Boucicault. The truth of this statement can be verified by any one who witnesses an opening performance of a play and then a few weeks later. Not only the players themselves, but the authors, stage managers, and all concerned are ever on the outlook for new business or new lines which will strengthen the piece.

One would think that when a play had been doing a big business that there would be no more need for alterations. Yet Thomas Wise, the author of "The Gentleman from Mississippi," which has scored one of the biggest successes on Broadway this season, is rewriting much of the last act of the piece.

Mr. Wise says: "I have already written the play at least six times, and am continually putting in new scenes." One of the changes on which the author-actor is now engaged is doing away with the "senator" love affair. Originally the "widow" in the play confesses her love for the "senator," but in the new scene being written she is made to admire him immensely, but the "senator" never knows it and there is no development. Of how much importance a slight change makes is well illustrated in an experience William Gillette had when he first put on "Secret Service."

The cast includes such favorites as Phoebe Davies as Anna Moore, James R. Armstrong as Squire Bartlett, Ella Hugh Wood as Martha Perkins, Eric R. Collins as David Bartlett, Josephine Bacon as Mrs. Bartlett, Warren Cook as Prof. Stirling, Alice Neal as Kate Brewster, Charles Burke as Constable Whipple, Jas. T. Calloway as Seth Holcomb, John E. Brennan as Hi Heller, Robert Taylor as Lennox Sanderson, and the famous village choir.

Criticizing Mr. Henry W. Savage's production of "The Merry Widow," a Boston reviewer said: "The success of 'The Merry Widow' is due to everything about it. The libretto is great. The music is great. The company of artists Mr. Savage has brought to Boston is great. The production is great. The scenery and production that, elected the above ensemble will be seen here at the Grand early in February."

The Woodstock Operatic Association is to appear at the Grand next Friday evening in the new light opera, "The Burra Burra." The book is by Miss M. I. Macdonald, of Woodstock, and the music by Miss E. P. Steiner, of New York. The opera has been produced in several cities, and those who have heard the music claim that it is quite equal to many of the comic opera successes. The production is said to be the most elaborate one, and the company numbers about twenty-five people.

The Partello Stock Company, with that clever little comedienne, Miss Alice Kennedy, will open a week's engagement at the Grand Opera House on Monday night, January 25, presenting a new comedy play, "The College Girl." Other plays to be presented during the company's engagement will be selected from the following: "A Yankee Girl," "Broad," "The Postmaster's Daughter," "Cumberland," "Tempest," and "Sunshine." "A Jealous Wife," "Thelma," "Luna Rivers," "The Girl of Eagle Ranch," "Under Western Skies," "A Daughter of the People," "When the Harvest Days are Over," "Sister," and "Under Two Flags." A cast of twenty-five players is being assembled, and every play will receive a complete scenic production.

"San Toy," undoubtedly one of the most popular international musical comedies that has ever been produced on the continent, will be the offering at the Grand next Wednesday and Thursday evenings. It will be presented by the Imperial Opera Company, which has achieved great success during the previous season for four and one-half months at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, in Toronto.

"San Toy" is the medium that brought James T. Powers to the front rank of stage lights, and made him a favorite in New York. The book is by Edward Morton and the music by Sidney Jones. When produced in London and New York its musical comedy established new records by the length of its engagements and the phenomenal business it recorded it. The members of the Imperial

piece William Gillette played the part of a telegraph operator, and in one scene is sending a military order. While doing his duty he is shot in the hand. Originally the actor first bandaged his hand, then picked up his cigar and continued operating. This did not bring any response from the audience, so Mr. Gillette conceived the idea of picking up his cigar, then bandaging his hand and went on operating. That the hero of the play was more concerned in his cigar than in his wound appealed to the audience, and they showed their approval of his pluck by a round of applause.

For several months Frank Keenan has been playing the part of Gen. Warren in "The Warrens of Virginia," when he made a change in one of his lines. In the scene where General Warren has been cut from the supply train he is almost in despair and groans, "We must retreat!"

One evening Mr. Keenan heard a man in the audience turn to his companion and remark: "This is a foolish statement in view of the fact that he has done nothing else but retreat for some time." Mr. Keenan was at a loss how to change this line, when one night all of a sudden the thought came to him and he submitted, "Mr. south, O, my south." That this line was an improvement and appealed to the audience was shown by the applause with which it was greeted.

Opera Company are well suited to the various roles, both lyric and comic. There are a number of musical gems in the score, which since the original production have become immensely popular, among which might be mentioned the following: "Viveli! Keep the Feast in Punksa Pung," "The Mandarin," "A Poxy From Over the Sea," "Six Little Wives," "It's Nice to Be a Boy Sometimes," "The Lady's Maid," "Love Has Come From Latin Land," "When You Are Wed to Me," "Sammy, Gammy," "A Little Bit of Fun," "Ghoul and His Pegoda," "Tommy Atkins," "I Mean to Introduce It Into China," "Pretty Little China," "The Little China Maid," and "Chinese Sugar Man."



ALBERT TAVERNIER, The Baron De Chambril in 'Frou Frou' at the Savoy.

Elgar Choir

The society that is most representative of the highest form of art in participating in Hamilton is, without doubt, the Elgar Choir, and it is not asking too much of the citizens that they liberally support the two concerts to be given at the Grand Opera House on February 17 and 18. Other choral bodies come and go, but the Elgar Choir was founded for a definite purpose, and it will continue as long as the love for harmonious blending of song is rooted in human kind. Year after year the choir becomes larger and more efficient, and its work, while pleasing ever increasing audiences, makes a name for Hamilton that is invaluable. For this keeping of the city's name before the Dominion choir has an additional claim on the support of the public. In the forthcoming concerts the choir will have the as-

stance of Claude Cunningham, baritone, of New York, and the Pittsburgh orchestra, Emil Paur, conductor. The choir is earnestly rehearsing a number of choice compositions; and sung, as they will be on the first night, unaccompanied, and with the orchestra at the second concert, the patrons have most delightful treats in store. Palestrina is represented with "Adoramus Te," Mendelssohn, "Judge Me, O God," Brahms, "The Serenade," Grieg, "Autumn," Verdi, "Requiem," and an Ernani chorus—and these do not exhaust the choral numbers. The great composer after whom the choir is named is represented with what is regarded as one of his most striking choruses, the choral ballad "The Challenge of Thor," from King Olaf. It is the salutatory legend in "The Musician's Tale," from "The Tales of a Wayside Inn," Longfellow, and is the opening chorus of Sir Edward Elgar's work. It possesses the most striking originality in harmonic structure and tonal coloring. In a comparative brief number he has crowded a marvel of choral variety, working up to a thrilling ending. "The Challenge of Thor" will be given with the orchestra at the second concert. Mendelssohn's setting of Psalm xlii, is not unknown here, but the Elgar's singing of it will be somewhat of a revelation. The Pittsburgh orchestra is stronger than ever, and will be heard in several grand numbers. Subscription lists are in the hands of the chorus and at the music stores, and these signing them now will participate in the first choice of seats. The undertaking is much more enterprising and expensive than the concerts of former seasons, and generous gifts of patrons are necessary to give proper encouragement to the choir, its conductor and its executive officers.

At the Savoy

Augustine Daly's most famous play, "Frou-Frou" will hold the boards at the Savoy all next week, with matinee Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and in the hands of the splendid players that Mr. Selman has gathered together should prove a winner. The play has been cast as follows: Gilberte—known as Frou-Frou, Miss Elfreda Lasche, Henri de Sartorys, the husband of the future, Joseph Selman; Moas, Brigard, a papa of the present, Campbell Stratton; Comte de Valence, Lawrence Barbour; Pierre, Douglas Drumbrille; Louise, the noble-hearted sister, Eugenie DuBois; Baroness de Chambril, a woman of the future, Claudia Lucas; Pauline, a maid of the present, Kathary Shay; Angeline, Mildred Herman. The presentation by the admirable company at the Savoy will no doubt attract large and fashionable audiences. The role of Gilberte was played originally by the famous beauty and acknowledged the greatest emotional actress of her day, Miss Agnes Ethel. The great actor, George Clark, was the original Sartorys; James Lewis was the Baron de Chambril; Fanny Davenport played Pauline and dear old Mrs. Gilbert, the Baroness de Chambril. The role of Frou-Frou was prominent in the repertoire of such great artists as Duse, Fiske, Bernhardt, Netherland and was played recently in New York city by the famous Grace Binns, Binns and Binns, the famous European musical comedienne; Cook and Stevens, in that funny "Chinese and Coon," dialogue, and the Morrissey Sisters, renowned dancers.

Hail Caine's great romantic drama, "The Land of the Midnight Sun," or "The Bondman," will be the next production at the Savoy. Ever since the opening of the stock season, this has been contemplated and now that Lawrence Barbour has taken control of the stage and knowing every piece of business of the fascinating story, the management has decided to present it. Mr. Barbour was in the original production, and a very fine production is promised. Scenic Artist DuBois is in possession of the original designs and a series of stage settings that is bound to please the eye may be expected.

At the souvenir matinee, Tuesday of next week, photographs of Mr. Barbour will be given every lady who attends.

At Bennett's

The most successful school room act in vaudeville since the appearance of Gus Edwards' famous School Boys and Girls, is said to be the offering of the Redpath Nanyones, who will be seen as the chief feature next week at the Bennett house. The company numbers nine clever, well-trained boys and four girls, and Harry W. Fields, the Hebrew boy comedian, who is said to be even funnier in that role than Herman Timberg, was in the original offering. The idea is worked out on almost exactly the same lines as the Edwards act. The laugh department has been entrusted to capable comedians. The title of the offering is "Fun In A School Room." It is well staged and neatly dressed. The girls are pretty and clever and the dancing and singing of the entire company is said to be excellent. The lyrics were specially written for the piece and in melody and rhythm are said to be exceptionally attractive. It should make a very good drawing card on next week's bill.

Another splendid feature is the Sutcliffe Troupe of eight people, men, women and children. They are Scottish dancers, pipers and acrobats. It is said to be the most spectacular acrobatic novelty ever imported from Europe. The troupe, dressed in full Highland costume and playing the bag pipes, make a very picturesque setting as they march on the stage. Just as the audience settles down to listen to a musical novelty the bagpipes are heard aside and the uniforms discarded while the troupe dash into a fast routine of acrobatic work. They march off again in their Scottish uniforms to the skirling of the pipes. The drummer is said to be a whizz and with sticks.

James Francis Dooley and Corinne Sales, who have appeared here before and pleased Hamilton theatregoers, will be seen in a bright comedy skit entitled, "Pavement Patterns." They are a clever pair. The girl is pretty and an entertaining comedienne. Dooley is a comedian of ability of the Chau type. Both are pleasing dancers and singers.

One of the best comedy jugglers in vaudeville today is General Ed. LaVigne, "the man who has solidified all his life." He wears a burlesque military uniform and introduces a lot of extremely funny business.

Oscar Lore, professional violinist, who gives imitations of great artists, displays a great deal of ability in technique



A Scene from "Way Down East," which will be welcomed back to the Grand next Saturday.

and interpretation, independent of the mimicry involved. It is a number that will delight music lovers.

Cora Beach Turner and company, in a breezy little comedy sketch, along original lines, entitled "A Bluffer Bluffed," should please. The act has made a hit on the big eastern circuit. Miss Turner is a prepossessing young lady and is capably supported by W. S. Draper.

May Leslie and Gertrude Moyer, attractive and talented young women, from the musical comedy, "The Follies of 1908," now having a big run in New York city, are graceful dancers, who appear in beautiful costumes.

Manager Appleton announces the appearance here the week of February 15 of Claire Romaine, London's Pet Boy, appearing in the characters that made her famous in all the musical halls of England—a song for each character. Miss Romaine has been the sensation of the season in vaudeville.

Skating on real ice, presenting Isabel Butler and Edward Bassett, the world's greatest skaters, will be the big feature of the week after next. While the manufacture of artificial ice has been flourishing for some time, this is the first time it has ever been tried on the stage. Mr. Bassett won the international figure skating championship last year. Miss Butler is the original "Dip to Death Girl," in Barbaud's circus.

Some attractive features to appear shortly at Bennett's include Alcide Castaine, the "perfect woman gymnast," Binns, Binns and Binns, the famous European musical comedienne; Cook and Stevens, in that funny "Chinese and Coon," dialogue, and the Morrissey Sisters, renowned dancers.

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Other Dramatic Matter on Page 5



Two operatic prima donnas who are appearing at present in Philadelphia theatres in their favorite roles.

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A VETERAN ROBBED.

Henry Dingle Sold His Land Grant and Lost the Proceeds.

Ottawa, Jan. 15.—Henry Dingle, a South African veteran, sold his volunteer bounty land grant yesterday afternoon for \$400, and in a short time afterwards, while celebrating the event in a convivial fashion in the American Hotel, he was robbed of his whole roll by two unknown men who were drinking with him. The police are now looking for the strangers.