

New Plays That Are Worth While

"The Mind-the-Paint-Girl," "The Perplexed Husband," "The Governor's Lady," &c.

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One of the Dolly Sisters in "The Merry Countess."

SEPTEMBER has been ushering in new plays at a lively rate, and from the imposing list may now be gleaned some really worth-while theatrical entertainment. With Sutro's "The Perplexed Husband," Pinero's "The Mind-the-Paint-Girl," "The Model," by Augustus Thomas, Alice Bradley's "The Governor's Lady," Bayard Veiller's "Within the Law," William Boden's "Honest Jim Blunt," Charles Klein's adaptation of Rex Beach's best seller, "The Ne'er Do Well," "Little Miss Brown," by Philip Bar-

tholamæ, no room is left for complaint either of variety or quality.

Long before the feminist movement had gained such headway, the perplexed husband had become a tolerably familiar figure of our social and domestic life. What new perplexities the "cause of woman" has added or may add to his already perplexing situation, Mr. Sutro has exposed in a comedy of rare charm and humour. During his absence from home *Tom Pelling's* wife has come under the spell of a glib theorist on the equality of sexes. She has also attended an Ibsen play and under the tutelage of the oleaginous bouncer has discovered a striking parallel between her own case and that of Nora in her "Doll's House." To regain her affections *Tom* resorts to the old expedient of jealousy, pretending to accept the wife's views of equal marital rights and put them into practice. Various complications arise and in the end the wife, tired of her enfranchisement, seeks reconciliation. The theme is not calculated to amuse all, of course, but those not committed to social theories will relish the satirical treatment of some superficial sentiments now extant. Mr. John Drew plays the perplexed husband and beautiful Mary Boland the "cause" for jealousy.

"The Mind-the-Paint-Girl" paints an exceptionally noble minded chorus girl who has won fame in a song called "Mind the Paint." Lilly Parradel by name, "whose mother hasn't an H to her name," is loved by Viscount Farncombe. His love is wholesome and intense, but the girl has forbears to think of and she tells him in no uncertain terms of her origin. The play is intended to present the problem of "marriage out of class." It comes here from a successful run in London, where Marie Lohr created the name part. Billie Burke is enacting the role here.

"The Model," by Augustus Thomas, is a comedy based on the conflict between puritanical and broad-minded views of life. The principal characters are an artist, his model, and a French philosophical novelist. The artist and the model are in love, but the artist is already engaged to marry the daughter of a straight laced millionaire. In the end he decides to marry the model, who proves to be the daughter of the novelist.

The title role of "The Governor's Lady" is the wife of a self-made Western millionaire whose wealth brings him a sense of power and importance. He has political ambitions, as well as social, which his wife does not share. It comes to the point where he decides that the simple, retiring domestic wife of his humbler beginnings will prove a handicap to his larger career. Another woman arrives on the scene at this juncture—a woman with youth, social position, and ambitions, to match his own. In a strongly emotional scene between the two women the younger is made to feel the superior claims of the wife and withdraws. Reconcilia-

tion is ultimately effected through the wife's efforts to qualify herself for the larger life to which the husband aspires. Miss Alice Bradley is the author of the play and Mr. Belasco the producer. It promises to be one of the dramatic successes of the season.

In "Within the Law," Bayard Veiller, the author, has used a psychological condition as a basis for a melodramatic story. A young girl is sent to prison for a theft which she did not commit. Before she is sent away this department store girl with a temperament and a forceful character, delivers an emotional philippic on the criminal wages of girls of her class and their hard economic and social plight. After she has served her term, and later has encountered the usual social rebuffs, in a spirit half vindictive and half in self protection, she turns her wits to living just "within the law." She finds she has the skill and shrewdness to win considerable wealth by practices that could scarcely pass ethical or moral scrutiny, but are strictly legal. The play had a big success in Chicago last season and the prospects are equally good for a long New York run.

"Honest Jim Blunt" is a sort of Col. Sellers, much in debt but sure he could set his affairs right if he only "had a day to turn round in." To quiet his more importunate creditors, he invents a temporary embarrassment due to activity in a certain stock which he claims to possess to the extent of 25,000 shares. Unexpectedly the stock begins to soar and, on paper, Blunt becomes a millionaire. He is forced to keep up the pretense, but in the end he extricates himself from his troubles. Tim Murphy, last seen here with Mrs. Fiske in "Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh," plays the title role.

NOTWITHSTANDING that the author has reused the popular features of his former farce, "Little Miss Brown" is far less amusing than "Overnight." The present play has to do with the experiences of a demure little maiden who, failing to obtain hotel accommodation as a maiden, adopts the expedient of a married title. Of course she chooses the name of an expected guest whose husband arrives beforehand. Complications arise, naturally, especially when the husband is called upon to explain the novel situation to his real wife in the morning.

The story of "The Ne'er Do Well," the young football hero who is disowned by his millionaire father for his profligate conduct, and who is smuggled off to Panama without money, there to

make his way as best he can, is no doubt generally known. The adventures both in love and war of this young man who describes himself as two-thirds matter and one-third mind are as varied and abusive as any snowstorm heroine of old ever experienced. He is doped, thrown on a ship senseless, penniless and baggageless, even his very existence denied by his father. He is made to work for his living at menial toil, is falsely accused of murder, and is about to be hanged when his father finally relents and comes to his rescue. Making plays from novels is a dubious task, but in this Charles Klein has contrived to preserve much of the spirit of the book in the stage version. The final scene, in which the father, with the aid of a megaphone voice, a few sailors from his yacht and an American flag, rides over the government of Panama and carries off his son safe, and free-holds enough eagle to insure a popular success in the United States.

A new musical comedy, "My Best Girl," by Channing Pollock and Rennold Wolf, authors of "The Red Widow," has come to dispute charms with "The Merry Countess" in that particular field of effort. Clifton Crawford is the particular star of this occasion.

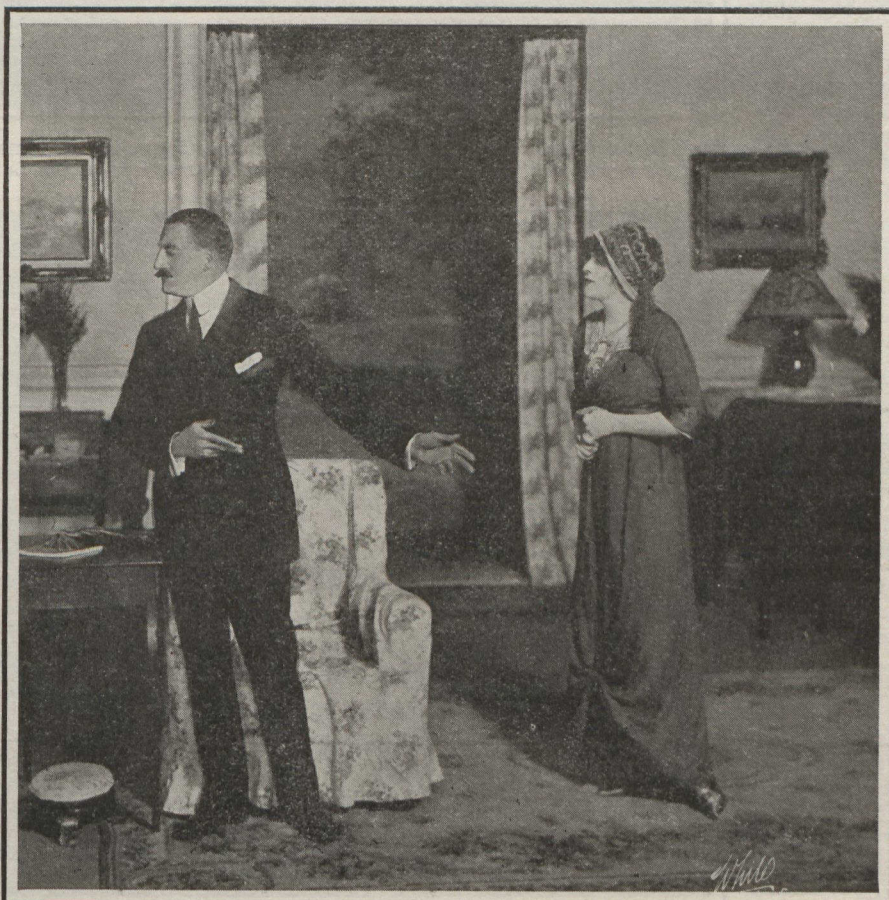
Dramatic and Music Notes.

THE Toronto Musical Festival, which is to be held in the new Arena next week, is no small undertaking. It is said that the aggregate amount of the contracts with the various artists is forty thousand dollars. This huge undertaking has been the work of two somewhat remarkable men. One of these is Mr. Lawrence Solman, manager of the Royal Alexandra Theatre and the Toronto Ferry Company which handles the entertainments and baseball grounds on Toronto Island. Mr. Solman has always been a leader in the promotion of sporting and amusement features and was the first to bring Tetrazzini and Anna Pavlova to this country. He gives the credit for the suggestion of this great festival to his friend, Mr. J. H. Dalton, of New York. During the preliminary stages Mr. Dalton conducted the arrangements from New York, but latterly he has been in Toronto superintending detail. On these two men, therefore, has fallen the burden of one of the greatest musical entertainments, probably the greatest, ever undertaken in Canada.

The conductor for the occasion will be Mr. Nahan Franko, who brings with him his famous orchestra. Franko was born in New Orleans, in 1861, and first visited Toronto as a child violinist in 1869. He was concertmeister in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, before he became a conductor on his own account.

Miss Molly Pearson, the original "Bunty," delighted the Toronto theatre-goers last week. Miss Pearson is well known in that city and had many friends there before she made her great success in "Bunty Pulls The Strings." This week she is playing in New York and the following week will be in Montreal. Shortly the company will go to Philadelphia, where they hope to have a long engagement.

Two years ago, when Edward Sheldon saw Margaret Anglin in "The Awakening of Helena Ritchie," he decided that he wanted to write a play for her. The actress was very eager to have a play by this brilliant young author, and immediately signed a contract with him. However, a change of management prevented her accepting the play last year. This year Miss Anglin is her own manager, and the first thing she did was to accept Mr. Sheldon's play, "Egypt," which is the vehicle she will be seen in at the Garrick. The play had its premiere in Hudson, N.Y.



Scene from "The Perplexed Husband," in which John Drew and Mary Boland are appearing this season.