

alliance is with New England and New York. A play on one of these circuits may be a long time reaching the far end of another circuit, but, if it is a good play and not too costly to move, it eventually gets there, however garbled the original company may be.

That an all-Canadian circuit is possible was being proved and proved to the great satisfaction of Canadians, when the war broke out.

IN 1912 Louis Waller, the English romantic actor, tried the experiment of an all-Canadian tour. He had just had a somewhat unpleasant experience with an unsuccessful vehicle in New York. New York had rejected his offering and lost him money to boot. So Waller used a little costume play, "A Marriage of Convenience," with Madge Titheridge as leading lady, and, starting at Montreal, toured all the way to the Coast. He made a great financial success of the venture. In the following year, 1913, the incomparable Martin Harvey brought out his "The Only Way" for a trans-Canadian tour. He brought with him an all-English company and played in every important Canadian centre. He, too, made a financial success and, more than that, added to his fame as an actor by his prowess as a speaker at various Canadian gatherings held in his honour at his various stopping places. As a Britisher, Canadians had a special interest in him. His all-red-route tour might almost have been regarded as stimulating "Imperial spirit," as the Conservatives call it. In the fall of 1913, Margaret Anglin, the Canadian actress, started at Vancouver with a Shakespearean company and repertoire and came through to Toronto, Montreal and Boston. Again the box office receipts more than paid expenses. In February, 1914, the all-Canadian tour received still greater impetus by the arrival of the lamented Lawrence Irving, son of the famous Irving, playing in repertoire with his wife, Mabel Hackney. Canadians who saw Lawrence Irving's "Typhoon" or who heard him speak, as he did in various cities, were delighted with him and his company. The tour was very profitable. Unhappily, Irving was lost in the wreck of the Empress of Ireland on his way back to England from Quebec. Shortly afterward war broke out. Trans-Canadian tours are at present not possible.

These pre-war experiments show, however, what can be done. Not all "shows" would be successful, nor all actors, in such a tour. De Wolf Hopper's Vancouver-Montreal tour, in Gilbert and Sullivan operas, was a success, but musical comedy of less merit—the kind of stuff that comes over from New York at regular intervals—might not be able to stand up to the test. What makes the all-Canadian tour so risky is the long jump from Ontario to Manitoba, from Winnipeg to Calgary, and from Calgary

to the Coast. Productions must be failure-proof to risk paying transportation on those long non-traffic-bearing hauls. It should be said in this connection that although the American theatrical trusts may have been put to some slight inconvenience by these all-Canadian tours, they apparently did everything they could to facilitate them. The bookings had, of course, to be made through them.

Can we ever have a Canadian national drama? This is the question the discriminating and discerning play-goer loves to dally with. Some are optimistic and others cock-sure that the thing is impossible for many generations to come. So far as the commercial stage is concerned there are no doubt many difficulties to overcome. The success of the trans-Canada tours cannot be taken as a sign that the national drama is nearly possible in Canada, because, of course, the successful companies came originally from England. What we may argue from this is that we may in time have not only the bookings of the American trusts, but British productions also. This is an advantage.

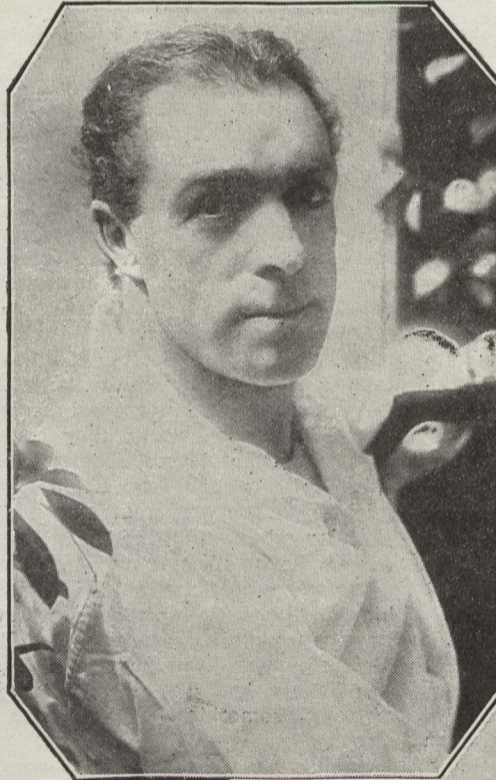
**S**IGNS of a deeper interest in dramatic productions, and in a class of play really superior to the average commercial drama, are to be seen in what is called the "Little Theatre Movement." Toronto, Ottawa, London and Montreal have perhaps given more sustained attention to these amateur, or semi-amateur, productions than other Canadian centres, but wherever there is a lively amateur organization there may be the roots of the little theatre movement be said to be taking root. Small groups of earnest, hard-working amateurs can give and have given in the cities just mentioned, delightful and inexpensive presentations of some of Maeterlinck's,

Shaw's, Tagore's, and other writers' shorter works. These short works are seldom undertaken by the commercial theatres and it is only a short step from producing such plays as these, to putting on the efforts of local Canadian writers. There are those who say that as the amateur movement grows in Canada we may see a sort of "Little Theatre" circuit spring up—pure speculation at present, however.

These are some of the "stars" whose goings and comings the trusts fix. Though Madame Edvina, the Canadian, is a grand opera singer and not an actress, even her appearances have had to have "Trust" approval. In order to obtain a booking in a first class theatre in Canada the grand opera producers, like any other producers, have to consult either the Shuberts or "K. and E." In Toronto the "K. and E." house, the Princess, was burned not long ago. It is now being rebuilt to keep up the traditions of the trust system.



Mrs. Fiske, many years ago, fought the K. & E. Trust by playing even in second and third class show houses provided they were free of the Trust. Some of her best performances have been given in the tawdriest 10-20-30-cent theatres, and she brought the snobs of every town to see her at that and forced the "Trust" to admit that she was not only an actress but a good business woman.



Faversham, the inimitable, full of life and brilliant ability, is well known to Canadian audiences. As "The Fawn" and "The Hawk" he has delighted thousands.

Maude Adams (as Leonora in Barrie's play) has a great following in the cities north of the American boundary. Perhaps it is because she plays Barrie so charmingly or because people in this country are particularly appreciative of whimsical drama, "Peter Pan" is part of every child's education and there has never been a better Peter Pan than Miss Adams.

