

AFFAIRS OF THE STAGE

Signora Duse is arranging another American tour.

F. B. Irving is to play "Hamlet" at the Adelphi Theatre, London, on the 4th inst.

Giles Shine is playing Polonius in Forbes Robertson's production of "Hamlet."

Beerbohm Tree has consented to act as treasurer for a testimonial fund that is being raised in England to the late John Hollingshead.

Mrs. Brown Potter has won success, it is said, at the Savoy Theatre, in London, with Christopher St. John's adaptation of Richépin's "La Du Barry."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Sarah Bernhardt will play together in "Peléas and Melisande" in 1906 in London.

Mrs. Sol Smith, at present with the Southern-Marlowe Co., celebrated her 75th birthday on March 19, at Cincinnati, O.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell said recently that of all languages she preferred acting in French, and that even when holding a conversation in English she invariably did her thinking in French.

Miss Nancy O'Neill will sail from San Francisco for Australia on May 18. Manager Schoeffel has arranged to send the entire company with her for the 15 weeks' tour at the antipodes.

Clyde Fitch has sailed for Europe to submit the book of a grand opera to Giacomo Puccini. The theme is to be American. Mme. Eames is to create the leading role.

In success for April an interview is given Mrs. Fiske fully representing her position as an independent star, and giving her ideas as to the workings and effects of the theatrical trust on the life and art of the American theatre.

Nat Goodwin, whose season has been highly successful, is thinking of going to London in May for a long stay at Jackwood, his English home, and may possibly try a short season in London, putting on "An American Citizen" and "A Gilded Fool."

Charles Frohman announces from London a flying visit to New York next month by Marie Tempest and her London company, now playing at the Criterion Theatre in "The Freedom of Suzanne." The play has been one of the striking successes of the London season, having passed its two hundredth performance.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell was to have closed her American tour this season with eight weeks of her repertoire after her original bookings in "The Sorceress" had been exhausted. Because of the accident which happened to her, it will take the actress the rest of the season to fill bookings.

The worm will turn. Arthur Dunn, Ezra Kendall's brother-in-law, rises to deny that his rendering of "The Kissing Song" in "The Runaways," while singing which he embraces 12 different girls, is the "cinch" that it is supposed to be. "Each pair of lips is covered with make-up an inch thick," declares the comedian.

Mary Moore and Sir Charles Wyndham not only made money from their theatrical tour in America, says The Dramatic Mirror, but, according to Congressman Jefferson M. Levy, they bought stock of a certain company some weeks ago when it was selling for \$200 a share. They sold at \$370, making a profit of about \$40,000 between them.

Lew Dockstader's company, containing singers, musicians, dancers, electricians and mechanics, numbers over seventy people, while the salary list figures up very close to \$4000 a week. Of course, Mr. Dockstader is the star of his company, as he is recognized as filling a unique position in minstrelsy, there being no one who even approaches him in magnetism, in comedy or reputation.

"The Bonnie Brier Bush" will have its initial English performance on April 3 at the Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, under the direction of William Molison, who also will be a member of the company. Reuben Fax, who hails from Toronto, and who has played the role of Posty in the piece for the last four years, has been engaged for the same part.

Mrs. Langtry's daughter, who married Ian Malcolm, M. P., a few years ago, has recently made the beauty actress a grandmother. How Mrs. Langtry will take the honor is a matter for debate. She is a good deal of a philosopher, and doubtless expected that in the course of time she must become one, but somehow it saddens one to imagine her in that role.

In his last letter from Paris Augustus Thomas advises Kirke La Shelle that he has completed a detailed scenario of the new play he is writing for Lawrence d'Orsay's use next season, and that the first act is finished, dialog and all. The locale of the play will be Washington, and d'Orsay will appear as a member of the British Legation. This is the last season for "The Earl of Pawtucket."

Lew Dockstader has ambitious plans for next season, having originated a new scheme of minstrelsy, the details of which he absolutely refuses to disclose even to his own business manager. Meanwhile, Dockstader is having a hard time winning a bet he made with George Cohan that he could go three weeks without even cracking a smile, on or off the stage. The wager is large enough for a new suit of clothes, and Dockstader says he needs the new suit.

At Madrid it is always to-morrow, even in the matter of the theatre. No one begins to think of going to a theatre before nine, and our three hours

traffic of the stage is considered insufficient. Your Madrileño wants four or five. But his aediles think he wants too much to-morrow, and they have therefore decided that all theatres shall close at midnight. The consequence is that none of them has been opened since. The opening has been that of a pretty horological quarrel, and the question of to-morrow has become the thorniest question of to-day.

The task of playing one part continuously for several years—of repeating the same speeches thousands of times—must be a nerve-racking one, and most actors assert that it is nothing less than torture. Maude Adams has appeared as Lady Babbalanza in "The Little Minister" more than a thousand times, and confesses to being heartily weary of the character, while Phoebe Davies has almost succumbed to the strain of seven years' connection with "Way Down East." Joseph Jefferson, Denman Thompson and James O'Neill are not known to have expressed themselves about "Rip Van Winkle," "The Old Homestead" and "Monte Cristo."

"A Friend of the Family" is what the management calls a screamingly funny farce, and it is recommended to theatre-goers as the greatest laugh-provoker presented on the stage in years. This is the second season of this farce in this country, and its record has been sensational, one, consisting of crowded houses and audiences that have laughed and applauded themselves into a stage of hysteria. Nothing like it has been known in years. The play bristles with ridiculously awkward situations that never fail to bring a hearty laugh. The plot is not only interesting, but probable, and the lines are crisp and bright.

"The Fatal Wedding" is booked for the Majestic at an early date. The plot is a powerful one, and deals with the adventures of a scheming woman, who, assisted by a male accomplice, designs the ruin of a happy family, and the separation of a wife from husband and children. In order that she can contract a marriage with the husband and thereby gain his fortune. She is prevented from doing this, however, by the timely interference of two characters, a Frenchman and an Irish servant woman, who, in their respective parts, create no end of amusement for the audience. An unusually strong cast, headed by Julia Ralph, will interpret the play.

Maurice Campbell's recent matinees of "When We Dead Awake" were so well received at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, that arrangements have been made for a series of evening performances of the play. The company which Mr. Campbell selected is an excellent one for the production of such a play as this one of Ibsen, which has been called his valedictory. It includes Frederick Lewis, who will be remembered in the production of "Ghosts" two years ago, and was the Orlando of Miss Crossman's fine production, "As You Like It," Miss Dorothy Donnelly, whose work in the title role of "Candida" was pleasantly commented upon, and Miss Florence Kahn, who has had wide experience in plays of an intellectual character.

A story of man's cruelty and woman's suffering is graphically told in Spencer and Aborn's new emotional melodrama, "A Wife's Secret," which comes to the Majestic at an early date. It concerns a young wife whose husband, believing the tongue of malicious scandal against her, turns her from his door

with a chance to explain and dispel his suspicions. Her subsequent trials, persecutions and misery and ultimate victory against fearful odds, with many exciting events of thrilling interest, form a most absorbing and soul-stirring story. Contemporary press comments pronounce the production a most elaborate and complete one, and the company of the highest standing. The cast is headed by Miss Lansing Rowan, the well-known emotional actress, as the young wife, and it is said to be one of the best roles she has ever played.

For many seasons the Hanlons have imported each year one of the English pony ballets. This year the Messrs. Hanlon decided to form an all-American ballet and the cast of pretty girls included in the new all-American ballet has fully justified expectations. These girls were selected from among over a hundred applicants, and were rehearsed in New York during the entire summer. They form perhaps the highest-salaried and most effective octet upon the stage and are attracting attention everywhere. One of their numbers is in the Parisian dance in which they introduce musical numbers, cake-walk dancing on the toes, in-step dancing, bending, acrobatic work and similar things. Another effective dance is in the Dutch maidens, a typical number with special music written for "Superba" and led by Miss Belle Gold and William Zinell. Still another dance is the "Poodles," an acrobatic "pony ballet." A weird effect is attained in the "Revels of the Poodles in Shadowland." "Superba" comes to the Grand the week of April 10.

The story "By Right of Sword," which Ralph Stuart will present for a return engagement at the Grand, is taken from A. W. Marchmont's stirring novel of the same title. The scenes are laid in Russia, and the plot revolves around the adventures of a young American named Richard Hamilton, who is mistaken for Alexis Petrovitch, lieutenant in the Moscow Hussars. This person is about to quit Russia to avoid a duel with one of the officers of his regiment, Major Devinski, and other complications resulting from his clandestine love affair with the wife of the chief of secret police, his membership in a Nihilist society and numerous pressing debts. But it happens that he has a very pretty and spirited sister, for whose sake the young American consents to masquerade as Alexis Petrovitch, until he can escape beyond the borders of the czar's land.

Thereupon ensues a series of adventures, as surprising to the friends of Alexis Petrovitch as to the young American who impersonates him. Instead of being a coward, as has been suspected, the new Petrovitch proves to be a regular dare-devil, and a champion with the sword. Becoming cognizant of a plot to kill the czar by derailing the imperial train on its way from St. Petersburg to Moscow, he manages to effect a rescue, and in the end quits Russia with decorations galore, and Olga Petrovitch as wife in stead of sister.

Maurice Barrymore, whose death was announced a week ago, was born of English parents in India, 58 years ago. His real name, Herbert Blyeth, probably was known to comparatively few who knew him as one of the most popular actors on the American stage. Educated at Cambridge University in England, young Blyeth early prepared himself for the civil service in India, and later took up the profession of law. He was admitted to the bar, but soon forsook that pursuit for the stage. Through his long American career he had a leading part in many of the great successes of the stage. Mr. Barrymore also was well-known as an author and playwright. Among his plays were "Nadzedda," which was written for Modjeska, and the "Robber of the Rhine." In 1878 Mr. Barrymore married Georgie Drew, a daughter of Mrs. John Drew, and sister of John Drew, the well-known actor. Ethel Barrymore, the actress, is his daughter and John and Lionel Barrymore his sons. His breakdown took place about four years ago, while playing at the Lion Palace Theatre in New York, when he suddenly lost his lines and began to talk incoherently. Later he was removed to a sanitarium. Mr. Barrymore made his first appearance in America Jan. 23, 1875, at the Boston Theatre, at a benefit tendered C. Leslie Allen. The part he played was Ray Trafford in "Under the Gaslight." He was immediately engaged to play Capt. Molyneux in "The Shaughraun." From that on his career was one of success in many parts.

The New York Times editorially recently said of Forbes Robertson: "Shakespeare now has no other single interpreter in the theatre who surpasses Forbes Robertson in maturity of intellect, in poetic sympathy, in lucidity and elegance of diction, or in personal grace. In other subtler attributes he has no living equal. In the view of many good judges he is the best actor now living in the English poetic drama. But we need not argue from that particular point of view to argue logically that his portrayal of a Shakespearean role for which he is fitted alike in his mental and his physical endowment, deserves the hearty support of all high-minded theatre-goers, especially in an hour when the dearth of intellectual achievement in the theatrical world is so generally and vociferously lamented."

Forbes Robertson is a finely equipped actor in the golden prime of his career. His performance of Hamlet is a true interpretation, undoubtedly competent to rank with the eight or ten other exceptionally fine portrayals of that much-discussed, much-abused role in the history of the stage. In conception it is sound, wise, understandable; in execution it is tasteful, moderate and beautiful. All persons who cling to the old belief that acting is an art, who still have faith in the educational influence of the drama, should see these representations of "Hamlet" at the Knickerbocker Theatre. To all others we say confidently that a view of Forbes Robertson's performance of the

Prince of Denmark will do them good. It is a pity so great an actor ever played so manly a part as the last he essayed in Toronto.

In The Washington Post the past week appeared this: "Wanted—School children who can write, to call at the New National Theatre, Saturday morning at 9.—Lew Dockstader."

The card attracted nearly 3000 children and it took several policemen to keep the line which formed and kept busy in front of the theatre. A reporter asked Rogers, the manager known as "Yours Merrily," after it was all over, what it meant. He looked at him in a guileless way, and winked.

"No children now are to be seen on the streets—all are at home writing for a prize," said he.

"What is the secret?" he was asked. He handed the reporter a printed slip 2x4. It read:

SCHOOL GIRLS AND BOYS.

To encourage rapid and distinct penmanship, the management of the Lew Dockstader Minstrels will give a private box to the boy or girl who distinctly writes:

"Lew Dockstader is my ideal comedian!"

the greatest number of times, and delivers same at box office of the New National Theatre at 4 p.m., Monday, March 27, 1905. To the next fifty (boys or girls) who comply with the above, two tickets each will be given.

"Oh," said the reporter, "that's it, is it? Very ingenious, forsooth."

"It is stated," said Rogers, impressively, "that a lie can be told and retold until the liar believes his story to be true. This it is reasonable to suppose that children writing this sentence a number of times will believe the advertisement to be true, and the idea will stay with them as they grow into manhood and womanhood."

Mary Manning, wife of James K. Fackett, tells this story: "Last autumn some thieves came one night and stole some brass fittings on our stoop. The next night they came and stole some of the ironwork. It was rather bold, and certainly annoying. A report of the occurrence was printed in the newspapers, and then it seemed that word was read by every friend we happened to meet the next few days. They all laughed about it and were incredulous enough to ask who invented the story. Mr. Hackett was furious; I was indignant."

"The next night we did not go to bed till late; in fact, it was so very late, I am sorry to confess, it was nearly daylight, when we heard a noise down stairs in the areaway."

"I'll get them this time," said Mr. Hackett as he grabbed a revolver loaded for the occasion and rushed down stairs.

"Soon I heard him calling up softly: 'Come down; bring a light and arm yourself.'"

"I obeyed; that is, I lit a candle and picked up a golf stick; it was the only formidable weapon I found in the room, but I haven't the slightest idea what I thought of doing with it. When I joined Mr. Hackett in the basement he had the window covered with his revolver, while I locked the side door to prevent the burglar escaping that way. We were both in our night clothes, and I presume looked rather determined. Then Mr. Hackett said in a loud tone: 'Come in now; I've got you covered.'"

"The window was slowly raised and the milkman set one quart of milk on the sill. Mr. Hackett lowered his pistol."

"You're taking big chances delivering milk that way," said Mr. Hackett.

"And what do you think that milkman said? Why, that we were also taking big chances in shoving loaded pistols in people's faces."

"Then we went up stairs, and in about half an hour there was another noise in the basement. Mr. Hackett was for going down again, but I remonstrated."

"Don't," I said; "remember there is the baby's milk yet to come. Well, that's all there was of it, except that our stoop is not yet repaired."

Richard Wagner's sacred dedication festival play, "Parsifal," which will be given in English at the Princess on April 24, 25 and 26, is the work for one stage in which the applause of the audience is unwelcome. The singers who take part in it know that the usual sign of public approval will be lacking and the management, not only in America, but in Bayreuth, does everything possible to discourage it. The reason for this is easily found in the music-drama itself. "Parsifal" is not an opera in the ordinary sense of the word. It is something greater, higher and better. It has, to be sure, dramatic action and all the decorations and paraphernalia of the stage, to say nothing of much of the most beautiful music that was ever written; yet, these, so to say, are but the garments of a loftier element. "Parsifal" is the preachment of a great moral lesson, and while at times the beauty of the magic garden scene in the second act, with its luring, seductive damsels, and its fascinating music, moves an audience to bursts of approval, one never hears applause after the first and third acts. One would think as much of applauding a beautiful service in a cathedral, as to applaud the two Grail scenes. In those, the audience is brought face to face with the passion of Christ. In those two acts, each one in the audience will see before him the soul of a repentant and sinful man. The response of the Grail to the prayers of Amfortas in the first act and of Parsifal in the last act, together with the invisible celestial choruses, affects one not as a theatrical show, but as a truly religious ceremonial. For these reasons and in order that the reverent atmosphere may be maintained, it is most earnestly requested by the management that no attempt may be made at the end of any of the acts to call the artists before the curtain. The prices for the engagement of "Parsifal" will range from \$1.00 to \$3.00.



Miss May Irwin and Edgar Atchison Eby in "Mrs. Black is Back," at the Princess Theatre.