

BANKER HOLDS PLAYGOING RECORD; REGULAR ATTENDANT SINCE 1850

S. G. Bayne, of New York, Has Known Many Stars.

(New York Sun.) "The oldest regular theatregoer in the world" is the title claimed for S. G. Bayne, 79 years old, chairman of the board of directors of the Seaboard National Bank.

"There are men alive today who went to the theatre before I did, perhaps," he told a reporter from The Sun and The Globe, "but in the oldest regular, I'm sure, I started frequenting the playhouses when I was 6. I've kept it up ever since. Even now I go four or five times a week."

Mr. Bayne has visited the theatre in virtually every part of the globe. He has known intimately many of the famous actors and actresses of other days, among them Charles Keen, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Gustavus Vaughan Brooke, Barry Sullivan, and John Lawrence Toole, the comedian.

From the pages of his memory he is bringing back many rare and amusing stories of these glittering stage personalities of the past.

"It was in 1850," he continued reminiscently, "that I first went inside the portals of a playhouse. That was the beginning of my world. The performance was 'Hamlet' and Sam Phelps, one of the great actors of the day, was the star. I was only six years old and my father went with me—I was accompanying him from our home near Belfast on a tour of the principal cities of England."

The theatre was the old Sadler's Wells Playhouse in London. Of course, the production would be considered crude nowadays, but it made a great impression on me. Phelps moved and I saw the historic display caused me great wonderment.

At this point the reporter could not refrain from asking this veteran playgoer how the Hamlet of Phelps compared with that of John Barrymore, which was seen in New York during the last season.

"I wouldn't go to see Barrymore's production, I understand it was very radical," said the aged financier with a dim, far away look in his eyes. "Barrymore played it without the Ghost. That isn't right. The part of the Ghost has been played by many of the most illustrious actors of the part to me, almost rivals that of Hamlet."

Recalls Pre-Jazz Age. Mr. Bayne, who has led an adventurous, exciting life, full of travel and high finance, but who has always kept the theatre as his first love, then went on to tell more details about the years before jazz shows and bedroom farces. He has an engaging, youthful face, fresh eyes twinkling as he recalls the "grand old days."

"The later years of my youth were spent in Belfast, where I indulged in an orgy of theatregoing," he said. "I was serving my time with Sir James Hamilton, a noted merchant. I saved my money and bought annual season tickets to the Theatre Royal, Belfast, was a great theatrical center, and was visited by all the London stars who toured the provinces."

"As the years went on my love of the theatre increased and I made frequent trips to London and European capitals to see the plays that didn't come to our town. I met all the famous actors and actresses of the day and became their friend."

"In Belfast was an internationally known theatre lover, one Dave McTear, who was the principal light in the Union Club of Belfast. He loved to give grand dinner parties and receptions to visiting players and he always included me, inasmuch as I knew so many of the actors."

"It was through him that I met Edward Askew Sotherton, the father of E. H. Sotherton, who, as his son did, made a huge success with the part of Lord Dundreary. The elder Sotherton and a party of us went one day to the races near Belfast. We rode out in a four-in-hand, and Mr. Sotherton won a pool of £50 on the main race."

Praise for Elder Sotherton. "He loved gay parties and after his £50 'victory' he spent all the money on entertaining us and the proceedings waxed merry indeed. His was a delightful, scintillating personality that I shall never forget as long as I live."

"Included among my other special friends at the time, about sixty years ago, was that great actor Henry Irving. He was turning London upside down with his Hamlet, but the critics—they were almost as pedantic in those old days as they are now—used to make unmerciful fun of his pronunciation and his many mannerisms. He was of Cornish birth and his real name—not many know it—was John Henry Brodribb."

"His accent lasted so long as he lived. He couldn't pronounce the word 'queen.' Instead, he always made it 'quane.' The funny papers of the day used to refer to him in jest as 'the Eminent Wan.'"

"In later years when Irving came to America—I was here then—he was at first afraid to appear in New York as Hamlet, because of his Cornish accent and the mannerisms complained of. Accordingly, he decided to use Philadelphia as a 'dog town,' and put it on there. He took a great company, which included Ellen Terry, William Terris, and many other actors of note, with him."

"He invited me to go along in the special train and it was a glorious occasion. The performance in Philadelphia was a great success. Invited were all the literary and social lights of the town, and they applauded Irving rapturously, in spite of his accent."

"I went back to his dressing room after the performance and he was feeling in a playful mood. 'Payne,' he said to me, 'I remember many years ago in Belfast, you had been drinking a bit of Bush Mills malt and you thought you would make a great Othello. From now on I'm going to train you for the part. Who knows? Perhaps you'll be the greatest actor of the day.'"

"I only laughed at the bogus offer. In turn, I said: 'Mr. Irving, what action would you take against some one, if he called you 'Hen' to denote his intimacy with you?'"



A woman in Hamilton, Ont., had a wardrobe extensive enough to meet the requirements of a dozen or more of her neighbors. But she didn't split it up with them. She never paid cash and she had no charge account, police say. Now she's being held on a shoplifting charge. Articles merchants say she stole from them filled every nook in the court room. Here they are.

AND SHE NEVER BOUGHT A THING!

Irving answered: 'If I had a pistol I would shoot him on the spot.' Mr. Bayne then went on to state that he thought that the Opera House at Buenos Aires was the most magnificent theatre in the world. Next he described the theatres of Japan of long ago.

"In 1878," he said, "I went to Japan to attend the queer theatres there. They were low roofed affairs, and the audience sat in something resembling pens about five feet square. Each pen held five persons. One sat on the floor; in those places orchestra chairs were not in sight."

"All the acting was done on runways which came out from the sides of the proscenium over the heads of the spectators. On the runways was a large practical ship, which was equipped for sea, and which swung around on a swivel. It made me dizzy to look at. The acting was done by men; no principal difference from the former runway at the Winter Garden."

The Great Japanese "Killer." "I dubbed the most famous actor in Japan at the time the 'Henry Irving of Japan.' I didn't think he was a good actor at all, but he got a princely salary because he could act out twenty different ways of killing men with a great deal of realism. He really worked up some splendid illusions, and he also had to be carried out of the theatre on a sort of stretcher when his efforts were finished."

"Apparently he would drown men in vats of water on the stage, knife them to death, saw them in two—how he did it I don't know. I still have some of the old play bills showing how he was advertised as an accomplished actor in the art of doing away with the race of men."

Monkey, Free, Has Lark In Brooklyn

Plays Jungle Pranks on Folks In Two Days of Roaming.

New York, Aug. 20.—An extraordinary monkey, the name of which is Jocko, was captured in the bathroom in the house of Mrs. E. J. Lehigh, Brooklyn, and thus ended two days of worry for the Brooklyn police—worry that almost called for a casting letter and a few lines of verse from Commissioner Enright to Mayor Hylan.

The monkey's name is Adolph, meaning seeker after knowledge, and he was rescued to Brooklyn by a sailor from Takuatamba, a celebrated port on the white gold coast of Africa. The sailor was in his boarding house room at Bush and Columbia streets, on Tuesday morning studying his lines in 'Philoena in Taurus,' a play he and his honest seafaring brothers contemplate giving at sundown September 1 on the five masted schooner Hyacinth, which will be at that time well on its way to Pernambuco to take on a load of rare lumber.

The owners of the Hyacinth insist that their sailors cultivate the esthetic sides of their natures and it is in this manner that the bluff fellows please their employers as well as while away the lonely hours at sea.

Seizes Adolph by Tail. While thus engrossed, the sailor (he has asked that his name be withheld),

Adolph to a bit of boxwood hedge on the fringes of the pretty lawn in front of his sailor's boarding house, in that section of Brooklyn vulgarly referred to as Red Hook. Two or three innocent children of the Red Hook populace, playing hooky as is the little dear's wont, joined Adolph in his innocent merrymaking and, before very long, one of them had Adolph by his tail.

Adolph, partaking of the spirit of the game, bit the hand that slung him and, incidentally, gained freedom from his leash. Adolph sniffed the Red Hook air. Ah, but it was good. The jungle, the jungle, the free, glorious jungle once more. He took stock of himself and decided that it was food he required.

He tried Hoyt street at a venture. So many people have done that very same thing through an open window in Hoyt street leaped Adolph, first taking care not to injure any of the delicate tendrils of honeysuckle with which the window was made fragrant and the family within gazed.

Adolph found himself in a well filled dining-room. Twelve sweet Greek children were helping to fill it. Their parents, gently schooling the little ones in the etiquette of the sales manager, did not see Adolph until he, mischievous wight, laid hold of a loaf of bread and ran laughing lightly back to the window. The police were notified, not minding you, that this gentle family cared when they thought of Adolph wandering homeless in Red Hook.

Adolph took on his flight from that scene of well bred eating, lay an honest workman. His name is Luigi Di Cabidocci. He was taking the strong man's forty winks, so to speak, as it was noon and the laborer is worthy of his hire.

Roots on Man's Face. Playfully Adolph leaped upon the fine Italian countenance. A baritone voice—clear as De Luca's and as mellow as Straciar's—issued from the face on which Adolph rested. It demanded that police attend and that help be requisitioned forthwith. The police responded but Adolph had crept on and was seen no more that day.

Yesterday morning the sprightly little fellow joined a Red Hook milkman on his rounds and nothing would do really nothing—but he must roll bottles of milk hither and yon, chattering

in the meantime with the vélocé that, since time began, has been recognized as the voice of freedom. But the milkman raised his voice, also, and policemen, hearing, came quickly. But not in time to capture Adolph.

In Sackett street Adolph came upon sounds of early morning revels. Through a small, opaque window the sounds proceeded. Beyond that window a human heart was leaping with the sheer joy of living. There was a splashing as of a wild cat and not to mention a swooning as of a wild bath taker. Life and happiness filled that room and Adolph was looking for a playmate. He entered because the window was open in invitation.

A piercing scream, slamming of a door and Adolph found himself alone in the bathroom. The wild spirit to which he had come had fled. And pretty soon three men came with a raincoat which they threw over Adolph and his two days of freedom were over. He is now in the care of the S. P. C. A., and his owner may have him as

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soon as he can spare time away from his studies of the Greek theatre.

And the Brooklyn police may now settle back to defending themselves against the underworld interest which, though the columns of the traction controlled press, would deprive them of their rightful heritage or something

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