

ROYAL ALEXANDRA

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NEXT WEEK

FORBES-ROBERTSON

AND HIS ENGLISH COMPANY, IN

"THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK"

BY JEROME K. JEROME

OVER 500 PERFORMANCES IN NEW YORK AND LONDON, ENG.

NEXT WEEK—SEATS READY THURSDAY
DAVID BELASCO Presents

FRANCES STARR

IN EUGENE WALTER'S GREATEST PLAY

"THE EASIEST WAY"

"Billie" Burke Coming to Canada

Fascinating Actress Will At the Princess May 9th

Miss Billie Burke, having conquered the United States, is going to invade Canada this spring. She comes to the Princess Theatre in this city on Monday, May 9, to begin a week's engagement in "Mrs. Dot."

So much has been printed about Miss Burke in the magazines that she scarcely needs an introduction. For people who don't read the magazines, she is an American girl who went to Europe with her parents while she was still a child, grew up there, and made her first appearance on the stage in London in a small part in "The School Girl." Her singing of "My Little Cane" in that piece made a tremendous hit and when "The Belle of Mayfair" was produced she was given the title role. That was pretty near the top of the ladder in musical comedy, but Miss Burke was ambitious to appear on the dramatic stage and when Charles Hawtrey offered her an engagement as his leading woman, in a comedy entitled "Mr. George," she jumped at the chance.

And a very big chance it proved to be. "Mr. George" was a failure, but Miss Burke made a personal hit, and thereby attracted the attention of Charles Frohman, who asked her to come back to America and be John

Drew's leading woman in "My Wife." That was only three years ago. Up to that time very few people on this side of the Atlantic had ever heard of her. The day after she appeared with Mr. Drew in "My Wife" at the Empire Theatre, New York, everybody in that city was talking about her and in a week the whole country was discussing her and her wonderful charm.

The next season Mr. Frohman made her a star in her own right and presented her in "Love Watches." Her success in that piece was little short of phenomenal and it is no exaggeration to say that at the present time Miss Billie Burke is one of the most popular stars on the American stage. And all in three short seasons! It is amazing!

The secret of her success? It isn't any secret at all. Miss Burke is the possessor of a remarkably charming personality—that quality that some people call magnetism—the something that reaches right out over the footlights and grips the very heart-strings of the audience. That and her youthful buoyant, exuberant youth. She is the personification of innocent, mischievous, good. She is an actress, too, with a rare talent for comedy as she proves in "Mrs. Dot," the comedy by W. Somerset Maugham that she has been playing this winter in New York and that she is now to present here.

Bill At Shea's

For this week at Shea's Theatre, Manager Shea has arranged another big vaudeville bill headed by Will H. Murphy and Blanche Nichols in "The School of Acting." This clever pair made the vaudeville world scream with laughter over From Zaza to Uncle Tegu, and it would seem impossible to find

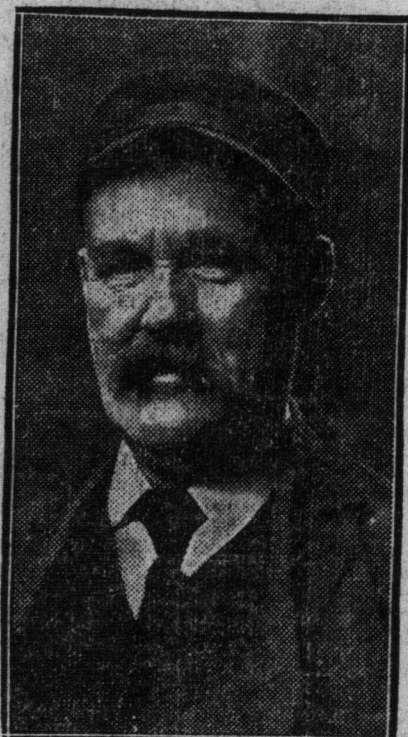
Fifty Years Behind the Footlights

Thomas Hutchinson, Veteran Stage Manager, Has Grown Up With the Drama.

By Frank McDowell.

When you are purchasing tickets for your favorite theatrical attraction, how often have you ever given a moment's thought to the days when the actors were in their infancy? Not often, but even in this period of costly and spectacular attractions, when a show produced at even a cost of about \$100,000, is forgotten within a season, there are still a few old-timers, who often delve into the past and tell yarns to the present day actors of the troubles and joys of old-time shows.

Probably the most popular of these



"TOM" HUTCHINSON, VETERAN STAGE-MANAGER OF TORONTO

old-timers is Thomas Hutchinson, stage manager of the Star Theatre. He has been in the show business for nearly half a century, and his many stories of the bygone days have made him a much-sought-for individual by the members of the various companies playing the Star, who always call for "Tom" when they reach the theatre.



MISS JEANNE TOWLER, LEADING WOMAN IN "THREE WEEKS," AT THE GRAND THIS WEEK.

A worthy successor to this act, but their present offering is said to be even funnier. Mr. Murphy, as the all-in-earnest teacher, a broken down actor, in "The School of Acting," and Miss Nichols in her ridiculous makeup are one long laugh and their lines and situations keep up the merriment every moment the act is on the stage.

The special extra attraction on the bill for the week is Stepp, Melinger and King, three young men who are fastly called vaudeville's cleverest entertainers. Mr. Stepp is the banjoist, Mr. King the pianist and Mr. Melinger supplies genuine comedy and interprets in an inimitable way the best of the popular songs. The act was first seen early in the season in New York and has since been in constant demand, making a decided hit everywhere. Miss Helen Bertram, the distinguished prima donna soprano, will be a special feature of the bill. Miss Bertram was last seen here as the star of "Havana" and her appearance in vaudeville at Shea's will bring her a warm greeting from her many friends.

The Dunedin Troupe has not been seen here in several seasons and these well-costumed young bicyclists always present an act that is finished and far above the average bicycle act. Jones and Deeley are making their first appearance here as a team. George W. Jones is well remembered as a member of "That Quartette" and Ben Deeley of "That Quartette" and Ben Deeley of "That Quartette." In which both comedians are given ample opportunities. Jones is seen as the chief of the bell boys and Deeley as the new boy who is going thru the troubles of "the first night on the job." The Four Floods have not been seen in many seasons and these acrobatic merry-makers are big favorites and have many friends in Toronto.

He began life long before electricity was thought of. He made his debut in Toronto, and strange to relate he has never been connected with any house, or show outside of Toronto, but once when he took a jump with one company as far as Montreal.

One of the favorite incidents "Tom" is never tired of relating happened in the Royal Lyceum, when gas was used. This time a large melodrama attraction was bidding, and the weather was extremely cold. Quite early in the evening the audience began to arrive, and within a few minutes the show shop was crowded.

Then the signal was given for the ushers to light up, but during the time between matinee and night the gas froze, and it was impossible to make it burn. Here was a pretty piece of trouble, and the only manner in which it could be overcome was to leave the house in total darkness, while candles were placed around the stage, but even then the light was very dim, and the audience could only see part of the show.

How would the present-day audience like that? Not very much, but that was a common occurrence, and here is another even worse. A large comic opera—by that in those days it meant a small company of fairly good screechers—came to town, but unfortunately, they had not been paid. The show was well billed, and the house was a good one. Everything went smoothly along until nearly time for the curtain to go up, and then the company struck. Not one of them would go on until they received their pay, and they kept the show back twenty minutes until money was taken from the box-office.

Then there were troubles back on the stage, but they happen even to-day. Only a couple of weeks ago the burlesque was nearly put out of business by an angry chorus girl throwing a

PRINCESS

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OLCOTT

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RITA OLCOTT

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TIME 1830

HEAR OLCOTT'S NEW SONGS

During the performance Mr. Olcott will sing his latest songs entitled: "The Eyes That Come From Ireland," "Sweet Girl of My Dreams," "I used to Believe in the Fairies," "The Old Field Shawl" and "In the Garden of My Heart," especially written for Mr. Olcott.

SEE The Good Little People—The Fairy Host—The Banishes—The Will-o-the-Wisp—and the Wealth of Beautiful Scenery, including The Big Box Scene.

WEEK OF MAY 9 MATINEES First Time in Canada
WED. AND SAT.

CHARLES FROHMAN Presents

MISS

BILLIE BURKE

AMERICA'S MOST CHARMING COMEDienne, IN THE FASCINATING COMEDY

"MRS. DOT" By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

AUTHOR OF "PENELOPE" and
"JACK STRAW."

SEATS THURSDAY—PRICES: EVGS. & SAT. MAT. 50c. to \$2.00
WEDNESDAY MAT. 50c. to \$1.50

well-filled powder puff at a fellow mentor, but instead of hitting her mark she caught the comedian, who was rushing to go on the stage in short time, right in the eye. Of course there was a big row, and the peace-maker had to be "Tom."

But he is used to rows; he has had almost fifty years of them and he is a quick-pace peace-maker. He is always boss of the roost back on the stage, and his word is law. It is his stories, tho, that make him such a hit. Just go behind the scenes at a time, and there you will find "Tom" the centre of a most interested crowd, who have coaxed him into telling of some of the "good times" that have come and gone.

"Tom" started in the business over 45 years ago, when a lad of sixteen. In those days Toronto was not the great theatrical centre it is to-day. In fact, there were only two show shops, one being the Royal Lyceum, where he worked, as a supe.

In '64 he was promoted to second-

hand and remained until '72, when he went to the Academy of Music, on Colborne-street. He did not stay there long, however, for the pay was bad, and his motto was "No pay one week, no pay two weeks," and he went to the old Lyceum, which was situated near King and Yonge-streets.

Next season "Tom" went to the old Grand, where he stayed for some time, and later worked in the Toronto Opera House, which was followed by a season at the Academy of Music. From there he returned to the Toronto, and stayed until it was burnt down. Then he went to the Grand again, and from there to the Star, where he first worked as second hand, and now is stage manager.

"I was playing, out west a few years ago," said J. C. Huffman, general stage director for the Schuberts, "with a company, the management of which was noted for its irregularity of pay day. One of the actors was continually joking of our plight. One night he was compelled to sleep in a room which was haunted. Next morning the manager asked him if he had not been afraid."

"No," replied the actor. "It was a real relief to be in some place where the ghost walked."

NOTICE

See the Huge
Display "Ad"
for the Grand
Opera House on
Last Page of
Illustrated Section

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MISS FRANCES STARR, IN "THE EASIEST WAY," AT THE ROYAL ALEXANDRA NEXT WEEK.