ROSTAND'S WONDERFUL PLAY; ITS FIRST NIGHT IN PARIS

Premiere of Chanticleer—A Brilliant Audience—Triumph of Symbolism on the Stage—Actors Dressed as Animals.

In the presence of the most brilliant audiences ever yet assembled in a Paris theatre, "Chantecler" at last has come and crowed and conquered. On the night of Feb 7, "le Tout Paris" gathered in the vast Porte St. Martin Theatre, where everything is appropriately new, costly, elegant. The theatre had been redecorated from floor to ceiling. The programmes, printed on vellum, were "de luxe." And, gracious goodness, the wonderful dresses, jewels and coiffures of the ladies, and the equally wonderful coats, waistcoats, socks, studs, moustaches, and immaculately-parted hair of the gentlemen! "Le Tout Paris"—worldly, literary, financial, and theatrical Paris; diplomatic and political Paris; the haute bourgeoisie of Paris; in fine, all Paris "that counts"—was in its very, very best; and the fashionable dressmakers, tailors, bootmakers, hairdressers and perfumers responsible for the supreme elegance of "all Paris" upon this extraordinary occasion, must have gathered in as much money as MM. Hertz and Coquelin, directors of the Porte St. Martin, have paid out on costumes, light "effects," and scenery.

Even the elderly cloak-room ladies had been "decorated" by the management. They wore red ribbons in their grisly hair; and they had put on all their trinkets—silver brooches, chains, and lockets, and bits of lace, and cheap coral turquoise, and amethyst rings. "I have been an usherette for twenty years, but never have I seen a theatre so animated, so brilliant, so chic," said one of these ladies to me, as she bundled up my overcoat, pinned a ticket to it, and then dropped it on the floor. "Not a peg left," she continued. "But your overcoat, although it lies on the floor, is in excellent company. Immediately beneath it is the overcoat of Prince Murat. In the heap next to it is a Rothschild overcoat. And as for that other pile of overcoats in the corner, all fur-lined, all magnificent, well, they belong to ambassadors, dukes, American millionaires, English nobles, famous jockeys—in fact, the most distinguished personages in the universe. Thus, as I said before, your overcoat is in excellent, or I should say, illustrious, company."

Story of the Play.

And now, as the usual prohibition respecting the "repetition generale" no longer exists, I may summarize the story of the play. In the first place, the cock represents the artist, the creative genius, the dispenser of beauty and spiritual light. If he is lord over the other denizens of the farmyard, it is because they will have it so. They believe the sun rises because Chanticleer summons it with his shrill, imperious "cock-a-riko." And Chanticleer the Superb believes it himself—believes it, in spite of the skeptical, cynical blackbird, who makes fun of him and scoffs at the very idea of such a thing. Chanticleer, in fact, might stand for a great many types besides the artistic; for example, the statesman who fancies he is the creator of the social reforms that are advancing over civilization like a tide.

The peacock stands for the world of snobs. The hen pheasant is seductive woman, capable of cruelty, treachery, self-sacrificing heroism. The owl represents that type of envious, small-minded people who hate the light and all minds that soar heavenward. The guinea-hen? Why, of course you know her; she is the shallow, worldly-minded, vain, chitter-chattering society woman.

Proud, gallant, idealistic Chanticleer falls in love with a lady-pheasant, whom he has saved from death at the hands of a sportsman; but she falls in love with him only when she discovers the plot of the nightbirds to kill Chanticleer. As they love the darkness and hate the light, they fancy if he is dead night will last forever. Surviving the duel into which he had been entrapped at a 5 o'clock tea, and fleeing from the lady guinea-fowl and six other members of a hypocritical society, he goes off on his honeymoon with the lady pheasant into the depths of the forest, there to live an ideal life far from the madding crowd. He hears the nightingale singing sweetly in the darkness. Then awaking from his sleep amidst the trees, he beholds, O horror! the sun, which had the audacity to rise without his permission. All gone are Chanticleer's illusions.

At ten minutes to 9 o'clock the three familiar thuds made by a mallet behind the curtain—the signal in French theatres that the performance is about to begin—caused a hush. Everyone sat down. "Chanticleer at last," said excitedly a lady behind me. A moment later up sprang a stout, jovial-looking man, attired in evening dress, from the first row of stalls—and mounted a huge velvet footstool placed immediately beneath the middle of the stage.

It was Jean Coquelin, the son of Constant Coquelin—of Coquelin aine, the "creator" of Cyrano de Bergerac, the incomparable impersonator of Moliere's heroes, the "great" and the "good" Coquelin, for whom the role of "Chanticleer" had been written, but who died suddenly a year ago in the tranquil country home he had founded for aged and infirm actors.

Eloquently, on his footstool, Jean Coquelin recited the prologue to Mr. Rostand's at once fantastic and psychological play. It was a delightfully humorous description of life in a poultry yard. Animals, just as human beings, had their joys, worries, philosophy, emotions, passions. Also lots of tittle-tattle in a poultry yard—as in a drawing-room. Again, jealousies, quarrels, no end of complications. As Coquelin continued to harangue the audience from his footstool and in his dress suit, the inhabitants of the poultry yard were heard to become impatient on the hidden stage.

A Farmyard Parable.

A crowing of cocks. A cackling of geese. The stamping of a horse's hoofs. The bray of a donkey. The miaow of a cat. The hoot of an owl.

"Patience, patience—until I have introduced you to the audience," cried M. Coquelin. Down, gradually, went the lights in the theatre. More and more impatient and noisy became the invisible inhabitants in the poultry yard. Again and again M. Rostand's prologue—a masterpiece in itself—was stopped by veritable thunders of applause. Then—when Jean Coquelin disappeared from the footstool—the lights in the theatre, which had been becoming dimmer and dimmer, expired—and the curtain rose on the first act of "Chanticleer."

Shouts of delight from "le Tout Paris!"

Strutting and waddling about the stage were cocks and hens, ducks and drakes, ganders and geese. In a huge cage a blackbird. Asleep on a wall a black cat. Butterflies, bees, wasps fly to and fro. Romping about are two little yellow chicks. Now and again the lid of a vast wickerwork basket opens to disclose the head of the Old Hen—a very old hen, the doyenne of the yard, and (so we heard later) Chanticleer's nurse. And whenever the Old Hen protruded her head, the Blackbird, dancing about in his cage, held forth scoffingly and mockingly. For the Blackbird, like every other feathered creature or animal in the play, is symbolical. He represents the smart, shallow Parisian—who sneers at old age, ridicules all principles, believes in nothing and nobody, and is enormously satisfied with his empty, cynical self. So he makes fun at the animals whilst the latter pay naive, eloquent tributes to the power of Chanticleer—the Cock of Cocks, the supreme creature whose clarion call causes the sun to rise and makes the world radiant, beautiful, and cheerful. Sides are taken for and against Chanticleer. The discussion becomes shrill, heated, quarrelsome. But all of a sudden a hush, for Chanticleer himself appears—solemn, majestic, arrogant—on the poultry-yard wall. And at this point the profound symbolism—the psychology—of M. Rostand's comedy begins.

The Hen Pheasant.

Chanticleer himself represents man, confident in his work, determined to accomplish it, and fulfil his duty. Yet he has his weaknesses, his vanities; and when the Hen Pheasant makes love to him he succumbs—and to his despair, and to the disillusionment of his admirers in the poultry-yard, the sun rises one morning when Chanticleer, having lost count of time, has failed to crow. The Hen Pheasant is the modern, ambitious woman of the world, who endeavors to enslave man in her own affections, and submits to him only when, in spite of his passing weaknesses, he ultimately proves himself the stronger. Thus when Chanticleer returns to the poultry yard with the cry of "I am still master there, it is my duty to return," the Hen Pheasant follows him. Then, the Guinea Fowl. She is the incarnation of the rich, vulgar bourgeoise. In the third act she gives an afternoon "at home" in a kitchen garden. Some twenty cocks, another twenty hens, more ducks and drakes and geese and ganders make their entrance self-consciously, and chatter rapidly, after the manner of the bourgeois folk depicted in Daudet's "Fromont Jeune et Risler Aine." Again, the dog; he is the indulgent, benevolent philosopher; and, finally, the bats, owls, and other more or less uncanny night birds, who typify unwholesomeness.

But innumerable other creatures revolve around the majestic (majestic to the last) "Chanticleer." There are a good dozen frogs. There are moles, cuckoos, pigeons, woodpeckers, magpies. There are tall turkeys and baby turkeys. There is an amazing peacock. There is a spider in a gigantic web. And when the bees swarm across the stage, how they hum! And when the screech owl appears, how he screeches!

In fine, "Chanticleer" is a work of genius acted by geniuses. The "Hymn to the Night" and the "Hymn to the Sun" will become classics. Recited by M. Guitry, with superb eloquence, they provoked cries of admiration from all parts of the theatre; and when the last words had left the great actor's lips, there were thunders of applause. After the first and second acts, the curtain was raised five times, and when M. Guirty, in his garb of brown and greenish-black feathers of M. le Coq, advanced to the footlights and made the formal announcement, "Ladies and Gentlemen,—The play we have had the honor of performing before you tonight is by M. Edmond Rostand," the huge audience cheered itself hoarse.

WILL MISS THESE FACES FROM NEW BRITISH PARLIAMENT

T. P. O'Connor Regrets Defeat of Will Crooks, Hamar Greenwood, Sir Henry Norman and Colonel Seely — Sketches of Each of Them.

(T. P. O'Connor in M. A. P.)

Will Crooks, another of the vanquished, will be greatly missed. He gave a great deal of good Cockney color to the House. Everybody liked him in spite of his extreme views, and he was a welcome and popular speaker whenever he got on his legs. I have written it often before, but I may repeat it, that Will Crooks looked and spoke as if he had just walked out of the pages of Dickens.

It is a pity that unsurpassed delineator of Cockney types never knew Will Crooks; if so, he would have been immortalized. Sometimes, indeed, Crooks spoke, looked, and acted as if he were the original of Sam Weller; so quaint were his conceits, so full of true wit, and all expressed in the inimitable language which is peculiar to the Cockney. And the fellow could be pathetic, too, bringing now and then a lump in people's throats as he painted some little sketch of the life of the poor in the black abyss of London society.

Hamar Greenwood, who was beaten for York City, was of a different but also very interesting type. He is a Canadian, born with no silver spoon in his mouth; and adventurous, ambitious, self-confident, he faced the desert of London determined to die or conquer. He had to drudge hard for many years as a secretary, as a lecturer, as a political orator on hundreds of platforms, until one fine day the electors of York, having heard him, declared that he must be their candidate.

The joke of the matter was that poor Greenwood had gone to York in perfect good faith to advocate, the claims of another man; but the lady, as so often has happened in life, preferred the wooer who came to the wooer who stopped away.

Cheery, even exuberant, with a strong and unquiet voice which sounded across the floor loud, strident, and unmistakable. Hamar Greenwood was one of the characters of the House; liked by everybody, and with something of that breeziness, orginality, and daring which belong to the men who are brought up in the invigorating and primordial condition of life beyond the Atlantic. But Greenwood is quite a young man; and he, though the most joyous of men, is one of the ascetics of political life—he never drinks, never smokes—a humorist on cold water.

Of the ministers who have fallen, the most important, and the one who will most be missed, is Colonel Jack Seely, as everybody knows him. His absence from the House of Commons, however, will be but brief; he cannot be done without.

Tall, alert, thin, with the ruddy face of a schoolboy, the manners of a young athlete, the resorant voice of a man in perfect health, Jack Seely still looks as if he had just returned from South Africa, where his skin got that red-brick hue which the sun of the Transvaal seems to burn into the soldier's complexion. He is still in perfect form, with every nerve and muscle taut, and ready to meet all comers.

He has been a conspicuous success as under secretary for the colonies partly because he has travelled through most of them; and doubtless he will soon find a seat in the House and in the Cabinet. He might have chosen a less perilous enterprise than the Abercrouby division of Liverpool; but he likes a fight, and not the least when it is something of a forlorn hope.

Sir Henry Norman has just attained one of his great ambitions when he was appointed assistant postmaster-general, having always had the longing and the aptitude for official life. He is one of the brilliant jounalists of politics who did great things when he was a working journist and could write picturesquely on almost any subject. I remember an historic interview he had with Mr. Gladstone after a fierce fight over a closure motion, which was one of the most daring, as well as successful, journalistic coups I have ever known.

Election Wit and Humor

Candidate and Heckler in English Political Campaigns—Some Famous Retorts.

More often than not the heckler has the best of it and Ian Malcolm hits the nail on the head when he says apropos of the "voice in the crowd," "You are powerless in face of it; the lilt of your sentence is ruined. Your withering scorn is turned to laughter and after laughter no retort appears effective."

Even Bernal Osborne, the wit of the Victorian age, was nonplussed when after a glowing speech at Waterford upon patriotism and a soldier's duty there came a voice from the gallery: "Och, what's the world to a man if his wife's a widow?"

Another election story of the Emerald Isle which Mr. Malcolm tells is that concerning a leading member of the Irish bar who in an eloquent speech upon the woes and injustices of his native land sought to impress his audience still further by squeezing out a few tears which trickled over his expansive cheeks. But the sublime was turned to the ridiculous when the wit of the gallery shouted out: "Shure, boys, boys, there's a fine field for hydraulics."

This was as disconcerting as the reply made to Sir Richard Temple, who returned posthaste from his duties in India to contest a seat. In the course of a speech he remarked that he "had travelled 3,000 miles and surrendered £5,000 for the privilege of representing this great constituency," and the audience were impressed until the remark in a loud voice came from the crowd: "Oh, what a fool!"

And the heckler silenced Lord George Hamilton on one occasion when the latter, describing the late Mr. Gladstone as "a political adventurer who always had his eye on the treasury bench," was met with the shout: "Yes, and he'll have his body there soon if you don't watch it!"

During the last general election a speaker at one meeting was somewhat irritated by a member of the audience who continually repeated, "We won't have our food taxed; no taxes on food." But it was not long before he silenced the interrupter with the cutting remark, "Console yourself, my friend; Joe isn't going to tax thistles."

"The voice" at another meeting shouted out, "Talk to us in language we can understand," because a speaker had quoted some Latin phrases. Like a flash came the cry from the platform, "Hee-haw! Hee-haw!" And the heckler vanished.

The son of a certain lord was addressing a meeting and was interrupted every few seconds by "the voice" saying, "I'm's good as you; what'sh the duff'rence 'tween you'n me?" Suddenly the answer came, "One difference is that you drink and don't work, and I work but don't drink."

Lord Morley is one of the few political speakers who can silence a heckler with a smiling retort as effectively as the famous Campbell of Monzie, who, when he asked an Edinburgh burgess to vote for him and received the angry answer, "Vote for you! I'd sooner vote for Satan himself," sweetly replied, "Yes; but if your friend doesn't stand, may I depend upon your support?"—a remark that earned him a stanch adherent.

The fact that a blind man, Mr. Walter King, is standing as Liberal candidate for one of the divisions of Somersetshire recalls a story of Professor Fawcett, who as a candidate for Brighton was asked by an elector how he, a blind man, was going to "catch the speaker's eye" and vote in the right lobby. Mr. Fawcett scored effectively by replying that he would depend on the kindness of friends. But, as to mistaking the lobby, he said, he might occasionally vote wrong, "but at all events that would not be so bad as your present M. P., who is always in the wrong lobby, and he does it on purpose!" The answer was cheered to the echo.

WHY AEROPLANES ARE MADE TO FLY

Because the Force at Which They Are Propelled Makes a Cushion of Air Underneath.

By Edgar Lucien Larkin of the Lowe Observatory, Echo Mountain, Cal.: The mathematical principle involved in aeroplanes, machines heavier than air, is that of gliding over a fluid. The air under the flat surfaces may be considered as being compressed—that is, a cubic foot of air under a moving plane weighs more than a cubic foot above because there is more air in the cubic foot of space. And the greater the velocity of the plane the greater the compression.

Thus: Suppose that a horizontal or slightly inclined upward plane is moving in air under the force of a given impulse; it will traverse a much greater distance than a body of any other shape driven by an equal force. I tried this experiment up here by throwing stones and tin plates. Different shapes of stone, pieces of iron, wood, etc., were thrown out over a canyon below the observatory. Smooth stones did not go more than 250 feet, wood and iron bodies less. The flat tin shingles were thrown horizontally or inclined upward. About twenty were thrown. Upon trial two were sent at the proper angle and speed to "catch the air," and they flew to a distance of not less than 1,500 feet.

This is the principle elaborated by Langely in his basic experiments. The reaction pressure of the air under the gliding plane was against gravitation and sustained all that part of its weight in excess of that able to be kept up by the aid in its natural state.

With enormous speed velocity theoretically, if not actually, could be reached where the air under the plane would be as solid, be a road for the flying plane. Thus the air in front of a rifle bullet is very dense and has been photographed as a dark mass.

In front of lightning the air becomes solid and turns the electricity aside in zigzag paths. The air above and around melinite approaches a very dense state when the explosion occurs. Meteors, when they move with their maximum speed of 42 miles per second, compress the air in front. The aeroplane rides on air which itself compresses. The greater the speed the greater the weight sustained.

DR. LYMAN ABBOTT AND HIS CREED

The Christian Intelligencer Says It Is Thinly-Veiled Pantheism.

Addressing a recent meeting in Cooper Union, New York, Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor-in-chief of the Outlook, took as his topic "How I Think of God," and according to the reports in the next morning's papers, he said: "I used to think of God as a great king, and my idea of prayer was that it resembled a sort of wireless telegraphy sent off somewhere eventually to connect with God, but now my ideas have changed. I regard God as a universal personality. There is one infinite energy in all human life, from which we cannot escape. We are not a set of separated wills going our own ways, but there is a unity in man. The whole doctrine of evolution illustrates that unity. If there were no unity it would be impossible for us to study history or ethical laws." Admitting that Dr. Abbott's words are not fully reported, as is very probably the case, and that his subsequent utterances modified somewhat his earlier statements, yet unless he absolutely retracted the ideas expressed above, we can regard his "Views of God" only as the most thinly-veiled pantheism. It may be true that this is Dr. Abbott's view of God, but it not God's view of himself, nor is it the scriptural view as authorized by him in his revelations. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." "I, even I, am he that blotteth out they transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins." "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." These are not the words of a "universal personality" or of an "infinite energy," but of the living and true God, who knows us altogether and whose creative power is no less real than his power to sustain and direct, to punish or to bless his creatures. Dr. Abbott is a man of great literary attainments, of fine personality and of kindly instincts, but if this is the best he can tell us about God his knowledge of Christian theology is but scant and his reliability as a religious teacher in the Christian sense of the word is very doubtful. It is well that the Outlook is confessedly a journal, not of religion, but of ethics and humanitarianism. If the editor confines himself to these important spheres of thought it may still render good service to the community.—Christian Intelligencer, Reformed, New York.

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SEVEN DINNERS WITHOUT MEAT

Menus Which Left a Family Without a Sense of Something Missing.

"What's this I hear, Aleck?" said Mr. Mack after greeting one of his sons-in-law during the noon hour. "They tell me at home that you have gone in for a meat boycott and that your entire family are mighty close to vegetarians. What's in it?"

"Well," rejoined Aleck, "I'll tell you. One evening after enjoying a particularly toothsome steak I did a little figuring. It was not at all hard to prove mathematically that the price of that steak would have supplied two entire meals with meat omitted and then have left something over.

"Then I went a little deeper into it and figured out that practically the entire amount of our meat bill could be saved for other purposes if we used vegetables, cereals, fruit and occasionally fish and eggs—not much of the last two of course, since they are about as expensive as meat. So we decided, Vi and I, to go without meat for a week, with the understanding that if at the end of that time we were in good health and just as happy as ever we would continue the proposition indefinitely."

"But you don't mean to say you cut the meat out completely at the start and haven't tried a bit of it, do you?"

"Yes, that's exactly what I mean. It hasn't been a hard proposition at all, except that sometimes when I am down town I look askance at the free lunch, to say nothing of the bills of fare at the restaurants where I occasionally go for lunch. Aside from that, however, I haven't missed meat a bit and now am starting the second week of the proposition."

"Well, but the children and Vi, don't they mind it?"

"Not a bit, so far as I can see. Of course it means some extra work in getting up desserts, and making soups without meat or bones, but even that has its compensations, and certainly our fare has been more varied than when we depended on meat as the main dish for the meal."

"And from an economical standpoint what has been the result?"

"There you rave the best thing of the lot. The saving the first week was within a few cents of the entire amount of our former weekly butcher's bill, and there has been no lack of tasty dishes and good combinations.

"Here is a list of the meals for last week. Glance at that and see if you cannot support life and work hard on such a bill of fare," and Aleck handed a slip to his father-in-law.

The menus were for dinners only, the breakfasts consisting as usual of fruit, cereals, rolls and coffee. Lunches for the family never included meats to any great extent, so the difference in that meal was little or none. The dinners for the week were as follows:

Monday.
Bean Soup with Croutons.
Spanish Omelet.
French Fried Potatoes.
Stewed Tomatoes. Mixed Salad
Rice Pudding.
Milk. Coffee

Tuesday.
Tomato Soup.
Baked Eggs.
French Fried Potatoes.
String Beans. Salad.
Apple Pie.
Milk. Coffee.

Wednesday.
Bean Soup with Croutons.
Scrambled Eggs.
Baked Potatoes. Peas
Salad Romaine.
Chocolate Pudding.
Milk. Coffee.

Thursday.
Cream of Celery Soup.
Macaroni and Cheese.
Boiled Rice.
Apple Salad.
Bread Pudding.
Milk. Coffee.

Friday.
Corn Soup.
Broiled Salt Mackerel.
Boiled Potatoes. Tomatoes.
Chicory Salad.
Lemon Meringue Pie.
Milk. Coffee.

Saturday.
Split Pea Soup.
Fried Potatoes. Stewed Tomatoes
Onion, Lettuce and Celery Salad.
Coffee Jelly and Whipped Cream.
Chocolate Cake.
Milk. Coffee.

Sunday.
Oysters on Half Shell.
Creamed Oysters.
Curried Oysters.
Escarole Salad.
Plum Pudding.
Milk. Coffee.
Nuts and Raisins.

"Well, I'll be gosh binged!" said Mr. Mack, after reading the list. 'While it has a vegetarian sound and style it doesn't strike me as distasteful as the average menu in a vegetarian restaurant. I wouldn't mind trying a few weeks of that myself."

"Wait a bit," rejoined Aleck; "by the end of this week Vi will be able to beat these menus all to pieces. Two months of this sort of life and the French, who are the most economical cooks and the best cooks in the world, will have nothing on my household, I promise you."

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