Washington Square Players In Their Work and Play

Walter Prichard Eaton Attends Their Celebration at the Bandbox and Writes of Their Bill

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

The Washington Square Players, in and other places have all tried little the atres in greater or less degree superimposed from above. The Toy in Boston lived so long as it remained in the hands of the amateurs. When it built a larger house and went into the booking business it went to grief on the rocks. Those who live in Philadelphia and Indianapolis, no doubt, can best say why their ventures caused. But it seems to stand to reason, in the case, say, of Indianapolis, that when your plays are to be acted by amateurs, unless there is a strong impulse among men and women to act so that casts are abundance.

themselves, cele-brated the other day their first year. They celebrated with a party. All the actors and au-thors and scene painters, and some newspaper men and other well-wishers were there. But no

SALTER P. EATON speeches were made. There was little will about dramatic art and none about the "uplift." What these young people did was to dance to the music of a negro exchestra until a late hour, with all the arder if something less than the abandon of society debutantes! Wa the foolety debutantes! We think that party was one of the most hopeful things about the Washington Square Players experiments. They are simply having a good time running their theatre, and it occurred to them to celebrate its in any other way than by hav-

tur a little more good time. The trouble with the uplift is that it in't a boost from the bottom; it's a pull from the top. Any real, fresh, vital movement in the arts must bubble up from below. We have seen many little theatres and the like experiments started here and there, all over the country, of late, and on the whole we are glad to see them. A few, we doubt, represent rather too much the personal vanity of the founders; but most of them are sincere, and they are indications that there is an awakening among certain people to the possibilities of a better theatre. But to have the stuff of endurance in them they cannot repre-ent the tastes and desires of a few people only, especially when these people are not themselves actors, writers or otherwise workers in the arts, but are more or less wealthy folks desirous of buying hing they cannot themselves create. Either there must exist a public demand rafficient to purchase the artists by steady alrenage, or there must exist the artistic brees fretting for a chance at expression and vital enough to make and seize their

In either case, the impulse is from below it is democratic. An example of the former might be the New Free Folk Theatrs of Berlin. We hardly have an Ameri-

Would you stand for this?

THE pen of the cartoonist may yet prove

I mightier than the sword of the movie

censor, C. R. Macauley, formerly car-

conist of the New York World, has ar-

saged with the Kineticartoon Studios

o distribute in animated form the car-

on reproduced above. The film runs

bout 80 feet and is sold at cost. First

glose-up of the page of an open news-

eds to blot out some of the printed

and Next a speaker is shown address-

an audience from a public rostrum.

hand, called "Censorship," grips the

maker over the mouth. Finally ap-

ara a representation of a motion-picture

Teen, upon which is written this legend:
A Great Public Forum." Then, fading
and obscuring the screen, appears a
sy-haired, puritanical figure with outstatched hands representation.

stched hands, representing "Censor-

sorship," fades over it and pro-

aper is shown. A large hand, labeled the screen art to it.

less there is a strong impulse among men and women to act so that casts are abundant and rehearsals always attended, there can be no success. All the endowments in the world will not buy this impulse.

Well, the Washington Square Players had the impulse. They had, some of them, the impulse to act; others to direct; others to paint scenery; others to write plays; others to look after the business end and the publicity. They rushed hopefully in where the wisest theatrical angel would fear to tread, poor as the young and enfear to tread, poor as the young and en-thusiastic generally are, on the assumption that if they did what they liked as well as they could, its novely and incentive would appeal to other people. And their assumption has proved so correct that their current bill is a great success, for the first three weeks selling out the theatre at every performance, and now they are paying their actors \$20 a week, and when their first birthday came around

when their first pirthday came around
—why, they just danced!

The first play on this bill, by the way, is a capital piece of work, and capitally acted. Already, after a year, these players, many of whom began as amateurs, are showing what training can do. The play is called "The Clod." The author is Lewis Beach, a recent graduate of Har-vard. The scene is in a poor farmhouse, on the border between North and South in our Civil War. It is night. The old farmer and his overworked wife complain of the hard times, and the poor woman dully complains that she'd do better if she could only get her sleep. A pursued Northern soldier slips into the house, and presently his two Confederate pursuers follow. Unreasoningly, merely to escape further persecution and loss of sleep, the woman helps to conceal the Northern dispatch-bearer. Goaded to desperation by the Confederates, when one of them calls her a hag, she selzes a shotgun and kills them both. The Northerner embraces her as the savior of his life, and incidentally of 20,000 soldlers. But she only contemplates her broken china, and moans that now they'll have to eat off tin. War means nothing to her but a nightmare that wrecks her house and keeps sleep from her poor old tired eyes. The sketch is thrilling in its suspensive excitement, and truly profound in its implications.

It is a little gem.
It is followed by a gay fantasy, called tre of Berlin. We hardly have an American example, unless it be the Municipal "A Road House in Arden," by Phillip Moeller, in which Shakespeare and Bacon ample of the latter might be the Little Country Theatre in Dakota, which originated to meet the natural impulses of the fake of various nationalities in those regions to express themselves in songs, "The Tenor," is not well acted, and the dances and plays, the opportunity, to attend the professional theatre being denied them. Boston, Philadelphia, Indianapolis all through, and significant work.

SMITING THE CENSOR WITH THE DRAWING PEN

PUBLIG ROSTRUM

WHEN WEBER & FIELDS

BEAT THE MOVIES AT

THEIR OWN GAME

Much has been said about what the

movies gain by working out of doors, but

Weber and Fields, the famous Dutch come-

dians, coming next week to Keith's, beat

Usually they did their rehearsing on

the sidewalk along what is commonly

known as "The Bowery." The policemen

did not have a great deal of respect for

the art of the two comedians and their

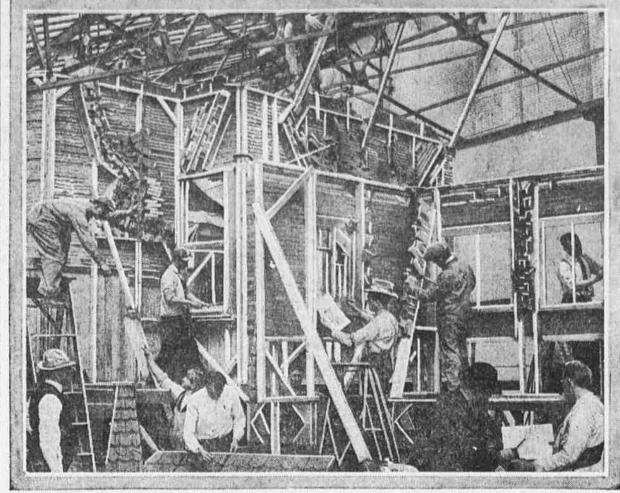
rehearsals frequently came to an end when they were threatened with arrest. The first time Weber and Fields appeared

The first time waser and recass appeared together as a team of comedians was in a cellar on the Bowery and it was at that time—almost too many years ago for present-day theatregoers to know anything about—that Weber and Fields original.

Or this?

THE MAKING OF A MOVIE EARTHQUAKE

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 26, 191



Benind the scenes in the Lubin studio when the car penters are getting ready for one of nature's handns. When the structure shakes and topples, the camera on the other side of the walls will get a realistic view of these bricks, joists and plaster tumbling in confusion. made cataclysms.

WHEN such a little thing as an earth- one may gain considerable inside information having practical windows, each house is quake happens in the course of a tion concerning the building of earth- lathed, plastered and papered. All the photoplay romance it is sure to awaken a thrill. But the spectator accepts it mildly and awaits further surprises. He has little idea of the time, patience and trouble required to provide the picturesque punch.

nunkes.

It is, of course, necessary to erect numerous houses to have a realistic catastrophe of this nature. The tedious task takes many days and requires a large number of workmen. Homes of many styles of architecture must be built, with all the domestic embellishments.

At the studie of the Lubin Company,

The accompanying picture gives an idea tions where thrills are manufactured every day, of the detail necessary. In addition to mass.

lathed, plastered and papered. All the joists, beams and lumber used in the construction of an ordinary house are included. In many parts of the interior of the building small wooden chutes are at-tached to the walls. The chutes are filled with bricks. When the crash comes, the bricks, the flooring, the plaster and por-tions of furniture are mixed in one great

Why E. H. Sothern Takes the Movie Plunge

and speak vehemently against it. Not long ago Louis Mann and Elsie Ferguon waxed very warm upon this subject before the Drama League. There is nothing of that attitude in Mr. E. H. Sothern's view on the movies. Still, Mr. Sothern is not the type of man to plunge into heated and acrim onious discussions on any sub-

The recent announcement by the Vitagraph Company of Mr. Sothern's engage-ment by them came as a bit of a surprise to many of Mr. Sothern's friends and ad-

PUBLIC FORUM

Then why stand for this?

prove his love for his friend.

terial wherever they could.

inated their screamingly funny burlesque

his fingers into the little fellow's eyes and

then tried to explain why he did it to

Like the late Pete Daly, W. J. Scanlon

Joe Murphy and other old-time favorites,

Weber and Fields came from the old East

Side of New York and before they be-

came famous and "found" themselves as

Dutch comedians, they knew many hard-ships in their early days. But it was as Irish comedians they secured a job

at Wood's Museum at 29th street and Broadway, known to the present-day thea-tregoers as Daly's Theatre and now rap-idly passing from the theatre zone. They did five "turns" a day and got their ma-

The Censor's Motto

Discretion is the better part of virtue. Channing Poliock.

THE photoplay has caused many a mirers, and possibly a shade of disap- the actor. Such men as Emerson and prominent theatrical star to rise up pointment. Yet, why not? The movies have other artists of equal rank.

> Mr. Sothern considers the movies extreme importance, both from the educational and artistic standpoint. "We should have the great Shakespearean plays, acted by our great actors, shown in the schools while the children are studying the play. A young mind can grasp a picture far faster than mere words, no matter how beautiful those words, no matter how beautiful those words may be.

"Shakespeare's plays are remarkable for two things. First, the wonderfully con-structed plot, full of action and fire; second, the language of the plays itself. Not long ago I had an argument with a friend on whether "Hamlet" lacked action. I was so sure of my point that I seriously thought of giving a production in which my company would not speak a word, but ould act the play as usual. it could be worked and the audience know just what was being done. The only place where the action would need to be hurried

is in the sollioquy. To be or not to be.'
"So you see, since I feel there is suf-ficient action to carry Shakespeare on the stage without spoken words, I am more sure that there is pienty of action for the motion picture. I am to make 'Hamlet' for the films. The scenario which will be submitted to me will depart from the original in many places, but this is nec-

"Do not think that I believe the movi will ever supplant the speaking stage. It can amplify it, however. The most mov-ing, thrilling thing in the world is the human voice, the keenest intellectual stimulus the spoken word. These two things the photoplay lacks.

"There is far too much attention paid to stage setting and far too little to the actor. It is just as true in the movies as on the legitimate stage. They strive for background and do not consider the principal figure. It is comparable to a painter who paints such a magnificent background that it takes your attention and you lose the central figure. Thus the painter defeats his purpose. So with in which Lew hammered Joe's face, stuck over-elaborate productions, either on the stage or the screen, the main points, the story and the acting, are lost in the set-

ting. There is a great tendency to belittle

The Nine-Foot Line

The nine-foot line to the uninitiated, a line nine feet from the camera's lens a line nine feet from the camera's lens running parallel with its face, whose ends touch those that bound the camera's focus, has been eliminated, so far as Hughte Mack and Kate Price are concerned, especially in regard to the taking of a close-up. It was discovered by Vitagraph Director George D. Baker, while filming a recent picture in which the pair played principal parts, it was impossible to get the two, side by side, on the nine-foot line on account of their enormous girths. The only way Director Baker could give them an equal chance was to take them in separate scenes.

Carlyle seemed to look down upon the stage as a profession. The actor, as a class, was considered light-headed and irresponsible. This is wrong. It does not hurt my dignity to be known as an actor."

Mr. Sothern considers the most important factor in any theatrical production to be the acting. Versatility is the keynote of great acting. He feels that the movies give the actor a greater scope for his abilities than the stage.

What Do You Think of While the Virtuoso Plays?

A Few of the Amusing Speeches From "The Artist," the Stage Society's Satire on Audiences

WHAT does an audience really think? The lady on your left when Paderwski plays tells you that his touch in the planissimo is superb, but probably she thinks: "I wonder why I couldn't train Henry's hair that way." And as for the pianist himself---:

This major mystery of the muste world is solved for the inquisitive in one of the entertaining playlets given by the Philadelphia Stage Society, on Friday and Saturday nights at the Little Theatre. It is solved by watches solved by neither a playwright nor a psychologist. A mere critic. H. L. Mencken, does the trick in "The Artist." By the kind permission of the Stage Society the Evening Ledges is able to print portions of the dialogue.

First a bare stage with only a piane to grace it. Then out of the audience—the actual audience of the Little Theatre rises a voice, two voices, half a dozen, First Woman-Oh, I do certainly hope

he plays that lovely Valse Poupee as an encore! They say he does it better than encore! They say Bloomfield-Zeisler. First Critic-I hope the animal doesn't

pull any encore numbers that I don't recognize. All of these people will buy the paper tomorrow morning just to find out what they have heard. It s infernally embarrassing to have to ask the manager. The public expects a musical critic to be a sort of walking thematic catalogue. The public is an area. public is an ass A Man-Oh, Lord! What a way to spend an evening!

A Married Woman-I wonder if he's as handsome as Paderewski.
Second Woman—I wonder if he's as
gentlemanly as Josef Hofmann. First Woman-I wonder if he's as fas-

cinating as De Pachmann.

A Married Woman—I wonder if he has dark eyes. You never can tell by those awful photographs in the newspapers.

First Woman—I wonder if he can really play the piano.

First Critic-What a hell of a long wait! These rotten piano-thumping immigrants deserve a hard calldown. But what's the use? The piano manufacturers bring them over here to wallop their pianos—and the piano manufacturers are not afraid to advertise. If you knock them too hard you have a nasty business-office row on your hands.

office row on your hands.
Second Man—If they allowed smoking,
It wouldn't be so bad.
First Man—I wonder if that woman cross the aisle-

across the ansetree front Pionist bounces upon the stage so
anddenly that he is boxing in the centre
before eny one thinks to applied. He
makes three stiff bous, At the second the
appliance begins, swelling at once to a rear.
He steps up to the pione, bows three times
more, and then sits dows.

Young Girl—Oh!

A Married Woman—Oh!

Young Girl—Oh such eves Such

Young Girl—Oh, such eyes! Such depth! How he must have suffered! I'd like to hear him play the Prelude in D-flat major. It would drive you crazy!
A Married Woman—How he could play
the Moonlight—or the Apassionata!
First Woman—I certainly do hope he plays some Schumann Second Woman-What beautiful hands! I could kiss them!

The Great Pianist, throwing back his head, atrikes the massive opening chards of a Beethoven sonata. There is a sciden high. Young Girl-Oh, perfect! I could have him! Paderewski played it like a barn dance. What poetry he puts into it! I can see a soldier lover marching off to war * * and throwing kisses to his sweetheart * *

Second Critic—The ass is dragging it, Doesn't con brio mean—well, what the devil does it mean? I forget. I must look it up before I write the notice. Somehow, brio suggests cheese. Anyhow, Pachmann plays it a damn sight faster. It's safe to say that, at all events.

A Married Woman—Oh, I could listen to that sonata all day!. The poetry he puts into it—even into the allegro! Just think what the andaste will be! I like music to be sad.

First Woman-What a sob he gets into

Second Woman-How exquisite!

The Great Planist-[Gathering himself The Great Pianist—[Gathering himself together for the difficult development section.]—That American beer will be the death of me! I wonder what they put in it to give it that gassy taste. And the so-called German beer they sell over here—good Lord! Even Bremen would be ashamed of it. In Muenchen the police would take a hand.

Young Girl-How I envy the woman he loves! How it would thrill me to feel his arms about me—to be drawn closer, closer. closer! I would give up the whole world! What are conventions, prejudices, legal forms, morality, after all? Vanities! Leve is beyond and above them all—and art is love! I think I must be a pagan.

The Great Planist-And the herring Good God, what herring! These infernal Americans-

[The Great Planist comes to the last measure of the coda—a passage of almost Haydresque clarity and spirit, is he strikes the broad chord of the tonic there comes a roar of applause. He arises, vouves a step or two down the stage, and makes a series of low boers, his hands to his heart.]

The Great Planist [Bowing.]—I wonder

The Great Planist [Bowing.]—I wonder why the American women always wear raincoats to piano recitals. Even when the sun is shining brightly, one sees hundreds of them. What a disagreeable smell they give to the hall. [More appliance and more bows.] An American audience always smells of rubber and lillen-of-the-valley. How different in London! There an audience always smells of soap. In Paris it reminds you of sachet bags—and lingerie.

[The appliance crosses and he returns to the

The applause ceases and he returns to the And now comes that damned adagie,

As he begins to play, a deathlike silence falls upon the hall.) First Critic-What rotten pedaling!

Second Critic-A touch like a xylophone player, but he knows how to use his feet. That suggests a good line for the notice—"he plays better with his feet than with his hands," or something like that. I'll have to think it over and polish it up.

Second Man—Now comes some more of that awful classical stuff.

Young Girl—Suppose he can't speak English? But that wouldn't matter.

Continued on Page Three



One of the Harvard professor's "ideographs" or visual psychology tests appearing in "Paramount Pictographs," a screen magazine shown at the Stanley. The letters in the jumble to the left are first thrown on the screen. Several seconds elapse. If you can unspe'l and respell them into the word Washington, you are blessed with creative ability.

ARE you fitted for your job? If so, how do you know? These are the questions Doctor Muensterberg asks, and he proceeds by means of animated tests to prove to your own satisfaction that you either are, or are not, pursuing the right course.

The first test is headed, "Have you a constructive imagination?" By means of trick photography, a number of little men appear on the screen, each holding a large candle. From each candle a letter pops. They are seen in motion and then finally come to a dead stop in this order-N I O L. You are told that they spell an animal. Before they are shown in their correct order, do you know that it

"lion"? Next comes a flower with the letters in wrong order. Each time the test gets harder than the last. Before you know it, you are guessing aloud. Doctor Mun-sterberg will continue his articles in "Paramount Pictographs" each week.

The National Board It is the 50,000,000 people who go to the motion-picture theatres who are the real censors. —J. Stuart Blackton.

MRS. BELMONT STAGES SUFFRAGE OPERETTA WITH REAL STARS

The suffragettes have caused a lot of trouble and plenty of comment at various times, but not long ago, at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, they succeeded in losing the trouble and turning the comment into praise when they produced Mrs.

O. H. P. Belmont's society satire, "Melinda and Her Sisters."

Not only were there famous suffragettes, but there were also famous stage

folk in the cast.

The collaboration of Mrs. O. H. P. Bel-mont and Miss Elsa Maxwell, of London. went off without a hitch. Governor and Mrs. Whitman occupied the big central box and the ballroom was filled with an audience of the best-known people in the

There was a real suffragetts parade and a soapbox suffrage speech, and Mario Doro, as Melinda, a slender little creature Doro, as Mellida, a siender little creature in a simple yellow frock, talked to the people in a way that seemed to come from her heart. She won over her sisters, Mr. Pepper, and perhaps—says the dubiously minded New York Times—the audience. The operetta was in two acts, or di-vided into two parts. The first was given

over to the sisters of Melinda, whom Mrs. John Pepper has sent abroad to study various arts. They come back as artists in music, in dancing, and bring with them their friends. Each sister does her par-ticular stunt at a ball which "Ma" Pepper, who is trying to get into society and the Colony Club, gives to the people of the neighborhood. The chorus was composed of many of the season's debutantes. Marie Dressler as "Ma" Pepper was ir-

resistible. It is said that Miss Dressier made her gown herself. It was popularly resistible. It is said that Miss Dressler made her gown herself. It was popularly short, a big butterfly, sparkling with jowels, was a brilliant corselet, and a brilliant green trail which looked to be a couple of inches troad trailed behind her effectively. It was a "pecan" gown, she said. said.

said.

There was a pretty letter box song by Bessie Pepper and her chorus and a real letter box into which the letters were a dropped. There was a delightful song by Annia Pepper with Count Veedlealteskey, of the Royal Onera House, Moacow, A classic scene fading into soft blus shadows with Miss Pam Day in a barefoot dance, and nothing was more - wer than the "Castle Dancers," Miss Gwendolyn King with Ernest de Weerth and their chorus of girls and young men. Emmy Wehlen gave her clever "Heilo"

Continued on Page Four

THIS IS NO CENTIPEDE



The radium dance number in the new Ziegfeld Follies, which comes to the Forest Monday. Seated on a curving platform of black, against a black background, the chorus achieves some remarkably striking poses.