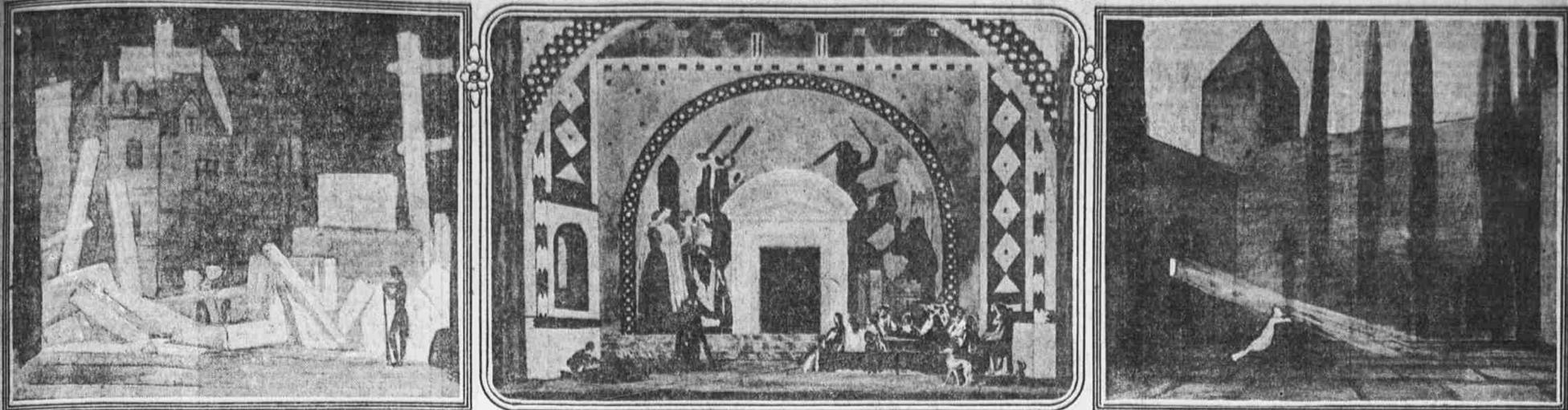


Evening Ledger

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING, MAY 13, 1916

PHOTOPLAY THEATRES DANCING MUSIC

THREE SCENIC WONDERLANDS IN ARTIST GORDON'S TRIP "THROUGH THE AGES"



At the left the conflict of the French Revolution is suggested by the rugged violent lines of the barricade and the aristocratic mansion behind, in the middle appears an ornate Italian hall, at the right is a medieval convent in masses of gray.

Walter Prichard Eaton Sums Up the Broadway Season

A Year of Prosperity and Success—And Also of Good Plays and Good Acting

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

THE season of 1915-16 in the New York theatre has been, in the whole, not only one of the most profitable financially, but one of the most encouraging artistically in many years.

Artistically, the outstanding features of the season were the excellent production of Louis Anspacher's play, "The Unchastened Woman," which carries on the tradition of Clyde Fitch; the establishment by Grace George of a repertory theatre where high comedy is acted (unfortunately only such comedy as contains a leading role adapted to Miss George's somewhat limited range); the successful establishment of a paying professional basis of the Washington Square Players' experimental and radical theatre (four vers libre of the stage); and, finally, the unpredictable and great popular success of Galway Kyles' powerful and searching modern realistic tragedy, "Justice," recently produced by John D. Williams with John Barrymore and a splendid cast. It is a fact that seven different theatres refused to book this play.

To balance the stark realism of "Justice," we have the sugar-coated romance of "The Cinderella Man" (by the Philadelphia, Edwin Childs Carpenter), which is hailed of their pleasure by the very repression and naturalism of the style. Mr. Thomas seems to have fallen between two stools. The play, however, is acted with unusual skill, especially by Richard Bennett, as a grizzled old army colonel. And the first act, which creates with marvelous skill the atmosphere of a Texas army post on a hot August day, is danced and acted all over the professional district.

After a while I ceased to be an infant in the eyes of the law and returned to New York, where I landed on Broadway and on the Winter Garden payroll at the same time. I am too modest to go into the details of my American career, because a uss everybody to go to another play and nobody could be found capable of taking his place. Mention of four such plays in a paragraph, all of them popular, should certainly show that we have not suffered for want of variety, nor failed in catholic appreciation.

As is only natural, considering the state of Europe, there have been few importations this season. The best, excepting the Shaw plays revived by Miss George, was "Hobson's Choice," that merry folk comedy of Lancashire life brought from Miss Horniman's Manchester Theatre.

Another excellent native comedy is "The Great Lover," in which Leo Dittichstein plays the part of a popular and amorous opera hero. This, too, is capably acted, and deserves its success. Sam Forrest, who has secured the Candler Theatre—and we mention this fact because this winter has demonstrated how much success depends upon good stage directing, "Justice" was staged by B. Idyn Payne. "The Boomerang," by Belmont; "The Great Lover," by Sam Forrest. And these three men are among our best directors.

Another pleasant feature of the season was the return of Mrs. Fiske in a rollicking, fantastic comedy role, in "Erastus Suman," the sort of role only she can

Rozsika Dolly—AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF FAMOUS TWINS—Yansci Dolly

I was born in Budapest 21 years ago, the elder of twin sisters. My mother was an artist at the National Theatre, Budapest.



Which is which? That is the problem that faces the newly wed husband in "His Wedding Night," the play that has its premiere at the Forrest Monday. He must find out which of the Dolly sisters is Rozsika and which is Yansci. Can you?

I was born in Budapest 21 years ago, the younger of twin sisters. My mother was an artist at the National Theatre, Budapest.

After this Budapestian beginning I went quietly until I was eight years old, when I made my debut as an actress. The debut was purely informal; the scene was our parlor, and the audience consisted of three boys and two girls.

The Easy Job of Writing a Mere Novel

By CYRIL HARCOURT

THERE are many reasons why I would rather write a book than write a play and the principal reason, I think, is constitutional. To write at all is an evil thing; it is probably a nuisance to the community and it may cause oneself and other people much distress.

These are the reasons, or some of them, why my literary activities are preferably employed and preserved (I hope) between the covers of a decent, sleep-producing novel, and chiefly perhaps because one may therein be relatively and beautifully untrammelled. One may punctuate precisely as one chooses, there are no maddening handicaps and restrictions placed upon one in the matter of length—a few hundred words more or less will not matter.

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Philadelphia's Season of Prosperity and Starvation

"War Prosperity" Brought Money to the Theatre and Good Plays to New York; but the Sum of Our Season Was Barrenness

By K. M.

THE season of 1915-16 in the Philadelphia theatre has been, on the whole, to parallel the remarks of Walter Prichard Eaton on the year in New York, which appear in an opposite column, if not the most profitable financially in many years, at any rate one of the most discouraging. Not only have the movies failed to "kill" the spoken drama, they have let it come near to killing the intelligent playgoer.

It has been a singular season—both here and in New York. It began in gloom, but it ends in gladness. Before Christmas old wariness like William A. Brady and Abraham Erlanger were next to certain that the theatre was dead. Brady stopped productions and plunged into the movies; Erlanger went doggedly ahead, but made no bones of his pessimism on Broadway. Both saw the end of the theatre they had built up and made the further blunder of imagining that this meant the end of the drama.

Then the great war began to make itself felt. The super-prosperity of the movies ended as soon as the withdrawal of European film manufacturers launched dozens of American firms on a career of overproduction very much complicated by the absurd triumph of the five-part feature. Philadelphia, too, felt the financial awakening. But as for the plays—well, Philadelphia must wait a year until New York relays them over.

Undoubtedly, Philadelphia's theatres have done well this year, but what about its playgoers? Just what have we seen for our money? Of course, we have seen our usual quota of stars, in spite of the seductions of California and its movies. Not so many, perhaps, as 10 years ago, but enough, Mr. Eaton finds the acting level of New York plays improved by the competition of the movies. Here, there has been no such result. If there is one criticism to be made of the acting we have seen it is the poorer quality of the players in the minor parts. Either the movies have taken the good ones or they are all in New York.

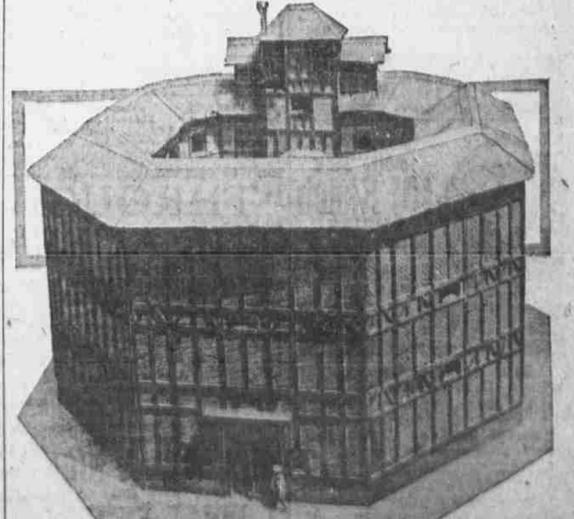
At a casual glance, the actors who most pleased, outside the ever-expert, popular and humdrum stars, were George Sidney for his theatrical manager in "The Show Shop"; Frederick Farry, for his study of the nerve-racked doctor in "On Trial"; Grant Mitchell, for his naive humor in "It Pays to Advertise"; Patricia Collins, for the charming impersonation who saved "Follyanna"; Laurette Taylor, for her accession to high comedy in "The Wooing of Eve"; George Hassell and Ralph Hiers, for two delicious Englishmen in "Ruggles"; O. P. Heggie, for his incomparably meek Androcles; and, among the people of musical comedy, the eternal Timiney, Williams and Lauder, the savior Grossmith, of "Nobody Home," and

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PHILADELPHIA'S THEATRICAL RECORD—1915-16

Table with columns: Date, Forrest, Garrick, Broad, Adelphi, Lyric. Lists plays and dates for various theatres.

THE GLOBE THEATRE—LONDON AND WEST PHILA.



This model of Shakespeare's famous old Globe Theatre, now in the Shakespeareana Exhibition at the Academy of the Fine Arts, will be reproduced to seat a thousand when the Philomathean Society of the University of Pennsylvania gives the "Comedy of Errors" all next week at the Botanical Gardens.

Joe Brandt and Gerald C. Duffy, editor of the Philadelphia Evening Ledger, and the flood of manuscripts which reached them two days after the announcement of the University's competition for a Mary Fuller scenario.