

WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT PICTORIALY AND VERBALLY SET FORTH FOR LEDGER READER

MYSTERY DRAMAS, MODERN AND OLD

The Press Agent of "The Thirteenth Chair" Discourses Sagely Upon Them

In "The Thirteenth Chair," Bayard Veiller's melodrama of mystery, a distinctly new contribution to the art of playwriting? In New York, where the piece ran continuously for a year, the "yeas" and "noes" are about evenly divided. It will be interesting to follow the local discussion which is sure to ensue upon the presentation of the play at the Adelphi on Labor Day with the New York company direct from its year's run at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre.

To describe it best, one speaks of "The Thirteenth Chair" as a mystery play, and yet it is a mystery in which the audience has a part quite as much as do the police inspector, who is called on to solve it. In fact, at the very beginning of the second act, which witnesses the arrival of the police on the scene of the murder and witnesses the events that have gone before that in the officer who is called on to solve the mystery of the murder of Edward Wales.

Assuredly this is a mystery play, yet at the same time is the audience fooled, for as the police inspector goes ahead untangling the mystery, he takes his audience with him. The final solution of the story is no more of a surprise to the audience than it is to the inspector and the audience has been fooled no more than he has.

To trace the history of plays which might be described as mystery plays does not require one to go back in time for more than a few years. Prior to the coming of Ibsen there were no plays at all that were really to the standard of "The Thirteenth Chair" as mystery plays, for the simple reason that playwrights invariably resorted to the soliloquy to explain to the audience what would have otherwise proven a mystery to them. Ibsen, by doing away entirely with the soliloquy, introduced an entirely new style of play, free of anything that suggested the mysterious.

There followed a period of years during which the drama made no effort to create situations calculated to mislead the audience. And then came "Arsene Lupin," the first of the detective plays which might be called mystery plays, but which were totally unlike "The Thirteenth Chair," in that they deliberately sought to mislead the audience.

Following "Arsene Lupin" came "Under the Cross," and following that "Inside the Lines," both plays that were mysterious only in so far as they defied their audiences by taking an unexpected twist at the end. In that, too, they differed from the present play of Mr. Veiller because, when the explanation does come at the conclusion of "The Thirteenth Chair," you realize that it had been quite within your power at all times to have discovered the correct solution, had you taken the correct course of reasoning from the start.

In any discussion of mystery plays one must not confuse the character of "The Thirteenth Chair" with the so-called mystery plays of the fifteenth century, which really marked the beginning of the modern drama. While those plays, written by monks, were called mystery plays, but which were really nothing but Biblical stories told in play form. While there is some uncertainty among writers as to when the first of these "mystery" plays was written, it is likely that the Coventry mystery plays, founded on stories from the New Testament and written in 1416, were the very first beginnings of our modern drama.

In connection with the early mystery or miracle plays, an expert tells of the



"SOME WILD WOMAN" She is Tisha, otherwise Jean Stewart, who plays the Babylonian vampire in "The Wanderer," coming to the Metropolitan.

struggle the monks were obliged to wage in order to induce the people to see their plays. In those days the taste of the populace ran more to tournaments, bear baiting, cock fighting and similar amusements. As an inducement he went to Rome, where he persuaded the bishop to grant a 1000-day pardon to every one who attended. And for fear that that would not prove inducement enough, the good monk also secured from the Bishop of Chester an additional forty-days' pardon, so that one visit to the monk's play was good for nearly three years' pardon for all other earthly misdeeds.

B. F. Keith's Theatre CHESTNUT & TWELFTH STS. Mat. 25c and 50c. Night 25c to \$1. 2-SHOWS DAILY.

GARRICK THE CRISIS TODAY at 2:15 TONIGHT at 8:15

GOATS, BE PREPARED FOR THEATRIC DRAFT!

"The Wanderer" Expects Every Hircine Actor to Do His Duty. No Kid to This

Any ambitious young goat in Philadelphia or its suburbs anxious for a stage career, will get the chance of its young life when "The Wanderer" opens at the Metropolitan Opera House late in September. In this great biblical spectacle, the scenes of which are laid in Palestine 5000 years ago, five young goats are used to give proper atmosphere to the scene. Of course there are sheep and other farm animals in abundance, but the stage business requires that five young goats shall be introduced at a certain moment.

CASINO Walnut ab. 8th St. Matinee Daily. Our Audience Age 18 to 25. There's a Reason!

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COLLEGE MAN TURNED FROM BOOKS TO FOOTS

Quotes Aren't Needed in This Case, for Footlights Are as Well Known as Sam B. Hardy

Sam B. Hardy, who heads the cast elected for Klaw & Erlanger's next musical comedy production at the Forrest, is one of the younger generation of comedians, a Yale man of honor in classes and sports, and an actor of varied experience in the practical school of the stage. He has played leading roles with dramatic stock companies in Minneapolis, Toledo, Springfield and Rochester, Douglas Fairbanks, "Stop Thief," "Princess Pat" and Ziegfeld "Follies of 1916." In "The

WOODSIDE Philadelphia's Foremost Park Musical Sensation of Season IMPERIAL BAND FREE CONCERTS Children's Day, Tues. Amusements FREE to Children from Noon to 2 P. M. Fireworks Every Friday Night

Wm. Penn THEATRE LANCASTER AVE. & 11ST. REOPENS Monday Afternoon MATINEES DAILY, 2:15, 4, 10, 15c. EVENINGS 7 & 9, 10c, 15c.

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VICTORIA Market above Ninth 9 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. PRICES, 10c, 20c MONDAY, TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY Gertrude McCoy IN FIRST SHOWING OF The Silent Witness THURSDAY, FRIDAY and SATURDAY Olga Petrova IN METRO PRODUCTION "To the Death" FIRST PRESENTATION

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The Oberammergau of America

For many years, pilgrims from all over the world visited the famous Passion Play in the little village of Oberammergau, which became almost sacred because of the devout performance of the humble peasants as they portrayed every ten years the great Bible story of the Master.

From all over our beloved country, the pilgrims of America have been flocking to see a great Biblical drama which tells in vivid and spectacular scenes, one of the greatest stories ever told in the Bible Book—the never-in-be-forgotten parable of the Prodigal Son—He who was lost and yet lived again.

This wonderful story, told in the Gospel of St. Luke, Chapter 15, embodied with stage settings of incomparable beauty, was such a sensation last season in New York that people went hundreds of miles to see what has been aptly described as "The Oberammergau of America."

This great play, "The Wanderer," after being presented in New York all of last season, is again playing there at the Big Manhattan Opera House, in its second season, turning hundreds of people away at every performance.

This wonderful story is superbly told in the great drama, "The Wanderer," which comes to the Metropolitan Opera House, Sept. 30. It is the greatest and highest attraction ever brought to the city of Philadelphia for any purpose. It will be admirably acted by the greatest cast ever organized in the history of the American stage. If you don't see "The Wanderer," you will miss the most dramatic and most inspiring spectacle of the age.

(Signed) WILLIAM ELLIOTT, F. RAY COMSTOCK, MORRIS GEST, Producers of "The Wanderer." (For Morris Gest.)

FORREST

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CASINO MATINEE TODAY "Sliding" Billy Watson and Wonder Show Walnut Above 8th St.

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EVENING LEDGER PHOTOPLAY CALENDAR

Table with columns for WEEK OF AUG. 27 TO SEPT. 1, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY. Rows list various theatres and their featured plays and actors.