# MANY NOVELTIES LISTED HERE NEXT WEEK FOR PLAYGOERS AND MOVIE FANS

## THE PLAYGOER'S WEEKLY TALK

*Observations on Plays and Photoplays of Interest to Philadelphians*

MARY RYAN, who is with us at the Garrick in "The Little Teacher," has other talents besides those of the stage. She is a clever cartoonist, and the accomplishment, practiced purely for her own amusement, has been the means of whiling away many a lonesome moment while awaiting cues or to pass the time on long railway journeys on tour.

"From my earliest childhood," Miss Ryan told The Playgoer, "I have spent much time transferring my impressions to paper.

"As a child I began copying from my picture books. I never thought of it as an accomplishment, but often it has been a great deal of comfort to me, helping to pass many hours that would have otherwise been dreary.

"One of the things that I like to do is to watch my fellow players from the viewpoint the audience never sees, from the wings of the stage, and catch their changing expressions as they depict comedy, tragedy, etc. It's almost like a game of hide-and-seek, trying to catch the varied emotions registered at those times."

IN "HELLO, ALEXANDER," in which Mclntyre and Heath return to the Shubert, Philadelphians are seeing a form of entertainment whose popularity has extended all over the world. Musical extravaganza has won a most regal. The United States holds no monopoly, however, on it. At the Empire Theatre in London, they have put on recently a most great scenic display, many extravaganzas as "Beauty and the Beast," "Mother Goose," "Humpty Dumpty," "Bluebeard" and other similar productions. The "Passing Show" and the "Follies" are modernized variants of the fairy tale "Panto."

"Hello, Alexander" is doubtless the most brilliant extravaganza ever written around those mentors of black face, McIntyre and Heath. The colors have been handled with lavish brushes and in scenic effects and costumes the show exceeds those of their past.

In the old days the Klralfy brothers were the kings of extravaganza. Their "Siberia" and others were shown at the Broad. At the Chestnut Street Opera House, Henderson, with his "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," Fox in "Blue Beard" and Rice in "1492" and others were the attraction for thousands.

Philadelphians of the older generation remember when J. Fred Zimmerman, now dean of American theatrical managers, used to lease the historic Academy of Music and put on "America," then the greatest musical extravaganza of the time.

The extravaganza is an old form of diversion, but it has not lost an iota of its popularity.

"I UNDERSTAND that a well-known actor has played a character about 600 times," said Sydney Greenstreet, of "The Rainbow Girl," behind scenes at the Forrest, "and from present conditions it would seem that he will have an opportunity to enact the part 600 times more. To step into a character day after day for three or four years one must keep his mind young; even then it is a marvel that the enthusiasm does not cool. Half the hours of his day must be lived as the character, not the man who plays it. Granted he is not on the stage from 11 o'clock at night till 8 o'clock the next night, the man he portrays must constantly creep into his mind. I should think the role would become a bore to him—at times. The case in point is a case of specialization. This actor must have those elements within him which go to make up a specialist, whether it is in art or science. He might have made a good actor or a lawyer. But to play the game of a specialist life must be all in one temple.

THE Shuberts, who control the Shubert, Lyric and Adelphi Theatres and the Chestnut Street Opera House in this city, as well as many houses in New York and elsewhere, were asked yesterday what they thought of the prospects for the theatrical business in 1919-1920, and made the following optimistic forecast:

"The theatrical business in 1919 ought to be the best the country ever has known. The worst war in history has been fought to a finish. For four years the people of America have been under the pall of the conflict, although it was not until April, 1917, that our country actually entered the fray.

"The demonstrations everywhere when it was known that Germany had signed the armistice, furnish an indication of how tautened nerves relaxed and how joy had banished the depression of war. It also was an indication to us as managers, of what the people will want during the next year. They will want lots of high-class amusement and they will flock to performances that are worth while in things such as the theatrical business in its palmiest days has not witnessed. We look for the opening of many new theatres to take care of this demand, and we also look for the appearance of many better plays of all classes than we have seen in a long time."

WHAT is to become of the stars of the screen? That is a question which is troubling many managers and

## FRESH AND FAMILIAR FACES ON COMING PLAYBILLS

In "MELTING of MOLLY" Opera House

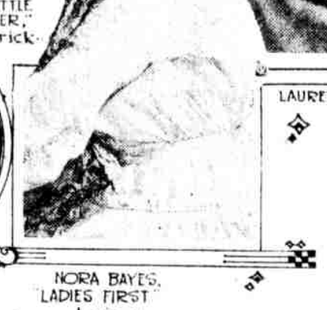
JACK NORWORTH, Keith's

LILLIAN ROSEDALE "HELLO ALEXANDER" Shubert



HELEN BLAIR "LITTLE TEACHER," Garrick

NAZIMOVA, "OUT OF THE P. Stanley



NORA BAYES, "LADIES FIRST" Lyric

ETTA PILLARD, "SOCIAL MAIDS" Casino

ALICE REHN, Globe

HELEN CANTLON, "DANDELIONS" Grand

ETHEL CLAYTON, "MAGGIE PEPPER" Locust

KATHLEEN MacDONALD, Victoria

CHAUNCEY OLCOTT, "VOICE of McCONNELL," Walnut

FLORENCE MOORE, "PARLOR-BEDROOM And BATH" Adelphi

LAURETTE TAYLOR, "HAPPINESS," Broad

### MOLLIE'S MELTING

**Isabelle Lowe Is the Fifth Actress to Essay the Role**

Isabelle Lowe, who plays the title role in "The Melting of Molly," the new musical version of Maria Thompson Davies's novel of that name, which comes to the Chestnut Street Opera House Monday, is proud of the fact that she and not one of four other prominent Broadway players is playing the role of Molly. The Shuberts, before deciding that the present production was in fit shape to be presented, did much experimenting, expanding and changing with different casts and different numbers.

The role of Molly, which calls for a very versatile player, one who can change her physical appearance as well as her mood, was attempted by such well-known players as Florence Nash, Alice Dale Fox, Irene Franklin and Vivian Wessell. Isabelle Lowe, the slim, pulpy-like Molly who sings her way through the course of the play, meanwhile growing plumper and plumper and then engages in the serious business of "settling down" to proportions and waist lines that are more esthetic to the eyes of her fiancé. Miss Lowe, who originally ventured her way through a few dances and song numbers in the "Passing Show of 1918." Before Miss Lowe's engagement at the Winter Garden she had traveled for seven years through all parts of the country with a road show. Her portrayals of the part of Olaf in "A Dawn of Tomorrow" and as June, the mountain girl in "The Heart of the Lonesome Pine," enabled Miss Lowe to win a stage reputation.

**Charles Hoyt in Musical Comedy**

"Ladies First," the musical farce of which Nora Bayes is the particular star, and which opens the Lyric Monday, was made into a musical play from the farce written by Charles Hoyt, which he called "A Contented Woman."

**Mask and Wig Show**

The Mask and Wig Club, of the University of Pennsylvania, has started well on the preliminary rehearsals for the new production, which will take the form of a big revue, embracing many of their past successes, and which will, as usual, be the Easter Week attraction at the Forrest.

Where are the stars of three years ago? Can you name them?

### A LONG PARTNERSHIP

**McIntyre and Heath on the Boards Nearly Half a Century**

McIntyre and Heath, who will be seen at the Shubert for a return engagement in "Hello Alexander," have had a remarkable career. For nearly half a century these two comedians have held their own. The reason that McIntyre and Heath's sketches have proved popular is that they are taken from life. All the incidents related in "Hello, Alexander," for instance, are not exact transcripts of actual happenings, but are based on experiences that befell these two clever artists early in their blackface days.

James McIntyre is the apprentice smaller and always downtrodden colored man, and Thomas Heath, familiar to those members of theatre-goers, is the overbearing Hebrew, in the sketches of McIntyre and Heath. But what a difference off the stage! Then the aggressive Hebrew, who is really of smaller stature, subsides into meek silence, while the unfortunate Alexander, the butt of all Heath's stage-bravado, becomes the spokesman of the team. Heath listens while McIntyre talks, inserting a word now and then or merely nodding assent. It was in 1877 in an early sketch that McIntyre and Heath satirized the material that has since gone hand to hand to such good results.

**From Baseball to Comedy**

Mike Donlin, baseball headliner, has been added to the original cast in "Turn to the Right" and is now on as Slippery Muggs, the pickpocket. This is the most amusing role in Donlin's theatrical career, which has been confined mainly to vaudeville. He comes to the Garrick March 24.

### OLCOTT ONCE PINAFORED

**Irish Actor Also Appeared in "The Old Homestead"**

Chauncey Olcott, who is coming to the Walnut St. Patrick's night in a brand new play from the pen of George M. Cohan, entitled "The Voice of McConnell," was born in Buffalo, and made his first stage appearance at the Academy of Music here as a ballad singer. Olcott's regular stage debut was made at the Union Square, New York, when he played the role of Pablo in "Pepita," or The Girl with the Glass Eye." For four years following this he played Frank Hopkins in "The Old Homestead." Then he appeared as Ralph Rakestraw in "H. M. S. Pinafore," and Nanki Poo in "The Mikado." Next he went to London to study music under Holland and Randegger, making his appearance on the London stage at the Criterion as the Chevalier O'Flannagan in "Miss Decima" and at the Prince of Wales Theatre at Cantherain in "Blue-Eyed Susan." Mr. Olcott then returned to the United States where he toured in "Macmourneen," since which time he has appeared in many costume parts featuring Irish heroes.

### MODES ON THE STAGE

**Nora Bayes Discourses on Theatrical Clothes-Philosophy**

Clothes may not make the man, but they have a lot to do with making the actor, in the opinion of Nora Bayes. Miss Bayes is one of the stage's best dressed women. Her gowns are creations and they look it. She gives excellent reasons for being a well-dressed actress. She says: "I cannot sing if I am uncomfortable, and I certainly would be uncomfortable if I appeared before an audience in an unbecoming gown. To be well dressed you must devote time and attention to the study of your clothes. I know the colors that look well on me and I know if gowns are properly made I can wear them intelligently. It may seem strange to talk about wearing a gown intelligently, but lots of women will know just what I mean. You must feel that you fit your gown to be comfortable in it.

"Keeping abreast of the times in stage frocks is a mighty expensive proceeding, but it pays in the long run."

### OUT OF "CHARACTER"

**John Arthur Drops "Bits" for Farce "Leads"**

Few actors have been able to escape the groove marked out for them by successes in character parts. The stage rule is generally once a Jap always a Jap, but there are exceptions.

Take the case of John Arthur, leading man with Florence Moore at the Adelphia in "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath." Arthur's first hit was made as the Jap in Eugene Walter's "Paid in Full." It was the playwright himself who chose Arthur for the role. Just when managers with Jap valet roles in their new plays were beginning to make it look as if Arthur would go on forever showing a saffron complexion and almond shaped eyes, he gave Broadway a surprising jolt by scoring another distinct success as the comical burglar in the popular Mary Roberts Rinehart comedy, "Seven Days." He has finally and emphatically cast his lot with farce comedy as a leading man in this popular form of diversion.

### JACK NORWORTH HIT IN TWO HEMISPHERES

**Back to Vaudeville After Foreign and Revue Experiences**

Jack Norworth's home is in Philadelphia, where he was born and educated in the public schools. Several years ago Mr. Norworth went to London to produce and appear in one of the big revues over there. It was just about the time the Americanized version of musical revues was being introduced in the halls, and Mr. Norworth was so successful that he remained three years, and his friends over here were beginning to fear he might lose some of his Americanism. But he was typically American and returned to his own country, but left behind him a reputation that made him almost as famous over there as he is here.

Mr. Norworth has not been seen in Philadelphia for more than two years. Last season he produced an intimate revue, which enjoyed popularity, and has only recently been taken off the boards. Vaudeville profited several ways by the production of this piece, for not only have several of its best "bits" been presented in the two-a-day, but the closing of the piece has sent Mr. Norworth back to vaudeville, and he is coming to Keith's next week with a budget of his newest song hits, a few stories and a lot of personality.

**Song Hits of "Rainbow Girl"**

The principal song numbers of "The Rainbow Girl," including the duets "Just You Alone," "My Rainbow Girl" and "Love's Ever New," written in the Hirschian best mood, are sung by Beth Lydy, who competently fills the name part, assisted by Harry Benham. No prima donna of light musical comedy to visit the Forrest this season has given more satisfaction than Miss Lydy. To an important role of this class of entertainment, she has brought a voice of excellent quality and adequate volume.

### HIRSCH AS COMPOSER

**Trained for Concert Pianist, Turned to Musical Comedy**

Louis Achille Hirsch is the full name of the composer of "The Rainbow Girl." He is a native of New York, is of French-American descent and was educated in New York City College. He is a musician by training and education. His executive gifts ran to piano playing, and he studied in New York and Berlin, where he also became a student of harmony and counterpoint. Just as he was about to make his debut as a concert pianist, his compositions began to have such vogue that he was engaged by a London firm to write musical plays, and then he wrote the music for a revue of the London Hippodrome called "Hello, Ragtime," which ran for 600 performances.

Mr. Hirsch has a gift of fluent melody and rhythm, and is a master of ragtime. His popular songs include "Hello Frisco," "My Bachelor Days," "Sumurun" and "I Left Her on the Beach in Honolulu." Mr. Hirsch is very much to the fore just now in musical comedy successes with "The Grass Widow" and "The Rainbow Girl."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