PLAY BY TWO PHILADELPHIANS, MUSIC SHOWS, MELODRAMA

THE PLAYGOER'S WEEKLY TALK

Observations on Plays and Photoplays of Interest to Philadelphians

THE ancient and absurd saying that Shakespeare spells ruin is again receiving emphatic disproof. Shakespeare adequately put on and competently acted is a drawing card. Mr. Mantell's engagement, ending tonight, has crowded the Broad at many performances and left very few vacant seats at the remainder. Sothern and Marlowe, who are working through the Middle West toward their Philadelphia engagement, have had remarkable success.

Actors have spelled ruin for Shakespeare, but never has he been so inconsiderate to them—if they were worthwhile. Even in these days of large receipts, the Sothern and Marlowe box-office records are noteworthy. During four weeks in New York city these stars played to a gross of nearly $100,000. In Boston in two weeks they reached a gross of over $45,000; in Providence, $17,179, and in Toronto, $20,902. In each case this was for seven performances a week only, excepting an extra matinee in Boston. In the latter city they established a record for Shakespeare by reaching $4310 and $4403 at two Saturday matinees. Probably the next largest "house" on record was Forbes-Robertson's farewell at Drury Lane, in London, when at $5 a seat he played to a little over $4000.

On his southern trip, completed just before his local appearance, Mr. Mantell broke, in both New Orleans and Atlanta, all records for a classic tragedian south of the Mason and Dixon line, from the days of Junius Brutus Booth, father of Edwin Booth, down to the present time. At one matinee in New Orleans more people were turned away from the big Tulane Theatre, where he was playing, than were able to find seats in the house.

ON MONDAY night at the Broad Philadelphians will not only have an opportunity to witness a play written by two local citizens, but also observe the premiere of a young actor in stardom.

"The Irresistible Genius" will be the title of the comedy, which holds surplus interest, in addition to the debut of the newly made star, because of the fact it was written by two Philadelphians—John T. McIntyre and Francis Hill.

Georges Renavent, a gifted young French actor, is the lucky person that George M. Cohan has picked out this time. Mr. Renavent is made a star "over night," and in typical Cohan way the recipient will not be aware of the honor until he reads today's newspapers. Mr. Cohan witnessed the premiere of "The Irresistible Genius" in Baltimore last Monday night, and after amusingly—and keenly—acting as dramatic critic for a newspaper there (in a review that decisively criticized the play in the spots which did not see with the theatrical knowledge of Mr. Cohan) the author-producer-and many-other-titles tore off his coat and set about whipping the piece into shape. Philadelphia will get the first view of the result.

PLAYING in stock, of course, is a great aid in mastering the art of stage technique. There is something beneficial, as any actor can tell you, in playing the suave "will-you" one week and switching the following week to the noble-minded youth who always saves the family farm in time for suburban theatregoers to catch the 11:20 electric car. By playing everything that has been known to man or beast, one acquires a confidence in every role. Which is the reason, perhaps, Robert Woolsey makes such a good Angus in "Dere Mable" at the Garrick.

All the readers of the "Dere Mable" books will remember Angus; he was (and is) the buddy of the famous Bill. After a dozen candidates had been tried out Woolsey was named for the part. And the curious part about it all is that it is the first time he ever portrayed a Scotchman on the stage, although he has appeared in 200 different parts.

This may seem like a large number, but when it is remembered that he played stock in St. Paul, Portland, Seattle, Elmira, Syracuse, Providence and St. Louis, after beginning his stage career with the old Alcazar Stock Co., in San Francisco, it readily can be seen that he has had the opportunities to do so. He also appeared in the regular casts of "The Enchantress," "Madame Sherry," "Three Twins," "The Prince of Pilsen" and "Maytime." The hiatus between the last two engagements is explained by a three-year tour through Australia, India and South Africa. He did not miss a town between Shanghai and Capetown.

SOME years ago the Lubin Co. made all of its pictures here. Now this city does not have a company at work. Surely, it cannot be because of the "locations," because every type of dwelling from a log cabin to an airplane plant may be found, while an hour's ride takes the movie maker to any desired woodland, mountain place or seashore scene. On Wednesday evening guests at the Golden Night on the Walton roof voiced a plea for the Chamber of Commerce to take up the task of inducing the movie makers to come here because many of the outdoor scenes are what is known as virgin property. They have never "appeared" in movies. The Betzwood laboratories are the largest in the country and could handle the mechanical side with ease. The making and showing of a "movie" on the Walton roof in the short time of eighteen minutes was a record made possible by the combined efforts of Ira M. Lowry as director and Kempton E. Green as chief player in a special playlet. Special apparatus for drying the film was installed.

IN A quarter of a century's experience with all the plays of Shakespeare considered actable under modern stage conditions, Robert B. Mantell has found "Macbeth" the most consistently and universally popular. This bears out the experience of Mme. Modjeska, in her tours of America. When that fine actress would "go broke" on an artistic experiment in modern drama she would recuperate by returning to "Macbeth."

Second place is shared by "The Merchant of Venice" and "Julius Caesar," with "The Merchant of Venice" probably a trifle in the lead. "Hamlet" trails these two plays closely. "King Lear," at the outset of Mr. Mantell's experience, was a sort of "cult" performance. By persistent repetition, however, he has made it popular with the generality of playgoers, and it is not far behind "Hamlet."

The case of "Richard III" is peculiar. Junius Brutus Booth, the elder, father of Edwin Booth, established "Richard III" in America as a Saturday-night play. It was Booth's best part, and he always saved it for the climax of the week. All tragedians since him have played it on Saturday night, as Mr. Mantell did this day week. It is an excellent money bill on that night with Mr. Mantell, but experiments with it on other nights have not been encouraging.

THEATRE BILLS FOR NEXT WEEK

Schedule of Entertainments at the Various Playhouses in This City

New Attractions

BROAD—"The Irresistible Genius," a drama by John T. McIntyre and Francis Hill. Elevates Georges Renavent, the young French actor, to stardom. The story of a gifted youth on the threshold of a career and the effect of feminine wiles on his artistic progress. Serious undercurrents are said to move below the frivolity and piquancy of the comedy passages.

SHUBERT—"Take It From Me," musical play with scenes laid in a big department store. The diverting book is by Will Johnstone, the well-known cartoonist, and the score, said to be very melodious, by Will Anderson, Zoe Barnett, Ruth Leavitt, Fred Hillebrand and the Gardiner Trio figure in a large cast of well-known entertainers.

FORREST—"Listen Lester," John Cort's musical dancing show. Harold Orlob composed the dashing melodies. The cast includes Ada Mae Weeks, Fred Heider, Rene Brown and other musical comedy favorites, and a chorus described in advance as notable. Plot has to do with a temperamental widower, a "vamp" and some letters.

CHESTNUT STREET OPERA HOUSE—"Frivolities of 1920," with a group of fun, vocal and dancing specialties and a large cast and chorus of revue specialists. Sara and Nellie Kouns, sopranos, are the featured vocalists, and almost every variety of dancers is found among the principals.

WALNUT—"Seven Days' Leave," a big, spectacular military melodrama. Still running in London. Story contrasts spiritual atmosphere of English life in wartime with its easy-going pre-war indulgence. Spies, patriots, soldiers animate the plot. A big scene shows a battleship in detail.

Continuing Attractions

GARRICK—"Dere Mable," a musical comedyization of the popular doughboy letters. An excellent cast is headed by Louis Bennison. A comedy chorus contingent is an asset and another is a lot of likable tunes and ditties.

LYRIC—"The Guest of Honor," featuring William Hodge at his characteristic best in a new comedy. The star is revealed as a struggling young author whose kindness to others has left him practically penniless. Jane Houston is an excellent leading woman.

ADELPHI—"Somebody's Sweetheart," tuneful musical comedy. William Kent, Louise Allen and John Dunsmore head a splendid cast.

Vaudeville

KEITH'S—Eva Tanguay, cyclone comedienne; talented Albertina Rasch and her classic dancers; Eleanor Griffith, sketch; Lloyd and Christie, comedians; James C. Morton, character comedian; Talbot O'Farrell, singing comedian; Libonati, xylophonist; Charles McGood and company, athletes; Jolly Johnnie Jones, novelty act.

ALLEGHENY—Jim and Betty Morgan, songs; Louise Carter, comedienne; Rowland and Meehan, skit; Mertens and Arena, comedians with a dog; Blatt and Gordon, songs; photoplays, "Nothing But the Truth" and "The Log of the Submarine U-35."

GLOBE—Dottie Claire and company, musical comedy; "Petticoats," playlet; Murray Bennett, songologist; Marion Munson and company, protean act; Cook and Oatman, singers; the Three Beatties, dancing; Howell and Gear, skit; Delano and Marguerite, music, and others.

CROSS KEYS—"Mabel, Be Careful," musical comedy; "I'll Say So," scenic farce; Jennier Brothers, balancing; Mitchell and Green, comedians, etc. "The Fashion Minstrels" head bill last half of week.

BROADWAY—Josie Flynn and company, "The Fashion Minstrels"; Dave Harrin, singer; Little Lord Roberts, "Toy Land"; Frank and Toby Schell, singing; photoplay, "Everywoman." "Mabel, Be Careful," musical comedy, heads bill last half.

WILLIAM PENN—Josephine Davis, comedienne; Henry B. Toomer and company, comedy; Ray Largay and Sue Snee, singers; Maxine Brothers and Bobby, novelty; "Should a Woman Tell?" photoplay, etc. Arthur McWatters and Grace Tyson last half.

GRAND—Dan Ely's Black and White Revue, modern minstrels; Alfred Latell, animal act; Elsie Vokes; Ed M. Gordon and Ida Day, pantomimic comedy; Frank Marley, banjoist; De Marest and Estelle Collette, music; Billy Bouncer, clown; movie.

NIXON—Rehn and Beck, singing; Herschel Henlere and partner, musical skit; Gruber's Oriental animal act, and photoplay, "The Last Straw," with Buck Jones. New acts last half.

Roof Entertainments

WALTON—Dyer and Sands, "from the land of harmony"; Vera Sabina and company, dancers; Horton and La Triska, clown and human doll; Grace White, singing comedienne. Two performances nightly, 9:30 and 11:15. The movies which were taken of the guests at Goldwyn Night will be exhibited on Wednesday.

Stock

ORPHEUM—"Little Peggy O'Moore," an appealing comedy of the Irish in America, with characteristic wit, humor and sentiment. Miss Desmond should be in her element as the charming colleen who has the love romance. Good parts for other favorites.

DUNBAR—"In Old Kentucky," that classic of the paddock and race-track, will have a complete stage revival. Cleo Desmond will play the heroine, Madge, and Andrew Bishop and H. L. Prior are cast for important roles.

Minstrels

DUMONT'S—"Good Night Nurse, or Left in a Huff," will be the lead on a fun bill. "The Strawberry Patch" will combine the comedy and song of Boyden, Lee and Richardson. "Late for Rehearsal" is a new conceit of Sheldon and Patterson.

Burlesque

CASINO—"Bowery Burlesquers," under Joe Hurtig's direction, will offer Loney Haskell's aviation fun medley, "Going Up and Going Down." Billy Foster and Frank Harcourt are the chief comedians. There are twenty musical numbers.

TROCADERO—"Henry P. Dixon's Big Review" will vary its extravaganza in two acts with a multitude of specialties. "The Two 'off-Uns'" is the burlesque. There are fourteen different changes of costume for the chorus and big cast.

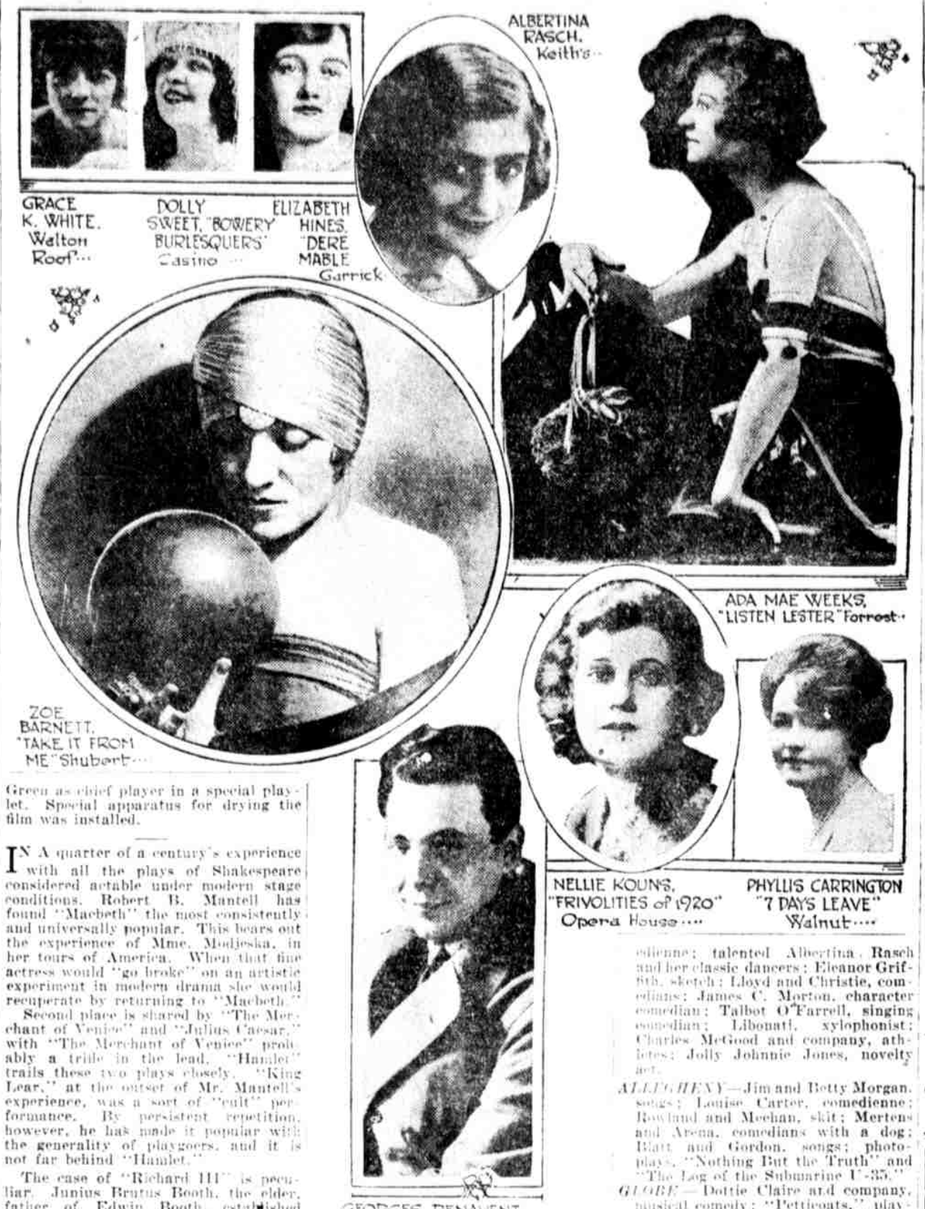
PEOPLE'S—"The Beauty Trust" will offer "Nedra," which varies in scene from a Palm Beach hotel to the Pyramid Garden of the Isle of Atlantis. Barry Melton is prima donna, Frances Farr soubrette and Jack Pearl comedian.

Coming Attractions
(March 8)

ADELPHI—"Up in Mabel's Room," farce, with John Arthur, Eleanor Dawn (sister of Hazel) and Enid Markey.

GARRICK—"The Ed Wynn Carnival," headed by the Philadelphia lad who has become a noted entertainer.

APPEARING ON LOCAL STAGES



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Cedar 60th and Cedar Ave. Richard Bach, Org't Mon. and Tues. "Cinema Murder" Wednesday, Thursday ANITA STEWART in "THE COMBAT" Friday, Saturday "FIGHTING CRESSY" CHAPLIN in "DOG'S LIFE"

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