

Wilson has carved a smiling destiny for so many irresistibly droll yet half pathetic figures that I inquired whether he preferred happy endings or merely tolerated them. He answered that he had no prejudice one way or the other; but that he regarded life as a series of happy endings "if you pick the right spots".

"You give me, on the whole, the impression that you think rather well

of life", was my comment as I was leaving.

"Anyone is lucky to have got in at all on such a preposterous adventure", were his last words.

They stuck. It seemed to me that this slant on life as a "preposterous adventure" was a fair explanation of why the books of Harry Leon Wilson are so successful in cheering the sons and daughters of earth.

THE BANQUET

By Beatrice E. Harmon

I BROUGHT new roses from the bush,
And old wines from the dark;
Three candles long and red I lit
In a tall, golden arc.

I set the arc upon the board
With a white damask spread;
I brought a bowl of bitter fruit,
A loaf of bitter bread.

I put an empty chair for him
Who comes to me no more;
I latched the shutters, drew the shades,
And bolted fast the door.

I quaffed the wine, I ate the loaf,
The bitter fruit did eat;
I swallowed all the husks of hope,
The ashes of deceit.

I drank a toast to faithless love,
I drank a toast to death;
I drank one toast to him my heart
(Poor thing!) still cherisheth.

I put a red rose in my breast,
And in my hair a white;
And opened up my door and fled
Into the starless night.

THE NEW YORKER

Spring and the Day of Bedroom Farces Arrives—A Speculation Concerning the Subscription Theatre—The Theatre Guild Attains the Rank of Bourgeoisie—More Congreve in Greenwich Village—"The Servant in the House" Limp Back—Bays for Mr. Gatti.

NOW that spring is here and the flood gates are opened for the summer musical plays and bedroom farces, it is a good moment to look back over a season in the theatre of which we have no great reason to be proud. It brought us among American plays but four of first rate interest: "What Price Glory?", "They Knew What They Wanted", "Desire Under the Elms", and "Processional" . . . a small portion but a highly creditable one. The failing lies in the fact that there have been so few plays that were "almost good". They all seemed to have been either excellent or bad. Among the managers there has been a popular cry to the effect that the radio has hurt the attendance at their theatres. This seems to us a fatuous excuse rather than a convincing reason for the dreary list of plays which have lasted from one night to a fortnight. Most of our friends are already sick to death of the radio and have stuck their sets away in the store closet. The answer lies not so much in the three tube set as in the low powered stuff which the theatres have offered.

The best evidence of our rightness in this matter is the success of the countless revivals. Certainly a season which has had a score of successful revivals argues but one thing — that it is amazingly poor in original material. To list a few of the conspicuous successes made by old plays, there have been "Candida", "Caesar and Cleopatra",

"The Wild Duck", "Patience", "The Mikado", "Princess Ida", "The Way of the World", and "Love for Love".

As one looks back over the season, another element stands out — the success of the subscription theatres. For years, indeed since before the collapse of the ill fated New Theatre, there has been a great agitation in certain circles for endowed theatres which could survive the crass commercial competition of Broadway. Time and again such a venture has been tried without success, proving once more that such things can grow only out of a real need for them, a need expressed by "the peepul" and not imposed upon them. At length the thing has come to pass. The opening of the "new and palatial" Guild Theatre is the triumphant proof. The Provincetown Players have had a season successful commercially as well as artistically. The Actors' Theatre has at last got off to a fine start. And now a new group called the Stagers, in which Margaret Wycherly, Mary Kennedy, Don Marquis, and a half dozen other intelligent talented players and writers are joined, has made a beginning in Fifty Second Street, a few doors from the triumphant and luxurious Guild Theatre. All this leads one to the conviction that in New York at least we are coming of age as a nation (despite even such stuff as "Ladies of the Evening", and "The Harem"). It leads still further into the belief that the so called "commercial managers"