

THE STAGE

A REVIEW OF THE SEASON OF 1898-99, WITH ITS OPENING IN TORRID TEMPERATURE, ITS UNEXPECTED FROSTS, AND ITS SUCCESSES, WHICH WERE UNUSUALLY NUMEROUS, THOUGH THE FOREIGN STAR WAS SCARCELY REPRESENTED AND THE NATIVE PLAYWRIGHT MADE BUT ONE HIT—THE PLAYS BROUGHT FORWARD IN THE METROPOLIS, THE PEOPLE WHO APPEARED IN THEM, AND THE IMPRESSION THEY MADE ON THE PUBLIC.

AS early as last December it became apparent to all who followed the affairs of the stage with any attention, that the theatrical year was to be a notable one from the standpoint by which even art is first judged nowadays—that of material prosperity. And this element of box office success continued to dominate the record as the months went by. Hit after hit was scored, in striking contrast to the previous season, which, as was stated in our review of last July, was marked by an unusual number of flat failures.

But one imported star shared in this prosperity—Olga Nethersole, unless we include Sonnenthal, who acted in German for a short season at the Irving Place Theater. On the other hand, almost every one of the successful dramatic productions was of English, French, or German origin. There is no getting away from this fact, sad blow to patriotic pride though it be. The stage, however, is not alone in depending just now on a foreign source of supply. Most of

our books, too, are coming from abroad. For the lovers of native drama, though, there is this consolation, that London is extending a warm welcome to a larger number of American plays with each advancing season. But to the New York record more in detail.

THE OPENING ATTRACTIONS AND THEIR HANDICAP.

The dramatic year opened August 25, a terrifically hot night, with musical comedy, "A Runaway Girl" at Daly's. The conception of this successor of various other "Shop," "Geisha," and "Circus" girls was imported from the London Gaiety, but her American realization was Virginia Earl, and the public "guessed right the very first time" in predicting that she and her clever associates would carry this farrago of tune-froth and frolic into the good graces of all sorts and conditions of theater goers. The critics, too, recorded a success the next morning, which was certainly very good of them, considering the moist conditions of linen under which they were obliged to write their impressions. But public, critics, even Mr. Daly himself, scarcely counted on a metropolitan run that extended almost through February, and a vogue for the airs that would place them on the



"A RUNAWAY GIRL" AT DALY'S THEATER.

list of every dance, give them prominence at band concerts, and even send them into the public schools for the children to sing at their exhibitions. James Powers' work as the jockey, *Flipper*, was adjudged by those who had seen both performers to be superior to that of the London creator of the part, and Mabelle Gillman played opposite to him as *Alice*, the maid, with a consummate adroitness that made her quarrel with Mr. Daly a matter of public regret. She joined the Casino forces for the leading part of "In Gay Paree," and her place in "A Runaway Girl" was taken by Elsa Ryan, a promotion from the chorus. The most popular song in the piece, "Soldiers in the Park," was sung at first by Yvette Violette, who used to imitate Yvette Guilbert, but she was afterwards transferred to "The Great Ruby" under her own name, May Cargill, and Adele Ritchie became the *Dorothy*, beginning with the shifting of the play to the Fifth Avenue in November. Cyril Scott was another leading favorite in the cast. Always at perfect ease in his parts, Mr. Scott is enabled to make even a colorless rôle stand out by an apparently effortless exertion of power that for lack of a better term we might call tact.

Hoyt's "A Day and a Night" at the Garrick was the next offering to brave the continued hot wave. It played to fairly good business for some weeks, but its chief defect was that the first act was so much better than the other two. The reviewers were quick to point out this fact, and as the Chinese system of paying for a performance piecemeal does not obtain here, Mr. Hoyt's profits were not augmented. The cast was headed by Otis Harlan, a Hoytian stand by, and among its minor members was pretty Grace Rutter, destined to blossom out in the Lyceum stock later in the season as Grace Elliston.

On September 1 Stuart Robson came forth at Wallack's, after several years' absence from the metropolis. This was a condition which New York had borne with more fortitude than it displayed under the infliction of "The Meddler," the concoction by Augustus Thomas which the manager had thoughtfully denominated "a comic play." Among those in the company who found nothing worth the doing were Marie Burroughs,



leading woman, and John E. Kellard, who soon deserted, only, alas, to fall foul later of "The Sorrows of Satan." After serving out his allotted three weeks' sentence, before audiences which Mr. Robson must have discovered to be the only chilly thing in that period of trying temperature, he betook himself and his wearisome "Meddler" to the road, where both found more congenial ground.

The same night brought Sothorn back to the Lyceum with Anthony Hope's "Adventure of Lady Ursula," to which the general public took kindly, although not to the degree of making it a season's run, like "Zenda" and "An Enemy to the King." Moreover, Virginia Harned's name part so overtopped that assigned to her husband, Sothorn himself, that brisk business with the British brand was not allowed to prevent the bringing forward of American goods in the shape of "A Colonial Girl," by Grace L. Furniss and Abby Sage Richardson. This met with a fair measure of favor for a brief period, and, in any event, served to restore domestic harmony.

The reopening of the Knickerbocker was accomplished the following week, under weather conditions that were still sizzling. De Wolf Hopper was to present his successor to "El Capitan," and naturally expectation ran high. Sousa's "Bride Elect" showed that the March King had not put his all into his first operatic success, and now that he had decided to go back to Charles Klein for his book, failure was the last thing looked for. But the event was otherwise. "The Charlatan" found his arts to be without avail in Gotham. He himself was voted tiresome,



VIRGINIA HARNED, IN
"LADY URSULA."

and the music to which he was set far too ambitious for a necromancer of his pretensions. Edna Wallace was undoubtedly missed from the company, which retained of the familiar Hopper people only its "old reliable" tenor, Edmund Stanley, little Alfred Klein (forced to masquerade as a woman), and stately Nella Bergen. Their stay in town was cut down one half, and Hopper left the metropolis with the first cloud on his horizon that had rested there since "Castles in the Air," his initial venture as a star, came tumbling about his ears. In all justice it should be added that "The Charlatan" on tour did such good business that Hopper had serious thoughts of taking it to England.

Two days later, on the first cool night of the new season, "A Brace of Partridges," an English comedy and company, inaugurated Charles Frohman's management of the Madison Square, lately Hoyt's. The critics were pleased, and said so with marked unanimity, but for some reason or other the public fought shy of these imported birds, who took flight back to Albion's shores before the winter was half over.

The next novelty, prepared by Harry B. Smith and Ludwig Englander, proved to be the herald of the military productions with which the season has been overrun. Francis Wilson began his theatrical year at the

About this time the Bijou was lighted up to launch Sam Bernard as a star. He had renounced a big salary at Weber & Fields' to follow whither ambition and large type led, and presently found himself in the market for another job. His undoing was wrought by "Chimmie Fadden" Townsend and a son in law of Joe Jefferson, Glen MacDonough, who had provided him with his first play, "The Marquis of Michigan." Poor Alice Atherton, of laughing song fame, whose sad taking off was among the many recent deaths in the profession, made all that was possible out of the strong woman with a penchant for music.



A NEW STAR AND AN OLD ONE-MAKE HITS.

In the last week of September "The Fortune Teller" pitched her tent at Wallack's, and it was speedily discovered that there would be naught but good luck for her sponsors,

librettist Smith and composer Victor Herbert. Alice Nielsen, in swinging out into space as a star, was careful to surround herself with capable support. There was a trio of comedians who were really funny, Joe Herbert, Richard Golden, and Joseph Cawthorne. There was also the bass of the many admirers, carried off bodily from the Bostonians, Eugene Cowles. And in the modest part of *Vaninka*, the gipsy girl, there was a player who was to write her name high in no less a house than Daly's before the trees budded—Marcia Van Dresser, the *Countess Charkoff* of "The Great Ruby."

ALICE NIELSEN IN "THE FORTUNE TELLER."

Broadway with "The Little Corporal" and Lulu Glaser. We put it this way because Miss Glaser was assuredly a factor in the piece without which it would have lacked at least half the snap and vigor that has lined it alongside the hits. Denis O'Sullivan, a big and handsome acquisition to the company, is also to be credited with especially good work.

John Drew made his reappearance at the Empire on this same night in an English comedy, "The Liars," and found therein the most sterling attraction he has had since "Rosemary." So closely was Mr. Drew fitted with *Sir Christopher*, another of those "squires of dames" in whom his soul delights, that one is almost ready to believe Henry Arthur Jones had him, as well as



Charles Wyndham, in mind the play. At all events, an action could not have conjured charming *Lady Jessica* than made. There were not many touches given in our playhouse year as some of those in her in one of which she tells him wanted to play *Romeo* all time only wanted to play *Juliet*: this pig-headed lover, Arthur a nephew of Ada Rehan, did not. He has improved wonderfully Irish was a capital *Lady K* was a pity that she chose to for the harrowing lead in "F. But she wished to be in New husband, J. E. Dodson, located in Union Square with "Because & So." *Rosamund* was passed this, formerly with A. M. Palm Tyree as *Dolly Coke*, chief liar, great scene with admirable aplomb. She, too, left the cast at the close of the New York run, and her place was taken, very acceptably, by Gertrude Gheen, who was seen to such advantage with Robert Hilliard about a year ago.



A MONTH OF SUCCESSES.

October was ushered in by the *pièce de résistance* of the season, Edmond

Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac," with Richard Mansfield, which played at the Garden Theater for eight weeks to standing room only for every performance except the second one. This record happily shattered the belief, prevailing in some quarters, that only frivolous productions are the big money earners. "Cyrano" won on sheer merit of play and player. It was the dramatization of no novel that had been the talk of the town, nor did its success in Paris mean much to the general public. In brief, the hit of such a play ("Cyrano" is a tragedy, it must be remembered) is to be regarded as the most hopeful sign seen in the dramatic heavens for many moons. Mention must not be omitted of Margaret Anglin, who stepped from comparative obscurity into the leading woman's rôle, making a *Roxane* that deserved praise and got it.

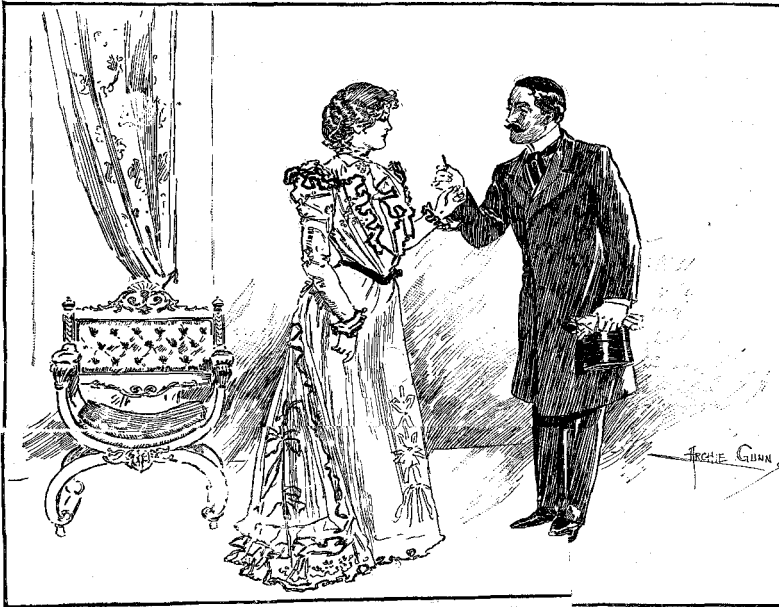
The second week in October saw the production of still another piece from over the sea. This was Hall Caine's "Christian," and if managers were inclined to disagree with Shakspeare and believe that there's much in a name, we should find them all busy searching the Scriptures for play titles. What with "The Little Minister" the biggest winner on Charles Frohman's record, and "The Christian" playing to the greatest receipts in the Knickerbocker's history, the church would seem to be in one sense the best friend the

than as the *Priscilla* of "Miles Standish," one of the many plays offered her. The fact remains, however, that the day after the first performance the critics awarded the greatest meed of praise to E. J. Morgan for his *John Storm*. His successor, Joseph Haworth, was also an admirable interpreter of this singular type. Indeed, the men dominated the play, Jack Mason as *Drake* and Jameson Lee Finney as *Lord Robert*, both scoring hits.

The third Monday in the month brought still another foreign success to the fore, "On and Off," a farce from the French, at the Madison Square. E. M. Holland and Fritz Williams headed a cast that played the skit at just the right tempo, and the scene in the last act where Holland is made to believe he has lost his wits sent the piece whirling along merrily until the middle of January.

And October had yet more golden fruit to drop into the laps of the managers, in the shape of "Catherine," with Annie Russell as star, and a supporting cast of much bril-

pleased mightily; the adventuress, Elsie de Wolfe, with a speech for which audacity is but a feeble term. Joseph Holland was "the good young man" of self sacrificing instincts and modest attire; W. J. Le Moyne capital as the doddering father of *Catherine*, the music teacher who becomes a duchess, while Ethel Barrymore lent the distinction of her beauty to the part of the *Duke's* sister. Mrs. Le Moyne was the *Duchess*, and the scenes that awakened the especial enthusiasm of all who witnessed



JOHN DREW AND ISABEL IRVING IN "THE TARS."

liancy. In fact, if being a star means getting the "fat" of the newspaper notices the day after the first performance, then the star of "Catherine" was indisputably Mrs. Le Moyne.

The play itself was treated with scant courtesy by the reviewers, but it was a piece admirably calculated to capture the fancy of women; and once this conquest is made, your box office receipts are assured. It was written by Henri Lavédan, a Frenchman, and first performed at the Comédie Française. The leading man here was Frank Worthing, who



them were those with her son, when she discusses the question of a marriage beneath him. Her utter freedom from stage conventions, that perfected art which is capable of concealing art—it was this that gave Mrs. Le Moyne's work in a quiet rôle the true qualities of greatness.

In connection with "Catherine" it may interest the reader if we reprint just here two paragraphs which appeared in a New York morning paper—the *Sun*—shortly after the play was produced. A new star was in one case represented as recounting her impressions of her reception, and although no name was mentioned, it was not difficult to read Annie Russell between the lines, for her *Sue* had certainly been the talk of London.

"Here I've made an attempt," she was reported as saying, "after having been praised and admired in Europe as no woman ever was since Mary Anderson. I return to my own country and find myself in a play which

gives me no opportunity whatever. I am told that I do the same old things as well as ever, and am patronized with such equivocal praise. The part in which I appear is such that my opportunities allow me to do nothing else. The honors go elsewhere, and I find myself, after the most enthusiastic acceptance abroad, just where I was five years ago. It is discouraging enough to make me feel like returning immediately to the place in which I was so much appreciated and remaining there forever."

As to the other complaint, it would not be a rash guess to ascribe it to Ethel Barrymore, who, the winter previous, had been playing in Henry Irving's company.

"I'm going back to London, too," was her declaration. "I've had enough of New York since I got back. When I was in London at the best known theater there I was praised for acting. Here I've been noticed only with a few words about my looks. Somebody told me the other day that I used my voice so indistinctly that it was impossible to hear what I said. I could be understood in London without any trouble, and the theater was much larger than the little one I'm playing in now. That was in London, and when I return there it will be to stay."

SOME HITS AND MISSES.

May Irwin's annual advent at the Bijou came early in November, and it goes without saying that she remained there until spring had almost arrived. The play? Well, really, the play matters less with May Irwin

than with any entertainer in the whole long list of them. She could make one laugh by simply reading from the Congressional Directory, and, let it be whispered, if her vehicles continue to grow poorer, as they seem to be



FRANCIS WILSON IN "THE LITTLE CORPORAL."

doing, she may come to this yet. Glen MacDonough's "Kate Kip, Buyer" couldn't sell a row in the "peanut" circle on its own merits.

The second hit of the month was made by Jeff de Angelis at the Broadway with a new comic opera, "The Jolly Musketeeer," by Stanislaus Stange and Julian Edwards. Everybody was glad of this. De Angelis is a clever fellow, who fell on hard luck when his lone starring was snuffed out by the collapse of "The Caliph" some three seasons ago. With "The Jolly Musketeeer" he marched right merrily into the citadel of popular favor.

Crane followed "The Christian" at the Knickerbocker, and there was the dull sickening thud of tradition when the "takings" dropped. "Worth a Million"

was so bad that Mr. Presbrey is reported to have said, as he boarded a steamer, that he was going to get out of the country before he was slain for writing it. "The Head of the Family" was rushed into rehearsal at once, but came perilously near being a case of out of the frying pan into the fire. Crane's leading women come and go like the pictures in a kaleidoscope. Percy Haswell was the last on view. "Cute little Gladys Wallis," the women's favorite and the paragon portrayer of the spoiled child, was restored during the winter to the Crane fold.

The third November winner was of English make—Pinero's comedy, "Trelawny of the 'Wells,'" serving to open the stock season at the Lyceum. Few productions since "The Little Minister" have inspired such enthusiastic notices, and the comedy ran until almost the close of the theater's regular season. Its success is another inspiring dramatic sign of the times. There were opportunities in it for many tawdry devices to achieve "situations" of which Pinero refused to avail himself, so that the play's record demonstrates, as "Cyrano" did in a different line, that there is a public for real art as well as for cheap artifice, certain croakers to the contrary



notwithstanding. The winners among the performers were Mary Mannering, delightfully combining childish enthusiasm and womanly sentiment in the title rôle; Mrs. Walcot, as a tragedy queen who never steps out of her part; Hilda Spong, as the actress who gets on faster than her friends at the "Wells," but who still sympathizes in their woes; Elizabeth Tyree, as *Avonia Bunn*, whose top notch of ambition is reached by becoming *Prince Charming* in the pantomime; William Courtleigh, the *Ferdinand Gadd* whom *Avonia* marries, and who has nothing but scorn for pantomime until he discovers that he can mouth his lines into a semblance of tragedy. Mr. Walcot, too, was first class as the gruff *Vice Chancellor*, with his inquiry as to whether there are "no cheers here" when he discovers his grandson's bride elect seated on the floor. Still another good impersonation was that of Charles W. Butler as *Augustus Colpoys*, the little chap who bobs up at every turn and has a finger in every pie. As for Edward J. Morgan, the Lyceum's popular leading man, after his big score in "The Christian," he seemed doomed to have nothing but hopeless parts for the rest of the season. As *Tom Wrench*, the out at elbows actor and playwright, the few good lines that fell to him were smothered in the laugh aroused by the swish of a crinoline or the shake of a waterfall. He has indeed been a martyr to the cause.

Shakspeare resumed his sway at Daly's in the latter part of November with "The Merchant of Venice," presented with all the scenic and musical embellishment with which Mr. Daly ever seeks to sugarcoat his offerings of the legitimate. Ada Rehan assumed *Portia* for the first time, and to such good purpose that the wonder was expressed that she had waited so long to add the impersonation to her list. Sidney Herbert's *Shylock* received rough handling from the critics, but the public applauded him generously, and then, any man makes a target of himself by undertaking a rôle that awakens memories of famous players with every line. Charles Richman was a very satisfactory *Bassanio*, and

the production deserved every one of the fifty five performances it received, and much larger audiences than the majority of them had. It may be that some day New York will look back with regret on the scant support it accorded to the uplifting entertainment which Augustin Daly, season after



VIOLA ALLEN IN "THE CHRISTIAN"—SCENE IN THE FIRST ACT.

season, sets before its citizens, giving them the opportunity of taking or leaving it as they may elect.

It was during this period that Julia Arthur sought to lead, in place of following, the taste of the people by giving them "Ingomar" and "As You Like It" at Wallack's when they preferred "A Lady of Quality" and studiously stayed away when this wasn't the bill. Miss Arthur fell ill before the engagement ended, and the theater management

sued for damages, not on account of her sickness, but because she had refused to play paying parts when she was able to play any.

AT HOLIDAY TIME.

The last week of the year brought the Empire stock back to town, with Anthony



MANSFIELD IN THE LAST ACT OF "CYRANO DE BERGERAC."

Hope's "Phroso" as the inaugural attraction. And this attracted, as it happened, more largely at matinées than for evening performances. Jessie Millward made her début as leading woman, succeeding Viola Allen, and conquered her position forthwith. The test was no light one, either, for she followed a great favorite with Empire audiences. Faversham, of course, was the *Lord Wheatley*, and labored valiantly to make real firecrackers out of material fit only for "sizzers." The play became an appalling jumble toward the end, but had a run of about six weeks.

The New Year ushered in the only American dramatic success of the season, Clyde Fitch's "Nathan Hale," in which Nat Goodwin and his wife, Maxine Elliott, appeared as joint stars at the Knickerbocker. Next to "Trelawny" this play received the strongest tribute of praise from the reviewers of any production of the winter. And the public went in throngs to see it for two months, in spite of the unhappy ending which history relentlessly demanded. To be sure, there were some who declared that Goodwin, in his personality, was unsuited to the name part; but he certainly acted it well, and even in these days of complete out-

fitting in drama, audiences must be called upon now and then to exercise their imaginations. The public has become so accustomed to seeing Goodwin in humorous parts, that some little time is required for the subduing of the old expectations of a laugh when he appears. His *Hale* showed that he has much more than the desire to play serious rôles; it demonstrated his ability to handle them with discretion, and with the necessary suggestion of reserve force. Miss Elliott's *Alice Adams* served to rank her for merit of no ordinary measure, while her sister Gertrude scored in a comedy part which gave her the first chance she had had to do more than flit in and out on the scene.

Meantime a downright failure went into the annals of Daly's. The long talked of and many times deferred "Madame Sans Gêne" of Sardou was brought to performance, and as it was no longer a novelty, everything depended on Ada Rehan's *Catherine*. She was disappointing as the washerwoman in the prologue, and although many of the other scenes went with a certain sprightliness, the wrong keynote seemed to be struck, and the piece survived for only a few performances, giving way to brief revivals of "The Shrew" and "The School for Scandal," pending preparations for "The Great Ruby."

"ZAZA" AND SOME OTHERS.

January's second week witnessed Mrs. Leslie Carter's triumph with "Zaza," a "problem" play from the French of Simon and Berton, adapted and ostensibly toned down for Americans by David Belasco. The production made a twofold sensation—of enthusiasm over the powerful work of Mrs. Carter, and of dismay at the audacity of the piece itself, which, even in the American version, held



episodes never before thrust upon the attention of the better class of metropolitan theatergoers. The only excuse for exploiting them in this case was the necessity which made them part and parcel of the character the star was called on to portray; they were not dragged in to gratify a depraved taste or add

ing man who made a disagreeable part not at all offensive while at the same time bringing out all its telling points. *Cascart*, *Zaza's* partner in the music halls, was Mark Smith, who used to be *Queen Isabella* in "1492," and to his new rôle he lent the color and atmosphere it needed. Another faithful portraiture



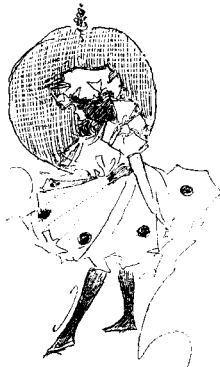
SCENE AT CLOSE OF FIRST ACT IN "TRELAWNY OF THE 'WELLS.'"

"spice" to a situation that would have scored without them. And yet, even from the most tolerant viewpoint, the choice of such a theme for the theater is, as MUNSEY'S noted in its March issue, a deplorable one.

As a matter of record we append some of the headlines of the critics' reports appearing January 10: "Genius the Word for Mrs. Carter"; "*Zaza*' Scores a Real Triumph"; "The New Bernhardt"; "*Zaza*' a Drama of Tremendous Power"; "Mrs. Carter Scores the Greatest Hit of Her Time." Another matter of record must be the statement that for no play in years—barring "The Little Minister"—was it so difficult to get seats as for "*Zaza*," and this although the run extended from early January until middle June. The cast was selected with excellent judgment. Charles A. Stevenson, the husband of Kate Claxton, who had not acted for some time, was a lead-

ing man who made a disagreeable part not at all offensive while at the same time bringing out all its telling points. *Cascart*, *Zaza's* partner in the music halls, was Mark Smith, who used to be *Queen Isabella* in "1492," and to his new rôle he lent the color and atmosphere it needed. Another faithful portraiture

was Marie Bates' *Rosa Bonne*, the tippling aunt to *Zaza*, as classic in its way as its interpreter's *Mrs. Murphy* in "Chimmie Fadden." Olga Nethersole came into Wallack's at this period for a four weeks' engagement, opening with her new play, "The Termagant," made in England for her by Messrs. Parker and Carson, who have scored nothing but failures since their big success with "Rosemary," and who did not break their record in this case. Pintero's "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" was put on for the second week, and proved such a hit that it almost crowded out costumed "Camille," and did succeed in pushing to the wall Max O'Rell's "Price of Wealth." Next to Miss Nethersole's own work, the best acting in the company was done by a new leading man, Hamilton Revelle, who very nearly succeeded in making "The Termagant" possible.





"Because She Loved Him So" came to the Madison Square on January 16 and ran out the season. It was an adaptation from the French by William Gillette, of a Bisson and Leclercq comedy, and its refreshing cleanliness added a gratifying feature to its success. There were a host of good people in the cast: J. E. Dodson and Kate Meek as the loving old couple who, after living together for thirty years without a quarrel, pretend to spat for their daughter's sake; Ida Conquest, as the daughter aforesaid, possessed by an Othello-like spirit of jealousy; Edwin Arden, in the part of the innocent and long suffering husband; young Arnold Daly, a newcomer, as the wife's brother, whom her marital troubles drive nearly to the verge of distraction; and Maggie Fielding, as the faithful servant who persists in joining in the conversation to the old gentleman's manifest annoyance.

The Broadway Theater Opera Company, in its successor to "The Highwayman," failed to score as decided a success. The same librettist and composer—De Koven and Smith—furnished the work, but the critics were extremely unkind to "The Three Dragoons," and although the public to a considerable extent disagreed with them, the new opera suffered by comparison with its predecessors in this house, which it left after a six weeks' run.

The Herald Square, after a series of "French Maid-ish" revivals and a period of like frivolity with the witless "Hotel Topsy

Turvy," accomplished an acrobatic feat with its own record by extending its hospitality to James A. Herne, with his "Rev. Griffith Davenport." This was a deadly serious dissertation on the Civil War, founded on Helen Gardener's novel, "An Unofficial Patriot." There was scarcely a ray of humor in the piece, and but few situations. One of the curtain effects was Mr. Herne's recital of the Lord's prayer. The star was well supported, his wife doing yeoman's service, while Robert Fischer gave a splendid rendering of a Virginia mountaineer. But the play was too somber, in too marked contrast to "Shore Acres," to endure, and its town life was brief.

TWO LIGHT COMEDIES AND A BIG MELODRAMA.

The first February hit was "At the White Horse Tavern" at Wallack's, an adaptation by Sydney Rosenfeld of a German comedy of rural life by Blumenthal and Kadelburg. Those who had not seen very many plays would be more likely to be pleased with this piece of deliberate action and much local color than would the blasé playgoer, but New York had seen nothing just like it in years, its tone was unimpeachable, and the fact that it caught on reflected credit on public taste. Joseph Holland, Amelia Bingham, and Frederic Bond were among the well known



DE ANGELIS IN "THE JOLLY MUSKETEER."



players who, together with some clever but unfamiliar ones, assisted in making life merry in this mimic hostelry among the Austrian Alps.

"The Great Ruby" began its lengthy career at Daly's on February 10. With the production of this melodrama Mr. Daly appeared to have taken unto himself a motto, for the first thing in the reading matter of the house bill was this quotation from Goethe: "I let tongues wag as they pleased—what I saw to be the right thing—that I did." "The Great Ruby" was evidently the right thing so far as filling the house was concerned. As for the rest, it proved to be by far the best constructed play of its type since "The Fatal Card" was brought out here. It was mounted, by means of the Drury Lane trappings, with a completeness from which Charles Frohman could learn points, and the cast was certainly irreproachable, picked as it was from the best people on the Daly roster, beginning with Ada Rehan herself. Two *Countess Charkoffs* made hits in quick succession—Blanche Bates and Marcia Van Dresser—and "dear old Mrs. Gilbert" appeared to have renewed her youth from the celerity with which she climbed to the top of the coach. Charles Richman appeared as an Indian prince of dignified mien, and yet handled the trying balloon scene with all the necessary vigor.

"Phroso" was followed at the Empire by another English play, "Lord and Lady Algy," a light comedy by R. C. Carton, who ranks well up towards Jones and Pinero. "Algy" struck the public fancy at once. There



JESSIE MILLWARD AND WILLIAM FAVERSHAM.

were the same old situations—an estranged couple, a designing villain with his eye on a good man's spouse, a frustrated elopement, and, of course, a reconciliation of the husband and wife who are at odds. But these hackneyed moves of the theatrical chessmen were made on a brand new board and to the accompaniment of much clever talk. William Faversham and Jessie Millward distinguished themselves in the name parts. A good many women, and probably not a few men, would not approve of some of *Lady Algy's* doings, but everybody approved of her interpreter, the Empire's new leading woman. The play ran from the middle of February until the second week in May.

LENTEN OFFERINGS.

The commercial element in the theater is to be deplored, certainly, but as we have no endowed play-houses, and as "angels" have



acquired an unsavory reputation, the drama must continue to exist upon the approval of the people. And with each passing season it

Hamilton one for consistent effectiveness, nor was O'Neill as dashing a *D'Artagnan* as Sothorn. Both performances, however, drew big houses and ran until after Easter.

After its strike with "Trelawny," the Lyceum fell on evil days with "Americans at Home," by Abby Sage Richardson and Grace L. Furniss, who contrived "A Colonial Girl" for Sothorn. It proved to possess the consistency of dishwater, and it was pitiful to see such a good cast wasting their efforts on it. "John Ingerfield," by Jerome K. Jerome, planned for an afternoon bill, was speedily put on to replace it, and though singularly



MRS. LESLIE CARTER AND MARK SMITH IN THE SECOND ACT OF "ZAZA."

is more and more clearly demonstrated that the people demand novelty. No matter how great the player, if he or she cannot bring forward a new work, recommended by inherent strength, by oddity of theme, or by the bizarre tint of its coloring, the general public will stay away, leaving the audiences to be made up of a cult of faithful adherents of a particular school, the mere sight of which carries dismay to the box office.

Mrs. Fiske played for six weeks at the Fifth Avenue, which had been devoted to revivals (Coghlan in "The Royal Box," Joseph Jefferson in "The Rivals," and "A Runaway Girl," transferred from Daly's). "Magda," "Frou Frou," "Little Italy" preceding "Divorçons," "A Bit of Old Chelsea," and "Love Will Find the Way," together with "Tess"—all repetitions with the exception of "Little Italy"—these formed Mrs. Fiske's bills and drew but light houses. Her hesitation over the choice of an adapter for "Vanity Fair" has probably cost her the loss of many thousand dollars.

The first gun in the war of the "Musketeers" was fired at the Knickerbocker on February 27, when Sothorn swaggered forth as *D'Artagnan* in the Hamilton version, called "The King's Musketeer." He received a right royal welcome, and the advent of a rival across the street at the Broadway, two weeks later, did not draw from his followers. Edith Crane was *Miladi*, but the real heroine was Katherine Florence as *Gabrielle*. The Broadway had a stronger *Miladi* in Blanche Bates, but the Grundy adaptation, known as "The Musketeers," could not touch the

amateurish in spots, afforded Mary Mannerling a chance for some very versatile bits of acting.

IN THE REALM OF OPERA.

The Maurice Grau season of grand opera at



DRESSINGROOM SCENE IN "ZAZA."

the Metropolitan was the most notable in many years, both from an artistic and a monetary side. It was the longest, too, covering seventeen weeks and footing up a hundred and five performances. Wagner was once more the favorite composer, as his name was on the house bill forty one times. Gounod came next, nineteen times, followed by Verdi, eleven times, Meyerbeer nine, Mozart eight, and Rossini six. Twenty seven different operas were given, sung by the greatest artists in the world, Melba, Eames, Nordica, Sembrich, Schumann-Heink, Lehmann, Jean and Edouard de Reszke, and Saléza, Calvé being the only famous absentee, and she was kept away by illness. The season opened on Tuesday, November 29, with "Tannhäuser," and closed Satur-



new American soprano, who came over with flying colors from her London appearances.

The second season of light and grand opera in English was opened by the Castle Square company at the American Theater, September 5, with "Boccaccio," and closed May 6, with "Aida." Several of the Gilbert and Sullivan works were performed during the year, including "The Pirates of Penzance" and "Iolanthe," which have come but rarely to revival, and which were given in first rate style. But the packed houses were drawn by "Aida" (two weeks), "Trovatore," "Faust," "Lohengrin" (two weeks), and "Lucia di Lammermoor." Many theaters would be glad to have the crowded auditorium seen night after night at the Amer-



J. E. DODSON, IDA CONQUEST, AND KATE MEEK.

day night, March 25, with "Lucia di Lammermoor." The innovation of giving a Wagner cycle proved so successful that a repetition of the afternoon series was part of the year's record. Of the new people brought out, Albert Saléza, the French tenor, met all expectations; so did Frau Schumann-Heink. Van Dyck, the tenor from Belgium, fell below them, as did Suzanne Adams, the

ican, but the above reference to specially popular titles is made in order to indicate the trend of public taste. Grace Golden was replaced by Adelaide Norwood, who, with Yvonne de Treville, sustained the burden of the grand opera soprano rôles, and most acceptably, too. Joseph F. Sheehan remained the leading tenor and prime favorite, and Lizzie Macnichol continued high in the



affections of the Castle Square clientage. The presence of such a well picked and well managed stock company for the performance of opera is a distinct addition to the attractions of the metropolis, and, it is gratifying to note, it has met with the success it most assuredly deserves.

AFTER EASTER NOVELTIES.

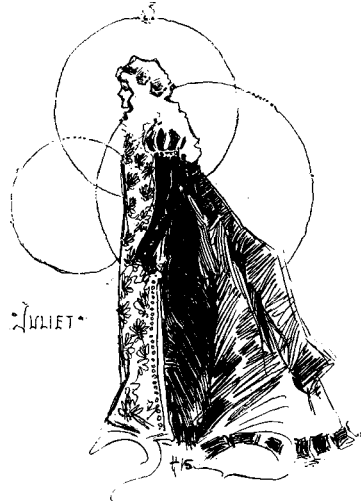
For the past three years the Lyceum has devoted its supplementary season after Easter to an attraction headed by a star, just as each autumn its doors are opened by Sothern. In the spring of 1897, for example, Annie Russell appeared there in "The Mysterious Mr. Bugle"; in '98 Herbert Kelcey and Effie Shannon played to big business in "The Moth and the Flame," and the present year James K. Hackett literally dashed in and out upon the stage as *Rassendyll-Rudolf* in Anthony Hope's prolonged "Prisoner of Zenda," yclept "Rupert of Hentzau." The judicious might grieve at the transparent trickiness of the whole business, but too few theater goers come under this head to give their protests any weight at the box office. In fact, the public took most kindly to "Rupert," and have invited him back to town in the fall. Makers of tragedies will no doubt take fresh courage in consequence, for here is a successful play that not only ends unhappily, but devotes its final scene to the view of a funeral.

In common with several other important plays of the last season, "Rupert of Hentzau" had its original production in Philadelphia. The part of *Queen Flavia* was created by Katherine Grey, but Miss Grey is accustomed to flit from company to company more times

in a season than it is always possible for the chronicler to note, so nobody was surprised when her place was taken by somebody else — Jobyna Howland, whose sole fitness for the position appeared to be the fact that she posed to Gibson for the pictures that illustrated the story in book form. *Rosa Holf*, the gipsy girl, was neatly played by Mabel Amber, who was leading woman for Nat Goodwin in "A Gilded Fool" and "In Mizzoura," and who more recently made a metropolitan impression in "At Piney Ridge."

Sothern was followed at the Knickerbocker by Julia Marlowe, who, since she has relinquished Shakspeare, has become a strong New York favorite. On this occasion she confined herself entirely to one play, a "comedy of French history and manners" adapted from the French of G. Lenotre and Gabriel Martin by Henry Guy Carleton, one time editor of *Life*, and author of a John Drew success, "Butterflies." Almost intolerably slow in its first act, which fortunately was short, "Colinette" bristled with action through the remaining three, and gave the star abundant opportunity for alternate displays of cajolery and consternation.

Prominent in Miss Marlowe's support were William Harcourt, the husband of Alice Fischer, with whom he played in "The Sporting Duchess"; John Blair, who made a hit in the Independent Theater's production of "El Gran Galeoto" last season, and William Beach, a capital *King Louis XVIII*. Mr. Beach was with Miss Marlowe once before, on



her first tour, playing in "Ingomar," "Pygmalion and Galatea," and as *Claude Melnotte* in "The Lady of Lyons." Last year, by way of contrast, he was with Anna Held in what he himself styles "a wild farce." During the successful six weeks' run of "Colinette,"

a newspaper man discovered that its chief part contained 3,200 lines, almost twice as many as those set down for *Hamlet*.

In the same week that Irving triumphed in London with Sardou's play of the French Revolution, Charles Coghlan failed in New York with his own drama of the same period, "Citizen Pierre." This was presented at the Fifth Avenue Theater, following Mrs. Fiske, and was outfitted with some fine scenery and a good cast. But it was put on before all things were in readiness, against Mr.

affair, which left town under a cloud in the autumn, returned in the spring as a decidedly enjoyable compote of melody and nonsense. Jessie Mackaye, the new soubrette, came to the part straight from *Micah* in "The Little Minister," and although her voice was infinitesimal, she became an instant favorite through the charm of her personality.

"ROMEO AND JULIET" AS A NOVELTY.

Broadway strollers must have felt like rubbing their eyes to make sure their visual



LORD'S CRICKET GROUND SCENE IN "THE GREAT RUBY."

Coghlan's expressed wish; the action was sluggish, and the waits tedious. There was much good work in the piece, and its fate, where so many plays of ignoble type win out, is to be deplored. Notable in the performance was the mother of the heroine, as played by Rose Eytinge, leading woman at the old Union Square in its palmy days. In the centennial year she was enacting the title rôle in "Rose Michel," then running a race in popularity against Fanny Davenport in "Pique" at Daly's Fifth Avenue, and "Julius Caesar" at Booth's.

After the week's run of "Pierre" Mr. Knowles' Fifth Avenue remained dark until May 4, when De Wolf Hopper appeared there in a new "Charlatan." Owing to the excision of attempts at grand opera effects, the insertion of new lyrics and the engagement of new people to sing them, this Sousa and Klein

organs were in good condition during those May nights when they regularly beheld, in front of the Empire Theater, the "standing room only" sign cheek by jowl with "Romeo and Juliet." What, Shakspeare draw in New York! No, it wasn't Shakspeare, but Maude Adams, at \$2.50 an orchestra chair, too. Something like two years ago, Viola Allen, then leading woman at the Empire, said to the writer that a fond hope of hers was to have Mr. Frohman produce Shakspeare with his stock company. Miss Allen's dream has been realized, although she herself has no part in it. But one may be sure it wasn't a mere matter of sentiment that caused this interruption in the triumphant career of "The Little Minister." Charles Frohman is shrewd; he knows human nature, and is aware that personality counts for more in this age than the traditions. Had a woman

come to him with the beauty of Helen, the art of Rachel, and the purse of Fortunatus, asking his sponsorship in a venture with the bard of Avon, her request would probably have been futile. While Mr. Frohman is called enterprising, and rightly so, he is a man who takes few unnecessary risks. This

her first love, and unconsciously accenting the humorous side of her own eagerness. The balcony scene in particular exemplified this trait. Of course the severe test was the potion episode, and here the actress' voice proved inadequate once or twice, but there was no painful exhibition of a vain attempt



SCENE AT THE END OF "LORD AND LADY ALGY."

production of "Romeo and Juliet," his first Shakspeare presentation, was announced a year ahead, and its financial success was practically assured before the first performance took place.

Miss Adams' *Juliet* was such as one would expect her to give, knowing her to be the sensible young woman she is. She comprehended her own limitations, and did not attempt to go beyond them. If she had, the houses that greeted her would no doubt have been just as large, for curiosity is a quality in the human make up that will not be easily denied; but the public would not have enjoyed the performances as much. This new daughter of old Verona was very much such a girl as an especially impressionable young lady from a Fifth Avenue or Beacon Street family of today, shy over the discovery of

to tear passion to tatters. The New York critics, with some few exceptions, were kind in their reception of the new *Juliet*, taking the impersonation for just what it was intended to be—not an attempt to rival the great Shaksperian actresses of the past, but a frank portrayal of a popular player's own idea of the part.

Faversham looked well as *Romeo*, and played the rôle with discretion, but it is to be recorded that Hackett, as *Mercutio*, seemed the greater favorite with the public. Mrs. W. G. Jones, an old stand by, was admirable as the *Nurse*, and W. H. Thompson, the leading elder in "The Little Minister," did excellent work as *Friar Laurence*, while the less important parts were filled in an acceptable manner. The blot on the performance was the *Lady Capulet*, and she was hopeless.



The play was produced in sixteen scenes, divided into five acts; there were no dark changes, a special drop, parting in the center and convenient for recalls, being used, and the intermissions were very brief. The mounting was in good taste, the balcony scene being particularly pleasing.

THE CLOSING NIGHTS IN MAY.

The successful run of "Rupert of Hentzau" at the Lyceum was interrupted to permit of Hackett appearing in "Romeo and Juliet," and in its place Charles Frohman gave his brother Daniel the farcical romance of English make, "His Excellency the Governor." Its production at this late period of the season made possible a crack cast, picked from no less than four of the leading Frohman companies: Jessie Millward, May Robson, Guy Standing, E. Y. Backus, and J. H. Benrimo, from the Empire stock; Robert Edeson, leading man of Maude Adams' forces; Harry Harwood, who was in "The Liars" with John Drew, as the elderly husband opposed to lying; and Grace Elliston, the recent accession to the Lyceum stock. Mention must not be omitted of William Norris, whilom the capital dude in "Thoroughbred," who, as the governor's secretary, scored strongly with his dry humor, at its best in a proposal eked out with notes surreptitiously consulted. Happily the play proved worthy of its interpreters. Its setting was refreshingly novel—an imaginary island under British rule in the Indian Ocean; and as this was its author's "first offense," he was not trammelled by any fear of repeating himself. Special points of excellence in the construction of the play were celerity and clearness of movement, the absence of tedious explanations, and a certain grotesque frankness about the love making, which, untrue to the possibilities though it might be, was made sufficiently convincing for the realm of farce.

The author of the piece is an Englishman of wealth, known simply as R. Marshall, and his experience in marketing this fruit of his brain is enough to discourage any aspiring dramatist. For if a play that turns out a success has to go begging for a manager, what chance has the mediocre article for a hearing? According to the story, Mr. Marshall hawked his manuscript about all the London theaters, and finally, in despair, put up the money to produce it himself. At the Lyceum it was put on for only two weeks, but was so well received that at the end of that time it was transferred to the Empire for a run into the warm weather.

On the same night that "His Excellency" was revealed to a Lyceum audience, the first play of a native author was presented by the management of the American Theater, in a supplemental dramatic season. Lee Arthur,

a writer of magazine stories, had been impressed by the dramatic opportunities offered by the Chickamauga encampment of 1898, and turned out "We-Uns of Tennessee," melodramatic in tone and crude in many of its parts, but possessing traits of originality that deserve encouragement. The play assuredly pleased the audiences at the American, where it received a careful production, including a cast of first rate excellence. The hero was Robert Drou  t, late of the Murray Hill, who is to enact *John Storm* with Viola Allen next season. There was also Theodore Roberts, the *Colonel Sapt* of "Rupert"; Georgia Waldron, who made a hit at this same theater in "At Piney Ridge," and Raymond Hitchcock, in high favor as the comedian of the Castle Square opera people.

Although the words which appear on page 615 in connection with Augustin Daly's presentation of Shakspeare's plays were written some weeks since and without any thought that the subject of them would so soon be stricken down, they may be read now as MUNSEY's tribute to the great American manager who passed away at Paris on June 7, in the plenitude of his powers. One looks in vain for the man to fill his place—a man who shall combine in his make up the scholar who loves the stage as the bibliophile his books, and the practical director who allows no smallest detail making toward a perfect whole to escape him.

* * * *

Imagine a man with a muck rake seeking the foulest corner of a barnyard, not to cover up its loathsomeness, but to haul all its repulsive contents into greater prominence—imagine this, and you may have some faint idea of what the Norwegian, Henrik Ibsen, has done in his so called realistic play, "Ghosts," of which a special performance, under distinguished patronage, was given in New York at the very end of the season. It is honor to the Anglo Saxon instincts that only at rare intervals can the emanations of this old man's distorted brain be staged in England and America.

This latest representation was given simply to afford John Blair, the rising young leading man, an opportunity which his recent r  le with Julia Marlowe in "Colinette" did not give him, and it is to be said that he availed himself of his chance to the fullest extent. But surely there can be little satisfaction in representing to the life a character whose culmination is reached in driveling idiocy. Mary Shaw, a sterling actress, who seems fated to be associated with plays of an unfortunate type, set forth a superb portrayal of the mother whose son is brought by the dramatist to an unspeakable pass before utter imbecility mercifully draws the veil.

ELIJAH FAIRBROTHER, PHILANTHROPIST.

BY JAMES L. FORD.

THE CHARACTER AND METHODS OF A CERTAIN TYPE OF PUBLIC BENEFACTOR, WHO IS NOT EXACTLY THE MAN TO DO GOOD BY STEALTH AND BLUSH TO FIND IT FAME.

UNDER this heading I desire to pay my respects to a class which is large and influential, especially in a great city like New York, and is always successful in keeping itself in a conspicuously favorable place in the public eye. Regarding those persons—and they are many—who do not let the right hand know what the left hand does, I have nothing to say. It is my purpose, rather, to treat of those who not only acquaint the right hand with the doings of the left, but impart full information to all the other members, and particularly to the organ of speech. For while we may depend upon the voices of others to spread the tidings of our shortcomings, it is only through our own lips that we are likely to get proper public credit for our good deeds.

The philanthropist to whom I wish to direct attention is the one who is always willing to do a kind act, or lend a helping hand, provided it does not cost him a cent; and who, in nine cases out of ten, contrives to make or save something through each deed of benevolence. If this were the whole of his scheme of life, it would scarcely deserve special comment, for the world is full of people who are perpetually striving to get the better of their fellow creatures. My charitable paragon not only possesses rare skill in “beating” his way through life, but while pursuing this course manages to acquire a wide reputation for benevolence. His scheme is one that calls for the display of real ingenuity.

The basis of philanthropy of this description is a genial, impulsive manner, the form of salutation sometimes affected by hotel keepers—usually described by reporters whom they favor as “a grasp of the hand with the heart in it”—and an apparent readiness to do anything for anybody. Reputations are quickly and easily made in a great city, thanks to a cheap and hysterical press; and it is not at all difficult for a loquacious person to spread the news of his own benefactions to such an extent that the public will recognize him as one who never wearies in well doing.

Such a man is Mr. Elijah Fairbrother, whose acquaintance I made some years ago, when I was sent to interview him for a daily newspaper which at that time gave me employment. I remember distinctly that the

city editor assigned me to the task very much in the following words:

“Go up and see that old blatherskite, Fairbrother, and ask him to give his opinion about that Home for Refined Old Gentlemen that we exposed yesterday. First of all, give him to understand that he must pitch into it, or we can't print what he says; and tell him we are going to publish his picture at the head of the article.”

“But suppose he declines to pitch into it, and says it is a most excellent institution?” I said innocently, for at that time I had not been in Park Row more than six months.

“Declines!” scornfully retorted the city editor, whose language was not always as choice as it might have been. “Philanthropists never decline any proposition that will get their names and mugs into the newspapers.”

It was with these words ringing in my ears that I sought out Mr. Fairbrother, called his attention to what we had already printed in regard to the Home for Refined Old Gentlemen, and asked him what he thought of it.

“I don't know why it is,” he said with an oily smile, as he laid an affectionate hand on my arm, “but whenever any subject connected in any way with public charity comes up, you newspaper men all come running to me. Of course I am very glad to do anything I can to help you boys out, and I feel particularly friendly to your paper, as your city editor knows. By the way, how is he? I don't recall his name just now, but he's a warm personal friend of mine. Well, young man, all I can say about this matter is that I am opposed on principle to these charitable homes, unless, of course, they are managed by competent persons. Now, I claim that the beauty of charity lies in the spirit in which it is bestowed. Of course, a man may give a large sum of money to a charitable institution because he is actuated by generous motives, and not merely because he desires to see his name in print. I myself, for example, once gave two or three thousand dollars—I forget exactly how much—to the Retreat for Disabled Teetotalers—be sure you get that name right, for there's another establishment that has a similar name and is conducted on a very different plan. Let me see what you've written. Yes, that's right,