

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE"

"THE ELDER MISS BLOSSOM" has made her debut at the Knickerbocker theater in this city under the auspices of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, and, while it cannot be said that the lady in question is possessed of sufficient originality or brilliancy to interfere with the normal flow of life here, it must be admitted that she is, notwithstanding, a most estimable and charming creature, possessed of much good sense, a little poor taste and many years.

The story of "The Elder Miss Blossom," which, by the way, is by Ernest Hendrie and Metcalfe Wood, is substantially as follows: Andrew Quick, F. R. S., is a middle aged man who is supposed to be a confirmed bachelor. He chances to meet, just prior to his departure for some faroff and uncivilized land, Miss Sophia Blossom, the daughter of Christopher Blossom and the niece of Miss Dorothy Blossom. Quick is deeply smitten by the charms of the young lady, and when he leaves he is head over ears in love. After thinking the matter over in his island retreat he concludes to make a proposal of marriage by mail. This he does, but unfortunately he addresses his note to Miss Dorothy Blossom. This apparently inexcusable error was caused by a circumstance which serves well enough when one does not care to be too critical, but is woefully inadequate if probability is to be regarded as an essential of good comedy. It seems that just prior to his departure from England Quick picked up a handkerchief which Sophia had dropped. The handkerchief happened to be the property of Miss Dorothy Blossom, whose name was written upon it. Sophia was called Bab by her relatives, and the obtuse Quick had never taken the trouble to learn her real name. Consequently when he saw Dorothy on the innocent little piece of linen he assumed that at last he had solved the riddle. Acting upon that theory, he wrote to Dorothy Blossom offering his hand in marriage. Her reply was an acceptance, and when the play opens we find that Quick has returned to England and is about to visit the home of his prospective bride, who has gone so far in the preparations for her marriage that the wedding presents have begun to arrive.

When Quick meets Sophia at the residence of her father, he assumes that she is his bride elect, and she in turn imagines that his peculiar remarks and surprisingly warm caresses are but the manifestations of the exuberance of the

middle aged man who is about to marry her aunt. The truth comes out, and Sophia is naturally startled, the more especially since she has never cared a jackstraw for Quick, being violently in love with the young parson of the neighborhood. Much episodic comedy is introduced, but it lacks the ring of sincerity and is so manifestly introduced for its momentary value as a time killer that it never becomes convincing. But to return to the story of the play. Quick, realizing that he has done an estimable woman a grave injustice, tells her of the terrible mistake he has made. He expresses his regret, and we see preparations making to send back the wedding presents when that erratic gentleman, having changed his mind, concludes that, after all, the elder Miss Blossom is just the proper mate for him. He so informs that lady, but she, being convinced that his apparent change of heart is due to a feeling of pity for her deplorable plight, rejects him. He then again sends her the note which originally caused the trouble. This is done by laying it on the wedding dress, which opportunely arrives. The added postscript which inquires whether or not he must leave England does the work, and the play ends with everybody happy.

When Dorothy, the elder Miss Blossom, learns the true state of affairs, she is crushed, and at this point we get the best acting that is shown in the piece. Mr. Kendal is never a bad actor, but it cannot be said that his work in "The Elder Miss Blossom" will add greatly to his reputation. Neither he nor his wife appears to have the strong grasp of situations which was the distinguishing feature of their work on the occasion of their previous visits, but withal they give a performance which would be thoroughly satisfactory when judged by any other than the high standard once set by the Kendals themselves. It is certain that the play lacks virility. It is too namby pamby to create a furore in this country, where both humor and emotion must be shown,

ALBERT CHAMPION, MIDDLE DISTANCE CYCLIST.



Among the small army of European professional cyclists who have invaded our shores to compete on the indoor tracks this winter Albert Champion is prominent. Champion is a gentlemanly appearing fellow 20 years of age. He stands 5 feet 6 inches in height and weighs 132 pounds. He has brought over two fast pacing machines with him and intends to try conclusions with the best of our middle distance riders. He has a great reputation in France and other European countries.

AMUSEMENT NOTES OF INTEREST.

N. C. Goodwin states that he really intends to try Shylock some time in the near future, with Maxine Elliott as Portia.

The scene of the revolutionary tribunal in the third act of "The Only Way" is said to be one of the most impressive

and best scenes ever seen on the American stage. There are over 100 people on the stage during the act.

Levin C. Tees, author of "At Gay Coney Island," has written a petite farce comedy entitled "The Burglar and the Bishop," showing how the two got

into a mix up in their efforts to impersonate Santa Claus for the amusement of the little ones.

The New York theater formerly known as Sam T. Jack's has been renamed and is now called the Theatre Comique.

Marie Curtis, the ingenue of "The Sorrows of Satan" company, has the role

of Marie Clare, which Marie Corelli, largely because of a similarity of initials, was accused of intending to be a portrait of herself. Singularly enough, Miss Curtis has also the same initials.

Glory's apartments in the Garden House, Clement's Inn, which is the setting for the third act of "The Christian," is of picturesque interest. It was

here that Mr. Caine wrote some of the book of "The Christian," and the hostelry is a noted place among the theatrical set in London.

An elaborate production of "Little Nell and the Marchioness" will be made in Boston early in the new year.

Beatrice Morgan, daughter of the famous artist, the late Matt Morgan, has

been engaged for the Lyceum theater stock company of New York as understudy to Mary Manning.

Maude Adams, now in "The Little Minister," had a birthday recently. Her company gave her a magnificent silver service, and J. M. Barrie, who wrote the play, sent her a gold jewel casket set with diamonds, showing the

figures of Juliet and Rubeen chased upon it.

E. H. Sothern will appear next spring in "Hamlet" to the Ophelia of Miss Harrod.

Freeman Wills, the author of "The Only Way," the dramatization of Charles Dickens' novel, "A Tale of Two Cities," is a London clergyman.

3RD ACT—"THE ELDER MISS BLOSSOM"



not suggested, as is too often the case in "The Elder Miss Blossom." There are one or two very well drawn and admirably acted roles in the play. One of these is a stuttering servant and the other is a country gentleman with a thoroughly hearty if a trifle undignified haw-haw. The cast in full was as follows:

Andrew Quick, F. R. S. Mr. Kendal
Christopher Blossom Mr. Abel Ford
Major Twentyman Mr. Frank Fenton
Rev. Arthur Leacock Mr. Rudie Harding
Tyrell Jones Mr. Rodney Edgumbe
Withers Mr. P. F. Ames
Wells, the caretaker Mr. G. P. Polson
Sophia Blossom Miss Nellie Campbell
Mrs. Wells Miss Mary Kilpack
Cooper Mrs. A. B. Tapping
Dorothy Blossom Mrs. Kendal

When James K. Hackett a few years ago became the leading man of the Lyceum theater stock company of this city, he showed, despite many crudities of method, some work which prompted the prediction that he would within a very short time become an independent star. This occurred last year when he was sent upon the road with Anthony Hope's "Rupert of Hentzau." Since that time he has filled two engagements in this city where he has been received most favorably, and his experience on the road, both before and since then, has demonstrated that he may be justly regarded as a fixture in the American stellar firmament. Mr. Hackett comes of good old theatrical stock, and bearing in mind the improvement that he has shown within recent years, it is not extravagant to say that he is destined to eventually become one of the most popular stars in this country.

When the announcement was made that "The Choir Invisible" had been dramatized, the Rialto in this city immediately divided itself into two factions, one of which at once asserted that the piece was destined to create a veritable sensation and eclipse the success achieved by "The Christian." By these people it was contended that the book was really a much greater work than "The Christian," and that inasmuch as the latter was dramatized by the author himself, "The Choir Invisible" would at least have an equal chance in that respect, because of the inexperience of Mr. Caine as a playwright.

The other faction contended with equal emphasis that while "The Christian" was probably written with especial reference to subsequent use for stage purposes "The Choir Invisible" had manifestly been put together without any such object in view and that it was too lacking in dramatic incidents to make it possible as a viable play. For these reasons and for the further reason that the play was to introduce Henry Jewett as a star the tour of "The Choir Invisible" attracted much attention along the Rialto. The experiment was made in due time, and it demonstrated that both factions were wrong so far as the surface results are concerned. The tour was abandoned, it is true, but it is far from being a fact that the play was a failure. One who professed to know told me that the play was received with great favor in many places, and even at those points where the box office receipts were least satisfactory there was little but praise for the play, the star and the company.

It would seem that the widely circulated statement to the effect that the abandonment of the tour was brought about by the refusal of Mr. Jewett to play in the small towns does that actor a grave injustice. It is generally conceded that the lack of bookings at important centers was the cause of the

collapse, and that the ending was greatly accelerated by Mr. Jewett's attitude, which, by the way, was a very sensible one. It was, as I understand it, not his objection to playing in the small places because of his imagined importance as a stellar light, as his enemies have intimated, that caused the company to come in. On the contrary, Mr. Jewett gave up the enterprise most reluctantly, feeling that the small places could not by any possibility yield returns sufficient for the maintenance of such an expensive attraction. Mr. Jewett is an excellent actor, and he probably knows it. He is not, however, within miles of being a great actor, and he probably knows that too. It is therefore inconceivable that the statement to the effect that he imagined it beneath his dignity to appear in unimportant cities should have found such a number of believers, even along the ridiculous Rialto.

One of the interesting events of the dramatic season is the elaborate revival of "Meg Merrilies" by Mme. Janauschek, who is presenting with great success a new version of the play.

This new version of the play was made by Paul Kester, and differs radically from the old one used by Charlotte Cushman and Mme. Janauschek and from the Daly version in which Miss Ada Rehan appeared in New York two or three seasons ago. Like the Daly version, Mr. Kester's play opens with a prologue showing Meg before the expulsion of the gypsies from Derncleugh, some 15 or 20 years prior to the period at which the old play begins. The new play is in five compact divisions and dispenses with the singing and the farcical elements that detracted so much from the dignity of the work. It will be remembered that Mme. Janauschek's last appearance was in "What Dreams May Come," a play by the same author, in which she was surrounded by a powerful company and in which her splendid interpretation of the Countess Dimitri created a deep impression in the eastern cities.

Mme. Janauschek is the last of the great actresses of a couple of decades ago. She has been called the "Mother of Tragedy," and holding a place apart in

the history of the theater, remains today the greatest tragic actress of her time. Her art is broad and heroic; in voice, gesture and carriage she is commanding and impressive above any contemporary; her Medea, her Antigone, her Lady Macbeth are portraits unsurpassable in the theater; her Meg Merrilies has awakened enthusiasm in former seasons, and it never fails now to interest and enthrall all those who care either for Scott's famous story of "Guy Mannering" or for splendid acting.

Arthur Crispin
New York.

AN UNSUPERSTITIOUS ACTOR.

Nothing short of a volcanic eruption or an earthquake would disturb Peter Dalley's mind, and 13 at a table is a mere bagatelle to him. Just by way of illustration, when Dalley was "campaigning" a few seasons ago, business was worse than bad and the manager of the company was in despair. When the curtain went up, the house was well filled, but the manager's trained eye saw evidences of "papering," and he was correspondingly sad.

"Why, I'll bet you there's \$2,600 in the house," said Dalley, to whom the manager poured out his hard luck story.

"Impossible!" cried the manager. "Why, that's almost capacity business."

"Well, my bet goes," said Dalley seriously, and the manager, half doubtfully but fully hopefully, accepted the wager and darted to the box office. He returned a few minutes later with a statement showing the gross receipts to be less than \$500.

"Well, I win," said Peter. "There's a friend of mine down in front with \$2,600 in his pocket. He won it at faro last night."

Della Fox is off to Bermuda to recuperate. She has been engaged for the soubrette role in the American production of "Hearts Are Trumps."

But, apart from the racing end of the game, while the hurrah period of the bicycle business is undoubtedly past, figures are at hand that the calamity monger can hardly get around. Two hundred thousand more wheels were turned out by the manufacturers this year than last.

Business men, these makers are not building wheels unless they can sell them, so we can feel pretty confident that more wheels were sold this year than in 1898.

The new concern known as the bicycle trust has given out some figures which show that our trade with foreign countries in the bicycle line is growing fast, and even now the export of bicycles exceeds in value that of any other manufactured article, and surpasses even the value of all agricultural implements.

In this day of the automobile, when it would seem that the days of the horse in cities are well numbered, the new boom in the market for trotters is extremely significant. The recent sale of high bred harness horses in New York, following the very successful horse show, proves that a really good horse is more valuable now than it ever has been and that our horsemen are willing to pay big money to get the best. With the improvement of roads and the building of speedways and other places where horses can be driven at speed it is likely that the prices given for well known and fast animals will go even higher.

The prospects for a return set of games between the athletes of Cambridge and Oxford on the one hand and Harvard and Yale on the other now seem very bright. It is said that the authorities at the British universities will give their consent for the athletes to go into residence a week or ten days earlier than usual for the summer term to enable them to take part in the games. There is a rule in the British universities that a man must sleep a certain number of nights in the college town during each term, and if they should start in at the regular time the

GOSSIP

How the Fighters Have Ridden a Good Horse to Death. Things of Interest in Other Lines.

BY LEO ETHERINGTON.

SPORTS

EVER since the passage of the so-called Horton law, which allows boxing bouts of a limited number of rounds to take place in regularly licensed clubs, the short haired fraternity has had things pretty much its own way in New York state. The law, when framed, was intended to allow only scientific contests for points and to do away with the brutality of the ring.

Had the men who run the clubs been alive to their own interests they would have kept within these bounds and boxing would not only have flourished in the Empire State, but other legislatures would probably have come around to the view that it is possible to regulate boxing by law so that only the science and none of the bad features of the sport shall be evident.

The recent Jeffries-Sharkey encounter and others like it have shown, however, that the hoped for result has not been attained, and now, owing to the shortsightedness of the men in control, it is very likely that the Horton law will be repealed at the next meeting of the state legislature, or, if not repealed, will be so modified that the sport will be practically killed.

Two well known pugilists have recently broken down, though from altogether different causes. "Kid" McCoy, the clever middleweight, came down with a heavy cold which developed fever and other complications while training for his encounter with Peter Maher. This illness of McCoy was not altogether a surprise to those who are followers of boxing.

Once before, soon after being knocked out by Tom Sharkey, the "Kid" broke down in the same manner. He declared at that time that he would not fight again for a year. While it is not believed that McCoy's retirement will be permanent, still it is doubtful if he will ever be in as good physical condition as that which he has previously enjoyed. McCoy never was very robust, and his great success has been mainly due to his wonderful boxing ability combined with his marvelous quickness and the shiftiness of his leg work.

Another fighter who will apparently never again engage in a contest in the ring is the former lightweight champion, "Kid" Lavigne. Ever since he was knocked out by George McFadden he has been trying to drown his sorrows in the flowing bowl, with the inevitable result.

Several matches were arranged for him, his manager and friends hoping by this means to induce him to train, thinking that possibly the hard work preliminary to an encounter would occupy his mind and that he would come around all right. All of these matches had to be postponed, however, as he still continued in his misguided course, so that now it is feared that his constitution is irretrievably impaired.

The calamity howler is ever to the fore, and he has been making his wall more persistent in regard to cycling than in connection with any other sport. According to him the whole business is going to the dogs. He predicts among other things that the manufacturers are bound to lose every cent they own, and a lot more in the same style in regard to the racing continent.

It cannot be denied that the past racing season has been a disappointment in many ways. But that was owing to the fight between two rival organizations, each of which aimed to control the sport. This will all be changed by next season, and the racers will be happy once more. Still the past season was not without its lessons. More than \$50,000 was distributed among the professionals by the National Cycling association, and if that amount of money was earned in a season when it was universally admitted that affairs were all at sixes and sevens it surely argues well for the sport next summer, when it is to be hoped that conditions will all be favorable.

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athletes would not complete their residence in time to compete.

A committee of Harvard and Yale men has already been appointed to manage the meet, which will probably be held at Boston, and the athletes are all expecting the affair to come off. No date has yet been settled on, but some time in May or June will probably be selected.

The football season is now over, and through it all one fact has been very prominent. This is that knowledge of football and of the right way to train a team so as to get the best work out of the men is not confined any longer to a little coterie of three or four colleges, nor even to the universities in the east. Given the green material to work on, and there are dozens of coaches all over the country who will turn out eleven as well equipped in football knowledge and training as those of the institutions known as the "big four."

THEY WERE REAL.

Those who saw Edna Wallace Hopper in "Yankee Doodle Dandy" at the Casino theater, in New York, a few months ago were surprised to find that she showed a degree of plumpness which, up to that time, nobody had given her credit for. Edna in tight was a delightful surprise, and the bathing costume she wore in the last act was a stunner in the way of revelation.

Edna spent a portion of the summer at Manhattan Beach and, being an expert swimmer, was in the water a large part of the time. Her bathing suit, while conforming to the strict rules of the Beach, was nevertheless scanty

enough to show off the curves that Casanova had so admired.

Of course there were many comments from the other guests of the hotel, and one girl, an actress, was loud in declaring that Edna's form was largely due to the costumer's skill in short, that she wore symmetricals.

After much discussion with her male friends the young woman referred to made a wager that Edna was pads and said she could prove it. So it was arranged the following day that the fair better would swim out to the raft just behind Edna and in trying to get on the swaying platform would, quite accidentally of course, grab hold of the little comedienne's leg and definitely settle the symmetrical question.

An anxious crowd, composed of those in the secret gathered on the beach next day. Edna soon appeared in her natty bathing costume, plunged into the surf and struck out for the raft. Close behind her was the skeptic actress, escorted by a male friend, who went along to see fair play.

Edna reached the raft first and remained there an hour or so, diving and swimming in the deep water, but never once did the better get an opportunity to "pull her leg," so to speak.

It was agreed that the test was to be tried the next day, but a little incident occurred that settled the matter definitely. One of the skeptic's girl friends bounded into the bathing corridor with a cry of triumph:

"Oh, girls!" she shouted. "I just saw Edna taking a shower bath. The first thing she did was to remove her stockings. She doesn't pad!"

The first thing she did was to remove her stockings.

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