

CRITICISM

STAGE

GOSSIP

FRANK DANIELS and his opera company are the present occupants of the stage of the Casino in this city. The vehicle offered for the delectation of theatergoers is a two act operatic comedy entitled "Miss Simplicity." Just why it is called "Miss Simplicity" is not apparent. Still it is not apparent why it should not be, and, anyway, the title is the least of its offenses. The book is attributed to R. A. Barnett, while H. L. Hertz confesses to the authorship of the music.

There is very little that is funny in the story of "Miss Simplicity," and that Mr. Daniels does not succeed in making his role humorous is nothing to his discredit. It would take all the comedians in the country rolled into one to do that. The music, while swaying at times, is always loud and garish, and the few melodies which are catchy are worked to death before the two acts have been played through to the bitter end.

There are several very good topical songs, and Mr. Daniels gives a hint of his possibilities in a congenial character by the excellent manner in which he renders these. There is one very good subsidiary role, a manufacturer of toilet specialties for all the diseases to which human flesh is heir, which might be elaborated into a very good part for the star. At present it is a trifle overdone by the man who has it, but it contains possibilities, and in a work like "Miss Simplicity," possibilities should not be overlooked. Helen Lord, the prima donna of the company, sings very well, but is weak as an actress, especially when she attempts to be hysterical. It would be hard to conceive a role in which Miss Lord would be more miscast than she is in the title part of "Miss Simplicity." The other members of the company were good enough for what they had to do, but the stage management, particularly the head

carpenters, scene painters and property makers are doing their best to duplicate in every detail the American production. Ben Teal, who staged the production in this country, is personally conducting the rehearsals, and if "Ben-Hur" should fail in London it will not be due to lack of careful preparation. But that it will not fail is almost a foregone conclusion. Ordinarily there is some doubt as to the fate of a play transported from this country to England, but there never was one in which there was less of it than "Ben-Hur." This is a drama which ought to appeal with more force to the British than it did to us, and that is saying a great deal. "The Sign of the Cross," with Wilson Barrett in the role of Marcus Superbus, was not a striking success here, and yet it ran a couple of years in England. This sort of thing seems to have a lasting hold upon the theatergoers of England, and "Ben-Hur" is a much more magnificent production than "The Sign of the Cross," besides

effects will carry a play. It must be good of its kind or it will fail. "The Silver King," "The Roman Boy," "Lights of London" and other similar English melodramas which proved successful in this country won favor not because of the manner in which they were staged, but because they were classics in their particular field. That is a good point to remember when we are tempted to enunciate the theory that "big melodrama will always go."

The tendency just at present appears to be toward the theory that there is more money in what are known on the other side of the water as "Christmas pantomimes" than in any other form of

THE EXACTING WORK OF GYMNASIUM INSTRUCTORS.

Few persons realize the work that is exacted of a gymnasium instructor or physical director, as he is sometimes called.

Formerly the man who could box skillfully, wrestle adroitly and execute tricks on the bars or rings was regarded as the man for the place. Not much attention was paid to his mental caliber, and his social distinction was away below the average. His work never went beyond the gymnasium and

NEWS

SPORT

COMMENT

THE STAGE WORKS.

RUIN OF PUGILISTS.

"The stage is killing prizefighters." That is the startling statement made by William Lachmann, a Milwaukee professor of physical culture. Professor Lachmann says that every noted pugilist, from John L. Sullivan down to Terry McGovern, the latter only recently conquered, all apparently invincible at one time, went on the stage and were beaten.

Corbett was defeated when he seemed to be in his prime, but it was after he had posed as an actor. Fitzsimmons, Sharkey, Mitchell and others suffered the same fate, all after they had adopted the stage as a profession.

Terry McGovern, whose defeat is still fresh in the minds of the public and who has not yet regained all comings, having happened, within the year, his first two years in the pugilistic game, but a little over six months behind the footlights made him easy prey for "Young Corbett," the present featherweight champion.

A prizefighter in the pink of condition becomes utterly unfit to engage in a battle after a year or two and sometimes after only a few months on the stage. His vitality is gone, at least to a certain extent. He lacks that snap and vim that characterized his every movement in the ring. His blows are less effective, and half the punishment he could take without flinching previous to going on the stage will knock him out ninety-nine times out of a hundred. This is all due to changing his operations from the open air or a well ventilated gymnasium to a stuffy and, as a rule, ill ventilated theater. He may take just as much daily exercise and be unconscious of the fact that his vitality is gradually slipping away, but his next battle, as the records show, will bring him to the end of his career.

A pugilist actor on an average gives two performances daily to audiences numbering from 1,000 to 2,000 people. He is in the theater at least five hours each day, and during all that time he inhales carbonic acid gas, the rankest poison and most deadly destroyer of human vitality, which is continually exhaled by the thousands of people who witness the performances, whereas while he is in training for a fight extra

The St. Louis Americans.

The success of the new St. Louis American team is a matter of doubt. While the Nationals made money last year, it is no sign that the Missouri metropolis is enthusiastic enough to support two organizations. A division of interest and naturally also receipts may cause both teams to finish with a deficit. The Nationals have been so long established that the Americans will find themselves up against a stiff opposition when it comes to drawing away the patronage. "Fans" are largely creatures of habit, and without some special attraction it will be a difficult task to wear the admirers of the St. Louis Nationals away from their favorite roots in grand stand and bleachers.

Roughness in Hockey.

The hockey teams are now entering the home stretch. In a couple of weeks the last of the season's regular schedule games will have taken place, and battered sticks and pucks will be afforded an opportunity to enjoy their annual period of "immense repose." The prominent feature of the playing has been the unnecessary roughness. This inexcusable disregard from the rules has characterized a majority of the contests, and a large number of players were forced to seek medical care and rest.

The entire fault rests with the officials. If proper men were placed in charge of games, men of backbone who would not hesitate to disqualify an offending player, hockey would be absolutely free from serious results.

Braid's Win a Fuke.

Last year gave Braid his first experience as open champion. Notwithstanding his defeat of Vardon and Taylor, he is not considered their equal, and it is very unlikely that he will ever repeat the feat. Of the nine matches played last season between Braid and Taylor, the former won three, Taylor corralled five and one was halved. In the six contests between Braid and Vardon the champion took two, Vardon three, and the remaining one was halved.

J. H. Taylor visited this country in 1900 after he had vanquished Vardon, and while he received a hearty welcome, his victory did not in the least impair Vardon's prestige. The Americans are warm admirers of good golfing, and, while they recognized the fact that Taylor was champion, they regarded Vardon as being his equal, a fact which he demonstrated that year by defeating Taylor at Chicago for the open championship of the United States.

Whitney and Travis.

The old subject of professionalism in the ranks of amateur golfers which Caspar Whitney of New York endeavored to revivify seems to have died a natural death. His charges against the amateur champion, Walter J. Travis, having fallen to the ground, we may shortly expect to hear of Whitney's departure for Egypt to accuse the great sphinx of being a Malay pirate in disguise. Whitney's move against Travis was not his first attempt to pose as a gratuitous purifier of sporting affairs.

A Notable Winter.

The winter season is seldom noted for the breaking of athletic records. Track and field athletes rarely find their prime condition until spring, but this year they have started in to alter the usual order of things. Alfred D. Flaw of the University of California and John Flanagan, the famous heavyweight champion, have already started the smashing of records, and it is more than probable that others will follow their example.

Flaw first acquired national reputation when he tossed the maceolite hammer throwing mark to 165 feet 9 inches. This he accomplished in 1900, and it was thought at the time that he would have done better had he been opposed by a dangerous competitor. That opinion was justified was illustrated recently when he propelled the sixteen pound hammer 187 feet 5 inches.

On this occasion Flaw threw from a seven foot circle. The world's record, made by Flanagan, was 171 feet 5 inches. The California star is planning to compete in the east in the spring. The university track team has entered most of the intercollegiate meets, and the members depend on Flaw to capture the weight events.

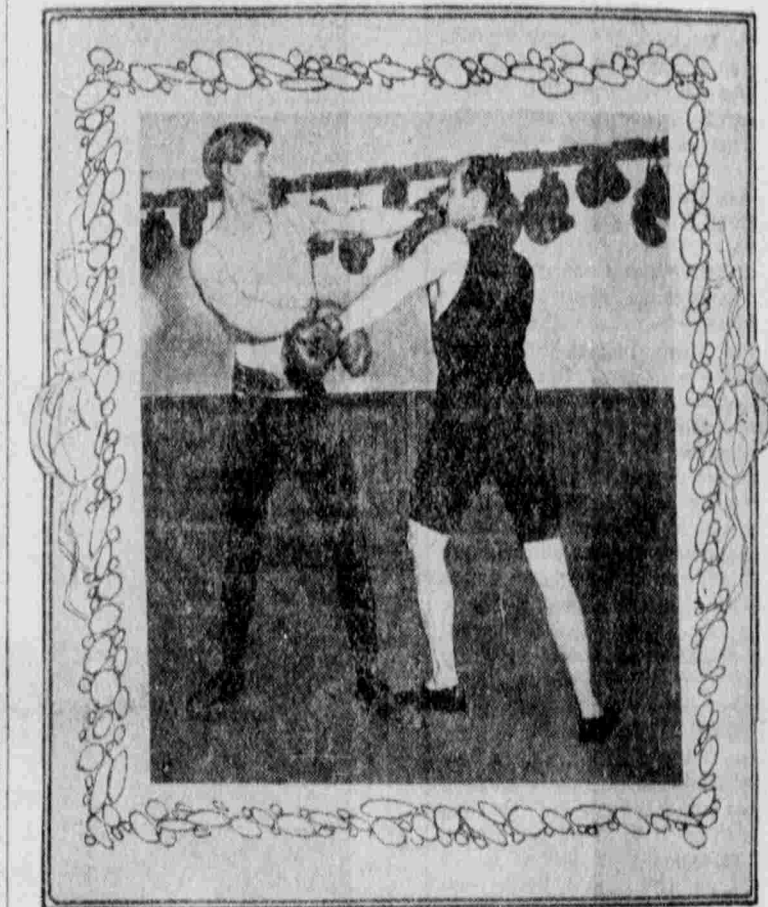
Flanagan has won new laurels by breaking the shot put record. The Irish giant a short time ago sent the metal ball more than a foot beyond the mark of two years ago.

Rival Baseball Leagues.

The American league is taking full advantage of the disturbed conditions existing in National affairs and is busy signing every good player showing a disposition to leave the older organization. The National suffered very much last year by the loss of many stars, and the outlook for the coming summer is no brighter. The managers are endeavoring to offset this action by liberal infusions of new blood into their teams, but I doubt if the proceeding will result beneficially. Young and comparatively inexperienced players are all right in small doses, but in various other lines of sport, it takes a veteran to successfully stand the strain of a season's campaign, and especially so vigorous a one as that indulged in by major league baseball teams.

The experience of the New Yorks last season should be an object lesson to managers who base their hopes of winning a pennant upon men recruited from minor leagues. George Davis, nine started off with a hurrah and a dash, working to the leading position in a couple of weeks. But prosperity was too much for the youngsters, and a sad awakening followed. Their finish back in the mire with the "also rans" is a matter of record.

Comiskey of the Chicago Americans has gathered about him a bunch of speedy players, and from present indications he should come dangerously near to winning the pennant again. But there is one man who will make the most desperate kind of an effort to lead Ban Johnson's league, and he is that doughty, independent Baltimorean, "Mugsy" McGraw. McGraw suffered one of the keenest disappointments of his career last year when the Comiskey aggregation walked away with the rag,



UP TO DATE BOXING.

Billy Elmer, the crack instructor at the Knickerbocker Athletic club, New York, shows how to successfully execute a very difficult boxing maneuver. He blocks a vicious left lead for the stomach with his right and counters heavily on the jaw with the left. Elmer's opponent in the above illustration is one of his star pupils.

Should hockey players be allowed to continue their "rough house" tactics, the game will become the equal of football as a filler of hospital cots.

American Jockeys Abroad.

Encouraged by their good fortune of last year, many of our jockeys have been going to England. The next to leave will be Danny Maher, Cash Sloane and Mitchell. Spencer, Piggott and Jenkin will sail several days later. Spencer is the most recent convert to the "cross the ocean game," and he will straddle the Keene horses. Our native turf pilots appear to be observing a maxim reading somewhat as follows: "Get all of John Bull's money you can carry, but spend it with Uncle Samuel." Going to Europe in the spring and coming back in the fall seem to comprise the principal portion of the American jockey's annual programme.

CUTTING UP PLAYS.

"The most confusing and trying performance for an actor is not the initial representation of a piece by any means," said a Thespian who has taken part in scores of theatrical productions, "though of course most persons believe such to be the case. The performance which occasions him the most worry and anxiety is the one which follows the making of 'cuts' in the show—that is to say, the removal of sundry lines and bits of stage business here and there throughout the play. "These cuts are usually made on the morning following the first representation. The author and stage manager put the entire company through a rehearsal and make the cuts as they go along. When evening arrives, one is terribly puzzled to remember whether such and such a line was to be left in or to be eliminated, and if for the sake of amusement you want to see a rather 'shaky' performance of a new piece don't go to the first night, but to the second. You will then witness many curious little contraptions that do not occur on other occasions. Of course I am referring now to those plays which endure too long at the first representation and have to be ruthlessly shortened next day."

Ed Geers, America's greatest driver, will hold the reins over The Abbot in his races next summer.

BUILDING A SKETCH.

Linton and McIntyre, who have been performing a new vaudeville sketch in eastern theaters, are young actors who will probably graduate to higher things before very long. They had just entered their turn in Keith's New York theater and were laughing as they walked toward the dressing rooms over a lucky bit of humor that had developed unexpectedly in the course of their performance.

"We've played the sketch just three times," said the male member of the team, "and each time it has been different. You see, the building of these sketches is done largely during the actual performances. Of course we prepare the thread to hang the gags on, but that's not a very elaborate business. Miss Linton and I sit down, pencils in hand, and map out a little story. Then, step by step, we fill in the places where the jokes shall come in and write a line or two that will lead naturally to a song. Nowadays the old line: 'Half past 8—not here yet? I'll just try over that little song that I am to sing at the opera tonight,' is too much eaten to do service."

"The great difficulty," said Miss Linton, "is that what seems so strikingly funny on paper as we write it is often received with funeral silence at night. So on the spur of the moment we write things that are quite unexpected. There must be a quick answer ready, which would be impossible if we hadn't worked together so long that we are familiar with one another's methods. Graciously in this way the sketch assumes shape. Two-thirds of what we originally wrote is discarded, and we stick to the happy little bits that struck fire when tried experimentally."



FRANK DANIELS
PHOTO BY
Chickering, Boston.

nodding and arm and leg waving accompanying nearly every note of nearly every song rendered while the chorus people were on the stage, was the worst I have ever seen in connection with anything purporting to be a first class musical production.

"The Two Orphans" Again.

Where is this craze for the "revival of the good old favorites" going to end anyway? There is a fight on now over the right to produce that lachrymose chestnut, "The Two Orphans," in which Kate Claxton and numerous theater fires were the principal performers a few years ago—just how many does not matter.

Lieber & Co. became impressed with the idea that there could be "big money" in a revival of "The Two Orphans," just as William A. Brady did last year. When they began to negotiate with Kate Claxton, they found that she was willing to let them have the play if Jules Murry would consent. Murry had also arrived at the remarkable conclusion that "The Two Orphans" was a sort of smoldering Klondike, and he would not give his consent.

This made the Lieber company's manager angry, and he declared that he should produce the play, consent or no consent. He explained that Miss Claxton possesses no exclusive rights in the play and that he had merely offered her royalties because he recognized that, morally, she was entitled to consideration. Indeed, he still avers that Miss Claxton would get her royalties regularly even though the battle should go to the courts, as his purpose is not to avoid these payments, but merely to assert his right to produce something which from a legal standpoint he regards as public property.

Now, if this contention should be made with reference to a new translation of "The Two Orphans," which Lieber & Co. might easily have made, they would doubtless be correct; but, if I am not mistaken, the version of the play which became popular in this country was an adaptation by Hart Jackson, the uncle of Ethel Jackson, the erstwhile prima donna of comic opera who recently retired from the stage to become the wife of young Mr. Zimmerman of Philadelphia. Again if I am not mistaken, this version contains a great many lines and speeches original with Mr. Jackson, and these would seem to be protected by the letter as well as by the spirit of the copyright law.

To make things more interesting, Mr. Murry announces that he will see that the Liebers do not produce "The Two Orphans," and further that he will himself present the play, with Kate Claxton in her original role of Louise.

Well, "It's a very pretty fight as it stands."

"Ben-Hur" in London. Klaw & Erlanger's staff are now busily engaged in London preparing for the production there of William Young's play, "Ben-Hur," made from General Lew Wallace's famous book of that name. Rehearsals are held daily, and

being much more reverential and much less harrowing. Therefore, all things considered, it ought to duplicate in London its success in New York and other large American cities.

A Good Thing For Henry Miller.

Henry Miller of late years has been putting in his summer vacation time in San Francisco, where he has succeeded in working up a very large personal following. It has been his practice to get the rights for that city of as many as possible of the successes of our Empire theater. Summer being naturally the actors' idle season, he was enabled at reasonable expense to surround himself with players whom he would not have been able to employ in winter. Naturally the result was a most happy one for all concerned, including the audience, for the latter had the opportunity of seeing plays new to them presented in a thoroughly high grade organization headed by Mr. Miller.

Mr. Charles Frohman has gone into the scheme for the coming summer with Mr. Miller, and the company will be better than ever, while the same general plan will be followed. Margaret Anglin, leading woman of the Empire theater company, will be Mr. Miller's principal player, and there are likely to be several other members of the Empire organization in his support. Miller's artistic methods may often be open to criticism, but it cannot be truthfully contended that he is not an indefatigable striver for the heights to which he realizes that he has not yet attained.

Anson Pond's New Play.

Anson Pond once wrote a play which he called "Her Atonement." It was not a startlingly good melodrama, but it happened to catch the fancy of the day and is said to have made a great deal of money. In time it wore out and was put upon the shelf or in the trunk or somewhere. At any rate it slumbered for many years. Then an inspiration came to somebody who remembered "Her Atonement," and Charles Frohman agreed to make an elaborate revival of it at the Academy of Music in this city. The run was not a particularly long one, and its results did not make Charles Frohman a millionaire. "Her Atonement" was voted another rest, and it is not likely that there will be any more "elaborate revivals" of it for many years to come.

But Mr. Pond now has a new play, and what is perhaps more to the purpose, he has a new backer. Rich & Harris, important theatrical managers, will produce this Pond melodrama, which bears the title of "Life" at the Garden theater at the close of the run of the Pantomimes in "Maid Marian." "Life" is said to be a sort of George H. Sims concoction, with the locale in New York instead of London. There is a theory concerning plays of this class that "they will always go if they are put on" properly. But this is in some respects a mistake. The day has passed when a few elaborate scenes or a couple of more or less good mechanical

Imported theatrical property. The fact that several New York managers will enter this field would indicate that they have the courage of their convictions, and the enormous profits earned by "The Sleeping Beauty and the Beast" at the Broadway theater in this city furnish at least circumstantial evidence of the soundness of their judgment. Meanwhile, no matter how matters theatrical may shape themselves, the American playwright, if we except Clyde Fitch and perhaps one other, always contrives to get left.

Arthur Crispin
New York.

A GOOD ONE ON DICK.

Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Mansfield met on the street. Said Mr. Hammerstein:

"They tell me that 'Monsieur Beaucaire' is not dramatized from the novel, but was originally a play, and that the novel was written from that."

"True," replied Mr. Mansfield, with his most literary bow and an amiable smile.

"Why don't you dramatize the book some time?" queried Mr. Hammerstein.

"It would make quite a play."

Mr. Mansfield checked his bow and, with a freezing stare, walked away.

Under the expert leadership of Foxhall Keene, our polo representative should make a good showing next June against England's mallet wielders.



WINTER BASEBALL PRACTICE.

The above illustration shows Hughey Jennings, the well known professional player, coaching the Cornell university baseball candidates. Jennings has his men on the gymnasium floor almost every day. He claims that indoor practice during the winter is the best possible means of rounding players into top notch form.

ston, Miss Granville and other members of the Duke of York's theater company. Frohman recently went to London to arrange for the production. The new opera is entitled "The Sultan of Sulu" and, according to Mr. Cooke, has a Filipino plot written around the effects of American civilization as typified by the American cocktail and the American divorce law upon the native Filipinos. The scenes are drawn from the author's personal observation while acting in the capacity of a war correspondent. The opera is in three

acts and will be produced at the Studebaker theater, Chicago, March 11. Robert Hilliard already is satisfied that he started wisely in leaving the stage to become a banker and broker. His office in Thirty-third street, New York, opposite the Waldorf-Astoria, is visited daily by financiers and men about town, who watch the fluctuations of the market on one of the costliest and handsomest quotation boards in the city. Much business is being done in the office, and the actor-operator is

looking forward to buying a seat on the Stock Exchange. Maurice Grau, the managing director of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, recently celebrated his thirtieth anniversary as an operatic impresario. He was the recipient of many congratulations. His first venture as a manager was when he brought out Rubinstein, the pianist, in 1872. He became associated with the late Henry E. Abbey in 1883 and was the acting manager of the Metropolitan Opera House when

it was opened Oct. 22 of the same year. Mr. Abbey being the director. The opera on that occasion was "Faust," with Campanini, Del Puente, Sembrich and Christine Nilsson in the cast. Fred De Belleville is to play Baron Bonelli in Hall Caine's "Eternal City." "Monte-Christo" O'Neill is to appear in "The Christian King" next season. Julia Arthur will not return to the boards. Paris is to have a theater for the "pure of heart."

RAYS OF STAGE LIGHT.

Bert Coote, the comedian, en route to London from Australia, will play in the principal cities between San Francisco and New York. He will make a return continental tour in the autumn. His bookings in the three countries to July of next year are complete.

H. B. Smith has signed with Weber & Fields to write the lyrics for their new burlesques on "Du Barry" and "A Gentleman of France" and also to col-