

# American Production of Puccini's "MADAM BUTTERFLY"



Scenes and Principals in "Madam Butterfly"



Harriett Behnee



Rena Vivienne

Phoebe Strakosch



## DRAMATIC

FOR the two performances of "Madam Butterfly" to be given at the theater Saturday next, Mr. Henry W. Savage has named two of the strongest casts that could be selected from his entire force of English singing artists. The big company will arrive from Oakland on its special train Saturday morning very early, and the first performance will begin promptly at 8:15, in time for out of town patrons to catch their evening trains. The night performance begins at 8:15 and carriages may be ordered for 10:55 p. m. The company leaves Salt Lake City the same night for Denver, as it did last season. When it made a memorable record run and added to Mr. Savage's fame as a manager. This will be the second visit of Mr. Savage's famous English grand opera organization to "Madam Butterfly," and his entire company with its symphony orchestra of nearly 50 musicians will put their best effort forward on this occasion in an effort to beat the phenomenal business done last season.

Among the brilliant array of stars necessary to make up a triple cast for the opera, are nearly all the favorite singers of last season, together with several newly imported singers that appeared recently in New York. Two sets of principals will be heard giving an opportunity for most of those who have become so well known to appear at the two Salt Lake City performances. The orchestra will be presided over by Mr. Walter Rothwell, that young genius among conductors, whom Mr. Savage brought from Vienna, and by Mr. Cornelius Dwyer, who was brought from Amsterdam to alternate with Mr. Rothwell. Both of these conductors were heard here on the company's last visit. The artists to appear at the matinee will include a new prima donna, Phoebe Strakosch, a niece of Adelina Patti. Miss Strakosch is a brilliant soprano who made her debut so successfully this year in the title role, and who has the advantage of studying the opera under Madame Carre, who created the role at the Paris Opera Comique. With Miss Strakosch will appear the talented contralto, Miss Ethel Houston. In the role of the Japanese maid Suzuki, the leading tenor will be William S. Williams from the opera in Milan. The first baritone at the matinee will be the young American singer, Thomas D. Richards, who created the role at the first performance in America at Washington. The remainder of the 15 roles will be sung by the same artists that appeared during the recent New York engagement, many of whom have been heard here in their respective roles.

For the evening performance, the title role has been assigned to Miss Rena Vivienne, the brilliant American soprano whose immediate success last year made her the favorite of all the American singers in the country. Since her debut in the picturesque character, the magazines have contained more photographs of Miss Vivienne than any other grand opera artist in the country. The leading contralto role will be taken by Miss Harriett Behnee from the Royal Opera in Berlin. Miss Behnee created this role in America. The tenor for the evening performance will be the handsome singer, Vernon Stiles from Milan, who is everywhere said to look the ideal U. S. navy lieutenant. For the part of Sharpless, Mr. Otley Cranston has been brought back from London. Mr. Cranston first came to America for the special production of Parsifal in English.

Is the American stage on the up or down grade?—a question often discussed, can be partly answered at least, if one studies the two casts of our "American Cousin," the first that with which the older Southern produced it 50 years ago, the second that with which his son is now rendering it in New York. As far as the acting and ability among the players are concerned, the palm certainly must be awarded to the dramatic personnel of 50 years ago.

Following is the old time cast: Lord Dundreary... Mr. E. A. Southern. As a Trunchbull... Mr. Joseph Jefferson. Sir Edward Trunchbull... Mr. E. Varney. Captain De Bow... Mr. Clinton. Harry Vernon... Mr. M. Lovick. Abel Murdock... Mr. C. W. Coulstock. Dr. Coyle... Mr. J. G. Burnett. Mr. Cuddiham... Mr. J. D. Brown. Mr. Binney... Mr. J. D. Brown. John Wickens... Mr. J. D. Brown. Mrs. Mountchessington... Mrs. Mary Wells. Florence Trunchbull... Miss Mary Wells. Mary... Miss Laura Keane. Mary... Miss Sara Stevens. Augusta... Miss E. German. Sharpe... Miss E. German. Skillet... Mrs. M. Lovick. Below is the cast which is giving the play in the Lyric Theater, New York:

Lord Dundreary... Mr. E. A. Southern. As a Trunchbull... Mr. Adolph Leitner. Sir Edward Trunchbull... Mr. William Harris. Harry Vernon... Mr. P. J. Kelly. Captain De Bow... Mr. Paul Seaton. Mr. Richard Coyle... Mr. Frank Fletcher. Abel Murdock... Mr. Malcolm Bradley. Binney... Mr. John Taylor. Florence Trunchbull... Mr. Alfred S. Howard. Mrs. Mountchessington... Miss Helena Head. Mary... Miss Virginia Hammond. Mrs. Mouthchessington... Miss Ina Goldsmith. Georgina... Miss Gladys Hanson.

### THE CRYSTAL THEATRE

Another motion picture theater opens its doors to the public tonight. It is the Crystal Theater, at 131 South Main Street, Mr. Young, the manager, is a veteran show man and has spared neither means nor care to make the place of amusement both attractive and safe.

### THEATER GOSSIP

Miss Maude Pealey has closed her tour in "The Stronger Sex." It was not strong enough.

Miss Maxine Elliott in "Myself-Being," a new comedy by Miss Rachel Crothers, will follow Miss Doro at Powers' Theater in Chicago next week.

Logan Paul, who has been playing Baco White, the Indian interpreter, in "The Squaw Man," has been engaged by the Shuberts for Will M. Cressy's new play, "The Village Lawyer," opening on Feb. 2.

One of the New York papers recently referred to the chief counsel for the defendant in the famous Thaw case as "the Belasco of the Bar." The Gridiron club of Washington, the noted organization of Washington correspondents, once called Shakespeare "The Belasco of his day."

Miss Nance O'Neill will make her first appearance in Chicago vaudeville next week at the Majestic Theater, presenting a one-act play called "The Jewess," which has been adapted by McKee Rankin from "Leah the Forsaken." Miss O'Neill is supported by a company which includes Mr. Rankin.

The authoritative life of Henry Irving, which is now being written by the actor's son, has been written for him by no less a person than Henry James, and today the actor gave me the first details regarding it that he has allowed to be made public. The play, which is a modern comedy, will be given for the first time at Edinburgh on March 26, and if the reception there is favorable, a London production will follow shortly. Later on, Robertson hopes to take his new offering across the Atlantic.

To reach the metropolis, however, not to mention the United States, this piece (which is not named yet) will have to prove a much more full-blooded work than James's first dramatic effort, "Guy Domville." George Alexander produced the latter 10 years or more ago, but like its author's recent literary work, it was far too elusive and analytic to appeal to any save the self-styled "select," and died an early death. I recalled it to Robertson, who declared himself confident that there will be a different story to tell of the American novelists.

"No," he said in reply to my query, "this is not an adaptation of any of Mr. James's novels, but an entirely original work, especially written for the stage. It is in three acts, deals with English life, and has a vein of romance running throughout the plot. The scenes are laid in a typical old English country house."

"My part," Robertson went on, "is that of an ambitious young politician, what we call a Radical, and, of course, a candidate for parliamentary honors. As the play unfolds itself he is found in a curiously embarrassing position from which he is extricated by the intervention of a young American girl. She, in fact, is the heroine, and this character, which will be played by my wife, Miss Gertrude Elliott, has been, I consider, delightfully delineated by the author."

"We are not hoping for a big success," he added, "in which case we certainly shall pay an early return visit to the United States. Personally I think that Mr. James' comedy, with its American heart, is sure to appeal to his countrymen."

In electing to write an original play for the stage, Robertson, rather than make an adaptation of one of his novels, Henry James is going dead against the present fashion on this side of the water. Perhaps never before, in fact, have so many dramatizations of works of fiction been promised for one theatrical season. Two will have seen the light before these lines appear in print—the versions of "Sins of the Fathers" and "Some Others," which have been made by their respective authors, Madame Albanesi and E. W. Hornum, the author of "Effie."

Both will be produced next week, and will be swiftly followed by W. J. Locke's stage version of his novel, "The Beloved Vagabond," and a play by Max Pemberton called "Kronstadt" and based on his story of the same name. In the latter, which will be produced at the Garrick, one of the chief parts will be taken by the American actress, Miss Rose Whylie. Locke's dramatization of the novel which was so popular in the United States was not expected so soon it is due at His Majesty's within a fortnight but its production is made necessary by the complete failure of Comyns Carr's "Mystery of Edwin Drood," the final performance of which are announced. Hailed with enthusiasm when produced by Tree in the provinces, this stage version of Dickens' unfinished novel has run less than three weeks at His Majesty's.

The list of other dramatizations of novels, however, is by no means exhausted. Perhaps the most important is that which E. C. Carton, author of "Lord and Lady Algy," has made of

week's play. Fencing, however is one of the strong points of Alphonso Ethier, the Majestic's new leading man. When he was a lad in Utah, where his father was stationed with soldiers, he used to sword drill with the horsemen and officers until his arms would ache. The game had a great fascination for him. Spaniards and Frenchmen used to visit the fort, and young Ethier would also learned their kind of sword play during the visits. Thus it is that when he has a fencing scene, his opponent has to do some real fighting. Most critics agree that Ethier is a good actor. They all say that he is an excellent fencer. —Cleveland Paper.

Mr. Fluke's Manhattan company has established a standard for ensemble acting in this country. Bruce McKee, the latest recruit, now playing the hesitant pastor in Ibsen's "Rosmersholm," is a fine example.

### IN LONDON THEATERS.

Special Correspondence. LONDON, Jan. 29.—Forbes Robertson, who has been out of luck for many months, is getting ready to play a trump card. As readers possibly may have heard, a new piece has been written for him by no less a person than Henry James, and today the actor gave me the first details regarding it that he has allowed to be made public.

The play, which is a modern comedy, will be given for the first time at Edinburgh on March 26, and if the reception there is favorable, a London production will follow shortly. Later on, Robertson hopes to take his new offering across the Atlantic.

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opposite Mrs. Fluke's Rebecca West, recently told what it meant to him to be enrolled with the organization. He said: "In becoming a member of the Manhattan company I have realized the ambition of my life. There is no leading man in the Manhattan company. Each person is considered an artist. Everyone respects every one else. There is no petty feeling about this and that to make one uncomfortable. You are not permitted to feel that there is a 'star' here. Mrs. Fluke herself doesn't think it. For the first time in my career I have been told to play for the play. In this company all have the same opportunities. When a 'star' reigns it is different. One must always think of someone else, and naturally the restriction in interpretation is very great."

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qualifications for doing something of a high order, but doesn't find much profit in them. Hence "The O'Grindles," which is good of its kind, and the kind is amusing and amiable. The scene is Ireland of a century ago. Dear old Sir Harry O'Grindle's eldest son Jim, a "broth of a boy," is in love with the delightful daughter of Sir Harry's old crony. The girl reciprocates and the parents approve. But Jim is a rollicking lad and has been seen flirting a harmless bit with a pretty bare-footed colleen, so it looks bad when her wretched father tries to blackmail the family. Jim's adorable sweetheart believes the story and off goes gallant Jim to "the divie," as he says, well knowing that it was his smug younger brother who had trifled with the pretty colleen's affections. But of course Jim didn't succeed in going to the divie at all, at all, and everybody was ultimately happy. Not a startling plot but every character in the piece is entertaining and often uproarious and each has a different degree of brogue from each of the others, so there is no lack of fun. CURTIS BROWN.

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