

"The play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general."—Hamlet.

GERHARDT HAUPTMANN is declared by his admirers to be the greatest living playwright. In fact, many of the ill advised worshippers at the Hauptmann shrine make bold to assert that not since Shakespeare's time has such a great dramatist been seen. The great German litterateur may be all that his admirers claim. He has yet to convince American theater goers, however, that he is anything more than a very unconventional writer who is so absorbed in the contemplation of his own greatness that he mistakes eccentricity for genius and oddity for originality.

"The Sunken Bell," generally conceded to be one of Hauptmann's best plays, was produced by E. H. Sothern and Virginia Harned at the Knickerbocker theater recently, and despite the manifestations of certain critics who imagine that it is scholarly to commend those things which are supposed to be erudite, the plain facts are that "The Sunken Bell" was a flat and uncompromising failure. This is unquestionably correct from the artistic viewpoint, and I am reasonably certain that the box office statement will also endorse this opinion. I saw the performance on the second night, when there were usually few personal friends of the players present, and to say that the piece was coldly re-

er. At about the opening of the first act we learn that a wagon carrying the bell which was to be hung that day has broken down and the bell has been rolled into the deep waters of the mere. Heinrich sustains a terrible fall and wanders to the home of Rautendelsin, who, seeing a human for the first time, falls in love with him. When Heinrich's friends come to take him away, she determines to follow them. In the next act Heinrich is shown in his cottage ill unto death, with his devoted wife at his bedside. Thither goes Rautendelsin, who, when the wife steps out, proceeds to prepare some decoction of roots, etc., which seems to cure Heinrich and to inspire him with renewed and increased ambition. By the way, this potion brewing scene is laughably like the witches' scene in "Macbeth," both in plan and language. Heinrich now determines to follow Rautendelsin to her home. He is soon established as a bellmaker, and arrogantly refers to himself as "the master." His workmen are the elfish creatures of whom he appears to be entirely inconsiderate. A minister and other friends attempt unavailingly to induce Heinrich to return to his family. Finally Heinrich is warned by the minister that when the sunken bell shall again toll the bellmaker will find his plans all going awry. The

be made bearable by a fine poetical rendering of the play into English and by good acting. With regard to the latter, it may be said that Mr. Sothern surprised even his admirers by his magnificent rendition of the role of Heinrich. His reading of the lines allotted to him when the spirits of his two children appear was as fine a bit of declamation as has been heard in New York during the past decade. It was the best scene in the play, and Mr. Sothern made the most of the opportunity. We have become accustomed to hearing Sothern threaten and defy, and it was a surprise that almost amounted to a shock to discover that on occasion he is able to put tears into his voice. No matter how great a failure "The Sunken Bell" may be, there can be no doubt that its exploitation by Mr. Sothern will serve to raise him many points in the estimation of observant theater goers, who endure an artificial hero whose lines are all "fat," but really appreciate one who is able to respond to so crucial a test as the role of Heinrich in "The Sunken Bell."

With regard to the adaptation of the play, which was essayed by Mr. Charles Henry Meltzer, the less said the better. This gentleman is undoubtedly a scholar of unusual attainments, but the anglicization of Hauptmann's play would never cause any one to suspect him of the ability which he unquestionably possesses. The so called poetry is the veriest doggerel, and much of it is coarse. This latter characteristic may, of course, be due to the text of the original, though it does seem incomprehensible that a man of the reputation of Hauptmann could have written anything so cheaply coarse and so brutally offensive as the wood sprite's dissertation on love. In short, "The Sunken Bell" may be a very great play in the original German, but, if it is, Mr. Hauptmann, the author, owes Mr. Meltzer, the translator, a deep and undying grudge.

Miss Virginia Harned as Rautendelsin.



E. H. SOTHERN IN "THE SUNKEN BELL."

ceived would be to give but a faint idea of the real state of affairs. In fact, there were certain passages intended to be intensely sad at which the audience irreverently laughed. "The Sunken Bell" is said to teach a great moral lesson, and perhaps it does, but I am willing to plead guilty to the charge of being unable to ascertain what that great moral lesson is. To me the only lesson taught by "The Sunken Bell" is that a mystical or allegorical play is bound to have a pretty hard row to hoe in New York under any circumstances, and that when such a play is also uninteresting it stands no more chance to last than a snowflake in July noonday sunshine.

That "The Sunken Bell" is uninteresting in the extreme cannot be denied by any impartial observer. Except in the fourth act there is scarcely a moment when the auditor cares a rap what happens to the various characters. The fourth act is very strong, and if the remainder of the play were even half as good it might enjoy a temporary success. As it is, however, it appears to me to be about as nearly hopeless as any drama I have seen this year.

The story of "The Sunken Bell" would probably read fairly well in type, but it is essentially not an acting play, it is a play that the English adapter has preserved its salient characteristics. Heinrich is a happily married bellmak-

divine proves to be a howling success as a prophet, for everything comes his way. In the fourth act Heinrich casts off Rautendelsin and sees the wraiths of his children. Incidentally, the sunken bell also gets in its work by some long distance tolling, thus demonstrating that the preacher knew what he was talking about when he foretold Heinrich's coming ill luck and also incidentally driving the unfortunate bellmaker some distance nearer to the border line of insanity.

During all this time the waterman, who, by the way, is several thousand years old, has been putting in most of his leisure moments telling Rautendelsin what unreliable creatures mortal men are. Of course, you will have already suspected that the waterman is himself in love with Rautendelsin. Finally she succumbs to his oft repeated protestations of love and goes down to join him. Heinrich is helped to some stuff which the elfin folks give him and dies.

That is substantially the story of "The Sunken Bell." There is no prize offered for a solution of its symbolical difficulties, but most persons will agree, I think, that few difficult problems have often been published in the puzzle columns of the popular children's magazines.

In spite of its deadly dullness, it is possible that "The Sunken Bell" might

lein, "an elfin creature," lacked the necessary lightness and agility, and Rowland Buckstone as The Nickelmann, "an elemental spirit," was very much more amusing than either he or the author intended. The cast of "The Sunken Bell" was as follows:

Heinrich, a bell hammer.....E. H. Sothern
His wife.....E. H. Sothern
Their children.....Edith Valdes
The Nickelmann.....Rowland Buckstone
The Wind Spirit.....E. H. Sothern
First Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Second Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Third Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Fourth Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Rautendelsin, an elfin creature.....Virginia Harned
The Nickelmann, an elemental spirit.....Rowland Buckstone
The Wind Spirit.....E. H. Sothern
First Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Second Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Third Elf.....E. H. Sothern
Fourth Elf.....E. H. Sothern

the piano under Ledochowski. It is an interesting fact that Mr. Kelley was diverted from the career of an artist to that of a musician by hearing Blind Tom play Liszt's transcription of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" music. After two years in Chicago Mr. Kelley went to Germany, where, in Stuttgart, he studied the piano with Kruger and Spiedel, organ with Finck, composition and orchestration with Sittz.

In 1889 he returned to America and settled in San Francisco. Here he wrote his first important work, the well known melodramatic music to "Macbeth." The "Macbeth" music is of such value that it reaches the dignity of a commentary. Beyond and above this, it is an interpretation making vivid and awesome the deep import of the play till even the least imaginative auditor must feel its thrill. Mr. Kelley wrote the music of "Puritania," which, though a failure, was not considered such from a musical standpoint. The work musically was not only conscientious, but really graceful and captivat-



EDGAR STILLMAN KELLEY.

ing. Mr. Kelley has attained considerable reputation in the composition of the finer humorous music. No other American has written so artfully and, perhaps, so ambitiously in this field. A humorous symphony and a Chinese suite are his most prominent works of this order. The symphony follows the life of "Gulliver in Lilliput." His Chinese suite was called "Aladdin." Mr. Kelley has made himself an adept in Chinese music and has fathomed the, to us, obscure workings of their rigid theories. His Chinese suite ingeniously manipulates the music as used in the Chinese temples, theaters and street pagodas. Mr. Kelley's most popular song in Chinese tone is "The Lady Picking Mulberries."

A masterpiece of burlesque weirdness by him is called "The Headless Horseman," representing the wild pursuit of Ichabod Crane and the final hurling of the awful head—said by some to have been a pumpkin. Mr. Kelley wrote the music of a Greek tragedy to the words of George Parsons Lathrop. It was intended for that disastrous venture, the Theater of Arts and Letters. Mr. Kelley has not been especially prolific, but his untiring and successful efforts at originality and distinction cannot be too highly commended.

Arthur Crispin
New York.

FIGHTING BLOOD.
Young Terry McGovern, the fistic idol of Greater New York, is a Brooklyn boy. In the district wherein he resides—South Brooklyn—he has been deified almost by the entire population. Upon occasions of his victories bonfires are lit in the streets and the populace gives itself over to general rejoicing. During his fight with George Dixon it seemed as if every available dollar in Brooklyn had been carried across the bridge to be wagered on "Terrible Terry." Among those who fought past the gatekeeper and scrambled for a seat was a weakened old Irishman from McGovern's bailiwick in Brooklyn.

In the early part of the fight Dixon, the sable veteran of a hundred fights, seemed to have the better of the argument, and once or twice he smashed the rushing Terry right and left. Some of the more impressive in the audience who had bet on the boy win at this, and one faint hearted better said with a groan:

"It's all up with Terry!"

The weakened old Irishman gave the speaker a glance of contempt. "G'wan wid ye!" he said witheringly. "A clout like that is nothin to the shcock McGovern comes from. Why, and a deep joy lit up his aged visage. 'It takes six policemen to arrest his grandmother!"

WATCH YOUR SPOKES.

While the breaking of a single spoke on a bicycle wheel will not make an appreciable difference in the running of a machine, that spoke should at once be replaced. The break places a certain strain on the twin spoke, and when the latter gives way it would almost certainly put the rim out of true, in which case something must be done or the tire will be ruined by the wheel revolving against the forks at each revolution.

short lived son, is the hero of the piece. In this Rostand has maintained the high poetic standard he set up in "Cyrano de Bergerac."

Where is this sort of confusing titles for plays going to end? The latest is "What Did Tompkins Do?" In that comedy Harry Carson Clarke will try to do next season.

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THE BASEBALL OUTLOOK

Buck Ewing, the Famous Manager and ex-Catcher, Thinks the National Game Will Boom This Year.

THE baseball season of 1900 will be one of the most important in the history of the sport, for it will mark a turning point in the national game. For some years past baseball has been losing ground. The loss at first was very gradual, but for the last two or three years has been in the nature of a toboggan slide.

There were many reasons for this decline in interest, one of the principal being that some of the National league

schedule as arranged this year is the best that we have had for a long time, and that is another point that conduces to good games.

Bad umpiring was the cause of a good deal of the dissatisfaction expressed last summer. At the beginning of the season it was thought that with the introduction of the double umpire system all trouble on that score would be banished, but this was soon proved to be a fallacy. The umpires gave wrong decisions and would then squabble between themselves over the renderings. Then again in some cases the umpires couldn't decide whose business it was to give the decision.

A case in point occurred at third base. The umpire at the plate saw the play, but wouldn't say anything, because he declared it was in the jurisdiction of his partner. The latter declared he was unable to see the play in question because several men got in his way. They couldn't decide what to do for some time, while the players stood around listening to their wordy warfare.

There may be 12 good umpires in this country, but if there are we couldn't find them last year. One good umpire is better by far than two incompetents, so that for my part I am glad the League has decided to go back to the old system this season.

Some of the umpires complained that they were afraid to give right decisions in certain cities. When the Cincinnati team was playing against St. Louis last year in the latter town, Hank O'Day made a rank decision in favor of the Browns. I asked him after the game why he had made such a palpable error. He frankly acknowledged that he had given the decision wrongly and said he knew it when he did so, but that he was afraid to do otherwise, because he knew that if he gave it to us he would be mobbed by the St. Louis players and spectators.

And this brings me to the subject of "rowdiness," of which so much has been said. As a matter of fact, the spectators are as a rule far more at fault than the players, for they urge on the men with shouts and hurled epithets at the umpires that make them afraid to act impartially, as in the case I have just mentioned.

The rules committee has made very few changes this year. The most important alteration is the one which makes the pitcher face a side instead of a corner of the plate. This will tend to increase the efficiency of the pitching department, for the twirlers will have a better mark to aim at. It will at the same time, I hope, do away with much of the present kicking as to whether a ball is a strike or not, for the umpire will be able to decide much more surely whether it goes over the plate or not.

The rule about balks created a good deal of trouble at the beginning of last season, but this arose chiefly from the fact that the umpires misunderstood the meaning of the rule. I remember one case in point. The pitcher was standing behind the home plate, backing up the catcher, after a long hit. The ball was thrown in and stopped by the pitcher while he was still on foul ground, and while there he made a motion to throw it to third base. He did not let the ball go, however, and the umpire sent the next man, who had not even come to the bat, to first base, claiming that a balk had been committed by the pitcher.

Now, this interpretation may possibly have been technically correct according to the reading of the rules, but it certainly was not the intention of the framers that it should be understood in any such fashion. Umpires in baseball, just as in other sports, are supposed to

use their brains and indulge in a little common sense, so as to get at the spirit as well as the letter of the law. I was asked the other day a question which is frequently put by the newer generation to those who have been in the game for a good many years. It was whether the players of today are or 20 years ago. To this I must emphatically reply no. The players now are on the average no faster than they were when I first donned a mask. There is no trick practiced today that was not known and used years ago. It is my belief that it would be very difficult to invent a play or piece of strategy that had not been used before.

At the end of last season I read in several papers that the Brooklyn team had won the pennant through their right field hitting and that this was a new wrinkle, it being the first time a team had ever made a feature of this style of hitting.

Now, it is very true that hits in that direction did contribute a great deal to the success of the Brooklyn team, but it was something new to us. Any old timer who has a good memory box will tell you that the Cincinnatis under Anson won the pennant in 1880 and 1881 through the same style of batting—hitting to the right field. The same will be found to be the case in regard to every article or play sprung by good players every now and then.

The fact that all postponed games will be played on open dates or not at all is a good feature. Double headers that do not tend to cheapen the sport, and anything that should be avoided.

All in all, I look for such a splendid revival of baseball, public favor this summer that it will again be worthy of its title of our national sport.

WILLIAM B. EWING.

REAL STAGE THEATRE.

A comedian in a Paris theater recently made a great hit out of a painful accident. While indulging in a bit of horse play on the stage he struck his head accidentally against one of the pillars of the scene.

Upon the stage, the third came in, a flutter of sympathy to pass through the audience.

"No great harm done," said the comedian. "Just hand me a napkin, a glass of water, and a salt cellar."

These were brought in, and he sat down, folded the napkin in the form of a bandage, dipped it in the glass and emptied the salt cellar on the wet part. Having thus prepared a compress according to prescription, and, when every one expected he would apply it to his head, he gravely rose and tied it round the pillar.

BIRTHPLACES OF FUGILISTS.

Tom Sharkey was born in Dundalk, Ireland; Robert Fitzsimmons in Elnes, Cornwall, England; Peter Maher in Galway, Ireland; Steve O'Donnell in Sydney, New South Wales; Joe Goddard in Pyramid, Australia; Dick O'Brien in St. John, N. B.; Dan Cusack in Newmarket, New Zealand; Tommy West in Cardiff, Wales; Peter Jackson in Port Risco, West India; Jim Hall in Australia; "Spike" Sullivan in Knockmanna, Ireland; "Young Griffo" in Sydney, Australia; Billy Murphy in Auckland, New Zealand; Eddie Connelly in St. John, N. B.; Tom Tracy in Australia; Joe Walcott in Barbados, West India; George Dixon in Halifax, N. S.; Paddy Slavin in Maliland, New South Wales; Frank Erne in Zurich, Switzerland; Casper Leon in Palermo, Italy; George Goddard in Prince Edward Island; Billy Whistler in County Kerry, Ireland; "Denver" Ed Smith in Birmingham, England; Jack Root in Austria and Jack McAuliffe in Cork, Ireland.



MANAGER "BUCK" EWING.

THE AMUSEMENT WORLD.

It is said that Stuart Robson will star Henry Dixey in a new comedy next season.

Blanche Walsh may take a try at Romeo next season. She once played the part in a one act piece, but it is Shakespeare's Romeo she is ambitious to portray.

Mr. John Drew is one of the very few

American actors who have the entire to Henry Dixey in a new comedy next season. He possesses a remarkable memory and is said to have the detail of the histories of the leading families in America at his tongue's end. Mme. Seacchi is the latest recruit to the continuous vaudeville. Patti and Irving may get there eventually. If

Keith gets one, Proctor will surely capture the other.

"Self and Lady" is the title of a new piece in which Fritz Williams will have the chief part next season.

It Charles Frohman carries out his idea of starring Maude Adams next season in "L'Aiglon," Rostand's new play, it will be that actress' first appearance in a male part. The young king of Rome, Napoleon's only and

short lived son, is the hero of the piece. In this Rostand has maintained the high poetic standard he set up in "Cyrano de Bergerac."

Where is this sort of confusing titles for plays going to end? The latest is "What Did Tompkins Do?" In that comedy Harry Carson Clarke will try to do next season.

Now it is said that the Earl of Yarborough means to conquer the vaude-

villes as a dancer. He should begin a show to do something for his living until the right heiress comes along.

Miss Rehan was born in 1860, April 22, at Limerick, Ireland, and America has been her home ever since she was 5 years old, and during her 37 years of public life she has assumed more than 230 characters, comprising every possible characterization known to stage art.

Mrs. Carter may treat Londoners to

"Madame Butterfly," the one act Japanese play adapted by David Belasco from John Luther Long's romance. Belasco is also writing a new play for his "star."

Edith Totten has been re-engaged by William Gillette for "Sherlock Holmes" next season.

Miss Elsie de Wolfe will be put forward a second time as a star by Mr. Frohman the coming season. It is said

the play will be of French origin and that Miss de Wolfe is to go to Paris to see it played in its original language. "To Have and to Hold," the latest of the popular novels, is to be dramatized. Charles Frohman has secured the rights from its author, Miss Mary Johnston, for its author, Miss Mary Johnston, a star will probably be in a dramatization by Stanislaus Stange of "The Courtship of Miles Standish."