

The Drama



George Damorel, Japanese Prima Donna at the Orpheum

Scene From "Little Peggy O'Moore" Alcazar Players, at the Baker



Kolb and Dill, in "The High Cost of Loving," Heilig Attraction.

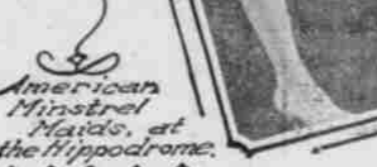
BY LEONE CASS BAER.

VIGOROUS diatribe against present conditions in the world of theatricals, an onslaught on poor acting as the bane of our stage, followed by a confession of frank embarrassment in searching for a remedy is contained in a brilliantly-written article by J. Rankin Towse in the current edition of The Nation. Mr. Towse's observations were called forth, he says, by a long wall over the degeneracy of the British stage made by H. W. Massingham in the London Nation. Mr. Massingham laments the impotency of the various independent theaters to bring about any true resurrection of dramatic art, alludes despairingly to the vanity of hopes founded upon the insubstantial proposals for a national or municipal establishment, and asks plaintively what has become of the great revival predicted as the inevitable consequence of the world-wide tragedy of war. To all of which well-known Mr. Towse makes reply by saying that it is too early to look for any revival or even remedied steps. "The needed inspiration," he sensibly observes, "can come only to those who have stepped full on the actual horrors of the field, and they, as yet, have other business in hand than the writing of plays, which takes time. Poetive was poetry of a high type we have had. The great plays may follow, but what assurance is there that they would be produced. In any case, their effect, if any, would be transient. The theater cannot be saved by good plays alone. The libraries already are stuffed with them. "In England, just now," further says Mr. Towse, "the stage is abandoned to trivialities, mainly because London and the larger cities are crammed with soldiers craving nothing so much as the temporary oblivion of laughter. This is not the case here, but the conditions are little less contemptible. The theatrical disease is, and long has been, progressive in spite of all the nostrums that have been prescribed for its cure. This is because the amiable amateur theorists who take note only of the symptoms, instead of probing for the original and deeply rooted cause of the malady. The malignant which is not, as is commonly supposed, simply commercial, the development of which is but one phase of it. The theater, like all other artistic and educational institutions, must be run—if it is to survive and grow—more or less upon a commercial basis. It has always been, from Elizabethan days downward, even in its best estate, commercial. Aids of every degree must be had, and, if they are to excel, must be made to work for it. They can be fostered, doubtless, to a certain extent, by patronage, but this means stagnation and ultimate decadence. They can be impelled to the highest achievements—even phenomenal gains in its best estate, but only by competition, which necessitates the development of capacity by hard work and education. This is a platitude, but it is also the true and sufficient explanation of the indisputable fact that with the extinction of the old system of stock companies the race of great actors vanished. Today, in the whole English-speaking theater, there are not six, nor three, actors—including both sexes—capable of a really first-class embodiment of any great character in either tragedy or high comedy, let alone in both.



reaction and without trained players? How is it to be lifted out of the quagmire in which it is bogged? "Plainly there must be a total upheaval of the present system. That, unfortunately, is not likely to come except after complete financial disaster, which does not yet appear imminent, although there are occasional signs of it on the horizon. Nor will any conceivable endorsement or legislative approval, the restoration of the old stock company system, in existing circumstances, does not seem feasible, yet, manifestly, the prime need is the creation, on a broad scale, of somewhat similar institutions in which a new school of actors could be trained properly in all the different branches of their profession. It is in this direction that the first organized effort for theatrical reform must be made. All talk of an artistic theater, without the proper actors to put into it, is futonense. A possible nucleus for such a scholastic organization might possibly be found in the various independent dramatic societies which of late have been springing up all over the country. But the administration of them would have to be changed radically. In the main they are devoted to amateurish performances of violent, abnormal, or freakish pieces of no permanent literary or dramatic value. As schools of acting they are negligible. If they could be endowed with this capacity, they might soon prove invaluable. But the ideal theater of the future must be based upon an educational and competitive basis. The shortest road to it, perhaps, might lie through a great dramatic university, with an absolute control over managerial licenses, to be issued only to graduates with honors."

The local calendar this week shows a return engagement of the Kolb and Dill comedy team, surrounded by their musical comedy company in "The High Cost of Loving," opening next Thursday night to round out the week at the Heilig. They have just completed a successful season extending from November until a fortnight ago in Chicago and are homeward bound to California to get ready for a new production. Max Robson will be here in "A Little Bit Old Fashioned" on April 11, 12 and 13, and we are to have Cyril Maude in "Grumpy" some time in early May. Also Otis Skinner is coming soon in "Mr. Antonio," and Max Pigman and Lolita Robertson are returning in "Nothing But the Truth," which is said to be a "little Peggy O'Moore" sort of play, opens today with the matinee for the week's engagements at the Baker. Ruck Gates will be Peggy, a little Irish colleen, and Edward Everett Horton will play Dan, the Irish lad who gets all mixed up in politics and romance when little Peggy comes over from Ireland to make more troubles for him. The entire cast of Alcazar players will appear. It looks like a great week for the Orpheum, as the artist who has the biggest type on the top of the poster is George Damorel, who has the reputation of being one of the greatest masculine drawing-cards in vaudeville today because he appeals not only to the lovers of dramatic art, but to the devotees of music and dancing. Another reason why this welcome-returner is so popular is because his principal support is always Myrtle Vail, who is at home dancing, singing or acting and who can qualify any time as a competitor with Venus in any vaudeville act that needs the Venus type. "The Little Liar," a new musical farce, in Mr. Damorel's vehicle this season. Edward Hume, comedian, also looms big in the support of the matinee. Hume and Myrtle Vail complicate the plot of "The Little Liar," which is built around an artist's model who has a perfect shoulder and who poses for the painting of "The Red Cross Girl."



American Minstrel, at the Hippodrome.

Daniolo in the famous Viennese success, "The Merry Widow." His vaudeville vehicle the past two seasons was "Temptation," which, like "The Little Liar," was written by Will M. Hough, who, as the author of "The Time, the Place and the Girl," "A Stubborn Cinderella," "A Modern Eve" and numerous other musical comedy successes, made his early reputation previous to entering the vaudeville field, to which he has lately contributed "The Naughty Princess," "The Night Clerk," "The Four Husbands" and others.

The other featured acts of the new Orpheum show are "In the Zone," another Washington Square Players' playlet, and Haruko Onuki, the Japanese prima donna, who made a big hit here last season. The Kinkaid Killies, one of the biggest musical acts in vaudeville, is coming to top Pantages new bill opening tomorrow. This act is made up of the original lads and lassies from the bellhounds of honny Scotland and features Bonnie Rose Maura, Bob Albright returns, too, on the new bill to delight with his singing, and the Five Metzettis acrobats are another big number. Al Franks, the clever Hebrew comedian of the Lyric, who has been sick for several weeks, returns to the cast today in "The Quacks," a semi-burlesque, which gives abundant opportunity for the popular team of Dill and Franks in their eccentric work. As common bums they pose as doctors in the usual inoffensive way found only in cartoon musical comedy, and set about trying to cure an attack of dumbness in the daughter of a wealthy judge. Musical and chorus effects are interpolated throughout the plot and several new faces and figures are announced to appear this week. They include little Billie Bingham, a well-known soprano.

FRIEDA HEMPEL
Leading Soprano, Metropolitan Opera Company
Direction Steers & Coman.
Heilig Theater, April 3
Seat Sale Tomorrow, 10 A. M.
PRICES
Floor—\$2.50, \$2.00
Balcony—\$2.00, \$1.50, \$1.00, 75c.
Gallery, ResWed—75c; Adm., 50c

between acts, for the expertness with which Kolb and Dill do things is evidenced in the same jazz orchestra they carried last year, which entertains while the curtain is dropped.

GEORGE DAMEREL BACK AGAIN
Former Star of "The Merry Widow" Returns as Orpheum Card.
No extra performance of Orpheum vaudeville will be presented at the Heilig this week, a concert engagement necessitating closing of the Orpheum show with the Wednesday matinee. On account of the Easter show being headlined by George Damorel, "the matinee idol of big-time vaudeville," special efforts were made by the Orpheum management in an endeavor to extend the engagement of this week's bill, but this could not be arranged because of the advance booking of Frieda Hempel and the Kolb and Dill show.

George Damorel, the new Orpheum star, is regarded as one of the foremost drawing cards, as has been established a big clientele among lovers of music, the dance and the drama. He is famous particularly for his association with the sensational success of "The Merry Widow," so much so that the "Merry Widow Waltz" even at this

late date is linked with the name of George Damorel.

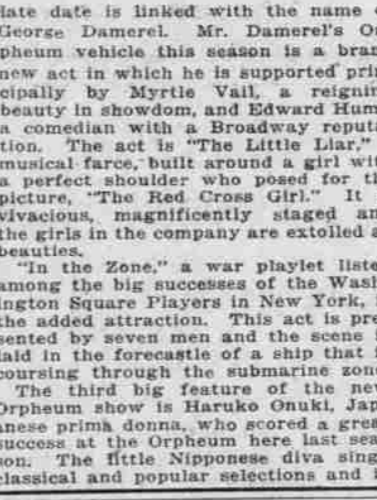
Mr. Albright is assisted at the piano by Miss Mary Cook, a clever pianist who makes her first professional appearance here.

One of the most amazing acts in vaudeville is that presented by the Five Metzettis, the noted European athletes. They offer a routine of cyclonic acrobatics, which is one of the most amazing aerial somersaults. The Metzettis astonished Europe prior to the war with their remarkable programme and with the advent of the war they came to the United States where they have scored a tremendous hit.

Cuban entertainers are Sinclair and Tyler who appear in an enjoyable programme. They are accomplished musicians who introduce the violin and the cello. Their routine includes many of the luring melodies of the South as well as the latest hits.

June Mills is the May Irwin of vaudeville and she appears with her own company in the brightest of sketches. Miss Mills' humor is infectious and she will be a popular figure on the programme.

As whirlwind manipulators, the mem-



Al Franks, Hebrew Comedian, at the Lyric, in "The Quacks"

As whirlwind manipulators, the mem-

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Bert—WHEELER & MORAN—Tom in "ME AND MICKY"
Geo. W. COOPER & Wm. ROBINSON Presenting "A Friend of Mine on the Wrong Street"

HARUKO ONUKI
JAPANESE PRIMA DONNA In a Repertoire of Songs

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