



Penrod And His Gang At The Baker.



Jazz Orchestra At The Lyric.

Catherine Mae In 'Are You a Mason?' At Hellig.

BY LEONE CASS BAER.

THE INDOOR sport of backing an opera company is a pastime so uncertain that the directors of the Chicago opera company have been holding solemn convalescence in Chicago, wondering if, perhaps, there should not be an "opera holiday" in the west, or at least a limitation of golden-brooded canaries.

Grand opera, the way Mary Garden is serving it up this season, costs \$2,500,000 for 23 weeks.

The first and only woman director of opera in the world has put it on in the most regal fashion America has ever seen.

The directors are going over the books and will soon announce whether the pressure is too severe or they can carry on.

The entire operatic world has its ear to the directors' board room. If they decide this is to be the last season of the largest and most expensive opera company in the world, it means the Metropolitan company will have the American field to itself and that the west may not hear the olden notes of opera at home for years to come.

Hundreds of the most noted singers, ballet dancers and orchestral musicians will have to return to Europe. While this tempest is blowing Mary Garden is confined to her home in Chicago by illness. Speculation that she is to resign or that her illness has been caused by administrative trouble and worry were officially denied.

Far from being in danger of being asked to resign, Miss Garden is, it is said, to be asked to continue as director of the Chicago opera company.

But, it was said, Miss Garden is to retire at the end of the 1932 season. She has "very interesting plans." It was added—plans that are expected to create a sensation in artistic and social circles.

But the directors have decided they cannot stand the pressure of another season like the present one.

Miss Garden has the biggest aggregation of songsters in the world right now. They may not exceed the Metropolitan company in excellence, but there are more of them. The Chicago auditorium is so full of them that they are fast filling the seats.

She has a dozen imported stars who have not even appeared thus far this season. Many others have appeared once or twice. She has a payroll of a ball club with 100 Babe Ruths in it.

At this is the last season Harold A. McCormick, multimillionaire attraction, and his recently divorced wife, Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick, are to make up the deficit of the company, the directors are doing lot of bookkeeping on next year.

They can get 500 Chicago citizens to subscribe \$1000 each every year for five years. But that is only \$500,000 a year. Box office receipts do not exceed \$1,000,000 annually. They need another million or so. And when Mary Garden runs an opera company, she has small change.

If the company is discontinued Miss Garden will be money ahead. As director she is guaranteed only two performances a week. If the directors can't make the trifling she has a contract for "calling for 75 performers in concert at \$3000 a performance."

She should worry! A London exchange says that the coming brevity of a ballet dancer's career is the result of the "scrumptious" eye, an officially censorious eye, the eye of a Presbyterian Scotch duke.

England has a new lord chamberlain, recommended by Premier David Lloyd George, and approved by the king, to succeed the late Lord Sandhurst. But, more important, the lord chamberlain, a dignitary of the royal household, also the man who controls the morals of the London theater. He has in his power the licensing of all London plays and it is he who decrees just how far things may go—and no farther. Beyond him there is no appeal.

London is watching the thumbs of the duke of Atholl—will they point vigorously upward or will they assume a critically downward slant? If his decisions aren't obeyed, the duke of Atholl, new lord chamberlain, is the only man in England outside from his majesty, King George V, who is privileged to maintain an army.

The duke is a real aristocrat. He is a very much grata at court, is mother and Queen Victoria were emperors. In fact, it was the duke who, while visiting the duchess of Atholl castle, set in the midst of a 200,000-acre estate in the Scottish highlands by a mere whim, authorized the Atholl family to raise and maintain its own private army, a force of 800 men, which is maintained day after day, although recently decorated by the secretary of state for an "a picturesque relic of bygone years."

The army is composed of hussars of the Atholl estate and they march out in full Tartan regalia on occasions of sufficient ceremonial importance.

But, as London sees the duke, the play's the thing. The duke is a big, blunt man, hard of head, erect and a vigorous Presbyterian. This combination of qualities, especially the last, are not believed to promote sympathetic appreciation in him of any of the subtleties and cynicism of the show girls.

London does recall, however, with a hope that it bespeaks broad-mindedness in the duke, that his family are the patrons and historical patrons of Atholl house, a collection of whitely, honey and eggs of such inspiration that one drop on the powder puff of a cotton-tail rabbit would send the rabbit out howling.

"Where's that top-eared bench-legged mutt of a police dog that chewed up my puppy last week?"

The Lord Chamberlain needn't be a first-nighter himself. He has two play examiners for that. He also operates with a committee of actors and managers who inspect the script of all plays before they are produced and frequently delete scenes or phrases which they believe would cause trouble if seen or heard by the examiners. In the past a mere hint from the Lord Chamberlain has met with compliance from the producers.

"Cairo" was the latest show in the city, affected by a hint from the Lord Chamberlain, but that was under the late Lord Sandhurst's regime. Morris Gest's English edition of "Cairo" also heard a whisper from the Lord Chamberlain and adopted slightly heavier mosquito netting for some of the girls.

Rights to a London production of "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" for Ethel Levey have been secured. She will star in the piece on her return to London, following the conclusion of her Keith vaudeville tour.

Harry Piller has been signed by Albert de Courville to appear in the New York run of his revue now touring Canada. The Scall Couple, acrobats, will join the revue in Canada, where the late Gabby Deshay's dancing partner.

William Rock, who started out on a vaudeville tour several weeks ago with a single turn, his wife, Helen Ebby, assisting as his accompanist, has added Nancy Welford to the act. Nancy is the daughter of Dallas Welford, the English comedian.

The Howard brothers, Willie and Eugene, will make their first vaudeville appearance in several years when they open at the Winter Garden, New York, this next week, headlining the Shubert bill.

The two boys have a contract with the Shuberts and have been appearing in musical shows. Kolb and Dill will appear in a new comedy being written for them by Aaron Hoffman. The theme concerns capital and labor. Kolb and Dill have received most of his script.

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Booking arrangements already completed call for the opening of the show out of San Francisco on January 10 and during this tryout tour the piece will play Eureka in the extreme northern end of the state. This will be the first time in 30 years that a \$2 attraction has played the lumber city. The San Francisco premiere is for February 5 at the Century, where they expect to stay for six weeks.

Caruso anniversary week, to be observed Saturday, February 6, 1932, and to be marked by special musical concerts and other activities in all parts of the country, has been approved at a meeting of the executive committee of the Caruso American Memorial Foundation, held at the New York Bankers' club one day last week.

Arrangements for the observance of that week will be under the direction of the executive committee, assisted by special committees of artists, music lovers, representatives of music industries and others.

The celebration will begin on the 49th anniversary of Caruso's birth and will continue through Saturday, January 14. Special homage will be paid to the memory of the great tenor and selected musical programmes will be arranged. The co-operation of various organizations in the development of the plans has been assured.

The meeting at the Bankers' club was held to formulate plans for raising an endowment fund of \$1,000,000, the income to be used for scholarships and awards for talented and deserving students of music and for

promoting a wider appreciation of music. Paul D. Cravath, president of the foundation, presided. Among the executive committee members are Otto H. Kahn, Walter Damrosch and Antonio Scotti.

Molly Pearson will play one of the chief feminine roles in A. A. Milne's "The Dover Road," which will open soon in New York. Miss Pearson recently appeared in "Lassie" and "Hobson's Choice."

Frank Bacon, author of "Lightnin'" has just completed a musical play with Milt Hagen and Joe McKiernan. Arrangements are now being made for its production.

A revival of Leo Dietrichstein's comedy, "Are You a Mason?" is to be the next offering at the Hellig, opening on next Thursday evening, January 5.

The Baker players are putting on Booth Tarkington's play, "Penrod," with Bob Russell, a youthful and talented Portland lad, in the role of Penrod. The Baker leading man, Selmar Jackson, will appear in the part of Penrod's father, with Frances Woodbury, leading woman, playing Penrod's sister Margaret. The play is of delightful quality and popular.

Sallie Fisher, known as "the singer-actress exquise," is one of the headliners of the Orpheum show which will open at the Hellig this afternoon. The other headliner is Colonel Fred Lindsay of the British army, famous sportsman and big-game hunter of Australia. Miss Fisher is making her vaudeville tour under the sponsorship of Charles Dillingham, the famous producer, and her vehicle is "The Choir Rehearsal," one of the most artistic acts in vaudeville. She is supported by a comedy especially selected in New York for the tour.

Colonel Lindsay and his company present an exhibition of native sports and pastimes. Other features of the incoming show are Muldoon, Franklyn and Rose in song, dance and comedy. The De Haven and Nice in "The Follies of 1776" and Kellam and O'Dair, a noted comedy couple, in "Chasing the Blues." This show will close with the matinee Wednesday.

A group of lassies from the land of Bobbie Burns will engage interest on the new bill at the Hellig. These are the "Glasgow Maids," with a remarkably clever Scotch woman, Jessie Blair Stirling, at the head of the organization. Two additional attractions are Fred and Tommy Hayden in "Artistic Oddities," and another is Zella Santley, a comedienne of original ideas.

A pretentious dancing act to be presented by Victor Hyde, and which includes all varieties of modern dancing, including Japanese steps, will be the feature of the Hippodrome's first New Year's bill. The personal appearance of a well-known song and scenario writer, Frank Farrer, in dramatic excerpts will hold first position in the midweek show.

The Lyric will have a musical comedy centered around a lodge episode entitled "Are You an Elk?" with Al Franks and Eddie Wright as the stars. The comedy is a comedy of the present day, hence of prime funsters, with the rosbud chorus in animated attendance.

Two of the best-known Pacific coast theatrical men are sponsoring the revival of "Are You a Mason?" and the company is under the direction of Edgar Lindsey, who also directed such famous stars as Bezzie Barricade, Charlotte Greenwood and others.

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headline. Mr. Lindsay is a famous Australian rancher and big game hunter and a veteran of two wars. He is the most expert manipulator of the stock whip in the Antipodes. During the war he commanded a squadron of Australian bushmen, was mounted brigadier, Colonel Lindsay has been a personal friend of many notables, including the late Theodore Roosevelt, and it was he who obtained Roosevelt's permission to shoot buffalo in eastern Africa.

The other features are Johnny Muldoon, Pearl Franklin and Lew Rose, a talented Portland lad, who has appeared before with the Baker players and who knows his present part like a school book.

Solmar Jackson will have the role of Henry P. Schofield, father of the refreshing Penrod, and Miss Frances Woodbury will be seen to advantage in the role of Margaret, sister to Penrod and good angel to boyhood generally. Other members of the Baker company have been cast by Director Walter B. Gilbert in parts that will permit an expression of the particular abilities of each, for "Penrod" yields a role for almost every artistic gift that may be found in a modern stock company. There are perhaps more parts in "Penrod" than any recent Baker play, so that each of the favorite players will have full opportunity. "Penrod" is four acts of fun bound together with a thoroughly interesting and dramatic story.

Other acts are Frank Farrer, dealer in laughs; the Ruth Howell duo, America's premiere aerialists. Topics of the day, Aesop's Fables and Pathe News, accompanied by views of Portland homes and Oregon scenery and the concert orchestra under direction of George E. Jeffery.

"ARE YOU A MASON?" COMING
Good Old Play to Be Seen at Hellig January 5.

An elaborate revival of one of the great laugh successes of recent American stage history is coming to the Hellig theater for a limited season in "Are You a Mason?" the play that did so much to establish the fame of its author and star, Leo Dietrichstein. The Portland season will open next Thursday evening, January 5, continuing through Saturday evening, with a special matinee on that day.

The story of "Are You a Mason?" is known to all theater patrons. It presents a problem through a husband's effort, aided by his friends, to account for his activities by professing to his wife and family that he had become a Mason. The situations that this state of affairs results in are good for comedy laughter, yet they require a high degree of talent to present.

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most delightful comedies written for the American stage. The youthful chief character is a typical American boy and in addition to the regular Baker company there will be five children in the cast. The title role will be enacted by Bob Russell, a talented Portland lad, who has appeared before with the Baker players and who knows his present part like a school book.

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solist proved popular, will have another of his specialties.

The Exposition trio, composed of Jewel LaVelle, Ted Ullmark and Clara Heath, will sing new songs.

As usual, the country store Tuesday evening and the chorus girl contest Friday evening will be features.

HIPODROME ACTS ATTRACT
Excellent Vaudeville Bill Will Inaugurate New Year.

If the Hippodrome winds up the year 1932 with as fine a show as is promised for its New Year's offering, it will have maintained a record during the twelvemonth worth striving to beat. The vaudeville which will begin today will contain the usual variety this house is accustomed to offer in the character of its acts and a quality that is up to the best standard that the house has ever presented.

Headlining will be a Victor Hyde offering, with a wealth of showy dresses and colorful stage settings, entitled "The Dance Whirl," composed of two young men and five girls, all of whom the management promises to be artists in the dancing art. Toe, ballet steps, Russian, Spanish, Japanese and other dance creations will be included in a programme which will be interspersed by several song numbers.

"Election Night," a satirical skit, will introduce Ann Wardell and Jack Doncourt. Their farce presents them as man and wife, who are both candidates for the office of mayor.

Harry White, the "Matrimonial," is one of the chief features of the new bill. In burnt cork he is a comedian who tells a lot of funny stories, sings and yodels. His monologue is said to be well balanced and seasoned with pointed satire at current events that has a smile with every sentence.

A pair of jesters, Clifford and Leslie, bring a line of originalities in instrumental music. With their array of instruments they keep the audience in high humor throughout their act.

Herman and Engle are presented as a pair of remarkable specimens of physical culture. This couple go through an exhibition of feats of strength in a manner that is easy and graceful.

The midweek bill next Thursday will include Hill and Quintall in versatile oddities; Wild and Sedalia, tunes and chatter; Frank Farrer, song and scenario writer; Silvia Moro and Reckless Duo in novelties.

in a group of new songs and imitations. She presents her own impressions of stage celebrities and also gives a number of original character studies in song. Miss Stanley is a pretty girl as well as clever.

"Artistic Oddities" is the name given the unique offering of Fred and Tommy Hayden, two popular vaudeville comedians and singers. Witty dialogue and appealing instrumental numbers are part of their act.

Four sons of Japan are the Ishikawa brothers, and there is no more sensational athletic offering in vaudeville than the act they will present on the new bill. They indulge in astonishing and daring feats of equilibrium and acrobatics.

Ranging from ball room to modern jazz the "Smart Tunes and Dance Originalities" presented by Billy Padrick and Ruby Devere will prove one of the most popular features of the bill. Their act is said to be handsomely staged and costumed.

Johnson, Fox and Gibson are responsible for an amusing oddity that they call "Bluff." Travesty, eccentric dancing and singing are mingled in their entertainment.

The feature picture offering for the new bill will be Alice Brady in "The Dawn of the East," a Realart super-production.

Comedy, Music, Dancing and Superior Athletics Have Places.

Comedy, music, dancing and some superior athletics will have a place on the varied bill announced for the new week at the Pantagone theater opening tomorrow matinee. It is said to be a programme that promises much in the way of real entertainment and as the headline attraction Jesse Blair Sterling and her seven Glasgow Maids in an elaborate production featuring Scotch songs and dances. It is called "Echoes From Bonnie Scotland" and from all accounts it is one of the breeziest and most entertaining Scotch acts seen on the Pantagone circuit in months.

Zelda Santley, a young girl who calls herself "Little Miss