

POOR OLD THEATER MIGHT BE WORSE, SAYS PLAY JURY

Stupidity More Deadly Than Naughtiness, in Opinion of Critics—Here and There a Bellringer Appears to Brighten Things



Ingenue and two stars on Broadway: Ruth Gordon, memorable dumb bell in "Mrs. Partridge Presents"; Laura Hope Crews as "Ariadne" and Blanche Yurka as Gina in "The Wild Duck."

THE NEA PLAY JURY'S TEN BEST PLAYS

Candida.
Is Zat So?
Mrs. Partridge Presents—
Old English.
The Firebrand.
The Guardsman.
The Show Off.
They Knew What They Wanted.
What Price Glory.
White Cargo.

(By the NEA Play Jury)

NEW YORK, March 7.—The poor old New York stage has had a bad year, so far as the reformers are concerned.

There are plenty of things the matter with it, all right, but it occurs to at least one onlooker that most of the wall is at grievances of secondary importance. There are a few words to be uttered, also, in defense of the accused.

Sex is the red flag, which has been capacity houses and attracted a charge from the censorious. It is true, however, that at least as many plays flaunting a cheap erotic invitation have failed as have survived. And the language! Sometimes it has been shocking in its twinnedness, and sometimes it has been inspiring in its sincere truthfulness. There is a selection. It remains to see how censors will draw the line.

Stupidity is a more valid indictment to bring against the season's offerings as a class. Almost never before have so many new plays been presented. Many and many have turned out to be good for a couple of weeks, lacking in real human understanding, often heavy to tears, empty or labored. Brave new attempts have been few. The ancient album has been drawn upon repeatedly.

Two years ago was a high-tide back with such adventures as

"Seventh Heaven," "He Who Gets Slapped," "R. U. R.," "Six Characters in Search of an Author," and the Barrymore and Cowd versions of Shakespeare. It is not a task, however, to pick out a dozen plays opened this season, more than half of them by American authors, over which one may smile with pride. It would take an excellent piece in any season to crowd out "Glory," "They Knew What They Wanted," or "Mrs. Partridge." And "Candida" never shone more brightly.

"Ariadne," the new Theater Guild play by A. A. Milne, runs to skill and deftness in both writing and acting. In no other recent play has so much been made of such scanty and flimsy material. It might be objected that its content is not worth the effort. But while it may be frothy, it sparkles under the foam.

Laura Hope Crews, wearing the title name with distinction, and Harry Mestayer as the wealthy and clumsy Lothario, take the principal honors. To the eye of this reviewer it is a well-cast company. That goes particularly for the winsome ingenue, Frida Inescort, and also for Orlando Daly, a clownish Rabbitt to whose heavy comes several of the New York critics suggested.

The play suggests "Candida" in that it shows a clear-eyed wife leading her obtuse husband nearer to having understanding. A lawyer asks his wife to be agreeable to a certain homestead because the latter is his most profitable client. She does, to the perturbation of her husband and all his relatives. The third act is a pinnacle of clever invention—the wife first making the Lothario like it while she tells him how ridiculous he is, and then refusing resolutely to take seriously the denunciation of the aroused husband.

The simple announcement that Ibsen's "Wild Duck" is presented by a fine company under the auspices of the Equity Players is almost notice enough. For some it is a warning to stay away. For others, and they should be no struggling few, it is an irresistible magnet drawing them

ceases, are headed for the heights. Now comes Lawrence Gray, property boy extra and "bit" man who attracted the eye of Tom White, who selects players for Paramount. Now Larry is playing the juvenile lead in "The Dressmaker from Paris," with Leatrice Joy, and Arch Reeve, who exploits the Paramount players, gave us an inside tip that Gray already has been placed under a long-term contract and is to be given every opportunity to reach the throne of stardom.

Now where did Tom White see Larry do that which branded him a star possibility? Doing a five-dollar-a-day extra part. Keen eye, what?

But Jupiter Pluvius, who gets no studio pay check, got sore and poured bucketsful of water on the scene. And it's no secret that Eve covered her charms with a slicker and boots until about forty-eight hours later the sun peeped forth again.

Clarence Roder directed, but the elements were "agin" him, and Eve's "Secret" will be delayed a trifle in being revealed so much per admission.

The famous Thomas H. Ince studio at Culver City—that lovely colonial manse behind which the late producer made millions as a profiteer—is now officially the Cecil B. DeMille studio. The former Paramount director-general and ace producer is going to personally make two super-films a year and supervise about twenty others, some to be directed by Frank Urson and Paul Irlbe, his assistants.

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Margaretta Fisher is to be starred again. Miss Fisher, who was a popular headliner under the old American banner, and is the wife of Harry Ballard, the director, recently appeared in "K— the Unknown," with Virginia Valli, and so interested Universal officials that it was learned from an inside source that the contract is ready to be signed that will make Miss Fisher a Universal attraction.

They're still out to beat "The Covered Wagon." Paramount tried it with "North of 36," and many critics thought they put it over. Now "The Thundering Herd" is ready for release, and Noah Berry, who some say ran away in "North of 36," is said to stand out in the new "buffalo opera." William K. Howard directed, with Noah, Lois Wilson and Jack Holt featured in reverse order.

Joseph von Sternberg is filming "Ecstasy" for Metro-Goldwyn. Mal St. Clair, formerly comedy director, is making Betty Bronson's latest, "Are Parents People?" James Flood and Millard Webb are directing at Warner Brothers' studio. And Sven Gade is producing for Universal.

All are new as directors. Who says new "faces" alone are desired in pictures? New brains, too, say the executives hiring directorial talent. The movies are proving there's room everywhere in the movies for new and energetic blood.

"Sneeze Gas" Now
WASHINGTON, March 7.—The chemical warfare service is experimenting with "sneeze gas" which has a powerful but harmless odor. When mixed with illuminating gas, it causes people to sneeze and thus warns them that the harmful gas is escaping.

Osburn Hotel Beauty Parlor, Phone 591.

Showards, the choice of the smoker

Syd Chaplin Stars in Real Comedy

"Charley's Aunt," Old Favorite, Put on Screen



Syd Chaplin

By A. H. FREDERICK
(NEA Service Writer)
HOLLYWOOD, March 7.—Swift, yet not entirely impossible; of a rollicking extreme mirth, yet not burlesque; farcical, yet with the inherency of sustained interest and dramatic suspense—

Such is "Charley's Aunt," now come to the screen with a most imposing theatrical record to sustain. The farce is introduced by its sponsors as the outstanding comedy of the year, or longer. That remains to be seen. But at least it is a milestone in comedy production.

Syd the Star
Syd Chaplin, brother of the famous Charlie, and himself noted for his work in "The Submarine Pirate" and other comedies of much merit, is the star. In fact, he is almost the play itself, for all situations center about him as a cocktail about a cherry.

The play itself scarcely needs introduction to other than those of



Florence Easton SOPRANO

Metropolitan Opera Company
Methodist Episcopal Church Auditorium

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MARCH 10

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short memory or extreme youth. In 34 years' time it has made its way from its birthplace, Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk, to every quarter of the globe as no other light work has done.

It deals with the adventures and misadventures of an Oxford college youth impressed into impersonation of an elderly lady by two chums who must have an emergency chaperon. He is made love to, abused by those he serves, suspected, and otherwise kept in hot water until the final denouement.

Syd Chaplin is much to be commended on his handling of the role. For many reasons. One that he does not overact his feminine masquerade. Another that he never becomes vulgar for so much as one instant—more remarkable in view of the almost universal tendency for comedians to take advantage of such attire.

Undoubtedly, through this picture he makes claim to consideration in all discussions of outstanding comedy stars. The industry recognizes this fact by having made him offers for a separate producing unit as a result.

The scenario is remarkably free from humor and slapstick, two things which many producers proclaim indispensable. "Charley's Aunt" is his refutation.

Syd was expense spared in meticulously truthful setting. An exact counterpart of portions of Oxford was built on the Al Christie lot, in massive manner.

Syd Chaplin fills a lifetime ambition in portraying this role. "I consider the story the thing, even in comedy," he says.

"Since my earliest days when I, as a 16-year-old boy, was playing with a little, more or less vagabond troupe touring England as chance dictated, I have believed in the story as developing the personality of the actors."

"Consequently for years I have yearned for the part of 'Rabba,' the title role of 'Charley's Aunt.' When I heard an English concern had bought the screen rights, I called them."

"Then when Christie got the producing rights and I was selected, I was the happiest man in Hollywood."

Modern Film Coming

"Cheap Kisses" to Play Here



Above is a scene from "Cheap Kisses" which will be shown at the Heilig theater next Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

"CHEAP KISSES" IS COMING

Three Days Run to Be Made by New Production

"Cheap Kisses," which comes to the Heilig Thursday, Friday and Saturday, is a comedy drama of today, laid in New York City and nearby, and deals with the mad whirl of the jazz age and its victims, old and young. It tells a story with a punch and with a lesson and tells it with intense dramatic episodes.

A show girl, but a "different" show

girl who loves a home and the things that go with it, is thrown into the hectic atmosphere of a millionaire's jazz parties. How she emerged unscathed, and saves her husband as well, is told in a gripping manner that holds interest to the very finish.

Lillian Rich is cast as the show girl, Cullen Landis is her husband, and other members of the cast are Vera Reynolds, Phillips Smaller, Louise Dresser, Jean Harlow, Bessie Epton, Lincoln Stedman, Kathleen Myers, Sydney DeGray, Michael Dark and Tom Ricketts.

It is the story of flaming youth of today—a story in defense of the much-maligned young people of this age. But it is essentially a story—entertaining and interesting throughout.

"Falling Down Stairs"

NEW YORK, March 7.—Falling down stairs kills nearly 15,000 people each year. In the Manhattan area of New York alone more than 100 deaths were attributed to falls on stairs. About 80 per cent of these accidents occur during December, January, February, when steps often are covered with ice and snow.

Blacksmithing and automobile repairing. RORNETT & BOLTON, 302 East St.

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DONNA HALL
Saturday Night, March 7
Everybody Welcome — Good Music

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For All Readers of

THE EUGENE GUARD
To keep up with the times and supply the demands of all progressive readers, the publishers found it necessary to compile an entirely new dictionary with an enlarged vocabulary and with many special features never before incorporated in a similar volume.
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Exactly the Dictionary You Need for Cross Word Puzzles
Call and examine the book itself—this illustration shows only half of its beauty—the top half
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SELF-PRONOUNCING

FLORENCE EASTON COMING HERE

Concert Will Be Given Tuesday Evening in Auditorium of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Is Announcement



Behind the Screen in Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD, March 7.—Make way for Charles Puffy, successor to John Bunny! Universal has contracted with Herr Puffy, who hails from Budapest and whose girl was encouraged by the famous pectus of Munich, to make a series of comedies. Puffy will first make "little ones"—one and two-reelers—and if the public takes kindly to him he will be featured in feature-length comedies.

By gosh, golly, and oh, dear! This certainly is the hey-day of new faces—and new figures, too. Harold Betty Bronson, Mary Brian and the youngsters who have made good in "Petie Pan" and other recent suc-