

American Theater

Its Radical Evolution During Past Thirty Years

By DANIEL FROHMAN.



Upon strict grounds of morale the modern play has progressed in audacity and moral freedom immensely. Once upon a time we were provincial, we were unsophisticated, we were afraid to see things as they are. If we are calculating the moral tone of the American theater by what it once was, say, 20 years ago, we must admit that the American people are not the prudish they were then. We had our "sensations," even in the days when the Madison Square theater was conducted by two clergymen, we will say. I distinctly remember when I made a production of Mr. Pinero's "Street Lavender" at the old Lyceum theater. I saw that the audience resented the fact that there was an illegitimate girl in the story. I realized that the success of the play at that time in this country depended upon legitimizing her at once. The author refused, at first, but he was finally induced to do so, much to my annoyance.

The problem play was more than the American public could accept, when "Street Lavender" was produced.

The American theater-to-day can attempt any dramatic theme from any country almost, providing it adorns the subject with good taste, with culture, with a literary quality, and—this above all else—providing its end is inspiring, is happy in actual demonstration, or in sincere statement. Of course, there are "sensations" plays that make a temporary stir because of their intrinsic audacity, but these are not permanent contributions to the American theater, because in the productions that count among plays that are worth while the human creations must conform to the hopeful and permanent moral standards of American life. I produced "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" because it was a superb play, a remarkable dramatic composition, not because it had a problem to define.

Woman, and Man's Proposal

By HELEN OLDFIELD.

Generally it is an extreme injustice to condemn a woman as a heartless flirt because she allows a man whom she does not intend to marry to make her an offer of marriage. It is all well to say that a woman ought to know when a man is in love with her and gently to discourage his intentions and attentions. But how can any one, not a prophet or the daughter of a prophet, be certain about anything so elusive and deceiving as man?

Of course, when a man tumbles head over heels into sure enough love with a woman, and means business, and nothing but business, first, last, and all the time, his one idea is to get married with as little delay as possible, to set up the lares and penates on his own domestic hearth; and there is no question of flirtation upon his part. He shows his intentions, frankly and plainly, for all the world to see, and the woman in the case has no excuse for misunderstanding him, or doubting his sincerity. She may take him or leave him, as she so chooses, and straight dealing and honesty exact that she shall do either the one or the other. His earnestness of purpose is entitled to honesty in return.

In spite of all that is said condemning the much courted woman as an unscrupulous flirt, she, with most men, shows the wisdom of the serpent in letting them tell their love, and in "letting them down easy," as the saying goes, rather than chilling them beforehand. As a rule men prefer to receive a definite answer, and a woman of tact can so refuse an offer as to make her rejected suitor her friend for life, while on the other hand it is much to be doubted if any man ever thoroughly forgives the woman who openly shows him that his suit is unwelcome before he has pressed that suit.

However, there is one case in which no woman is justified in permitting a proposal, unless really it is unlooked for; when she is already engaged to another man. Then she should make a confidant of her admirer, and without appearing conscious of anything special in his attentions, tell him that she will be glad to have him meet and know her fiancé, or something of the sort, which will let him know that there is no hope for him, and so spare him the pain of a refusal.

A New Auto Peril

By REV. FRANK G. SMITH, Chicago.

The peril of the automobile, not to those who get in its path, but to persons acquiring machines when unable to meet the expense of original cost and maintenance, is one of the disturbing conditions which we face to-day.

Here is the man who saw such a rosy side to the proposition, the machine was such a beauty. Then, too, it was just the right size for the family; wife and he and the two smaller children behind and the grown son and daughter in front. Then, again, if he had it they would not need to go away on a vacation this summer.

And, again, he would not be surprised if it would pay for itself in a saving on doctor bills. It was only \$2,500. The home was paid for, after years of struggle, and there is a little bit in the savings bank. He can pay \$500 down and give a mortgage just to secure the rest, and easily pay it at \$500 a year for four years. And so it is done.

Poor, deluded man. He forgot to estimate the cost of about 12 barrels of high-grade lubricating oil and 50 to 75 barrels of gasoline, and various bills for repairs, the size of which would make a plumber's bill look like a humming bird in a flock of ostriches; also about 25 to 50 rubber tires. And besides all this the family not only went on the vacation, but they took the machine along. And then a smash-up or two brought the doctor into requisition for the setting of broken limbs, so that when the first year was over it was difficult for our friend to pay the interest, to say nothing of a \$500 installment, and at the end of the third year the mortgage was foreclosed for non-payment.

It is just so with every kind of debt that goes to pay the running expenses of a household. It is this variation between the dream and the reality that lands people in the hands of the loan shark. The credit system all tends to extravagance and sometimes to poverty. It does not cause any of us the pain to buy a \$5 pair of shoes and say "charge it" that it does to part with a nice, crisp, green \$3 bill, especially if we happen to have but \$3.65 in our pocket.

EVERYTHING POINTS TO A BUMPER CROP



QUESTION AT ISSUE

CAN THE COUNTRY AFFORD TO ELECT MR. BRYAN?

Voters Must Consider the Inevitable Consequences of a Change in Present Administrative Policies—Last Year's Object Lesson.

The main thing for voters to determine in choosing between Mr. Taft and Mr. Bryan as presidential candidates is as to whether the general welfare of the country will be best promoted by the election of the one or the other. That is the broad and the long of the whole matter. Whether or not Mr. Bryan is the chief political proponent of the election of the one or the other, Mr. Bryan, has been a secret agent of the Standard Oil Company and whether or not the ex-treasurer of the Democratic campaign committee was at one time connected with some not altogether creditable Wall Street transactions, these charges made by Mr. Hearst have conducted to the sensationalism of the present campaign. There have been other questions brought prominently into the discussions which may fairly be called subsidiary issues. The question of paramount importance before the voter is as to whether he shall take the risk of such a change in the administrative policies of the national government as would undoubtedly be involved in Mr. Bryan's election.

Both party platforms advocate and both party candidates are committed to a proposal for tariff revision. The Republican party has always stood for a policy of protection to home labor and home industries. On the other hand, the tariff policy of the Democratic party has always been and is yet "a tariff for revenue only" practical free trade. Only the other day comment was made upon the great strike now on in the cotton-mill industries of Great Britain, a strike which involves 150,000 operatives. The reason why the wage cut has been made should fix attention in this country. According to the statements given out by the millowners, the very best cotton-mill machinery has been bought in Great Britain for founding cotton mills in both Japan and China, and because of Asiatic cheaper labor the British millowners are afraid that their home market will be flooded with cheaper products from China and Japan. Great Britain is a free-trade country. Can the working people of the United States take the risk of having the tariff schedules revised according to Democratic ideals?

The people of this country were afforded a most impressive object-lesson followed, from which we are just recovering, when it is undermined and shaken from its foundations, produces widespread demoralization and trouble. It is now generally agreed that last year's panic was a "gamblers' panic." It was brought on by the reckless trading in Wall street. Fifteen or 20 big financial institutions that failed during the panic period were in the downtown financial area on Manhattan island. But by the financial smashes in New York city business confidence throughout the country was shaken and a period of industrial depression followed, from which we are just recovering. Is there any person of well-balanced judgment who does not foresee that in case of Mr. Bryan's election business confidence would be given a solar-plexus blow that the industries of the country would be demoralized thereby to the extreme and ruinous disaster? The real issue before the voter is as to whether or not he had better let well enough alone.

Mr. Taft is no less alive to the evils of trusts than Mr. Bryan. He has his own ideas as to the proper method of dealing with them. His method would be more effective than Mr. Bryan's as far as the country themselves are concerned, and would involve no injury to the "little" man, no pulling up of the wheat along with the tares.

CHOICE OF TWO POSITIONS.

Plain Facts for Those Who Contemplate Voting for Mr. Bryan.

In a recent speech Mr. Bryan reiterates his familiar assertion that his renomination after two defeats shows that his party still believes and indorses "the principles I have been advocating." Now, Mr. Bryan is identified with no principle so thoroughly as with free coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1 and the necessary concomitant of that proposition—renounced and declared by himself to be the negation and destruction of the gold standard.

It is true that Mr. Bryan now says, "I have no principle so thoroughly as with characteristic alibitiness, that what he aimed at in 1896 was not destruction of the gold standard but "more money." His assertion is false; for what he aimed at then and what he has never yet renounced, is the destruction of the gold standard. To this inescapable fact his own testimony bears irrefragable testimony. At Knoxville, Tenn., in 1896, he said:

"Against the maintenance of the gold standard for one year or forever the Democratic party has arrayed itself. We are opposed to a gold standard; we have commenced a war of extermination against it which will not cease until it is annihilated."

"If there is any one who believes that the gold standard is a good thing or that it must be maintained, I warn him not to cast his vote for me, because I promise him that it will not be maintained in this country longer than I am able to get rid of it."

No man can vote for W. J. Bryan in this campaign except on one of two grounds. Either he must believe that Bryan will years to destroy the gold standard, in which case he is unfit for president; or else he must believe that Bryan was wrong then and knows better now, in which case he is a faulty reasoner and an unsafe guide.

No Longer Editor Bryan.
He is not only the author and editor in capacity since the Denver convention. The editor part of him is retired by his own act. He refuses to be responsible for all of the utterances of his paper during the campaign, as he cannot supervise and review as he has been wont to do, and something might slip into the columns of the Commoner which would compel him to explain.

The change is not radical, however, and Mr. Bryan runs no risk of suffering the catastrophe which has been known in history to occur when the editor was away and another had temporary charge, with the effect of revolutionizing all the political and other tenets that had been formerly supported. Brother Charles may be as dependable and loyal as the Brother Charles of the Taft family, and Richard L. Metcalf may be trusted without any reservation. The change is a volume entitled "The Real Bryan," in which the candidate is made to appear as a sort of demagogue.

The change is to endure only until November, according to Mr. Bryan. It is possible the candidate anticipates that he will have nothing to do after the election, and that he will be expected to once more assume the role of the editor? Is such an announcement tantamount to a confession of defeat? The change is impossible; it does his sub-consciousness whisper of victory for the Republican party? Or, if elected, is it his purpose to again assume the editorship of the Commoner and thus make sure of having at least one organ that will indorse his policy in all things?

Not Encouraging.
Did ever anyone seeing such a gang of political speculators and plutocrats as that associated with Mr. Bryan of whom Haskell is a good specimen? It is enough to defeat any ticket, even a Democratic of the modern school. But the evidence of Mr. Bryan's poor judgment of men are certainly multiplying at a rate alarming for those who expect his election.

Happenings of Illinois

News Notes of Interest Gathered in Cities, Towns and Villages of the State.

GREAT FIRE IN ROCK ISLAND.

Lumber Yards and Sash Works Burn, Loss Being \$500,000.

Rock Island—Fire Friday night caused \$500,000 damage in the yards of the Rock Island Lumber Company and the Rock Island Sash and Door works. The flames started in the southwest corner of the yards and, fanned by a southeast gale, swept everything north to the river, devastating an area of ten acres in two hours. Twenty million feet of lumber and two sawmills were destroyed. The fire burned over the bridge on the main line of the Rock Island railroad and traffic was tied up for several hours on main lines of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy and the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul roads.

SPEED RECORD FOR A WEDDING.
Man and Girl Get Licenses, Marry and Start Home in Twenty Minutes.

Shelbyville—A new record for speed in matrimonial lines was established by Les Vegas and Miss Marie Hill, who arrived here direct from St. Louis in the afternoon at 2:20, single, and departed at 2:40, just 20 minutes later, married.

Les Vegas is a Mexican, and a student in Washington University in St. Louis. The bride is a full-blooded American girl. After the ceremony at the Catholic church, they hurried to the county clerk's office, obtained a marriage license, repaired to the residence of Rev. N. M. Bligg, the Methodist minister, near by, and were united in marriage.

Balky Nag Kills Man.
Shelbyville—A "balky" horse cost Charles Kull, a wealthy and prominent German farmer, living at Seward, Ill., \$100. The farmer was driving a team of horses hitched to a wagon heavily loaded with coal up a slight incline near New Hope, when one of the animals balked and refused to pull. The wagon rolled back down the hill and off the road down a steep ditch, burying the farmer from his seat to a position directly under the horses' feet.

Fire Threatens Romeo.
Romeo—Fire that destroyed the residence and general store of John J. Keig and a store building and dwelling owned by William Shields, for a time threatened to lay waste the entire village of Romeo. The loss is estimated at \$100,000. Sparks thrown by a sand Pan engine are assigned as the cause.

Big Blaze at Virginia.
Virginia—The department store of Clark & Co. was destroyed by a fire which is thought to have started from an overheated stove. The building belonged to Mrs. Mary Stehr and was damaged to the extent of \$3,000, with insurance for \$200. Furniture valued at \$1,000 were insured for \$500.

Doña Clothes in Zael.
Decatur—Because he insists on reverting to the primitive type of man, Hugh Wright, a young farmer living a few miles east of this city, was obliged to dress at the request of his relatives and placed in the county jail. He was tried in the county court on a charge of insanity.

Social Leaders Are Divorced.
Pana—Maudie Edna Smith was granted a divorce from J. Will Smith on a charge of habitual drunkenness. The case has attracted great interest throughout the county because of the prominence of the parties. They were leaders in local society work and are members of prominent families.

Peach Seed in Turnip.
Decatur—Mrs. C. W. Frew, who lives on the farm of Thomas Morris, five miles southwest of this city, is exhibiting a large peach seed which she found in the center of a large turnip on her farm. How the seed came there is a mystery, as the turnip was absolutely perfect.

Counterfeiting Admitted by Grocer.
Streator—Daniel Roeder, a prosperous young grocer, was arrested and taken to Chicago after he had waived preliminary hearing, on a charge of counterfeiting. He declares he printed 50 bills, but later destroyed them and the plate because they were not satisfactory.

Almhouse Cook Dies in Jail.
Decatur—Wilbur Hall, cook at the county poor farm, died in his cell in the county jail of acute alcoholism. He was placed in the cell three days ago suffering with delirium tremens. He never regained consciousness.

Say, Thirteen, Shoots Niece.
Alton—Ruth, six-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Rayburn, was accidentally shot in the right eye by a blank cartridge from a pistol in the hands of her uncle, Irwin Steele, 13 years old. She may lose her sight.

\$2,000 Sawmill Burns.
Taylorville—The sawmill of C. C. Cummings, five miles west of this city, was destroyed by fire, together with a quantity of lumber. The loss is estimated at \$2,000, with no insurance. The origin of the flames is unknown.

TRIBUTE TO RIOT VICTIMS

Miners at Girard Hold Services for Men Who Fall in Battle.

Girard—The tenth anniversary of the memorable Virdey riot was commemorated with an elaborate program in Miners' hall. Frank D. Hayes, state secretary-treasurer of the miners, delivered the chief address. The great battle was recounted vividly by Hayes and a glowing tribute paid the men who gave up their lives for the cause of the union. Several other persons delivered appropriate addresses. Following the exercises in the hall a procession was formed and marched to Girard cemetery, where the grave of A. H. Breneman, a riot victim, was bedecked with flowers by the ritual work of the union carried out. State President John H. Walker and Mr. Hayes also delivered addresses at Mt. Olive, where the anniversary also was observed. Special cars on the Interurban took hundreds of miners to the town.

New School for Pana.
Pana—The special election held for the purpose of deciding on a site for the new school building in the Fourth ward and for issuing bonds to the amount of \$15,000 carried by a majority of 105 over all. The election was a spirited one as many were opposed to the erection of the school building at this time. The school to be new township high school building which is now under construction. The Northwest end residents and West end residents, however, put up a good fight and got out a good vote with above results.

Craps Leads to Murder.
Peoria—Involved in a dispute over a trifling sum at stake in a crap game John Francis, a local carrier, shot and killed Martin Thomas, alias "Big Maude," at the latter's home. Half an hour later the murderer was arrested in a neighboring house. In a rambling, incoherent talk he denied his guilt, although a revolver with one empty cartridge and five loaded ones was taken from his person.

Motion to Quash Is Denied.
Pana—A motion to quash the indictment against Edward Rayhill was quashed in the city court by Judge Hodge. Rayhill's attorneys asked that the indictment be quashed on the ground that the immediate trial asked for following the charging was not granted. Rayhill is charged with the murder of Asa Cheney, following the shooting of the local option question last spring.

Dream of Son's Death True.
Danville—Some nights ago Mrs. Richard Sneddon, 60 Porter street, awoke from a sleep in which she dreamed of her son, Fred Sneddon, a machinist at the Oaklawn shops, dead, having been killed by his machine. So vivid was the impression that she began to go to work. The next day Sneddon was probably fatally injured while toiling at his lathe.

Ross Jury in Disagreement.
Quincy—Standing idle to three for acquittal, the jury in the case of Charles Ross of Kansas City, late bookkeeper here for the Weems Laundry Company, was discharged and the case was set for the next term of the criminal court. Ross is charged with systematically embezzling funds from the Weems company in recent years aggregating \$2,000.

Fifty Injured at Fire.
Peoria—Twenty persons at a fire in the Mercer Furnace Company and Peoria foundry plants in this city were slightly injured by the toppling of a pile of lumber. Others were injured by the sudden withdrawal of part of the engines to a fire at short distance away. The total loss of property approximates \$25,000.

Nokomis Man Dies at Alton.
Alton—James H. Hicks, 35 years old, died suddenly at his home as the result of the breaking of an abscess in his lungs. He had not considered himself ill until a few minutes before death occurred. He was smothered before a doctor could reach his side. Hicks recently came from Nokomis.

Saloon Keeper Is Indicted.
Springfield—An indictment for murder was returned against Joseph Brinkman, a saloon keeper, in connection with the recent death of Mrs. Florence Moore Pancher, 17 years old, whose body was horribly bruised and down whose throat acid had been poured.

Trampled to Death by Horses.
Pana—Charles Kubi, aged 65 years, a prominent farmer of Shelby county, was trampled to death under his horse and cart. The horses refused to pull and the wagon rolled back down hill, throwing him beneath their feet.

Divorce Suit Attracts Attention.
Pana—Because of the prominence of the parties the whole town anxiously awaited the outcome of the divorce suit of Maudie Edna Smith against J. Will Smith. The parties were former leaders in local society.