

FEDERAL PLAYERS GO MELODRAMATIC IN 'AFTER DARK'

Mrs. Roosevelt to Attend Second-Night Presentation of Play on Keith's Stage

Boucicault Vehicle of Villain and Mustache Era Is Delivered With Appropriate Gestures to Bring Hisses and Cheers From Audience.

BY JOHN W. THOMPSON

The Federal Players will wait 30 minutes on Mrs. Roosevelt tonight so that the First Lady of the Land can see as much as possible of "After Dark," this week's Federal Theater drama.

Last night the players trotted on and off the stage at Keith's, through scenes of intense melodrama.

Mainly because of Betty Anne Brown, Hal Hawkes, Jack Duval and a few others the audience got into the 1868 spirit of Mr. Boucicault's play cheered at precisely the right times.

The company, in order to stimulate interest at the correct pauses, and to discourage the audience from hissing the wrong character (which was done several times), planted several official applauders and hissers, dressed in the fashion of the period, in the theater boxes. It would seem that these "cheer leaders" are almost as important to the humor of the play as the players themselves.

Plot Is Intricate

Mr. Boucicault must have tried to get as intricate a plot as possible, to make it long as he could, and then, to further add to the complexity of the situation of "After Dark," conceived several of the characters so much alike that it is difficult to tell them apart.

The story of "After Dark" concerns George Medhurst, an English gentleman, who goes in for some plain and fancy gambling. While under the influence one evening he tipped so far that he forges his father's name on a paper to cover his gambling debts and the paper falls into the hands of Chandos Bellington, the dirty villain.

Gathered by a few of the lines that Chandos had been an even viler character during his earlier days. He was an awful viper last night.

Well, George, the poor soul, flees to America, buries his head on little Eliza's shoulder and marries her in order to forget his past. He doesn't tell her about his crime, and we almost were ready to kiss him for it when he explained his logic so well (some place between Scene 1 and 6) so that we understood perfectly and sympathized.

George Is Hounded

In order to wreak vengeance on poor George, Chandos comes to America, links up with Morris Cohen, keeper of a house of drink, and together they set out to make life miserable for George and Eliza. You see, George's father had died by this time and to inherit his papa's fortune back in England he must marry some one of his own level, which Eliza most certainly isn't.

So Chandos and Morris tell Eliza she must leave her husband for his own good! Then they split the beans to George about his having to marry Rose, the girl of his own class. He agrees and goes to her, and we're ready to kiss him for it when he explained his logic so well (some place between Scene 1 and 6) so that we understood perfectly and sympathized.

It All Ends Well

Anyway, Old Tom changes his color and becomes quite a hero, gives up drink and everything, for his daughter's sake. The papers are all switched around so that they fit into a nice ending and virtue, we guess, is its own reward by the time the curtain comes down for the last time.

The best thing one can say about the cast of "After Dark" is that it is terrible, which is exactly what it is supposed to be in melodramas. This aim is to overact to such an extent that the audience feels a sense of superiority and claps its hands because it thinks it could do a lot better.

Mr. Berkell has displayed a grand knack of getting his company into the melodramatic spirit. They strike grandiose poses, swing their arms in Jack Dalton fashion, and generally cavort about the stage with the fervor that made "After Dark" a tremendous hit when it was first produced.

Miss Brown Applauded

Barely has Miss Brown been better. We liked the way she followed through on her gestures. She should do more of this sort of thing. Ned LeFevre makes a charming hero. Mr. Hawkes goes through the D.T.'s excellently. Mr. Duval almost pulled off his mustache as the villain and Ira B. Klein kept up a pretty nice Jewish dialect as Mr. Cohen.

To break the emotional tension of the play, the Players introduced a quartet of tap dancers from the Kathryn Oliver dancing school for variety between scenes. Alice Arnold, one of the cast, appeared briefly and entertainingly in a song skit called "Our English Nightingale."

Starting Monday, the Federal cast is to present "The Old Maid," Pulitzer prize-winning play.

300 Ask Speech Copies

Lionel Barrymore has received more than 300 requests from various schools and school children for copies of the speech he made in "The Voice of Bugle Ann."

Taylor Goss East

While Joan Crawford is working on sequences in "The Gorgeous Hussy" in which he does not appear, Robert Taylor has left the studios for a 10-day trip to New York, his first.

SWIM—DANCE

WESTLAKE

BEACH TERRACE
Every Night Except Mon.
PAUL COLLINS ORCHESTRA

STARS IN COMING PICTURE



Famed Singer Notes Birthday

Mme. Schumann-Heink Is 75 Today; Finds Life Grand.

BY RUTH MCINTAMMANY

Times Hollywood Correspondent

HOLLYWOOD, June 16.—Mme. Schumann-Heink is 75 today.

"I am an old woman. Traditionally I should go to my little home in San Diego and stay. But no, my new contract tells me I am to appear on the screen. I do not know what such a thing is possible 50 years ago? How was I to know that in my life such mystic wonders as telephone, radio and sound pictures would be perfect? And then they say old people have nothing to live for—hah."

"I am just beginning and such a beautiful beginning. No more worry about money, no more hunger for something to eat. I used to be hungry so many times when I was a girl—but I must forget all that now. I have been thinking, If I can play my roles just a tiny bit as well as Marie Dressler did then I will be of great service to the millions who went to the theater to see her, and missed her. Ach die liebe Marie."

The sound camera is responsible for a new type of speaking voice which may have its effect in a far-reaching influence throughout the country.

It is a known fact that dress styles of moving picture stars have been duplicated by leading designers in wholesale numbers.

Constance Bennett has seen a Sheba on the screen, and the costume designer has copied the creation in her own skirt and saffron with a unique skirt and tucky sleeves.

When Garbo adapted the white collar and long

skirt for her costume in Queen Elizabeth, every department store in the country displayed Garbo collars and cuffs.

Such a result we may expect from the low pitch, suppressed voices "top" players are using on the screen today. It is a half-pressed, slightly husky tone quality projected to be effective to the delicate mechanism of the "mike," which is set at close proximity in the scenes. An early and outstanding example of this new voice is James Cagney's. Persons standing a few feet from the camera as he plays a scene can not hear his lines.

"Okay," I said. "I'm just wandering around."

The costumes were colorful, the set pretentious. This was a replica of the White House ballroom at the time of Andrew Jackson. On a balcony, members of a colored orchestra were humming a post-Colonial tune, "Moon Over Miami." Below them, four extras were playing bridge.

Most of the people, including perhaps 50 extra girls, were sitting stiffly on property trunks and looking benches, keeping their gowns from getting mussed. Two girls were practicing a dance step. One was an extra, the other was Joan Crawford.

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William Powell, an actor of versatile facial expression, uses a voice scarcely above a whisper. But his diction is so clearly defined, his "stress words" so carefully weighed that the result is entirely soothing to the audience. Marlene Dietrich came from the European stage and screen with a voice technique already established.

The first is to present Mrs. Marjorie Payen Breeden, soprano, and Charles Caron, baritone, and will be held at 8:15 tomorrow night in Robert Park Church.

Monday, Miss Harriette Leake, mezzo-contralto, and Fred W. Martin, baritone, are to be heard.

Program Is Announced

The program tomorrow night is as follows:

"Believe Greatly" (Meleah).....Handel

"Sleep, Why do you leave Me?".....Handel

"Allegro".....Mr. Breeden

"Ich groe nicht".....Schumann

"Gesang Weih".....Strauss

"Verborgenes".....Wolf

"Mr. Carson".....III

"Si mai vous avez des ailes".....Bahn

"Carnaval".....Fondane

"Madrigal Espanol".....Husar

"Glaiveito".....Vaivoda

"Mrs. Breeden".....IV

"Vision Fugitive".....Dunn

"Carmen"....."M. Piroletto".....Verdi

"Duet La ci darem la mano".....Don Giovanni".....Mozart

"Mrs. Breeden".....V

"The Bitterness of Love".....Dunn

"The Cloths of Heaven".....Dunn

"Open the Madam".....Hambill

"I am Fate".....Mr. Carson

"A Burst of Melody".....Lynn Seller

"Julia".....Dunn

"Invitation to a Dance".....Liebling

"You Will".....Mr. Breeden

"Accompaniment".....Myra Tilson, Miss Harriette Leake

Joint Recitals Are Scheduled

Burroughs School Students Sing Tomorrow, Monday.

Two joint student recitals, in

augurating the summer session of the Burroughs-Jackson School of Music and Fine Arts, have been announced by Mrs. Jane Johnson Burroughs, director and teacher of singing.

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Plenty Goes on When Cameras Stop, Visitor at Studio Finds

Glimpse Behind Gate Reveals Extra Teaching Dance to Star, Loafing Actors, Busy Electricians.

STARS IN COMING PICTURE



'St. Joan' in Final Week at Chicago

Katharine Cornell Wins Praise for Work in Shaw Play.

BY JAMES THRASHER

To see the much discussed Katharine Cornell production of Shaw's "St. Joan," one must go to Chicago, and quickly, for her brief engagement closes there this week.

The eminent actress who, almost single-handed, is responsible for the post-depression renaissance of the "road," also is full of ambition. And because she has a new play in the offing, she is limiting her Western appearances to Chicago and Los Angeles, much to the disappointment of her many admirers.

Miss Cornell's performance in "St. Joan" has not been overrated. Her performance, and that of an admirably chosen cast, make the production memorable.

Shaw at Best, Worst

The play, of course, is no such "starring" vehicle as "The Barretts" or "Romeo and Juliet," as for every one knows, Mr. Shaw is more interested in the propagation of ideas than in dramatic portraiture. But Miss Cornell plays the Maie with utter sincerity and simplicity, and Joan emerges a believable, lovable, tragic and holy figure.

The play is Mr. Shaw at his best and worst. His brilliant wit, broad sympathies and true dramatic instinct here proclaim him as one of the greatest playwrights of the century.

As for the epilogue, actors and audience apparently have found fault with it since the play's premiere 13 years ago, and Mr. Shaw still retains its chief protagonist. It may be, as the author says, clinch Shaw's purpose, but as drama it undoubtedly sinks to the level of an amateur pageant in many places.