

Christmas in the Theaters



DONALD BRIAN, JULIA SANDERSON AND JOSEPH CAWTHORNE
NATIONAL



WILLIAM FAVERSHAM AND ARLEEN HACKETT
IN "THE HAWK"
BELASCO



GEORGIE O'LEARY
KEITH'S

HOWARD LANG
NEW CHARACTER MAN
POLI'S



FRED G. BERGER
NEW MANAGER
POLI'S

JOLLY TRIUMVIRATE OF MUSICAL COMEDY STARS VS. FAVERSHAM IN VIRILE ROLE OF MODERN DRAMA

By JULIA CHANDLER MANZ.

There is no place like the theater to effect the final touch of jollity to the Yuletide season.

And no merrier triumvirate of stars than Julia Sanderson, Donald Brian, and Joseph Cawthorne could have been selected to dispense the Christmas spirit of good cheer at the New National Theater this week.

It was the season of 1912-13 that Miss Sanderson made her stellar debut in this city at the Columbia Theater in "The Sunshine Girl," gathering into the meshes of her infectious smile every heart that palpitated within the radius of her influence.

How that brilliant premiere sticks yet in my memory! President Taft occupied the stage box on the left and with his own hands flung to the bewitching young artiste a great bunch of American Beauties.

In the next box the late Charles Frohman hid himself from curious eyes deep within the shadows, accompanied by members of his staff who had had a hand in the musical comedy production that was to establish Miss Sanderson's popularity with splendid permanency.

The theater was packed with a brilliant audience, and so frequent was the demand for repetitions of song hits that critics of morning newspapers wondered if they would catch the press of the day after the morrow—or maybe the next day.

And all through the gala affair Mr. Frohman's customary mask of imperturbability was broken by a smile of satisfaction in having picked another girl who would measure up to the high artistic standard set by the artists under his management and rake the gold into his coffers.

Joseph Cawthorne was exuberantly funny in his creation of a low comedy role in "The Sunshine Girl," and you'll also remember that the Castles flashed their graceful tapershorean art through the performance, beginning the fashionable vogue which they have since enjoyed. In fact, the piece was the corner stone for their fame and fortune, and they might soon graduated from it into wealth and stardom.

After "The Sunshine Girl" came "The Girl from Utah," with Joseph Cawthorne still shouldering the comedy honors, this time as a featured member of the cast which also included in its stellar triumvirate Miss Sanderson and Donald Brian, the dapper dancer who has rather resented his fame as such.

He didn't want to be a dancer; never intended to be a dancer.

He had his career all planned along quite different lines. His ambition was to be a juvenile comedian, and George M. Cohan was going to write a play for him. The piece was to be called "Harrington of Harvard," and Brian was to play the title role. While he was waiting for the comedy to be written, Henry W. Savage came along with a nice little offer of the role of the Prince in "The Merry Widow."

But there was "nothing doing."

Mr. Brian saw his future looming large as a comedian, and he turned down the offer with all the confidence of youth.

After which Mr. Cohan got mighty busy with something else and forgot all about "Harrington of Harvard" and the Brian person, which was pretty hard lines. But it resulted in Donald eating humble pie like a man, appealing to Mr. Savage for the spurned role, and his overnight plunge into popularity, for the "Merry Widow" waltz got under the public hide, sending everybody away from the theater whistling the lilting tune and talking about the chap who had danced to it with so much agility and grace.

Since then he's played numerous roles, but he is still more closely associated in the public mind with the "Merry Widow" than with any other one of his achievements, and if he still has any hankering after the non-existent "Harrington of Harvard," he keeps it to himself.

The musical comedy which brings us the Sanderson, Brian, Cawthorne trio of clever entertainers as a Yuletide attraction has its American premiere on the New National stage tomorrow evening, after what is claimed to have been a stupendous success in several foreign capitals. The title of the piece is "Sybil," and Max Brody and Franz Martes who wrote the book of "The Merry Widow," are responsible for the present story, while Victor Jacobi, who composed the music of "The Marriage Market," in which Donald Brian starred alone, has written the music for the new piece.

Another adaptation from the European stage makes plea for our attention at the Belasco Theater this week, where William Faversham returns in a modern comedy from the pen of Francis de Croisset entitled "The Hawk," a drama of accredited intensity originally produced at the Nouvel Ambigu in Paris.

When first presented in the French capital "The Hawk" created its principle sensation through the surprise felt that its author, who had accomplished nothing literary beyond light verse and comedy, had achieved sudden greatness through a serious, gripping play.

William Faversham adapted the piece for the American stage and when he made its first production in New York last season it was with Gabrielle Dorziat, a French actress of great distinction, in the role which she had created when the play, as "L'Epervier," had been presented in Paris—the part of the wife of a gambling adventurer who wanders profitably through cosmopolitan society until fate in the guise of one of the personages discovers and breaks him. The discoverer loves the disillusioned wife and would take her away, but in the end pity for her ruined husband, and her instinctive sense of obligation conquer her.

The leading feminine role in "The Hawk" is of psychological importance, requiring great histrionic ability to effectively portray it, which accounts for Mr. Faversham's care in casting it since Mlle. Dorziat relinquished the part.

Julie Opp's illness, after a ten days' appearance in it, is responsible for Arleen Hackett's good fortune in securing the now famous characterization. Miss Hackett, who is a distant relative of James K., is a direct descendant of John Alden and Richard Warren, her family having resided for years at the old Hackett homestead in Wareham, Mass. It was her original intention to take up lecturing and lyceum work, but she found the field so limited, and so unsatisfactory in expression that she decided upon the legitimate stage and secured an engagement with Henry W. Savage. After this she was associated with Mrs. Leslie Carter in several of her successes; played the role of Rosalie in "The Right Of Way," that of the elder sister in "Mother," with Mary Shaw in "Ghosts" and "Mrs. Warren's Profession," and last season played the exacting role of Lily Wagner in "Today."

As for Mr. Faversham, and the enthusiasm that has attended his return to modern drama, the follower of the theater knows already. In his own production of "Julius Caesar," which we saw a couple of years ago, his Marc Anthony was a poetic and picturesque portrayal, and the artistic standard which he achieved in the stupendous production he made of Shakespeare's historical drama, led theatergoers to express the hope that he would continue to tack his faith to the Bard of Avon. But, unfortunately for their hope, they failed to give substantial patronage in degree sufficient to justify other such expensive productions as Mr. Faversham had made of "Julius Caesar," and the actor-producer was glad to secure a great and virile modern play for the expression of his remarkable talents.

His portrayal of the title role of the de Croisset story has been acclaimed by critics of New York and Boston as the most brilliant performance of Mr. Faversham's entire career since its far-away beginning in London under the instruction of the famous actress, Carlotta La Clerq.

Mr. Berger, former manager of the Columbia Theater, of this city, is to succeed J. W. Cone as house manager of Poli's Washington Theater when Mr. Cone saddens the host of friends he has made here by his assumption of his new duties in New York as assistant general manager of the Poli interests.

Mr. Berger was for many years associated with the Messrs. Metzgerot in their management of the Columbia, and will be welcomed in his new relationship with local theatricals.

While talking of stock a comment on the new venture of the Casino is not amiss, particularly as the Hall Stock Company, which will have its inauguration in this house tomorrow, will bring us a one-time Poli favorite in Louise Kent, and promises us another when Gertrude Bondhill completes her present engagement in a film production and joins the new Washington stock company as leading woman of the organization.

In the interim Maude Eburne, who did such an excellent bit of character work in "A Pair of Sixes," when first we saw the farce, is to play the feminine leads, while Louis Ancker will be the leading man.

The Casino Theater has suffered numerous changes in an effort to hit upon a successful policy. It is a comfortable, cozy little house—just the sort of intimate theater to house a stock company—which should bring it to now a greater measure of success than heretofore it has enjoyed.

Certainly I find it in my heart to include it in my Christmas greeting, and wish for it a share of that success which I hope the good fairies will bring in measure heaped up and running over to every Washington playhouse throughout the year that stretches before us in splendid promise of the best the theatrical producer has to offer.

CALENDAR OF THE WEEK

Belasco—William Faversham in "The Hawk."
National—Julia Sanderson, Donald Brian, and Joseph Cawthorne in "Sybil."
Poli's—Under Cover.
Keith's—Vaudeville.
Gayety—Burlesque.
Casino—Hall Stock Company.
Columbia—Vaudeville.
Loew's—Columbia—Paramount Pictures.

National—Sanderson, Brian and Cawthorne in "Sybil."

Julia Sanderson, Donald Brian and Joseph Cawthorne will furnish the holiday diversion for Manager Rapley's patrons at the New National Theater this week. The three stars will be seen here for the first time in a new musical play "Sybil" which scored success in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest. The piece is still being played abroad successfully. It is described as a distinctly musical play rather than a musical comedy. The book of "Sybil" is by the authors of "The Merry Widow" and the music is by the conference of "The Marriage Market." Fred G. Latham has been conducting the rehearsals here in association with Julian Mitchell, that well-known inventor of wonderful "girl numbers" and ensemble in which the nymphs of the stage figure so alluringly. Inasmuch as the scenes of "Sybil" are laid in Russia, it is needless to say that the producer has taken full advantage of the opportunity for picturesque costuming and mounting. Unlike the majority of musical comedies "Sybil" is said to boast a plot that begins logically, has a middle, and ends consistently. Briefly told it concerns the adventures of a young officer of the imperial guard, Capt. Paul Petrov who deserts from the Czar's palace in order to win the heart and hand of a most beautiful princess. Only the ready wit of his adored one saves the young man from exile to Siberia, but the complications that arise from the clever ruse by which Sybil saves her lover's life constitute the excuse for the romance.

If prime importance in musical comedy is the score, and while the melody of "Sybil" is said to approach high operatic standards, the composer has not altogether disdained the popular melody thoughtfully demanded by all lovers of musical comedy. Miss Sanderson will portray the title role. Mr. Brian will appear as a young royal stock, and Mr. Cawthorne will be a vagrant impresario with a young and pretty wife whose flirtatious propensities excite him to mad moments of jealousy.

Belasco—William Faversham in "The Hawk."

"The Hawk," a thrilling love story of modern life in three acts by Francis de Croisset, will be presented by William Faversham at the Belasco Theater this week.

This play has been acclaimed the most brilliant French drama seen on our stage since "The Thief." The treatment of the theme, which is based on the eternal triangle, is new. The climax brings home to the audience the maternal instinct of womanhood as that impulse which leads the mothers of the race to stand by, succor and protect their men when all others fail. It is said to be a play which entertains and at the same time gives the best art of the theater.

Mr. Faversham is seen in the name part.



LOUISE KENT
HALL STOCK COMPANY
CASINO

"The Hawk" is Dassetta, a Hunarian, whose ancestors had bequeathed him a small heritage in worldly goods and a nature which led him to believe that his was the right to get that which his needs demanded by the easiest way at hand. But there is a motive to lead him on, and it is supplied by the extravagant demands of his wife to whom he is devoted. Gaining in the means to his end and he uses his wife as his accomplice. Comes a friend of the couple who is deeply attached to the wife. He awakens all the better side of the woman and she responds to his affection. At the height of his infatuation he discovers her cheating, accuses her of it, forces her to confess, and promise to give it up. She seeks to induce her husband to give her a divorce. After some months he is found, poor and a pitiable wreck. His inventive gone he has given up gambling and seeks forgetfulness in morphine. The last scene reveals the depth of the husband's devotion, the answering protective mothering instinct of the wife and the resolve which they take to go forth together mutually resolved to find new and better life.

Poli's—Under Cover.

A drama of crime and its detection of smuggled jewels and the forces of the law closing in upon the smuggler, a girl driven to aid them against the promptings of her affection, of alarms in the shrubbery, of lights switched on and off, and of revolvers fired in the dark—this is "Under Cover," the New York success which is to be seen for the first time in Washington, when presented by the Poli Players this week.

"Under Cover" ran for an entire year at the Cort Theater, New York, and for six months at the Plymouth Theater, Boston. It is now being presented on tour at the \$2 scale of prices.

The story of "Under Cover" concerns a certain lovely necklace, brought undeclared into this port by one known to his acquaintances as Denby. Necklace and all, Denby joins a party at the home of some steamer friends, on Long Island. There the officers from the Customs House close in about him, guided from



MAY LATHAM GAYETY

The clash comes when Denby traps the heroine in his own room, to which she has come to find the necklace, and then, unconsciously, he gives the signal which was to have been her sign that the customs authorities were to raid the house. How, a few moments later, the tables are turned and Denby escapes from the toils of the collector's office, is the author's secret.

Keith's—Vaudeville.

Three holiday attractions of stellar magnitude will be featured at Keith's Theater next week, with three performances on New Year's day only, at 2, 5 and 8:15 p. m., the other days having only the usual two daily performances. In leading position will be "The Society Circus and Ballroom Ballet," presented by Ernest W. Evans and an ensemble of danseuses. Special music has been written by Parentau and Alfred Livesey wields the baton. Next in rank will be Morris Cronin and his "merry men," just over after years in Europe, presenting a novelty, "La Pigeon Charmeuse" with her Pierrot and his black poodle, and her seventy snowy homing pigeons; the organ recitals and the Pathe pictorial.

Gayety—Burlesque.

Some new and original ideas in burlesque entertainment are promised local theatergoers who attend a performance of "The Merry Rounders," Max Spiegel's production, which is due at the Gayety Theater this week.

"This is the Life" is the name of the two-act revue which will be presented by "The Merry Rounders," and in which the featured comedian is Abe Reynolds, well known for his Hebrew character work in burlesque.

Mr. Reynolds is supported by George



VALESKA SURATT
LOEW'S COLUMBIA

F. Hayes, the rube character performer; Jack McGowan, Frank Grace, and Johnny Herkes. The female principals are Mae Latham, June Le Vaez, and Della Clayton.

Casino—Hall Stock Company.

Tomorrow evening the Hall Stock Players will open their new season of popular price productions at the Casino Theater in "The Revolt," a comedy drama in three acts by the authors of "The Climax" and "The Case of Beckwith" with a cast of players that should win popularity.

Maude Eburne who will be seen in the leading role, has been specially engaged for a limited engagement only, through the permission of H. H. Fragar, who holds a lengthy contract on her services.

"The Revolt" is the story of a faithful woman who married to a sensual man, determines after eight years of marital fidelity to throw off the yoke. Her first act is to seek out a girlhood acquaintance who is now the demi monde. The wife arrives during the course of a noisy dinner party at the Riverside Drive apartments which is made up of miscellaneous men and women.

Through the machinations of the hostess, who has an old grudge to pay off, the wife is locked in a room with an intoxicated pursuer, but she is finally rescued through the interference of another man, who guesses at her dilemma. At this point, a telephone call informs the wife of her little daughter's serious illness, and it is here that she returns to her home for the final climax.

The company has been rehearsing for the past two weeks in order to give Casino patrons a complete production in every detail. Among the members of the organization will be found Louise Kent who was a former favorite in this city under the Poli management.

Other members of the company will be Louise Ancker who will enact the leading male character, Noma Kelly, Anne Ives, Bertha Julian, Gale Saterlee and others. Arthur Bell, a former resident of this city, will play juvenile parts, while Charles Peyton, recently from Poli's Hartford company, will be seen in the character interpolation. Stanley Pierce and Elmer H. Brown will personally direct the company.

The regular matinee days will be Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Loew's Columbia—Paramount Pictures. The management of Loew's Columbia Theater announces the appearance of Valeska Suratt on the screen of that theater for the first three days of this week, beginning tomorrow morning, in a picturization of "The Immigrant," which was especially written for her by Marion Fairfax.