

# Sophocles Play Fails to Make Hit It Was Popular About 450 B. C.

## "Oedipus," Too Revolting for a Modern Audience—"A Gentleman of Leisure" Proves to Be an Interesting Raffles Play

By Vanderheyden Fyles

NEW YORK, Sept. 2.—About fourteen months ago P. G. Wodehouse, an English resident of this country, extended his somewhat limited reputation as a fictionist by publishing a novel called "The Intrusion of Jimmy," and almost immediately several managers pounced upon it as popular material for the stage. The result is "A Gentleman of Leisure," written by the novelist and John Stapleton for Douglas Fairbanks, and now revealed as the second modern comedy of the dawning season.



VANDERHEYDEN FYLES.

Every decade should have its Van Bibber; but he never can be a repetition. He cannot drive trotting horses in these times of motor cars and airplanes any more than the Richard Harding Davis hero of the days of Willie Langtry, "Dels," the bustle and the "brownstone front," could have worn Dundreary whiskers and a velvet jacket. As the hurrying years change the designation rapidly from beau to dandy, dude to sport and rounder, the fads and fancies of the type alter quite as variously.

**A Bet on Burglary.**  
Mr. Wodehouse evidently studied the doings of the Paris detective very carefully, but he kept his other eye on Jimmy Valentine. Returning from a stay of several years abroad, the young New Yorker referred to in the title of "A Gentleman of Leisure" wagers he can out-Raffles Arsene Lupin. He bets a club friend he can break into a large and prominently placed New York house, leave certain specified signs of having done so, and get away in safety. No sooner has the bond been sealed between the two and the amateur crackman prepared to go to bed than a professional burglar breaks into the plot. Does the 1911 model Van Bibber call for the police? Not at all. He "pumps" the thief for names of likely victims, for tricks of the treacherous trade, for various nefarious commodities of the sort. And all the while the amateur astonishes the professional by pretended feats and bluffs, but cuts him back in the infant class. Before long the experienced burglar is only too glad to set in admiring humility as assistant to the gentleman of leisure.

The second act sustains the opening's light and flippant, but consistent semi-burlesque and vagueness; and, especially, by a fitness of purpose. At an early, earliest hour of the morning the united thieves break into the handsome house of a certain police captain, wealthy and retired. He is an Irish blusterer, whose wit and cunning are pitted against those of the idle gentleman throughout the remainder of the play. Our young Van Bibber has fulfilled the stipulations of the wager and is about to quit the silent house when an inmate of it catches him. This pretty powder is no other than the captain's daughter. Now, you must know that she and he had met before, though neither knew the other's name. Indeed, the meeting appears to have occurred on a Richard Harding Davis ocean liner, while leaning over the ship's rail, in a Dana Gibson wind that blew her glorious hair across his manly brow.

When caught obviously as a housebreaker our young hero finds himself miserably released in his ideal's eyes. Of course, he could not tell the very simple truth, for at that point the play is hardly half way through. So he hits on a happy lie. He tells her he was passing by the house when he caught sight of a suspicious looking stranger breaking into it. Stealthily he followed him. Finding this explanation doubted, the self-appointed Raffles produces the disreputable young man he caught earlier in the evening in his own rooms and brought with him on his thieving prow.

**"Mr." Sophocles' Play.**  
It takes a few months or a year for a Viennese operetta to amble over to America in an English translation, but it appears to have required about two thousand, four hundred and fifty years for the "Oedipus" of Sophocles. John E. Kellard is to be credited with the courage and artistic purpose that incited this belated presentation, made at an out-of-the-way theater and in August. Just why he should expect to draw enough people to a Greek tragedy at such a time

and in such a place to support the enterprise is a baffling question that, however, does not need to be considered here.

Paul Mounet-Sully, chief tragedian of the Comedie Francaise, acted Oedipus here in French about fifteen years ago, and Ernest Novelli undertook to interest us in his performance of it in Italian about ten seasons later. But the attitude of Boston was so apathetic and the sale of seats in New York was so small that the distinguished signor substituted an Italian tragedy—and crowded a large theater near Broadway. The fact is healthy minded Americans have no desire to spend an evening in contemplation of anything so revolting as a man who comes to know that his wife, the mother of his children, is in fact his own mother. If any dramatist of today dared to deal with such a theme he would find his theater closed and barred the second night and a police magistrate laying down the law on dramatic art. Rhetoric about the gods having willed this fate for Oedipus and the fact that his mother-wife immediately kills herself and that with the jeweled buckles of her gown, the frantic king tears out his own eyes and staggers to his doom with only torn and bloody voids to guide him, do not get us away from the hideousness of the central story.

### Done Into Bad English.

Such an attitude about a classic undoubtedly would horrify college students of the drama, or, rather, would incite in them a withering superiority and scorn, but they should bear in mind that Euripides and Aeschylus and this same Sophocles wrote other tragedies as austere admirable in form and as noble in expression that still were not repulsive. And besides, where is the beauty of a Greek tragedy translated into inadequate English? The French have "Oedipus" in the poetry of Corneille and Voltaire; and there are English versions made by John Dryden, W. L. Courtney and Professor Gilbert Murray. The translations of the latter scholars, by the way, are being merged together by Martin Harvey for his spectacular presentation of the tragedy, about to be revealed at Convent Garden, London, and subsequently to be acted in the larger opera houses and arenas of our country.

### Played Thirty Years Ago.

I am not prepared to contradict John E. Kellard's claim that this week's performance of "Oedipus the King" are the first ever given in New York in the English language; but the historically historic production, at Booth's theater thirty years ago, was partially in English. George Riddle acted Oedipus in Greek, as did Georgia Cayvan, Jocasta, wife and mother of the king, but all the other characters were played in English. However, Oedipus and Jocasta so completely dominate the play that the performance was virtually in the original of Sophocles. Lewis Morrison, by the way, was the chief English speaker of the occasion, being cast for Green, brother

of the queen. Those two weeks at Edwin Booth's ill-fated theater (January 30, 1882, to February 11, to be exact) are further notable for having given Georgia Cayvan the first opportunity to impress her rich talent upon a public that honored her for many years thereafter. Indeed, Jocasta was her third role as a professional actress, and in it she made as immediate and positive a sensation as Mrs. Patrick Campbell the night she burst forth in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" and Richard Mansfield in "A Parisian Romance." Before it Miss Cayvan had acted in just one play, "Hazel Kirk," by the late father of Percy Mackaye, the poet of today—first in the ingenue part of it and subsequently in the title role.

### Inadequate to Role.

But we are considering "Oedipus the King" as of August, 1911. The performance by Mr. Kellard and his company is highly creditable. If it were given between two spruce trees in the back yard of a university the "intellectuals" would assure us it was great art. In an ordinary theater, acting depends simply on its merits. Without going into detail, Mr. Kellard's may be said to be an experienced and intelligent reading of the chief parts of the performance that would be admirable if the part were King Claudius or Macbeth. He reads well, but he has not the voice for so heroic and tremendous an undertaking.

Oedipus demands an actor of the physique and strong power of Mounet-Sully, or Novelli, or Salvini. Robert Mantell is the only American tragedian endowed with these requirements—and we sincerely hope he will never make good his threat to appear as Oedipus. Lillian Kingsbury, who used to pitch her voice against his, is the Jocasta of the Kellard company, and she booms along right lustily. If what she presents as a performance were merely a reading of the play, it would be much to say in praise of it; but the aspect of her Jocasta is a New England "schoolmar" in a fury. Of the rest of the cast little need be said. Like the "packed up" production, the chief parts are as good as could be expected; and Eric Blind, recently with the Sothorn-Marlowe company, is excellent as Creon.

The passages for the chorus have been given to a group of songsters in yeager suits and smudgy woolen tunics and would be just as tiresome if delivered by riper elocutionists. Aubrey Boucault, re-appearing after nearly two years in retirement, delivers the speech descriptive of the suicide of Jocasta and the agony of Oedipus with invigorating fire; and Agnes Miller is to be mentioned as a silent but graceful, picturesque and interesting debutante on the occasion, being the third child and only daughter of Henry Miller and his wife, who, as Bijou Heron, was a child actress in Augustin Daly's company and, at the time, much talked about because of her own histrionic promise and costumes, they are daughter of Mathilda Heron, the first American Camille.

### Greeks Liked It.

It is understood that when the "Oedipus" of Sophocles was first revealed in Athens one sunny afternoon about 450 B. C., the Alan Dales and William Winters of the day wrote scathingly of it; but, in defiance of the critics, the public flocked to it. In A. D. 1911 the situation seems reversed.

While H. B. Warner's press agent is keeping interest in "Alias Jimmy Valentine" alive by supplying the public with all it does or doesn't want to know about his star's part in liberating innocent prisoners, the influence of this and other plays glorifying thieves spreads and spreads. Lately it has reached the shores of vaudeville and is flooding them. Two new sketches rise on the surface of that tide—and in a single week. Harry Leighton made his reputation as a Shakespearean actor, but he has cast aside his lags, Mercutio, Macduffs and the rest to measure himself with Mr. Warner. He wrote "Get-Away Quick Dugan" for himself; it seems superfluous to name the suggester of the title. The thief in this case is not related closely, after all, to Jimmy Valentine, but rather to Arsene Lupin. He has the Frenchman's habit of disguises. The comedy begins with a conversation between Detective and a policeman about several consequential jewel robberies, all of which were "pulled

# Amusements in Salt Lake

**SALT LAKE THEATER**—"The Spring Maid," with Mizzi Hajos, beginning Thursday, September 7, for three nights and a matinee.

**ORPHEUM THEATER**—Advanced vaudeville. Bill changes this afternoon. Matinee daily, at 2:15. Evening performance begins at 8:15.

**COLONIAL THEATER**—Motion pictures and vaudeville. Afternoon and evening. "The Barretts" commencing Sunday, September 10.

**MAJESTIC THEATER**—Abbreviated musical comedy. Matinee daily. Two evening performances.

**LIBERTY THEATER**—Motion pictures, singing and music by Liberty orchestra. Afternoon and evening.

**SHUBERT THEATER**—Shubert Stock company, in "The Moonshiner's Daughter," commencing this evening. Curtain 8:15.



MIZZI HAJOS. The Little Hungarian Prima Donna in "The Spring Maid," Which Opens at the Salt Lake Theater for Three Nights and a Matinee Beginning September 7.

AL the principal cities in the United States and Canada are to have an opportunity the coming season to enjoy that charming operetta, "The Spring Maid," while its melodies are still fresh and while it is still at the height of its popular success. With the possible exception of "The Merry Widow," no other foreign musical work has so completely captivated New York since "Floradora" had its two-year run. The tuneful "Spring Maid" waltzes, two-steps, marches and choruses are favorites wherever "catchy" melodies are played and sung. However, it is perhaps the charming romance told in the opera about the saucy Carlsbad Princess Bozema and the dashing Hungarian Prince Aladar, giving this Viennese masterpiece a delightful story book charm, that has made it so irresistible.

It was found that New York and Chicago would monopolize the booking time of Christie MacDonald in "The Spring Maid" for at least two years, so that Manager Werba and Luescher decided to organize another company, as perfect in every way as the New York organization, to visit the rest of the country before the delicious "The Spring Maid" music had been lobster palaced and barrel organed to death. It was their good fortune to find the very artist for the captivating role of the princess in the Hungarian beauty, Mizzi Hajos. This gifted song bird had sung the part in her native Budapest and had been declared ideal in the role by the composer, Heinrich Reinhardt, himself. Little Mizzi is every inch of her the saucy princess. Blonde, bright eyed and beautiful, she pictures the character as only a sweet voiced Hungarian comedienne could. Also she has lived in the famous Carlsbad spring girls, the dress of one of which the princess assumes in the play in order to teach a lesson to the noble Aladar. She sings like a bird and imparts a world of expression to the tender love songs, "Day Dream," "The Love Play," "Two Little Love Boes," duet, "Fountain Fay" and other alluring music numbers of the score. Miss Hajos made her American debut in

off" by Get-Away Quick Dugan, according to the former's belief—and to the latter's, for that matter, he being German, dense and easy to convince. While they were talking on the true thief, he himself was looking on from a window. Get-Away Quick Dugan was no piker. Definitely he had rented an office check by jowl with the precinct headquarters.

**Disaying Disguises.**  
No sooner had his pursuers left the room than Dugan entered and made another haul. Then he disguised himself as rapidly as Henry Lee used to change from Lydia Pinkham to Napoleon and made the policemen take him for the detective. Living up to that disguise, he sent the "cop" to headquarters; and making another Mary Queen of Scots to Abraham Lincoln change, deceived the detective into thinking him the policeman. In the meantime he had sent a confederate to "hook" the jewels, but the disguise habit had got too strong a hold on him. Under the pretense of thinking his pal might throw him down, Dugan returned to his detective make-up and when his confederate returned, took the swag from him. By this time Dugan seemed tired of green whiskers and took to a naked pistol. The detectives had returned, bringing the tall-tale pawn ticket. However, armed with his little sure-shot, Dugan got the paper away from him. Then he laid hands on everything else in the play, "covered" all the characters—and half the audience—and "got away quick." The audience was delighted, and nothing remains to be said, unless, perhaps, "Oh, you Dugan!"

### A Peculiar Elopement.

"A Peculiar Elopement" is even more up to date than the "Dugan" play, inasmuch as its chief crook is a chauffeur also. If said thief were a taxicab driver New Yorkers might more readily—but that is a digression. He is a chauffeur and has more or less fascinated a rich young woman. Rather less, really, but still enough to have induced her to elope with him. You see, she has had a lovers' tiff with the man she really cared for and in a moment of pique has listened to the chauffeur. Having got her to a lonely turn in the road he admits he has no idea of marriage, but is interested only in a bag of jewels she brought.

At that moment another thief pops from behind a tree and cracks the chauffeur over the head. Thereupon the heiress gets an additional run for her jewels. Said second crook confides to her the system he and his unconscious pal have habitually worked. He always let the other do the love-making and more delicate work, while he supplied the rough stuff—receiving, however, the main end of the profits. Now he has decided to reverse the roles. Thereupon he shifts them so impetuously that the heiress is terrified and wishes right heartily she were back home. A new report. At the crucial moment the crook she eloped with comes to, fires at the other man and binds him to a tree. Then, after a little love-making of his own, he removes his motor cap and goggles, and, lo, he is no Jimmy Valentine at all, but the faithful suitor with whom the girl had her original tiff. Life does turn out so happily—in vaudeville.

"The Spring Maid" at Atlantic City on August 7.

Werba and Luescher have surrounded their new star with a company of nearly 100 people. There will be an orchestra of thirty musicians under Theodore Bendix, making this the largest comic opera company to be sent on tour the coming season. The Salt Lake engagement will begin at the Salt Lake theater on Thursday, September 7, and will include a Saturday matinee.

**ANOTHER corking good bill at the Orpheum this week is the promise of the advance notices. Heading the aggregation of entertainers (and there are thirty-two of them, not counting the ponies and donkey) is Gerald Griffin and company presenting a tabloid version**

born." All are good singers and dancers.

Another scream is "The Maggie and the Jay" as presented by Maud Hall Macey and company. The scene is laid at Bird's Nest farm with its rural types in evidence. Enter the magpie, a bawdy girl fresh from New York. The rest of the story is one big laugh.

"The Magis Flutes," as presented by Parker, Horsfall and Bianco, is something new in vaudeville and is arousing enthusiasm all over the circuit. This trio of musicians play popular tunes in an artistic fashion calculated to enthrall any audience.

A much traveled and talented Englishman is Clifford Walker, who has an act along the lines of that of Willa Holt Wakefield last week, only differ-



JACK CONWAY. Stage Director of the Shubert Stock Company, Which Opens That House for an Indefinite Engagement, Beginning Tonight With "The Moonshiner's Daughter" as the First Week's Bill. Mr. Conway Also Plays One of the Leading Roles.

of that screaming farce, "Other People's Money." All the good lines and situations have been retained, crowded into twenty minutes of fun, making one long continuous laugh. Mr. Griffin is a well known character comedian who has been identified with some of the big attractions of the country and he has picked his support with discriminating care.

The biggest acrobatic feature yet to appear on the local Orpheum boards is the eleven English men and women who two years ago were one of the headliners with Ringlings' circus. The famous Lorch family come near being the acme of acrobatics. With never a wait and something doing all the time they have a whirlwind exhibition of feats of strength, acrobatics, risley and dancing. The animals, which are also a feature, are splendidly trained. The act is elaborately staged and pictures the inside of the Plaza de Torres with the eleven members of the family dressed in the gorgeous costume of the Castilian.

All the fun and frolic of a complete minstrel show are crowded into a few minutes in "From Uncle Tom to Vandyville," as presented by Fay, two Coleys and Fay. The two girls black up and enter the fun with zest, while the men are comedians "to the manor

formance is given by the Fonda company, "The Jugglers and Girls." They are displaying in a garden after a game manner. They proceed to a number of juggling feats and grace that are pleasing. These clever young people returned from a tour of Europe they have been enjoying much.

Then there will be some interesting films by the daylight picture apparatus and some classical music on the part of musical concert orchestra.

**I**N order that the patrons of the coming season, the box that theatre will be open until 5 p. m. Seats in advance will be held until 10 minutes before each opening performance. It will not be necessary for you to claim the seats for any performance unless they so desire.

Manager, Sketcham reports a line of attractions for the season will be the best since the house factor in the local amusement that have never been well as well as a return of several of and shows that were popular Colonial last season.

The orchestra will again in the direction of Prof. Squire will bring from Europe the most popular musical composition by the Colonial orchestra.

The following is a partial list of the stars and attractions that ready booked to appear at the this season: Robert Mantell, "Every Woman," "The Purple," "Madame X," "Henry ruff," "The Gamblers," "Gorou Excuse Me," "The Girl on West," "Mrs. Leslie Carter and Jeff," "The Barretts," "Schoff," "The Piper," "The Bird," "The Balkan Princess," "The Girl and the Willow Collier," "Mama, Trust Sam," "Bernard," "The Pirates," "Miss Jimmy," "The Campus," "Florence Thurlow Bergon," "Theology," "Baby Mine," "The Ho Door," "Sheehan opera," "Overnight," "Forbes-Robert Van Studdford, Lawrence D," "The Earl of Fawceter," "Lewis, Richard & Fringes," "Mother," "The Chocolate and others not yet completely for.

The regular season at the will be formally opened September 3 with the dramatization of "Beach's Strongman Barretts." Although this northern frontier has been in Salt Lake before, it is since the piece was last seen its compelling elements and dramatic touches, which appeal to the emotions are expected to prove the magnet for the past made "The Barretts" the most popular drama of

**T**HE Shubert stock company, after a two week engagement on the road their contracts expiring, will be routing the Shubert company, September 3, with the drama of southern setting, "Moonshiner's Daughter."

The story deals with the manufacture of whisky in the mountains of the Federal law and the routing of the moonshine government agents. It is while throbbing with pathos national circumstances, is a quaint comedy.

The company includes nearly old favorites of the Salt Lake company, with Jack Conway director. The following play presented during the engagement today: "Two Orphans," "Hazel Kirk," "Light don," "Tennessee's Pardner, Lynne" and several others arranged for.

**"HIS BROTHER'S WIFE"** name of a new sketch ten by R. W. Water Salt Lake boy who presented on a local stage short time. While the present is in the nature of a travesty to submitting the book who has read the manuscript familiar with the work of who will probably appear is confident that if a cleverly conceived playlet staged and peopled is what agents are looking for. The work will find those whose business it is the public with entertainment cast will include five people be staged under the direction Conway.

**F**AME is indeed a transitory thing, which have been years building are soon forgotten and nurtured and in no field of human endeavor this hold more true than in the theatrical world. Always alive fact, the management of the race with the changing taste. They will come to Salt Lake season claiming to have the pany in their existence of more than a quarter of a century.

**D**igestion and Assimilation is not the quantity of food but the amount digested and assimilated that gives strength and to the system. Chamberlain's and Liver Tablets invigorate each and liver and enable them form their functions naturally. Sale by all dealers.



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