



MARGARET DALE



MISS BRANDON DOUGLASS IN 'WHY SMITH LEFT HOME' GLASOTYPE PHOTO CO.



SARAH TRUAX, THE NEW STAR



MADELL HOWARD IN 'YAZA'



THE DUEL SCENE FROM 'CHRIS AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP'



KATHERINE BLACK



MARIE WAINWRIGHT IN 'MILLE FIFI'



MME. MARIE TAVORY, PHENOMENAL CONTRALTO

# Off to London!

By Alan Dale.

**T**HE callous and nonchalant way in which New York managers are announcing their "summer season" in London is not devoid of a certain exquisite interest. No sooner is a success struck in this metropolis than London appears on the horizon. Managers no longer talk of breaking records, or achieving phenomenal runs. The critics agree that a certain production is admirable, and the next morning the lucky manager has the choice of ten London theatres for a "summer season." In fact, it would really seem that London was tumbling over itself in order to get the outside edge of the New York season. Everything—everything is to go to London. The only institutions so far exempt from this temporary exile are the roof gardens and Huber's Museum. I scan the theatrical news eagerly every morning in the fond belief that I shall read of Huber's tempting offer to appear at Her Majesty's with the Dog-Faced Boy, the Lion-Faced Lady and other luscious wares. And I firmly expect to find a few of our roof gardens set up on the Bank of England, the Mansion House and Buckingham Palace.

Is it prestige or is it lucre that our theatrical managers seek? It seems almost impossible to decide. Yet there can scarcely be any prestige in following the general herd. Time was when a London success was intensely gratifying to the Anglo-manic of this city. How they all used to worship the Daily company when it returned from England! What a gala night Daly's opening in New York used to be when Miss Ada Rehan, Mr. John Drew, poor "Jimmy" Lewis and dear old Mrs. Gilbert appeared before us, with the odor of the ocean upon them and the possible appreciation of the Prince of Wales sewn in satchet packets, in their clothes!

And how indignant we used to be at the failures, which were glossed over as carefully as possible, in fear, forsooth, that they might militate against renewed success in New York. What a tumult of angry feelings swept our innards when we were told that Dixey was the victim of a clique, anxious to secure his downfall! And how we pined and wept when we were informed that Miss Lotta had not captured London, as she expected to do. Anglo-manic were desperate. They felt that they had no right to sanction that which London had rejected.

And then came that favorite howl! Why was London so inimical to Americans, when New York had for years been patronizing English companies, from Irving to the Gaiety and from Tree to D'Oyly Carte? Do you wonder that there was prestige in a London success?

We have changed all that. Americans have had their heads turned by a few successes—such as "The Belle of New York" (which, I humbly beg to suggest, New York did not care about to any very exuberant extent; Nat Goodwin, who, after several efforts, captured the English metropolis with "An American Citizen;" William Gillette, whom they adored in "Secret Service" and didn't adore in "Too Much Johnson;" and De Wolf Hopper, who has won in "El Capitán," as I prophesied he would do, and told you he had done, when others professed to doubt the genuineness of his London welcome.

And now, as I began by saying, the callous and nonchalant way in which New York managers announce a London season has become exquisitely interesting. San Francisco is quite out of it; yet there was a time when "a trip to the Pacific Coast" was quite a splendid achievement. Even Chicago is viewed with comparative indifference. Manager Grau swears he'll never take his opera company there again without a guarantee. But London! Ah! London is the Mecca—the Mecca of the Mind.

London is the great inducement with which managers tempt us. They say to us: "You are no fools. You have appreciated our play, and to reward you we will take it to London."

Gillette and "Sherlock Holmes" had no sooner conquered than we heard the glad news of a "summer season" in London. Long before Mrs. Carter left New York "Zaza" had booked passages for London, and London was "paraphrasing" it. Little Miss Anna Held and "Papa's Wife" had scarcely settled themselves at the Manhattan than Manager Ziegfeld was trying to decide which of London's scores of playhouses would suit him best

for the glorious Summer. And Weber and Fleids, who have been regarded as something so utterly New York that even Hoboken and Red Bank, N. J., would scarcely catch the "Hobokenisms," have been implored to appear abroad, just for eight weeks—just a little eight weeks, oh, do, please! Mrs. Elske has been "negotiating." It has been said, for an opportunity to give her matchless "Tess" and "Becky Sharp" to London, where she has been very much discussed. As soon as I got to London last Summer—I left the day after Maude Adams produced "Romeo and Juliet"—I found them talking about her probable appearance in England, and heard of at least five theatres in which she was to settle herself.

And yet I can't help wondering whether the game is worth the candle. There can be no prestige in a London season, any more than in a season in 'Frisco or Chicago. And—I am ignorant on the subject, and would welcome "points"—can there be much money? What do eight or ten weeks in the English metropolis amount to, after the expensive transportation of so many "souls" is taken into consideration?

It seems to me that this London rush is a gigantic will-o'-the-wisp, to which managers will awaken in the sweet by-and-by. It cannot be that managers value the opinions of English critics—when they are had opinions. (Of course, I know that they value them when they are good.) There is a strange clamor surrounding the trip abroad, and I am always vastly amused to read the interviews with actors and actresses who have just got back. They are always careful to say, first of all, that they are glad to be back—that is essential—but they are equally careful to prate about the encouraging reception given them by English audiences, and to remark upon the delight of playing before people who are neither fickle nor sensational. Even Mrs. Yeamans, after inveighing against English beer and vegetables, and the London denseness to the New York joke, told us of her lovely time and her pretty success.

We shall see what we shall see. It will be interesting to watch the denouement. There is no harm in watching, is there? Sincerely do I trust that there will be no denouement, but that the pleasant interchange of companies will continue in its present almost Utopian way. But I can't help warning New York that every New York success is not bound to duplicate itself in London, any more than London's successes duplicate themselves in New York. We have had some bad English failures here. The tastes of the two cities are completely different. Of course, there are human plays produced in New York and in London that would succeed wherever the English language is spoken—in the bush of Australia, or the heart of Africa. They are rare—these human successes that speak one universal language.

At any rate—and this is very important—we have established the fact that international good feeling prevails. We shall no longer hear silly stories of cliques and preconcerted attacks, and we shall no longer listen to the tirades of foolish actors against the invasion of "foreign talent." Whatever happens, London has had incontrovertible evidence that New York is always ready to accept anything good that comes its way, and New York has had equally substantial testimony that London welcomes and takes to its bosom the talent of her cousin metropolis. Recent events have settled that question, and that is the best thing that recent events have accomplished.

Even critics are becoming international. I think I was about the first to show that a London season was interesting to New York. I must have shown it conclusively, for others followed in my footsteps, and I shouldn't be surprised if the entire fraternity rushed with the American companies to London.

Still, the unique manager will henceforth be the manager who stays at home, and mends his little Broadway muttons on their own little Broadway pasture. He will have no foreign triumphs to tell us about, but that will be rather a relief than otherwise, for foreign triumphs are becoming as common as peas in a pod. We no longer feel a very acute interest in reading the cabled reports of an American opening in London—unless they be written by some American critic who goes into details. We are accustomed to the inevitable "success achieved from the very start"—and we mutter to ourselves, "How nice!"

The international service of critics, however, will regulate things nicely, as it regulates things at home. The truth will be told of "triumphs," and the real success will be vouched for by accustomed pens. I shall hope to record the outstanding triumph of the Dog-Faced Boy and the Lion-Faced Lady with the English aristocracy, and to write a glowing description of how they were hidden in Windsor Castle, and of how the Queen took the Dog-Faced Boy by the hand, and—in order to put him at his ease—remarked sympathetically, "Bow-wow!"

ALAN DALE.



WEDDING SCENE FROM 'A PATRIOT SPY'

OLIVE MAY