

PLAYDOM

'CLAY-CART' HERO WINS

'T'WAS EVER THUS — EVEN IN
 THE SANSKRIT

By Edwin Schallert

The villain is routed, and the hero wins the girl, and there is a last-minute rescue just when the execution is about to take place—and it all happens in a play written 1500 years ago in the Sanskrit. So, if you are questing for novelty on the stage and anticipate discovering it in "The Little Clay Cart," be prepared in advance, but rest assured also that you will have a new experience.

"The Little Clay Cart" is being presented at the Potboiler Art Theater, and it is the naive event of the present theatrical season. It is one of the best productions offered thus far by this group of coworkers who have been responsible in the past few seasons for many unusual stage offerings. The play itself, incidentally, is one that is enjoying a vogue just at present in New York, where it but recently opened.

Frankly, I didn't expect such a fascinating melodrama, nor so much gay comedy, nor so embellishing a mood of fantasy in a dream so ancient. But in many respects "The Little Clay Cart" is a revelation of all these things, and moreover presents a curious technique of the theater, in which time and space are reduced to nothing more than a few steps around a pillar in the center of the stage, which represents the annihilation of both. Characters are summoned and appear no matter how far they are actually supposed to be from the scene of the action in a very few minutes, and by a process that in certain ways attains the effect of magic. And so the play goes on with a minimum of formalities, and a mere suggestion of settings, but delightfully.

Whether "The Little Clay Cart" will appeal to all classes of theatergoers I doubt. It is designed perhaps more for the dramatic student.

However, there is a liberal share of entertainment. The plot is about the murder of a courtesan, who isn't murdered after all; the blame is thrown on the wrong man, who isn't held to blame in the finale, and the only person who is more or less at outs with himself and the world at the end is the one guilty of the crime which never actually took place.

There is a grotesqueness about the idea of the play, and also the manner in which it is unfolded that is thoroughly amusing, and the audience approved what was intentionally funny, and what was funny merely because of the unusual stage conventions. Most bizarre of all were those scenes in which the bullock cart appeared, drawn by a chap in knickers, with a wrist watch on his arm, and wearing a plaster cast bovine head on his shoulders, in order to achieve an adequate impersonation.

There is beauty, poetry and also an epigrammatic wit in the lines of the play. It is amazing how some of them have the Shakespearean lilt in their poetry.

The cast is exceptionally large, and only the principal names can be given here. Of the portrayals those of James A. Marcus, Symona Boniface, Gale Gordon, George Lamont, Mique Spooner and Adriane Marsh merit particular commendation. Others importantly figuring in the plot, of which there is plenty, are Peter Kirk, Jean d'Ath, Mary Watts, Lucile Wild, Catherine Cotter, Etta Lee, Louis White and Harold Lorimier. The performance last evening, the second, still dragged somewhat.

"The Little Clay Cart" is to be presented for a full week's engagement, with three extra performances next week, whereas the other plays have been given at the Gamut Club for a three-day period. It is one of the most unique achievements of the Potboilers. The translation from the Sanskrit was made by Dr. Arthur Ryder of the University of California.

Vitaphone Proves Motive for Many Unique Requests

Indicating the uncanny features of the Vitaphone and how little the public understands its capabilities, amusing situations are daily confronting Sid Grauman, the latest of which was created by a letter addressed to him from Pomona.

The impresario received a letter from a benevolent society asking if it would be possible to send Willie and Eugene Howard, famed vaudevillians appearing in the Vitaphone prelude to Syd Chaplin as Old Bill in "The Better Ole" at Grauman's Egyptian Theater, to appear for a public performance sponsored by the organization.

In his reply advising the officials of the society that it would be impossible to accede to their request, Grauman explained that he had only the images synchronized with the voices of the stars, and that the two-a-day team was some 2500 miles away, playing an engagement in the East.

"UPSTAGE" OPENS AT BOULEVARD THEATER

Norma Shearer in her picture of vaudeville life, "Upstage," opened at the West Coast Boulevard Theater yesterday for a four-day showing with a Fanchon and Marco "Vod-Bits" presentation on the stage. The prologue features Enrico Martinelli, grand opera artist, Maurito Urango, the violinist, Murray Peck, singer and Don Barclay, master of ceremonies and orchestra director.

Oscar Shaw, musical comedy star, plays the role of Norma's dance partner in "Upstage." Professional vaudevillians in the cast include many famous stars of the two-a-day. Members of the cast include: Dorothy Phillips, Ward Crane, Gwen Lee and others.

MUSIC BOX STARS GUESTS

Lupino Lane, star of the Hollywood Music Box Revue, and the entire cast, will be the guests of the Al Malakah Shrine when it meets in the Biltmore ballroom today for its regular weekly Thursday luncheon. Doris Eaton, Nancy Carroll, Bobby Higgins, Ted Doner, Bobby Thompson, Doris Whitney, Henry Barsha, Florence Hedges, John Maxwell, the Duley Twins, and the entire assembly of "the pick of the world in girls" will all be on hand to put on an elaborate show for the entertainment of the Shriners.

NEW CASTING DIRECTOR

William W. Cohill has been appointed by Carl Laemmle, president, Universal Pictures Corporation, to succeed Paul Kohner to the post of casting director.

STARTS WITH JETTA

William K. Howard yesterday shot his first scenes for "White Gold," in which Jetta Goudal has the stellar role with Kenneth Thomson opposite.

BENNETT WILL PLAY 'THE DOVE'

*Belasco Will Present New
 York Success Early Next
 Year*

Richard Bennett has been signed to play the star role in "The Dove," when that production is staged at the Belasco early next year, it was announced last night.

Bennett is now in the last week of his engagement in "Creoles," at the Mason. He will return to San Francisco next week for an engagement in "They Knew What They Wanted." Rehearsals for "The Dove" will begin after the first of the year.

"The Dove," one of Belasco's greatest successes, ran for an entire year in New York, and for nine months in Chicago. It is a play of Mexican life, and the locale is in Mexico.

Some of the successful plays of the past in which Bennett has appeared include "The Fool," "He Who Gets Slapped," "They Knew What They Wanted," and "What Every Woman Knows," with Maud Adams. His earlier successes were in the plays of Brieux, the French playwright.

"The San Daughter" is the next production at the Belasco, following the close of "Gentlemen Prefer Brides."

VARIED ROLES PROVE VERSATILITY OF ACTOR

Michael S. Visaroff, character actor with the Moscow Players in Moscow, Russia, arrived in Los Angeles just a year ago to try his hand in the movies.

In that short time he has gained a reputation as an actor of great versatility. He is playing the father of Mabel Normand in that comedienne's comedy "The Nickel Hopper," which with Art Young's "Alaskan Adventures" is the attraction at the Figueroa Theater. He also played a highly dramatic role as the father of Norma Talmadge in "Camille" and at present is doing a serio-comic character part in Mae Murray's picture at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, "Valencia."

CONTRALTO SINGS AT PHILHARMONIC

Julia Claussen, famous contralto, from the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, will be heard in her only Los Angeles concert tonight at Philharmonic Auditorium, management of L. E. Behymer.

Equally renowned for her dramatic work, as well as for lieder and ballad, Claussen has divided her program aptly. She will begin with Gluck. Then follow French, Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian songs. Meyerbeer opera excerpts follow, then German lieder and, finally, American songs, including two by Ellnor Remick Warren of Los Angeles.

DOROTHY YOST BUSY ON "MOTHER" SCRIPT

Dorothy Yost, the diminutive scenario writer, is busily engaged in putting the finishing touches on her latest script, "Mother," which is to be an F. B. O. super-special with Belle Bennett in the title role.

Miss Yost recently completed the "Hills of Kentucky," a starring vehicle for Rin-Tin-Tin and "Uncasy Payments," an Alberta Vaughn comedy for F. B. O. She also wrote the script for "On the Wings of the Storm," a Fox Films production starring Thunder, Frank Foster Davis's police dog, scheduled for early release.

COULDN'T APPEAR THERE

Franklin Pangborn received a wire from the management of Loew's State Theater in Newark, N. J., his home town, soliciting that he make a personal appearance at the theater during the run of "Exit Smiling." The actor, however, is daily making a personal appearance at Metropolitan studios where he plays the role of the sap, one of the featured parts in "Getting Gertie's Garter" starring Marie Prevost. Mr. Pangborn still has several weeks on this picture.