

Six Chicago Theaters Open for 1936 Debut

Stage Revives with Flood of Holiday Plays

Ruth Draper Comes to Selwyn Tomorrow; Openings in Review.

By Charles Collins.

THE Christmas flood of premieres has put the Chicago stage back on its feet and supplied playgoers with the most attractive theatrical catalog of several years. An almost barren field has suddenly blossomed with hits; Broadway's choicest flowers of the past season are here to be plucked and enjoyed. My pious hope is that this will not prove to be an embarrassment of riches; that the citizens who have been yowling and moaning for shows will take immediate advantage of the opportunities at hand; and that this surprising renaissance will be celebrated by the jingle of coin in the box offices.

I come up from under the heavy wave of first nights—five in a sen- nite—blinking my eyes and shaking stars out of my hair. This has been a surfeit of pleasures akin to a debauch, beginning with "Personal Appearance" on Dec. 20 and ending with "The Great Waltz" last Thursday night. Now, no doubt, I shall have to spend another week catching up on the fag- ends of last acts that I missed because of haste to get at the job of hair-trigger midnight reviewing.

Inventory of Holiday Stage.

The inventory now stands as follows: "Personal Appearance," an adroit, amusing comedy about a Hollywood vampire with an insatiable appetite for stalwart young men; "Anything Goes," a spirited and handsome musical comedy with two comic stars—William Gaxton and Victor Moore—who are inimitable; "The Old Maid," a blue ribbon drama of emotional substance which deals shrewdly with some of the mysteries of the female soul; "Squaring the Circle," a tidbit of modern Russian humor; and "The Great Waltz," a superoperetta with spectacular embellishments. And tomorrow night, to run the list of playbills up to six, Ruth Draper, incomparable giver of one woman programs, returns after a long absence. This, I believe, represents the best array of theatrical attractions that the Chicago stage has offered at any time during the past four years.

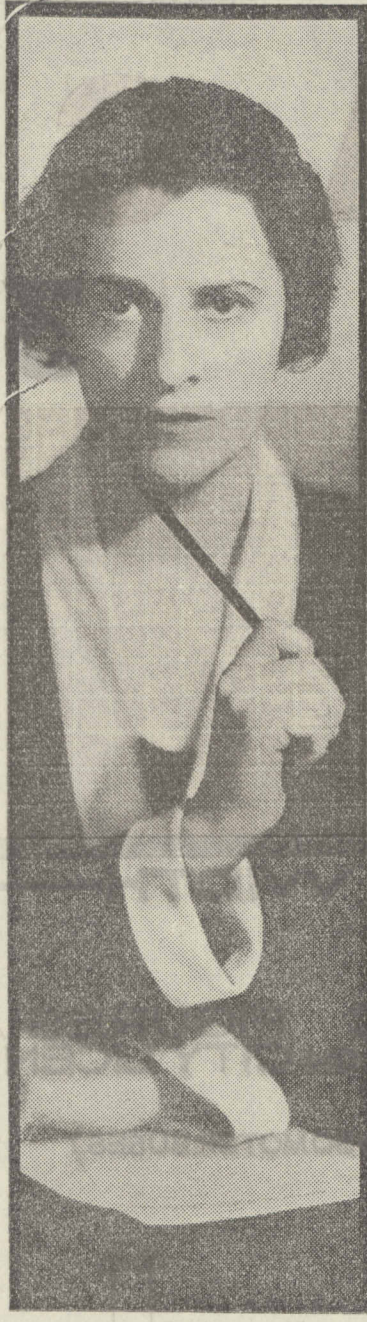
Discovery of Gladys George.

Gladys George, who is not to be confused with the much older Grace George, is the center of interest in "Personal Appearance." She has come up out of comparative obscurity in this play, but she is making herself remembered for a lifetime. Her character study of a case of egomania and nymphomania among the movie queens—exaggerated, caricatured, burlesqued, but ringing beautifully true to the film industry—is brimming with vitality and gleaming with hard-boiled humor. This is one of the famous plays of the year that you will never see on the screen, because it is an antidote to the propa- ganda of the film fan magazines.

The presence of Messrs. Gaxton and Moore in the chief roles of "Anything Goes" transforms a typical Broadway song and dance frolic into a notable affair. These two wags—the loud man and the quiet man of musical comedy—make a famous team for fantastic, persuasive merriment. They fit together better than Montgomery and Stone of the good old days.

"Old Maid" Tells Secrets of Women.

An odd thing about "Everything Goes" is that it does not contain any singing that can be called music (except that of an incidental male quartet), and yet its songs "go over" the footlights with irresistible gayety. Cole Porter's smart,



STAR OF CHARACTER SKETCHES

Ruth Draper, eminent in the field of self-written character sketches, will begin a two weeks' engagement in the Selwyn theater on Dec. 30. This will be her first appearance in Chicago for several years. (Nickolas Murray Photo.)

Gillette Tour

WILLIAM GILLETTE, who is remembered by generations of theatergoers as the only possible Sherlock Holmes, is soon to abandon his retirement in order to return to the stage. At the age of 80 he will embark on one more tour. The play is to be Austin Strong's "Three Wise Fools."

The revival will open in Newark, N. J., on Jan. 23. It will move to Philadelphia, Washington, Boston, and other places before going to New York. Mr. Gillette's cast will include Mary Rogers, James Kirkwood, Charles Coburn, Brandon Tynan, Isabel Irving and Addison Pitt. John Golden is the producer.

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The family chronicle of "The Old Maid"—a story of the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s, richly staged and costumed—gives striking roles to Helen Menken and Judith Anderson and tells a story which has heart appeal and psychological insight. This is primarily a woman's play, giving the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady of today much to

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think about and to thrill over in their inscurtable feminine souls. It deals with a lifetime of silent jealousy between two cousins (almost as closely connected in their family life as sisters), with a suppressed scandal and a maternal complex at the root of the mannerly feud. A substantial drama, with a brilliant cast and a sumptuous decor—such, in brief, is "The Old Maid."

The Russian mirth of "Squaring the Circle" and the glorification of Old Vienna when the Johann Strauss were flourishing of "The Great Waltz" are matters that may be left for future discussion. The latter operetta is the most elaborate stage spectacle of the period.

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Cabarets Plan Gala Bills for New Year Eve

Capacity Attendance Is Expected in Hotels and Floor Show Cafes.

NEW YEAR'S EVE at the Hotel Sherman will find parties in the College Inn, Bal Tabarin, and ballroom. Reservations indicate capacity crowds. Three popular orchestras will be featured. In the College Inn George Olsen and his band, with Ethel Shutta, will headline the entertainment bill. The ice skating troupe will present a new show.

Duke Ellington will be featured in the Bal Tabarin with his orchestra. The Bal will also present a special floor show.

In the ballroom the entertainment bill will be headlined by Louis Panico and his orchestra.

The Bismarck hotel's New Year's eve festivities will center in George Nelidoff and his company, with Leonard Keller and his dance orchestra. The entertainers will perform in the Walnut room. Henri Kublick and his Bavarian ensemble will appear in the Bier stube. Reservations indicate a capacity attendance. Souvenirs will be distributed to the guests. The Bismarck grill may be thrown open for the evening.

"The Esquire," an unusual modern ballroom dance, is being introduced by George Bernard of the Three Bernard Brothers, professionally known as The Esquires,

now appearing in Bouché's "New Continental Revue" in the Continental room of the Stevens hotel with Seymour Simons' band. Movements of the concert dancers Krutzberg, Wigman, and Graham are used in this dance in ballroom form. Cecile Duval of the Duval Sisters is his partner.

Seymour Simons' orchestra will end its six months' engagement at the Stevens on Jan. 2. Charles Gaylord's band will follow, with Jack Fulton Jr., tenor; the Marvella dancing trio, and Ballantine and Pierce, dancing duo, in a return engagement.

Jack Gwynne, magician, and Lyda Sue closed their engagement in the Terrace room of the Hotel Morrison last Thursday night. The current bill contains Enric Madruguera and his orchestra; Tito Coral, baritone; the King's Jesters, formerly with Paul Whiteman; Rosalean and Seville, dance duo; Rudy Baie, master of ceremonies; Bobby Marlowe and his marionettes, and the Terrace dancing girls.

Gary Leon, dancer, made his Chicago debut recently in the Congress hotel's Joseph Urban room. Marcia Mace, former musical comedy girl, is his partner. They came here from a season in Europe. They appeared with Jack Hylton in London, at Les Ambassadeurs in Paris, and at the Casino in Monte Carlo. Also featured in the Urban floor show is Shavo Sherman, recently of "Strike Me Pink," an impersonator. Benny Goodman provides the dance music.

Additional features for the revue and a program of special numbers by Kavelin's orchestra will mark the New Year's eve celebration in the Mayfair room of the Blackstone. Chrysis De La Grange; Minor and Root, dance team, and Anna Wrenn Fulton, singer, will be the chief entertainers.

Horace Heidt and his Brigadiers will play to the largest crowd ever assembled in the Gold Coast

room of the Drake on New Year's eve. Nearly 1,200 patrons are expected. Heidt's troupe will present a completely new program.

Three floors of Harry's New York cabaret, 400 North Wabash avenue, will be devoted to the New Year's eve celebration. Three orchestras will play for dancing, and the floor show, with Claire Powell, danseuse; the Three Taka Sisters, Japanese girls; Margot Rebel, singer; Jack Irving, and the Texas Debutantes, ballet girls, will be seen on all three floors.

The revue to be offered by the Royal Frolics for a single performance New Year's eve promises to be the most elaborate ever presented by this café. Joe Lewis will officiate, and the show will be new. The revue contains Dolly Kay, Reed and Mele, Barbara McDonald, Birdie Dean, Anita Sanchez, and Hal Monte. Henri Leshon's band plays for dancing.

Jacques' French restaurant in the 900 North Michigan apartments will celebrate New Year's eve with entertainment.

Plans for the New Year's eve parties at the Aragon and Trianon rank with the most ambitious efforts ever made by these ballrooms. In addition to the music of both Jan Garber and Gray Gordon and their orchestras at the Trianon, a floor show will be given. At the Aragon similar arrangements have been made, with the music of both Anson Weeks and Jimmy Joy and their orchestras.

A NIGHT OF STARS New Years Eve at Hotel Sherman GEORGE OLSEN COLLEGE INN Supper-Floor Show - Dancing and Favors \$7.50 per person with the ICE SKATING SHOW ETHEL SHUTTA DUKE ELLINGTON IN THE BAL TABARIN Supper-Floor Show - Dancing and Favors \$7.50 per person IN THE GRAND BALLROOM LOUIS PANICO AND HIS RADIO BAND CHAMPAGNE FREE IN GRAND BALLROOM ONLY Supper-Floor Show-Dancing Favors. Quart of Champagne for each Couple \$5.50 per person ALL PRICES PLUS TAX

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SELWYN TOMORROW NIGHT at 8:30 DEARBORN nr. LAKE - Phone CEN. 8240 ..TWO WEEKS ONLY.. THE ACTOR-MANAGERS, INC., Presents RUTH DRAPER IN HER CHARACTER SKETCHES DIFFERENT PROGRAM EACH PERFORMANCE Mon. Eve.: Opening Bazaar; Three Generations; 3 Women and Mr. Clifford; (Dec. 30) Church in Italy. Tues. Eve.: Italian Lesson; Dalmatian Peasant; Doctors; County Kerry; Art (Dec. 31) Exhibition; Railway Station on Western Plains. Wed. Mat.: Children's Party; Maine Porch; Three Breakfasts; Miner's (Jan. 1) Wife; Church in Italy. Wed. Eve.: English Houseparty; County Kerry; Greek Immigrant; 3 Women (Jan. 1) and Mr. Clifford; Class in Greek Poise; Southern Girl; Love in Balkans. Thurs. Eve.: Opening Bazaar; County Kerry; 3 Women and Mr. Clifford; (Jan. 2) Church in Italy. Fri. Eve.: Italian Lesson; Three Generations; Maine Porch; Actress; Doctors; (Jan. 3) "Vive La France." Sat. Mat.: Morning in Bed; German Governess; Class in Greek Poise; Dalmatian (Jan. 4) Peasant; Art Exhibition; Railway Station on Western Plains. Sat. Eve.: Children's Party; Maine Porch; Three Breakfasts; Miner's Wife; (Jan. 4) Church in Italy. SPECIAL PROGRAM SUNDAY EVE., JAN. 5th PRICES: EVES. & SAT. MAT., \$2-\$1.50-\$1-50c. WED. MAT., \$1.50-\$1-50c. Plus tax

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