

'Ah, Wilderness' as Document in Obsolete Slang

O'Neill's Comedy Talks American Language of 1906 with Accuracy.

By Charles Collins.

EUGENE O'NEILL'S comedy, "Ah, Wilderness!" which is current at the Grand Opera house with George M. Cohan in its central character, is, among other things, an anthology of the slang, catch-words and popular idioms of the American vernacular in the year 1906. It is all familiar to me; it is the speech upon which I was bred; but much of it comes with a sense of strangeness to players under thirty years of age. I have therefore prepared a casual glossary for their enlightenment. The class in the American language should now prepare its note books and give attention:

"Not the only pebble on the beach"—A figure of speech that was as common as pebbles on beaches in the first decade of this century. The sarcastic meaning is obvious. The expression is still used, though not with unimpaired frequency.

"Skiddoo"—Equivalent to today's "scram." The word is used in the stage dialog but I do not find it in the printed text. It may be an interpolation in honor of Mr. Cohan, who put the word into current use in his "Little Johnny Jones," a hit of the "Ah, Wilderness!" period. "Skiddoo" was often used with the numeral "Twenty-three" attached, as in "Twenty-three skiddoo." That was the "skiddoo" number—a signal for hasty exit. This came out of the argot of gambling houses.

Fossils of Our Native Speech.

"Thick"—The current equivalent is "dumb." However, this word had a special application to the ignorance of recent Irish immigrants.

"Beat it"—Still in use, but much more prevalent than now. Another equivalent for "scram."

"There's one along every minute"—A cynicism comparing women to trolley cars. It has dropped out of the vulgar imagery.

"Dated up"—Note the use of the preposition, now obsolete. Girls were always "dated up" in that time; now they are "dated."

"Straight goods"—An expression for honesty and candor, or the facts in any given case, still intelligible although outmoded.

"Cuts no ice"—Meaning "makes no difference," an expression of cynical indifference. It has almost faded out of use.

"To pull one's freight"—Meaning to move on, bag and baggage; its background is the railroad era of American culture.

"No wedding bells for me"—This was a much used catch-line of bright conversationalists, taken out of a popular song.

"Whole cheese"—A cynical reference to a person of self-esteem and importance, now generally called a "big shot." It probably originated in the American family's habit of purchasing entire heads of cheese.

Catch-Words of First Roosevelt Period.

"Feaze"—Pronounced "faze," often spelled "phase." To have a marked emotional effect. Obsolete except among the passing generation. Origin unknown to me.

"High hat"—A feminine expression. It was replaced by a few years ago the equivalent was "jitzzy."

"Slob"—An admirable expression for slovenliness, then in constant use as a term of contempt in any circumstances. It is firmly imbedded in the vulgar speech, and cannot be called slang. Its frequency of use has diminished since the "Ah, Wilderness!" period.

"Paint the town red"—To get drunk, consort with loose women, become boisterous. It has had a long history, but is falling into disuse.

"Let her go, Gallagher"—A line from the comic Irish songs of the period, popularized by Maggie Cline and others. "Let's go" is the current equivalent, without the gesture of emphasis.

"On the Q. T."—On the quiet; furtive conduct; confidential information, etc. Now out of vogue. It was an early sign of the wretched contemporary tendency of reducing the language into initial letters.

"Sweet"—Short for Sweet Caporal cigarette. But O'Neill's usage is wrong; the expression should be "Sweet Cap."

In several places, I feel, O'Neill has been inaccurate, and has used bits of argot that came into vogue later than the "Ah, Wilderness!" period. "Babies" is often used as a term of contempt for loose women. This is not typical of 1906. "Dogs" for feet is a similar



"FUGITIVE LADY"

"Fugitive Lady" (at the State-Lake) is the picture in which Neil Hamilton and Florence Rice thus appear. The lady does not look so "fugitive" to us!

"Different" the Adjective for Pacifist Movie

"Man Who Reclaimed His Head" a Weird Tragedy of War Torn France.

"MAN WHO RECLAIMED HIS HEAD." Produced by Universal. Directed by Edward Ludwig. Presented at the Palace theater.

THE CAST.

Paul Verin.....Claude Rains
Adele Verin.....Joan Bennett
Henri Dumont.....Lionel Atwell
Linette Verin.....Baby Jane
De Marnay.....Henry O'Neill
Curly.....Wallace Ford
Marchand.....Lawrence Grant
Charles.....William Davidson
Laurent.....Henry Armetta
Excellency.....Gilbert Emery
Dangles.....Hugh O'Connell
Jean.....Rollo Lloyd
Louise.....Bessie Barriscale
Baron.....Ferdinand Gottschalk

By Mae Tinee.

GOOD Morning! This is certainly a "different" picture. What its mass appeal will be—only the masses will decide.

The fact that Claude Rains has the title rôle is big odds in the production's favor. Certainly he does for a difficult part all that possibly COULD be done for it.

The picture is pacifist propaganda. It makes grim obeisance and lays grave charges at the doors of that "invisible government," the munitions makers. Its story, located in Paris, is about a brilliant journalist who, at the solicitations of his beautiful and adored wife, who desires security and pretty things, permits his genius to be utilized by a newspaper owner who pays him well to act as "ghost" writer.

Publisher Tries to Steal His "Ghost's" Wife.

An ardent pacifist, Verin devotes his editorials, signed by the publisher, to the cause of peace. The paper becomes the bible of the men in the streets. . . . BUT, comes a day when Dumont sells out to the munitions interests. . . .

War is declared. . . . Verin is one of those who goes forth to fight. . . . While he's at the front, the man who has stolen Verin's brain endeavors to steal the heart of Mrs. Verin, in whom he's been interested for a long time. . . .

Gossip—scandal—can reach even to the front line trenches. . . . The husband's revenge is horrible—but not too unexpected. For the first scenes of the picture give you a clue as to the finale.

Verin Makes Mysterious Midnight Trip to Attorney's Home.

The film opens with the sight of Verin, carrying his little daughter—and a satchel—making his way late at night through air-bomb-riddled Paris to the home of a famous attorney.

The lawyer, routed out of bed, is forced to listen to what, at first, he believes to be the tale of a madman.

Empire Room Prepares Holiday Revue; Cabaret Bills

THE Empire room of the Palmer house prepares itself for the holiday season by announcing a new revue to begin performance next Thursday night. The leading performer will be De Roze, called "the wonder barman," from Maxim's in Paris. His specialty is to produce a great variety of drinks from a pitcher of water and serving them to the customers to prove that it isn't an optical illusion. He will appear only in the midnight show.

Other contributors to this holiday revue will be: Harris, Claire and Shannon, a dancing trio from the Savoy hotel of London; Bob Ripa, a young juggler with many new tricks; Roy Cropper, the operetta singer, and Tommy Martin, slight of hand man. The latter two will be held over from the current bill. The Abbott International Dancers will have new numbers. Ted Weems will continue as orchestra leader. Saturday luncheon dances will start Dec. 22.

● The Walnut room of the Bismarck hotel embellished its program last Friday with the addition to the bill of the Four McNallie Sisters, singers and dancers of vaudeville reputation, who are now making their debut in the Chicago cabaret field. Among the other entertainers are Natalie and Howard, adagio dancers; Esther Todd,

anachronism. "Skeddadle" is a civil war and early American word, the parent of "skiddoo," no doubt, but it is valid if used as a touch to date the father.

The popular songs that are quoted or alluded to in the dialog are exactly in the picture. "Bedelia," a rollicking ditty in Irish dialect, was a song of the hour in 1906; Blanche Ring started its vogue, and used it as a personal theme song for many years.

"Waiting at the Church," a London music hall song, was popularized by Vesta Victoria, a vaudeville star who toured this country frequently. It was sung on vaudeville bills by hundreds of her imitators. "Dearie" was a sentimental ballad, written by Claire Kummer, later a successful playwright and still active. It was first sung by Sallie Fisher, a musical comedy prima donna of great popularity in Chicago. "The Lobster and the Wise Guy" was recited, rather than sung, by Raymond Hitchcock, and had a vogue among the "hot sports" of the period.

ALL CHICAGO PRAISES THE
BIGGEST HIT SHOW
Ever Seen in the
EMPIRE ROOM PALMER HOUSE

First Show 7:30 p. m. sharp
STAN KAVANAGH
ROY CROPPER
TOMMY MARTIN
DOROTHY AND DAVE FITZGIBBONS
EDGAR BERGEN
ABBOTT DANCERS
TED WEEMS' MUSIC

Dinner \$2.50—NO COVER CHARGE
Minimum Charges—Dinner \$2.50, Supper \$2 (Sat., Sun. and Holidays—Supper \$2.50)

contracto, and Mara Senta and Carl Mueller in duets. Art Kassel's orchestra continues to play for the floor show and public dancing.

● Harry's New York cabaret operates under the slogan, "Every night is New Year's eve." A new singer, Sadie Moore, has joined the quintet. Joe Buckley's orchestra plays during the afternoons and evenings; Paul Maree's band plays from 8 p. m. until dawn.

● The Bal Tabarin, famous for many years as a supper and dance club, will reopen its Saturday night festivities in the Hotel Sherman Dec. 22. Miss Jerry Conley will be the official greeter.

● Gypsy Nina, singing accordionist, and Flora Duane, interpretive

A GREAT SUCCESSION OF STARS!
★ COON-SANDERS
★ HAL KEMP
and now
KAY Kyser
His distinctive orchestra
See these talented entertainers! Plus a great floor show



Dinner \$1.50
Make your day of shopping complete by dining here!

WEEK DAY DINNER \$1.25
the new

Blackhawk
RANDOLPH AND WABASH
Truly smart...disfractive...convenient

SEE YOUR FAVORITE STARS AT THE EVERY MONDAY MIDNIGHT FLIER!

dancer, continue their engagements in the new Continental room of the Stevens hotel. The vocalists featured with Keith Beecher's orchestra are Jack Tarr, "Doc" Davis, and Cliff Williams.

● Herbie Kay and his orchestra returned to the Edgewater Beach hotel last Wednesday night. This organization was popular at "the Beach" last September and October. It now contains Memo Loa, a Hawaiian dancer. Alta Warszawa and her ballet will continue into the new year.

● The new Continental room of the Stevens hotel, located at Michigan Blvd. at Seventh Street, is now open for business.

NEW YEARS EVE

AT THE
STEVENS
MICHIGAN BLVD. AT SEVENTH STREET

GRAND BALLROOM
\$600 PERSON Plus Federal and State Tax

INCLUDING COCKTAILS. CHAMPAGNE
SOUVENIRS GALA ENTERTAINMENT
EARL HOFFMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

IN THE BEAUTIFUL new
CONTINENTAL ROOM

FORMAL \$1000 PERSON Plus Federal and State Tax
INCLUDING COCKTAILS AND FRENCH CHAMPAGNE
SOUVENIRS

KEITH BEECHER'S ORCHESTRA
GYPSY NINA FLORA DUANE

RESERVATIONS WABASH 4400

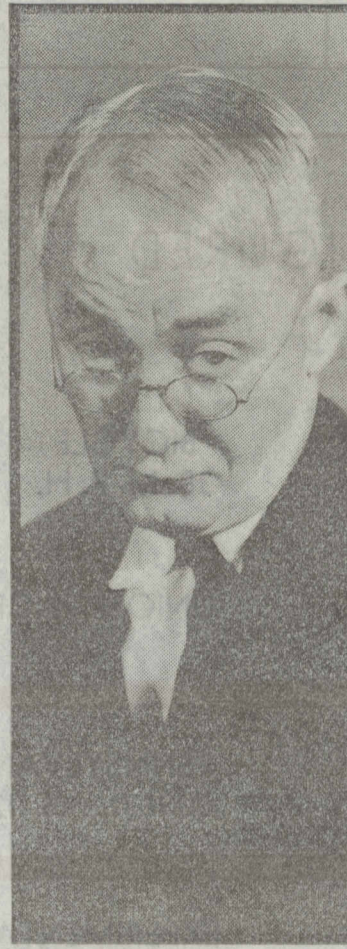
CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER AT THE STEVENS \$150

Make Your New Year's Reservations Now

Revue of Revues
"HELP PARK VIENNA HELLO"
FRENCH CLARK AT

American Debut of
JOHANN STRAUSS
and His Orchestra
Cast of 120 Artists
Direct from Europe
Tom Gerun's
Dance Orchestra
Phone Longbeach 2210
For Reservations
JACK HUFF, Mgr.

MR. COHAN AS WORRIED FATHER



George M. Cohan acts the role of a small city father worried over his lovable boy's crazy behavior, in Eugene O'Neill's comedy, "Ah, Wilderness!" now at the Grand Opera house. This is the most successful character study of his career.

(Vandamm Photo.)

Triangle Show from Princeton

THE Princeton Triangle club will present its latest production, "Stags at Bay," in the Auditorium on Dec. 22, continuing a tradition which dates back to 1880. The organization is ranked as the third oldest organization in the College Musical Comedy league, being antedated by the Mask and Wig club of the University of Pennsylvania and

These scenes merge into those depicting the related story.

Despite the fact that Mr. Rains gives a fine performance, and supporting players do their able best, the yarn (though it has pith—just HASN'T got what it takes. The action moves slowly and dully.

And leaves you with a hideous taste in your mouth.

See you tomorrow!

the Hasty Pudding club of Harvard. It is an outgrowth of the Princeton Dramatic association, which included the Glee club and the Banjo and Mandolin club, formed in 1882. Booth Tarkington, '93, wrote its first original play, "The Honorable Julius Caesar."

Each year's success has contributed to the reputation of the club until the Triangle occupies an enviable position among the college dramatic societies of the country. It contributes many men to the professional stage.

The entire production is in the hands of undergraduates.

GOODMAN TONIGHT
and Mon., Tues. and Wed. Nites Only
Sullivan's
"RUDDIGORE"
Prices \$1.50, \$1.00, 50c
Box Office and Lyman & Healy

ERLANGER STATE 2461
Matinees Wednesday and Saturday at 2:10 Sharp—FINAL 3 WEEKS

CHICAGO ACCLAIMS
THE THEATRE GUILD'S PRODUCTION OF

AH, WILDERNESS!
EUGENE O'NEILL'S COMEDY, with

GEORGE M. COHAN

"Mr. Cohan is completely himself; his portrait is a masterpiece."
—Charles Collins, Tribune.
"Ah, Wilderness!" is major event of the season."
—Lloyd Lewis, News.
"Best acting of Mr. Cohan's life, I advise your attendance."
—Ashford Stevens, American.
Eves. \$2.75, \$2.20, \$1.65, \$1.10, 83c. Wed. and Sat. Matinees \$2.20, \$1.65, \$1.10, 83c. First American Theatre Society Subscription Play. Save by Subscribing.

BOX OFFICE PURCHASE SEATS NOW
OPEN TOMORROW Hundreds Turned Away Last Year
AUDITORIUM THEATRE 8 EVENINGS 5 MATINEES
Opening WED., DEC. 26 Closing WED., JAN. 2
GLAMOROUS RETURN ENGAGEMENT
S. HUOK PRESENTS COL. W. DE BASIL'S

BALLET Russe
DE MONTE CARLO

Direct from Triumphs in London, Paris and Mexico City
COMPANY OF 125 SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Opening Program Dec. 26
AURORA'S WEDDING (new)
TOY SHOP (new)
BEAU DANUBE
Thursday Eve., Dec. 27
SYLPHIDES
SCUOLA DI BALLO
UNION PACIFIC

PRICES:
83c-\$1.05-\$1.65-\$2.20-\$2.75-\$3.30
MATINEES
55c-83c-\$1.10-\$1.65-\$2.20-\$2.75
Tax Included
Opening Night—83c-\$4
Gala Night New Year's Eve
4 Ballets—83c-\$5.50
Direction: GRADE DENTON

BLACKSTONE
3 MORE WEEKS
EVES. (EX. SUN.)
MATS., WED. & SAT.

EUGENIE LEONTOVICH
in EDWARD SHELDON'S
'ROMANCE'

Leontovich in "Romance" is an even better actress than when last here in "Grand Hotel."
LLOYD LEWIS, Daily News.
EVE. PRICES: 55c, \$1.10, \$1.65, \$2.20. MATS. WED. and SAT., 55c, \$1.10, \$1.65

ANNOUNCEMENT!
[No Performances Week of Dec. 16]
LAST 2 WEEKS
BEGIN
CHRISTMAS NIGHT TUESDAY, DEC. 23
MATINEES
WED. & SAT.
New Year's Week (New Year's Day) & SAT.
SAB H. HARRIS Presents
CLYTON WEBB BRODERICK
DOROTHY ETHEL
STONE WATERS
IN THE MUSIC BOX SENSATION
"AS THOUSANDS CHEER"

GRAND Nights (except New Year's Eve), \$1.10 to \$3.30. Mats., \$1.00 to \$2.75. New Year's Eve, Bal. conv. \$2.20, \$2.75, \$3.30, \$4.40. Floor, \$5.50, tax included.

SHOW BOAT DIXIANA
In River-Diversey Play, bridge—2300 West
Mat. Today, 2:10—5c, 50c, tax incl.
Tonight, 8:10—50c, 75c, \$1, tax incl.
Old Time Show Boat Melodrama
"A LITTLE OUTCAST"
All seats reserved. Reservations, Ph. Armistice 9700

MILLION DOLLAR STAGE SHOW!

"A NIGHT OF STARS"
Sponsored by
CHICAGO'S OWN XMAS BENEFIT
Mayor Edward J. Kelly
Chairman

CHICAGO STADIUM
WED., DEC. 19,
at 8:30 P. M.

LEADING STAGE-RADIO-SCREEN STARS IN PERSON
Soprano Tucker Dan Vedo
George M. Cohan Lina Basquette
Ted Weems Clara, Lu 'n' Em
Jan Garber Art Kassel
Mark Fisher Kay Kyser
Wayne King Paul Ash Revue
Earl Burtnett Paulist Choir
Joe Lewis Mundy Singers
George Olsen Olin Ryan
Ethel Shutta Hal Totten
Verne Buck Pierre Andrie
Myron Duncan Amos 'n' Andy
WLS Barn Dance Master Kozak
Earl Hines Bok Elson
Johann Strauss Pat Flanagan
Folies Bergere Larry Rich
Myrt & Marge Josef Chervinsky
Stan Myers

And Hundreds of Others Including
COMPLETE SHOWS FROM: Palace, Chicago, State-Lake, Oriental, Chez Paree, College Inn, Terrace Garden, Grand Terrace, French Casino, Congress, Drake, Red Lion, Palmer House.
ENTIRE PROCEEDS GO FOR CLOTHING AND SHOES FOR CHICAGO'S NEEDY CHILDREN
TICKETS NOW ON SALE \$5.00 and \$10.00

CHICAGO'S OWN XMAS BENEFIT
33 N. La Salle St., Rm. 1327. Ran. 0026

SELWYN Beginning Mon., Dec. 24
The Drama Union of Chicago operating with the Theatre Union of New York
"STEVEDORE"

By PAUL PETERS & GEORGE SKLAR
With original cast which played in original houses for
FIVE TRIUMPHANT MONTHS IN NEW YORK

"A stirring play and a magnificent show. Obviously the finest production of the season."
—Sidney Howard.
"Stevedore" is an exciting and a moving play, well produced and excellently acted."
—Elmer Rice.
"An astonishing and powerful production."
—The Literary Digest.
"A smashing indictment of racial hatred."
—James W. Ford.

Mail Orders Now—Box Office Thurs. Prices: Every Night, 40c to \$2.00 WED. and SAT. MATS., 40c to \$1.50

HARRIS LIMITED ENGAGEMENT
BEG. MON. EVE., DEC. 24
BOX OFFICE OPENS THURSDAY
American Theatre Society's
2nd Subscription Play

Send in your MAIL ORDERS now for this perfect Christmas present play. . . . *Laughing, Love, Romance, Adventure, Songs with Chicago's most popular actor:*

DENNIS KING
In Mark Red's New Rolling Comedy

PETTICOAT FEVER

Presented by
Richard Aldrich & Alfred de Ligne Jr.
with **ONA MUNSON, JAY FASSETT, DORIS DALTON** and Excellent Cast
Mats. Wed. & Sat. 83c to \$2.20, incl. tax

LAST WEEK
CHICAGO GRAND OPERA CO.
Paul Longone, Artistic Director

Tonight at 8:30—SPECIAL BENEFIT CONCERT: 30 STARS, and full chorus of 150. (Special prices: 50c to \$2.20, no tax.)
Mon., Dec. 17—PAUSE with Mason, Bontaloni, Pinks, Morelli. Weber conduct. Tues., Dec. 18—TRISTAN AND ISOLDE with Alen, Olaszewski, Melchior, Hume, Barones. DR. FREDERICK CONDUCTS.
Wed., Dec. 19—LA TRAVIATA with Mason, Fairbank, Hackett, Morelli, Paul conduct. Sat. Mat., Dec. 20—JANOSKA with Hope Hampton, Bontaloni, Guild, Royer, Ropp conduct.

SATURDAY NIGHT, DEC. 22
LAST PERFORMANCE
SPECIAL OPERA NIGHT
3 PICKED ACTS FROM
MANON, AIDA, TRAVIATA
with ALL STAR CAST
Followed by 40 Minutes of
OPERA BURLESQUED
Starring Some of Chicago's
Leading Social and Music Figures

20 N. Wacker Drive Tel. Ran. 9229

EXTRAORDINARY CONCERT
for the BENEFIT FUND of the
CHICAGO GRAND OPERA CO.
TONIGHT at 8:30
ALL THE OPERA STARS
COMPLETE OPERA ORCHESTRA
OPERA CHORUS OF 150

List of Contributing Artists Includes:
Mant Barova Anna Turkel
Eliana Turkel
Lucia Diano
Marta Barones
Joe Fairbank
Gao Glade
Myron Duncan
Hope Hampton
Eleanor La Mance
Edith Mason
Nancy Maxwell
Helen Ornstein
Sonia Shumova
Jean Tennyson
Joseph Royer

Conductors for the Concert:
Leo Kott
Paul Longone
Gennady Pavlo
Isaac Van Grove
Frank Laird Walker
Henry Weber

Note: All soloists, chorists, musicians, stagehands, house-staff, et al., are contributing their services to the Benefit Fund.

Prices 50c, 75c, \$1, \$1.50, \$2, \$2.50, no tax.
CIVIC OPERA HOUSE
20 N. Wacker Drive Tel. Ran. 9229

ORCHESTRA HALL
CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Frederick Stock
Conductor
THURSDAY AT 8:15—FRIDAY AT 2:15
Wolf-Ferrari Dance of the Angels from
"La Vinta del Higo" (1875) by Don
Christoforo. "The Song of the Lark" by
Rimsky-Korsakov. "Scherzando" by