

"ERSTWHILE SUSAN"

Newest Offering of New Trier Dramatic Club to Be Staged in Auditorium February 19

By G. W. C.

A small Pennsylvania Dutch town, full of unbeautiful, narrow-minded people; a mean old Dutchman whose brain is warped and who rules his children with a strap; a lovely girl, suppressing herself and her own fine ideas because of her fear of her father; an eccentric woman, once an actress, who earnestly wishes to bring beauty to the Pennsylvania Dutch people. Here are some strong ingredients which, when mixed together, surely should form a plot containing many laughs, many dramatic moments, and not a few tears. And that is just what these ingredients do, for they form the basis of a play called "Erstwhile Susan," the author of which is Marian De Forest.

"Erstwhile Susan," which was first produced in 1916 with Mrs. Fiske in the title role, has been selected by the New Trier High school Dramatic club for its second production of the season. They will present the play on Saturday, February 19, in the New Trier auditorium.

This play is a splendid vehicle for actors who really are willing to give to the utmost that they may make a fine production. It is a subtle play, for underneath its sugary coat of laughter there is a fierceness, almost akin to tragedy.

The author has thrown the spotlight on those Pennsylvania town-folk of which she writes. To be sure she turns the spotlight on in such a way that the humorous side of these people is shown. However, the dark side of them can also be seen—their narrowness, their selfishness, their total lack of education and the finer things of life. And among these people—his people—is one Barnaby Dreary, a man who governs his motherless children tyrannically and keeps his young daughter from everything except work. He thinks of her not as a human being but as a sort of machine, made to wash clothes and scrub and cook for him and his sons. His theory is that "the place fur females is at home, a-doin' the work." And his sons, big animals that they are, accept this theory as being quite natural.

As for Barnabetta, the daughter, who really has a fine mind and is eager to

learn, she is to be pitied. She, too, accepts her father's idea about women, and works and works until she almost loses her personality, until she is more of a machine than a living person.

Then into this community of Pennsylvania Dutch and into the Dreary home comes Miss Juliet Miller, erstwhile Susan, a woman who is eager to show those narrow people all that they are missing in life and how they can better themselves. She also desires to help Barnabetta and free her from her sordid surroundings. To accomplish this she marries Barnaby Dreary, just winds him around her little finger. Then sparks begin to fly. The whole Dreary family, with the exception of Barnabetta, are uneducated and crude in their actions and ideas. The new Mrs. Dreary is educated and eccentric, and her extreme sophistication clashes constantly with the Drearys' minds. How she conquers the family and the town, in spite of the fact that one of the sons dug up an unsavory episode of her past, is the play. And an exceedingly interesting play it is.

A Lips of 844 Spruce street is in St. Francis hospital convalescing after a serious illness.

Isabel Richardson Molter to Sing MacDowell Songs

Isabel Richardson Molter, soprano, who has just returned from a recital tour, will give a MacDowell benefit program at the Woman's club, Evanston, on February 10, under the auspices of the Evanston MacDowell club and the Delta Omicron sorority of Northwestern university.

Mrs. Molter is in Wilmette for a few weeks before starting on a recital tour through the South. Mrs. Molter has been giving programs for the past few weeks in the East, appearing as soloist with the People's symphony on Sunday, January 9, and in her own recital at Jordan hall on January 13 before a large, enthusiastic audience. She also gave a recital program on January 11 at Perkins institute, Watertown, Mass., and at the Woman's club, Cheshire, Conn., on January 14, and a sacred program at the Wesley Methodist Episcopal church, Worcester, Mass., January 16. Harold Molter is his wife's accompanist at the piano in all her appearances.

Mr. and Mrs. Wirt Farley of Walden road leave Monday for a ten day trip to New York.

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