

# MARIONETTE THEATER OPENS NOVEMBER 21-22

### Theatron to Produce Notable Plays for North Shore Drama Lovers at Evanston Club

Beginning Wednesday and Thursday, November 21 and 22, Theatron's Marionettes will start their subscription season with a production of "The Taming of the Shrew", by Shakespeare. Their home is to be in the Evanston Woman's club where a stage one-quarter life-size will be set up in a small hall for an intimate audience. These marionette performances are the outcome of the desire of the Theatron group to give north shore drama enthusiasts such classics and new works as are seldom offered by the commercial theater. The medium of the marionette is a comparatively inexpensive means to their end, for costume plays and hitherto unproduced plays of merit cost much to mount on a large stage.

Among the pieces to follow "The Taming of the Shrew" are "Noel, or the Mystery of the Nativity", by Maurice Bouchor, for the first time in America, a revival of Henry Fielding's burlesque, "Tom Thumb the Great," and "Winged Women," after the novel by Inez Haynes Irwin, for the first time on any stage.

#### Incidental Music Features

A feature of these productions will be their incidental music, played by Miss Margaret Bluthart of Kenilworth. "The Taming of the Shrew" has a selection of Elizabethan melodies and compositions written originally for the virginal by such sixteenth century masters as Dr. John Blow, Orlando Gibbons and Dr. John Bull. This music, harmonically fine as it is, ranges over only the four octaves of the virginal (a precursor of the piano-forte) and has a quaint and miniature effect very appropriate to accompany marionette action.

"Noel or the Mystery of the Nativity" has a special score written by Paul Vidal, a pupil of Massenet. This was performed to enthusiastic audiences at the Petit-Theatre in Paris. "Tom Thumb, the Great" is to have an accompaniment of amusingly bombastic eighteenth century opera music.

Rehearsals are now in progress for "The Taming of the Shrew" with a set of marionettes designed and constructed by Paul McPharlin, director of Theatron. Each face shows the special characteristics of a character in such a way that, when the light shifts across it, the character seems to come alive with his own individuality. Katherina, the shrew, is red-haired and sharp-nosed, with narrow eyes and a scornful mouth. But when her taming is accomplished, she droops her head and her whole expression grows mild and modest.

The costumes are exact miniatures of Elizabethan styles, executed in silks, satins and velvets. The furniture and architecture conform to the period, some Tudor English and some north Italian, for the introduction of the play takes place in England, and the play proper in and about Padua.

#### Expert Constructs Stage

John L. Dean of Chicago, who has designed work for the Auditorium theatre now in its last opera season, and various other Chicago theaters, has constructed a stage that may be taken down in pieces for transportation, and quickly assembled again. There is a mirror arrangement so that readers seated behind scenes may see each gesture of the marionettes as if they were in the audience. The stage floor may be altered for the use of string marionettes, or marionettes

operated by rods from below. A complete miniature lighting equipment, with spots, borders, floods and dimmers, to throw light of any color desired, has been made by Frederick A. Bohling of New York.

Theatron's Marionette theatre is the first in the country to give a season of plays to a subscription audience. The general public may obtain seats for individual plays after the subscribers have been accommodated. The ordinary puppet is aimed at children's enjoyment, but Theatron's Marionettes make an appeal primarily to adults, both for their plays and their manner of mounting.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vissering, 257 Kenilworth avenue, Kenilworth, are leaving tomorrow for their home in Babson Park, Fla., where they expect to spend the winter.

Mrs. Albert Sutcliffe of Winnetka was hostess at the Cradle Maisonette last Tuesday and Mrs. Harry Edmonds will take charge on November 13.

Of the total area of the city of Chicago, 30 per cent—streets, parks, etc.—is the property of the city, state or national governments.

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