

An Operetta on Economics

THE operetta "Grubb's Corner," libretto by Frank Stephens and music adapted from Gilbert and Sullivan by Estelle Hillersohn, was given its third performance June 24, by sixty-three singers, many of them professionals, before a crowded house, the preceding performance having been given in Wilmington. The author's preface may be judged from this quotation from which he said as prologue: "The epoch-making work which we are about to present or perpetrate, is without foundation in history or tradition. It brings together people who never met, in places where they never were, and at times when they were not alive. It includes in its one-day matters seventy years apart, its place is just where we are, Grubb's Corner. Maybe it should be admitted that its purpose is to set forth the peculiar beliefs some few of us hold touching the origin and validity of titles to land in this country, but as we have been saying the same things up and down this State for thirty-eight years without anyone paying any attention to them we will risk their hurting anyone's feelings now."

The plot opens with the coming of the Dutch under Captain David De Vries to seize the land under grant from the Lords States General of Holland. They are followed by a crowd of English noblewomen and swash-bucklers led by Lord Baltimore, coming to seize the same land under grant from King Charles and King James. As they pass on come William Penn and the Quakeresses to claim the same country by grant from the Duke of York. The nature of their proffers may be judged from that of Lord Baltimore:

We offer you just for plain dirt
The kind a papoose makes mud pies of,
Some beads and a calico shirt
For a district an uncertain size of.

Pokerface, the chief, accepts after this suggestion from his squaw Pocohontas; to the air: "Things are seldom what they seem" in "Pinafore:"

Tho' I have no head for numbers
And talk nonsense in my slumbers
No deceit this fact obscures,
What you sell them is not yours.
That for which you get the bribe
Is the land of all the tribe,
If you sell it to these gents
You can pocket all the pence.

The deal is interrupted by the in-rush of Peter Grubb, the original settler, the roughest of pioneers:

Forbear, nor carry out the grab you've planned,
What are you doing, swapping off my land?
Take notice, all these fields you think you've spotted
Are mine because I got here first and—squatted.

Solo:

From "Pinafore" "When I was a lad,"

When first I came to the Delaware shore,
It was some weeks ahead of Lord Baltimore
And I floundered over moor and fen
Some days ahead of William Penn.

I cut my schedule down so fine
That I reached the banks of the Brandywine
Some half an hour or so I claim,
Before these folks from Holland came.

By dropping my kit and hustling quick
I was first to get to Naaman's Creek,
And just ahead of Dutch and Quakers
Mandated some five thousand acres.
And here secure from war's alarms,
I'll stake out hundred acre farms.
I'll rent them fair, as man to man,
And farm the farmers as I can.

And then when Wilmington grows great
We'll make some booms in real estate,
And all by landlord's law will be
For me and my posterity.

Hands Penn his card:

PETER GRUBB, REALTOR,
Grubb's Corner, Delaware.

Duet:

Penn and Peter Grubb,—("Mikado". "On a tree—."

Penn:

The legend I read on your visiting card
Is just this: "Peter Grubb of—Grubb's Corner",
But I can't understand, tho' I've tried long and hard,
How you're Peter Grubb of Grubb's Corner.
Now would you be so good as to kindly explain,
Since there is no Grubb's Road nor even Grubb's Lane,
How there can be a corner where no roads obtain,
To make you Peter Grubb—of Grubb's Corner?

Peter Grubb:

I am only too glad, my good friends, to explain
How I'm Peter Grubb of—"Grubb's Corner"
So many long years ere there's any Grubb's Lane
To cross over and make a Grubb's Corner.
You see just before you arrived at this spot
I cornered the land you each thought you had got,
And that corner in land is the corner I wot
That makes me Peter Grubb of—"Grubb's Corner."

Chorus:

All but Grubb—(Trial by Jury) "With all respect."
With all respect we do object
We do object, we do object.

Peter Grubb:

All the legal quibbles seize you—
No explaining seems to please you.
Chase yourselves, you'll have to scoot—
I have Indians to shoot.
Gentle Hollanders and Sweder
Get out of this—"Auf wieder,"
Boodling Britons, quibbling Quakers
"Raus Mit"—for land-grabbing fakirs—
Throw your parchment screeds away—
I have squatted here to stay.

Chorus:

Ow—ah.

Peter Grubb:

For I grabbed it first.

Chorus:

And a good grab, too!

Peter Grubb:

So you get the worst—

Chorus:

Yes! we certainly do.

Peter Grubb:

Though you're mad enough to bust

You'll obey the law, I trust:

For the law is always just—

And that's one on you—

This is landlord's law, you know.

Chorus:

And it's strong law, too.

Peter Grubb:

It's been so since long ago—

Chorus:

Yes, it's long law, too,

This is landlord's law, we're told,

That who grabs it first shall hold,

So the rest of us are sold—

And it's good law, too.

Schalkenbach Foundation Work

A NEW booklet, suitable for enclosure in ordinary sized envelopes is being prepared by the Foundation. It will contain the speech of Dr. John Dewey over Station WEVD in April of this year, and, in addition will present in its last pages a collection of new quotations from contemporary celebrities. Due to the limited number of pages, it was not possible to include all of the statements that have been made in the past nor during the last few months while the Foundation gathered estimates of the life and work of Henry George. Those statements that do appear are convincing, however, as is Dr. Dewey's strong recommendation to read and study George's two books, "Progress and Poverty" and "Social Problems." This pamphlet can be handed, with pride, to friends who want to know something about Henry George, and it can be used to good advantage as an enclosure in personal correspondence. Single copies are five cents; packages of thirty will be sent for \$1 postpaid.

Following a theory that "Progress and Poverty" ought to interest almost anyone including the elusive "man in the street," if the story of the book is presented in an attractive manner, a folder has been designed describing the book, and containing quotations from famous people. About 2,000 home-owners in Brooklyn and New Rochelle received the folder and a percentage have thus far replied sending for the book. It is too early to ascertain whether the results in inquiries and sales will justify this endeavor, but we know that advertising a book in this manner sends people to the public library and to read "Progress and Poverty," and local bookstores sometimes benefit. More than 2,000 people who presumably knew little or nothing

about Henry George now have a slight acquaintance with his name and his masterpiece. A further experiment will be tried in the Fall with additional special lists.

At the suggestion of Prof. Broadus Mitchell, we procured a list of summer school teachers of history, economics, philosophy and sociology, and sent an assortment of literature to some 350 names. A special offer was made with regard to quantities of "Progress and Poverty" or of "Significant Paragraphs from Progress and Poverty" for classroom use, and as a result we are obtaining the interest of a number of summer school teachers.

The Foundation acknowledges receipt from Mr. Robert Balmer of this city of a group of books and pamphlets connected with the progress of the Single Tax movement in South American countries. The books have been added to the Foundations' library on economic subjects, and are at the disposal of anyone who wishes to refer to them. They include such titles as:

Dr. Andres Lamas—"Biography of Rivadavia" (Rivadavia was the George Washington of the Argentine, and a brave exponent of land reform).

"Public Ownership of Land." C. V. Dominguez.

"After the Avalanche", by Juan Sin ITierra (dedicated to Antonio Albendin.)

"History of Land and Agriculture in Ancient and Modern Mexico."

Accompanied by a letter from the Foundation's president, Mr. Hennessy, several books were sent to prominent men and women during the month, with the compliments of the Henry George Club of New Orleans. "Social Problems" was sent to Mr. Ferdinand Pecora and to Will Rogers; an abridged "Progress and Poverty" was sent to Miss Perkins, Senator Borah and President Roosevelt; a copy of "The Land Question," containing also the "Condition of Labor," was sent to Mrs. Roosevelt.

A result of earlier work of the Club in New Orleans is the editorial that appeared in the New Orleans *Daily States*, a newspaper edited by Mr. J. Walker Ross. The Club asked the Foundation to send a copy of "Social Problems" to Mr. Ross. This was done in January. On June 22, the following editorial appeared in Mr. Ross' paper:

THE DANGEROUS MAN

"The dangerous man is not the man who tries to excite discontent; the dangerous man is the man who says all is as it ought to be."

Henry George said that nearly half a century ago. For nearly two generations we have forgotten or ignored this simple truth, and see to what that has brought us! Let it now be impressed upon our minds so deeply that nothing can hide the warning.

If there is any penalty to communities dominated by so-called civic organizations, it is the price they pay for smug complacency that is set up. God's in his heavens, all's right with the world! Into what disasters have we walked with that bandage tightly tied over our eyes.

Civic organizations are of the breath, bone and body of the upper thin crust. They see nothing except their own special interests. Individually their members are often broad-minded, fair men; collectively, they have a sort of mob psychology that sees nothing, hears nothing, says nothing, except what the mob is immediately intent