

MISS CREIGHTON'S STORY.

Mrs. Potter and Kyrle Bellew To
Act In Separate London
Companies.

STAGE NEWS AND GOSSIP.

The recent disturbance at the Lyceum Theater, Detroit, Mich., which precipitated the withdrawal from the Cummings Stock Company of Bertha Creighton, has found an echo in New York by the simultaneous advent among the several theatrical exchanges of Ralph E. Cummings and Manager Nicolai, who engaged Kate Daglish as leading lady to supplant Miss Creighton.

The whole trouble dates back for some time, and arose from a series of domestic complications in which Cummings, according to reports, has played anything but an enviable part, and which culminated in Miss Creighton absolutely refusing to appear on the stage in conjunction with Blanche Douglas and Helen Byron, the former being the ex-wife of Stage Manager Cummings, and the later, it is alleged, the woman upon whom Mr. Cummings had bestowed his affections.

Miss Creighton was cast for the role of Phyllis Lea in "The Charity Ball" the night she refused to appear. She went to the theater fully prepared to go on, but when she discovered that Miss Douglas had been unexpectedly called upon to play the part of Bess she packed up her wardrobe and called at the box office for a settlement. Manager Nicolai argued and pleaded with Miss Creighton in vain, and the performance was obliged to proceed minus a Phyllis Lea.

"There seems to be an entire misunderstanding concerning my action in the Lyceum Theater affair," said Miss Creighton to a New York Telegraph reporter, "and I have been openly accused of having committed an unprofessional breach. Well, perhaps I did wrong in quitting so abruptly, but my American womanhood rebelled against being made a party to such scandalous gossip as the Detroit people had been treated to, and rather than permit my name being associated with anything that might reflect upon my reputation I could not conscientiously appear on the same stage with Mr. Cummings, Miss Douglas and Miss Byron."

"The facts in the case are simply these," continued Miss Creighton. "I was engaged as leading lady of Mr. Cummings' company six weeks before the close of the Toronto season, to succeed Miss Helen Byron, for the purpose of counteracting the rumors in connection with her and Mr. Cummings, which, by the way, had caused the management of the theater much annoyance. Miss Byron's services were immediately dispensed with after my joining the company, but, nevertheless, she was on the train with us en route to Detroit, and I had no right to object, as it was none of my concern.

"In Detroit Miss Douglas, who was at that time still the wife of Mr. Cummings, was assigned to my dressing room, and to me she aired her grievances. She being the wife in the case my sympathies were naturally with her, and I made no effort to conceal my contempt for Mr. Cummings' conduct. Of course, my frankness greatly displeased Mr. Cummings, and he ceased to speak to me or even notice me. So long as I performed my services satisfactorily his friendship made no little difference to me. When Miss Douglas left the company and went to Louisville to get a divorce and afterward re-entered the company, playing a part that actually necessitated her kissing the woman who was responsible for all her domestic troubles, I could not humiliate myself by appearing on the same stage with both of them, and, inasmuch as I had previously given Mr. Cummings warning, I deemed it my privilege to deliberately sever my connections."

On arriving in New York in search of a new leading lady, Cummings was confronted with much opposition on the part of the dramatic agents, who demanded an explanation regarding his conduct as reported, and two of the most prominent ones positively declined to have any further business dealings with him.

For a time Cummings was placed in a very awkward position. His standing in the Actors' Society did not permit him to apply there for talent, and it began to look as if he would have to take desperate chances in order to secure some one to take Miss Creighton's place. A visit to headquarters and the payment of certain claims against him, however, straightened matters out, and the engagement of Miss Daglish, formerly leading lady at Morosco's San Francisco Theater, and for several seasons a great Denver favorite, resulted.

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