

THE POPULAR THEATRE

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The popular theatre by George Jean Nathan

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GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

**THE POPULAR
THEATRE**

THE
POPULAR THEATRE



BOOKS BY MR. NATHAN

ANOTHER BOOK ON THE
THEATRE

EUROPE AFTER 8:15 (*in collabo-
ration with H. L. Mencken*)

MR. GEORGE JEAN NATHAN
PRESENTS

BOTTOMS UP

A BOOK WITHOUT A TITLE
THE POPULAR THEATRE

C. D. N.

7-1900

The
POPULAR THEATRE

by
George Jean Nathan



PROPERTY OF
DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART

New York
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MCMXVIII

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"I deal not with theories, but with things as they are."— JOANNES CANTACUZENE.

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GRAMATIC ART DEPT

Preface

Mr. Ernest Newman, brought by vocational ordinances to review the sawings and mewlings of the heterogeneous catgut scrapers and contraband philomels who every other night were posturing themselves before London audiences as musicians and singers, became one day so riled at the whole business that he publicly announced he would no longer attend any performances save those of artists who had made a reputation. After fourteen years of unremitting theatre attendance in New York — a period during which I have nightly been spectator at the performances of authors, actors and managers who have made reputations — I am of a mind to announce that I will no longer attend any performances save those of authors, actors and managers who have not made a reputation.

To the making of a reputation in the popular theatre of New York, everything would seem to be essential but talent. One is so surrounded in this theatre by famous playwrights, famous actors and famous producers — all more or less first-rate eighth-rate men — that the occasional glimpse of an utterly unknown, utterly unidentified, intruder bursts upon the vision with a sensation as agreeable æsthetically as the sudden spectacle, on a dark, gloomy, rainy day in Spring, of a young woman in a soft white dress