

# MONTREAL HIGH NOON GOSSIP

BY EUSTELLA F. BURKE

Montreal, December 1.

WHILE Montreal is having its periodic fuss and flutter over the sad lack of a Little Theatre in its midst, a small band of amateurs styling themselves the Pilgrim Players, has prepared and presented its first play in Victoria Hall, Westmount. As a matter of fact, Westmount provided not only the hall, but the inspiration and most of the players.

The Pilgrims did not spring into action overnight. They were drawn together over a period of a year, through the encouragement and efforts of Mrs. J. Harry Smith, wife of the C.P.R. Press Bureau director. Last season was spent quietly, in laying a solid foundation and preparing for a public presentation this season, Jessie Brahm White's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. It is one of the best plays that has ever been written for children, while including in its cast the very young, the adolescent and the mature actors and actresses. Winthrop Ames used it a few years ago in his New York production, at which time it was rewritten and much improved.

Mrs. Smith chose it for a variety of reasons. One was, that in breaking new ground she felt that the Pilgrims should present things which in the ordinary way are not done by the commercial theatre.

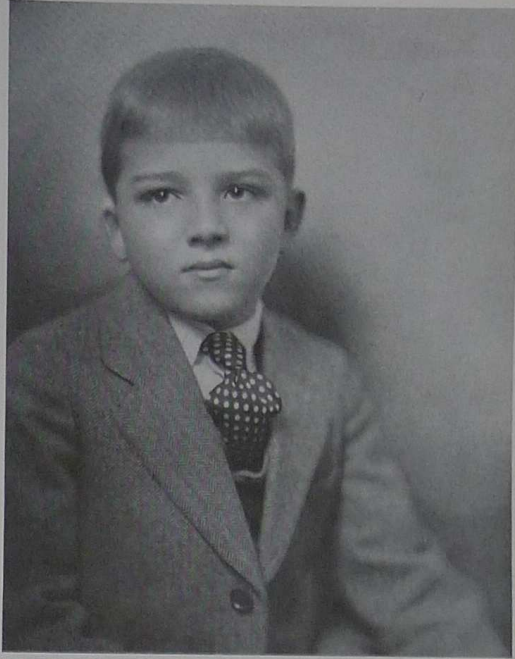
The very fine cast included: Mrs. George Finlayson, Mrs. H. S. Roth, Miss Rosemary Morris, Miss Margaret Muller, Mr. Malcolm Ransom and Mr. Mark Harwood. Mr. Warner Norman was the organist for the occasion. The children in the cast were Ann Sweeny, Diana Fisher, Adelaide Smith, Jean Thomson, Hilda Dullege, May Thomson, Alex McLaughlin, Anatole Haemmerle, Dorothy Cotton, Joyce Oliver, Margaret Murphy, Edwin Skelton, Helen Patrick, William Patrick, Margaret Thomson, Marie Oliver, Beryl Watson and Evelyn Henry.

There seems to be no dearth of enthusiasm in Montreal concerning theatricals. To date there are eighteen English-speaking amateur companies delighting large audiences and displaying some fine ability. The answer then to this strange local problem would seem to be the lack of a sincere, self-sinking few, leaders who are prepared to sacrifice personal prestige, and to build up brick by brick, the Theatre that is so much to be desired. The few should include those with sound business judgment as well as with dramatic ability—at least that has been the experience of other successful Little Theatres.

The Pilgrims are still in the chrysalis state. If they continue to develop as they have progressed thus far, there is every reason to believe that they are the answer to the people's prayer for an amateur theatre group; the solution to which has been a knotty problem for many years.

Another most energetic person in the interests of the Theatre in Montreal is Miss Martha Allan, the daughter of Sir Montagu and Lady Allan. Miss Allan is a distinguished actress and has shown her versatility as a producer, director and impresario. It is through her efforts that Montreal has seen and heard much of the best that has come here in the past few years. Kreutzberg and George the internationally famous dancers who have completed a tour under Max Reinhardt, are coming in December under her auspices. On one other occasion they were at His Majesty's Theatre but this time they return with their own orchestra and a new programme. Miss Allan's main interests lie principally with the professional theatre, or so it would appear.

Lady Allan left Montreal for California some weeks ago and her daughter will join her early in the New Year. Mention of migrations south reminds that Sir Frederick and Lady Williams-Taylor will forsake their lovely villa at Nassau this season to spend the winter in England. While there, we understand that they will be the guests of Col. W. Grant Morden and Mrs. Morden at their country seat, *Heatherden Hall* in Bucks. Mrs. Morden is a niece of Lady Williams-Taylor. Already their Moorish castle on Pine Avenue has new occupants in Mr. and Mrs. Norman L. C. Mather. Mr. Mather is the managing [See also page 78]



—Wm. Notman & Son

Top: Master Trenholme Williams, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Maurice Williams, of Chesterfield Avenue, Westmount, Quebec, and grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Trenholme. Portrait by Rice Studios

Lower: Miss Marguerite Casgrain, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Umberto Casgrain, of St. Mark Street, Montreal, and granddaughter of Hon. J. P. B. Casgrain and Madame Casgrain, of Montreal

