

THE TACOMA THEATRE.

TACOMA in many things shows an enterprise and faith in the future that commands the admiration of every one at all acquainted with the facts, but one of the greatest exhibitions of this may be seen in the elegant theatre which was dedicated to Thespis Monday night last.

Recognizing the need of such a building a number of enterprising gentlemen organized the Tacoma Theatre Co., and secured a site at the corner of St. Helens and Ninth streets. Arrangements were made with J. M. Wood, of Chicago, whose fame as a theatre architect is as wide as the Union, for a design of such a structure as would combine beauty of architecture, solidity of construction, adaptability to the ends sought and elegance of appointments. All these features are most happily blended in this edifice. The building was erected under the supervision of George B. Evans.

On Ninth street it has a frontage of 67 feet, and on St. Helens 174 feet, the other sides being 120 and 165 feet respectively. On the St. Helens street side are seven stores, one in the corner and three each on either side of the porte cochere, their fronts being solid stone and plate glass. There are office rooms on the first, second and third floors, and in the gable of the fourth floor a room 28x32 feet.

The main entrance, on Ninth street, is in the form of a gable projection and opens into a vestibule, fourteen feet deep by twenty-one feet wide, with the box office just opposite the entrance door. The box office is in the form of an East India pagoda set into a recess in the wall, with a comfortable settee on either side, upholstered in embossed leather. The front of the pagoda is in beveled plate and cut glass. Just back of the box office is a roomy office for the manager of the theatre. The floor of the vestibule is in imported tile, the side walls wainscoted below and finished above with papier-mache and bronzes.

Opposite the box office is an archway with three steps, leading to the outer foyer, 20x24 feet, elegantly carpeted and hung with tapestries. From this a vestibule leads to the circular parlor for ladies in the corner tower, which is twenty feet in diameter and most elegantly and tastefully furnished. The main foyer extends entirely across the rear of the auditorium, from which the balcony is reached by a wide staircase on either end. Near the stairway on the left is the gentlemen's smoking room, a delightful lounging place. Entrance to the parquette is made by three wide aisles, the center one stopping at the railing, and the others continuing to the orchestra pit. The parquette and circle are seated with opera chairs, upholstered with silk plush, and having automatic backs, hat racks, etc., and will seat 600 people.

The balcony is seated with improved and upholstered opera chairs of comfortable widths, and all commanding a clear view of the entire stage. It seats about 250, and affords a fine view of the entire proscenium front, private boxes and sounding board.

There are eight proscenium boxes, four on either side, being in the form of Indian temples or pagodas, standing well out from the surrounding work, so as to command a clear view of the stage, and yet not obstructing the view from any of the side auditorium seats. These boxes are provided with movable, easy chairs, forty in all. The floors are carpeted in moquette and the rails upholstered in silk plush, with polished brass rails above, and low silk plush valances. Just back of the boxes, on the left, is a box parlor, handsomely decorated and furnished, forming a pleasant retiring room from the boxes. The upper boxes on each side are approached by special stairways from the lower floor, just back of the lower boxes.

The gallery is reached by a special stairway from the alley, where are an entrance and ticket office. It has a seating capacity of 350, and is furnished with comfortable chairs. Special attention has been paid to exits. In addition to the main entrance, twelve feet wide, there are two six-foot doors opening into the alley on the right and two into the corridor on the left.

In its appointments it is complete in every detail. There are two drop curtains and an asbestos fire proof curtain, twenty-four complete sets of scenery, two quarter traps, a Hamlet trap, two sectional traps, two sectional movable bridges, and a multitude of other conveniences and appliances.

The dressing rooms are large, well lighted and comfortable, and there are a scene room, 18x30 feet, and a property room. The stage is seventy feet wide and forty-three feet deep, the distance from it to the rigging loft above being sixty feet.

In its interior furnishings the Tacoma Theatre is elegant and artistic, with a most harmonious blending of colors, producing soft and pleasing effects. It shows a display of artistic taste and a disregard of cost that is in keeping with other features of the structure. With its splendid equipment and its seating capacity of 1,200 in a city growing so rapidly and containing such a large proportion of liberal and cultured people, it will draw the finest histrionic talent in the United States, and will combine with Spokane Falls, Seattle and Portland, when they shall have completed similar structures, in forming a strong circuit for theatrical attractions. Mr. John W. Hanna, a gentleman possessing wide experience as a theatrical manager, has charge of the theatre, and under his management the house was opened Monday, January 13, 1890, by the Duff Opera Company, with the charming comic opera of "Paola." The season thus auspiciously begun will be a brilliant one, the leading musical and dramatic attractions having been secured.