

AT THE PLAY



Soprano

The Man of Straw.
 My? what a noise, just see the boys,
 And hear their laughter ring.
 They've all joined hands where shaking stands
 The wildest kind of thing.
 From a ragged suit, and a shawl, and a boot,
 The queerest ever you saw—
 With his old high hat, and his paunch so fat,
 They've made a man of straw.
 With many a bump they make him jump,
 They make him strut and stride,
 And how they shout, as he's danced about
 And tumbled from side to side.
 They cut his ears, but he only sneers,
 And nods his silly head.
 And bows profound as he's pulled around
 And propped with his feet outspread.
 Now it seems to me, there are men we see
 Whose backbone knows no law.
 They seem to go as the winds may blow—
 Just like that man of straw.
 They sag right down, should they meet a frown!
 They'll walk to a line you draw!
 They'll wriggle and smirk, and pull up with a jerk—
 Just like that man of straw.
 On politics' side, they're bound to ride
 In the ship of The Powers that Be,
 So they wriggle the tongue to the song that's sung
 By the bird in the topest tree.
 And every time, they're bound to chime
 Right in with the music playing,
 Be it classic songs, or Chinese songs,
 Or be it an ass's braying.
 In Theophrastus' realm they know no helm,
 They bid for the lead guitar,
 With a weak-kneed joke—Oh! there's a actor folk
 Just like that man of straw.
 —Charles T. Vincent, in Dramatic Mirror.

THREE FINE ATTRACTIONS

"Quo Vadis," the Boston Lyrics and "King of the Opium Ring" Lure People to the Theaters.

"Quo Vadis" is one of the many plays adapted from successful novels which have been produced during the past few years. While most of these plays would not have their being, were it not for a factitious fame created by the romances that they pretend to transfer to the stage, "Quo Vadis," as dramatized by Stange and produced by the Whitney-Knowles Company, deserves the success it has won, irrespective of the great book which it represents.

The play supplements the book. To the characters of Sienkiewicz' great romance, it imparts life and action, causes them to breathe and speak and to do, in reality, the things they were only supposed to do in the book. What the model is to the painting, actual traveling to the book of travel, illustrations to the mere printed pages, the play is to the book. The book is a wonderful historical study, the play is a splendid, graphic illustration of its contents.

Closely following the main outlines of Sienkiewicz' story, "Quo Vadis," as produced at the Marquam last week, emphasizes the religious side and excellently portrays the struggles and persecution of the early Christians. By effective contrasts, the different elements of life at Rome in Nero's time are clearly pictured. Against the simplicity, faith and devotion of the Christians, with their hymns and prayers, are set over the vice, debauchery and corruption of the patricians, with their bacchanalian songs and dances. Humorous bits of comedy and peaceful scenes of trusting love lighten the depressing effect of suffering and persecution.

This particular production of "Quo Vadis" is much superior to the other presentations which have been seen in Portland, in point of elaborate scenery, beautiful costumes, and good acting. The scene in Linus' house, with Rome burning in the distance, and the scene of the exterior of the circus, showing the arena, are as beautiful and impressive as any ever seen here.

Instructive as an accurate historical representation of Roman life and customs, entertaining as a fascinating story, the play is also impressive and inspiring, in its description of the trusting faith and confidence of the Christian martyrs, in which respect it is better than a sermon.

The Company.
 The company is a good one and well balanced. So true is this, that it is with equal pleasure one watches the generous Petronius, the impetuous Viniculus, the convicted Nero, the cringing Chilo, the suffering Lygia, the loving Eunice, or the scheming Poppaea.

Well fitted physically for the role, Mason Mitchell makes an admirable Petronius, the philosopher, scholar and counselor. Always master of the situation, even at his death sentence, he ably acts the part, whether advising his nephew, Viniculus, mollifying the despot emperor, or caressing the slave Eunice.

Marcus Ford, as Viniculus, is the impulsive soldier and lover of Lygia, and does exceptionally well. In his denunciation of Nero, the philosopher, scholar and counselor, Miss Mary Emerson's Lygia is a work of art. She carries the emotional scenes well, retaining, at the same time, the shrinking modesty of the Christian maiden.

Joseph Callahan plays well the part of the vain Emperor, particularly his bursts of passion, and Miss Mary Emerson's Lygia is a work of art. She carries the emotional scenes well, retaining, at the same time, the shrinking modesty of the Christian maiden.

shows the love and devotion of the slave, Eunice, for her master, Petronius.

On the whole, the play is nearly as good as the book. One leaves the theater with the determination to re-read the book, with better understanding, and the desire to see it played all over again, after the second reading. The small house which greeted the opening performance would reflect on the judgment of Portland's theater-going public, had it not been doubtless in some measure due to the fact that this is the third company to produce the play in this city within a year.

Return of the Lyrics.
 That Portland people are hungry for comic opera has been very clearly demonstrated by the size of the audiences that have crowded Cordray's past week, to welcome the Boston Lyrics. These genial entertainers have lost none

of that dashing good humor, brightness and snap that characterized their work last season and made them such arch favorites with our theater-goers. Their chorus work is as successful as of old, and Colonel Thompson has added some clever new singers. As regards personality and power, each one of these is still more or less of an unguessed riddle. But however disconcerting a change of principals may be from the managerial point of view, the public dearly loves the nov-

elty of an occasional new face among old friends.

Bertha Davis, the new soprano, so far as one can judge from the light work she has had the first week, seems to be a sprightly young woman, with a pretty profile and a voice of excellent timbre that promises much. There is a certain plucky air of savior faire mingling with her unacknowledged freshness of humor that piques one's curiosity to know her better. Her vivacity has nothing starchy about it; the bloom is still on the peach. With all her pretty coquetry, she carries herself aplomb and self respect.

Sara Carr's solo work indicates that she possesses a sweet, rich, languorous contralto, of much sensuous beauty of tone. In stature she is even taller than Maud Leekley, who was with the company last season. There seems to be a predilection in the Boston Lyrics for singers of imposing height; one of the basses must be at least six feet six. Charles Huntington, the other new member, appears to be a valuable acquisition, vocally. The burden of the soprano work still falls upon Josephine Stanton, whose large range and flexibility of voice are so admirably fitted to bear it.

"The Idol's Eye." with its strong and well-defined comedy elements, is well adapted to show the Boston Lyrics to advantage. John Henderson and George Kunkel, through three acts, played hide and seek with one another around the altar of the ruby-eyed, cross-legged Juggernaut and through fateful trap doors, with all the rollicking fun that, in seasons past, have kept their audiences in an uproar of laughter.

The ensembles in the second act were as effectively pretty as anything Colonel Thompson has ever presented in Portland. The slow-swaying bodies of the priestesses, their white, uplifted arms gleaming against the black and gold of their slashed draperies; the sweeping salmons of the chanting Hindoo beauties, in loose-flowing embroidered robes of white and saffron yellow; the grim background of the jewel-encrusted temple; the din of clashing cymbals almost drowning the piercing melody of the women's voices—all these made as carefully elaborated and as charming a mise-en-scene as probably has ever been given on Cordray's boards.

"King of the Opium Ring." If the true criterion by which to judge

it undertakes combining enough of the vaudeville to please those who enjoy specialty work; enough of the heroic to win the applause of the gallery, and enough of the emotional to secure the approval of those who are attracted by sentiment. The different elements constituting a representative audience thus being appealed to, the play is successful in its ambition to amuse and please.

Dealing with the schemes of a ring of unscrupulous opium smugglers, the scene is laid in the heart of the Chinese quarter of San Francisco. The author has fully utilized his opportunity to present a realistic insight into the interesting life peculiar to the haunts of the Chinese. Opium joints, an interrupted Chinese-American wedding, and police raids are the spectacular features, counterbalanced by singing, dancing, tumbling and musical absurdities. Each act closes with a thrilling climax, in which police, villains, Chinese and comedians become mixed up most bewilderingly.

Individually, Laurette Cooney, as Sparke, attracts the greatest attention. Taking a relatively unimportant part, so far as the development of the plot is concerned, the pretty soubrette dances and sings her way into the good graces of the audience with surprising ease. Much more might be said of Miss Cooney, if she could sing half so well as she can dance and pose.

Louis Morel, as Wah Sing, assumes the role of a character becoming more frequent and familiar, as the civilization of the Chinese progresses—a Chinaman of education and intellectual power, free from the superstitious and beliefs of his race, yet, because of his race, denied the privileges to which he aspires. The character is that of a crafty, calculating villain, sensitive, but persistent in his desire to possess the beautiful Georgette, Fred Douglas, as Macey, the king of the ring, and Barbara Douglas, as Georgette, a quite aristocratic young girl.

One or two features of the play deserve criticism. There is too much rough-and-tumble horse-play, which falls in its effort to be funny. The frequent indulgence in unnecessary profanity by the minor characters, and several vulgar allusions could well be omitted, to the improvement of the play.

LYRICS' SECOND WEEK.
"Wang" and "The Fencing Master" to constitute the bill.

Colonel "Billy" Thompson's merry band of singers and comedians will begin the second and last week of their present Cordray engagement tonight, with Morse & Goodwin's comic opera, "Your Uncle Wang," in which De Wolf Hopper scored one of the greatest successes of his professional career. It will be repeated Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, and also at the Saturday afternoon performance of the Lyrics, giving place to "The Fencing Master," Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

"Wang" is a tuneful opera, with many catchy melodies and amusing and dramatic situations, and will be presented by Colonel Thompson's company with much of the spontaneity of stage-setting, brilliancy of performance and striking mechanical and electrical effects, which distinguished the original production. The title role will be assumed by George Kunkle who, as a clever, operative comedian, has a secure niche in the esteem of Portland theater-goers.

Miss Josephine Stanton, the leading soprano of the organization, will appear as "Ma Matay," Mr. Henderson, as a capable comedian, as Papat; Miss Bertha Davis, one of the new members of the company, as Marie, and Miss Sara Carr, also a newcomer, and whose rich contralto voice works in with pleasure in last week's production of "The Idol's Eye," will assume the role of Madame Frimouse. The other parts are mostly in capable hands, and a treat should reward those who witness the opera.

"The Fencing Master," which will follow "Wang," will also have a strong cast, and gives the principals as well as the chorus and other members of the company, admirable opportunities to display their respective abilities.

"A NIGHT IN TOWN."
 Eddie Foy Brings His New Musical Comedy to the Marquam.

Tuesday and Wednesday evenings of this week Eddie Foy and his company of players will present his new musical comedy, entitled "A Night in Town," at the Marquam Grand Theater.

"A Night in Town" is one of the most amusing plays in which Foy has yet appeared, and its success has been marked in the East, where it has been produced to a good business. As is indicated by its title, it is a rapidly moving, funny farce, said to be devoid of horse-play or suggestiveness of an unpleasant sort. The character which Foy assumes is that of David Scaramo, a young man who, through the excessive use of cigarettes, has a very tangled memory.

He is a great admirer of the fair sex, and makes frequent proposals of marriage. After making one, he smokes a cigarette, and then he forgets all about it (the proposal), to the intense discomfiture and disgust of the recipient, who gets even by bringing suit for breach of promise.

This causes David much perturbation of spirit and keeps him busy trying to keep out of trouble. He falls "really in love" in love, at last, and after various exciting complications, becomes a responsible married man. Those who have seen Eddie Foy on the stage—and there are very few theater patrons who haven't—can imagine all about the action of the piece, so far as he's concerned in it.

The company, which will appear here in Foy's support is headed by Eva Tanquay,



EDDIE FOY, IN "A NIGHT IN TOWN."

of that dashing good humor, brightness and snap that characterized their work last season and made them such arch favorites with our theater-goers. Their chorus work is as successful as of old, and Colonel Thompson has added some clever new singers. As regards personality and power, each one of these is still more or less of an unguessed riddle. But however disconcerting a change of principals may be from the managerial point of view, the public dearly loves the nov-

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 Last 3 rows......75
 Balcony, first 6 rows......50
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 Balcony, first 6 rows......50
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 Sale of Seats Begins Wednesday Morning, October 10

a clever New York soubrette, and is said to have been well selected.

WEST'S MINSTRELS THIS WEEK.
 Billed for the Marquam for Friday and Saturday.
 Billy West, with his big minstrel organization, will take possession of the Marquam boards Friday and Saturday evenings and Saturday afternoon of the present week. Generally speaking, this well-known purveyor of burnt-cork and white-face minstrel entertainment needs no introduction to Portland or other American audiences, and neither does his company, but this engagement, he comes with some new features and several new people, among whom are performers who have made a reputation in the minstrel branch of the theatrical profession. In addition, there are nearly all the old favorites.

Richard J. Jose, the famous contra-ten-