

LOOK BACKWARD AND FORWARD

Review of the Past Dramatic Season in Portland and Announcement of Plays in the Future.

THE amusements of Portland draw about a million dollars per year through the box office windows of the theaters.

This matter of amusement—the theater, the play, the opera, the music, entertainment of a public nature in general—may well be thought about seriously, as a factor in our civic existence.

We work. We sleep. We play. We pay much attention to the activity that yields us a livelihood, and are extremely solicitous concerning our comforts and luxuries of sleeping and rest. Now should we not look a little more carefully and critically into the question of what we shall do to amuse ourselves?

The theater is the most potent purveyor to our amusement. Who is running it? What sort of people are its managers? What amount of amusement we shall have? What has been the record of the season that has just closed? And what are the prospects for the coming season? Have we fared well, or ill? Have we had the best that could have been given us under the circumstances? How far do we go in stipulating the kind of treatment, theatrically, that is in store for us during the season that will open next year?

Theaters are open the year round. Three vaudeville houses and one stock house are open now, the Grand, the Star and the Pacific. The Grand, the Lyric and the Lyric, devoted to stock productions. The other theaters in the city of a more prominent character are now closed for the summer, having presented what they had to offer. The Lyric has the bookings for Klaw & Erlanger, the firm that controls the largest number of important "attractions" of the better grade. The greater portion of these offerings were presented last Saturday night. That theater had been run throughout the balance of the season. It was a grand success, and the latter part of the season was placed out at the Lyric, after which it was to be presented in a short-lived summer season of musical comedy and grand opera being given, which ended last Monday evening suddenly, artistic glory and monetary disaster.

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There was material fight here in Portland about the quality served up to us this last season on the Baker stage, some of which was ignored and then not used, some of which was ignored. It was not on grounds of economy. It was because someone wanted to get out of the business, and then there was no one to get out of the business, and then there was no one to get out of the business.

The consequence was that every play put on was unsatisfactory in the achievements of the women. The leading woman failed to greatly impress her audiences. And there was no one else in the company who had the ability or personality to impress anyone, except it might have been Miss Nesbit, who was shelved nearly all the while in inconsiderable bits.

Next year that work must be different. The public overlooked the fact that the women in the Baker company were second rate and weak this last season, for the productions were rather big and money-value-giving at all events.

To continue the policy of this past season, to keep out a stunning individual woman because she has a vogue among the best people of town and possesses magnificent stage jewels and a beautiful figure, and to bring less than business value for George L. Baker.

Let the leading woman be ever so good. There is no objection to that. A hundred times as competent and attractive a woman as Miss Nesbit would have been a help to the theater. But the idea of banishing everything charming from the company so the one outstanding female figurehead may be left alone on what ever glory she may be able to radiate is a foolish business plan.

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and, if we want these "attractions," as we most certainly do, he must be provided with a convenient and suitable theater for their reception.

No stock company, whether theatrical or musical, has ever paid to the building that is now called the Helig Theater. The company that came nearest to paying was the first that occupied it—namely, the Columbia stock company. The Columbia company's loss on the entire season of 27 weeks was about \$900.

I presume that the musical season just closed, that of the Kendall Musical Company, netted a loss in six weeks of about \$500.

Klaw & Erlanger are disposed to send their best shows out as far as this city, and probably Portland, will have about the same kind of a season as to quality and quantity as if San Francisco had not been shaken down and burned up.

The big shows can take in Oakland and stay down on the Bay at the California metropolis a shorter time. That is the only difference.

The Northwest Theatrical Association has shown evidence lately that it is not omnipotent in this part of the country. It is something to put the Orpheum into Seattle, Spokane and Portland, without turning many perspiratory hairs, the other day.

Russell and Drew, also the other day, got the Seattle Theater away from John Cort, who lauds himself as the chief benefactor of the Northwest Theatrical Association, and is undoubtedly an excessively energetic theatrical man, with an ambition that is liable to overreach itself and goad him on in his avarice and overweening zeal into unscrupulous lengths.

Sullivan's action in New York deprived us of the splendid Orpheum vaudeville shows.

That company would have fixed up and occupied the Baker Theater. We scarcely regretted the fact at the hour, because it meant that the Baker Stock Company would be continued another season. But it will be a deeply regrettable episode if we lose the Orpheum, and do not get as good a Baker company as Mr. Baker, unaided and un molested, could secure for us.

The Orpheum, being absent, gives a better chance for the continuing success of Sullivan and Condit's two houses here—the Grand and the Star.

One house, the Lyric, is worthy of serious attention just now. Its managers have been quietly conducting it for the last two years without the interruption of a single day. The charges are the same as the vaudeville houses, and the acting of the players there is well up to the standard of the ordinary stock house in this country. In fact, there is often in some Lyric Theater better acting than at the Baker Theater in far more pretentious performances.

The size of the stage being small, and the size of the cast being small, are the only drawbacks that can be noted in a performance which is, in reality, great value for the price. They with the smaller number of plays and partially rewrite the plays, they present them, in order to keep up the high standard; for the limited price makes gross receipts small, and it would be impossible to pay royalties on the high class plays. There are thousands of good, high-class plays, the royalty on which

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When a fellow in the East writes a play and it proves a failure, it is immediately released for stock and offered by all the theatrical agencies in the various stock companies in the cities of lesser magnitude throughout America.

The managers of these theaters do not know much about plays. Half of them are ignorant, unlearned and unlettered men, and cannot take a good play on a bad one. They take a play on all sorts of reasoning and recommendations—bating a big royalty play and looking for a snap that has the elements favorable for advertising purposes.

In the case of George L. Baker, who is supposed to be responsible for the selections at the Baker Theater for the coming season, he himself is disposed to take little note of the size of the royalty, and is left to his own accord he would choose the best plays that were offered—the ones that were known and acknowledged to be of the highest quality. His judgment is excellent. I consider him one of the best judges of the chance of a play's run in the business.

But he is absolutely at present in the hands of an actor and an actress who will choose plays, in as far as they are able, to practically starve the actress in question.

This is a bad business scheme. They are not likely to go to the end of the line. But if it is their intention to go as far as that, they are in for it.

The list of plays will not be prepared with sole reference to giving Portland as can be procured. The basis of judgment will be on other grounds.

The "Submerged Tenth," tentatively selected by Charles Klein, the author of "The Lion and the Mouse," will be produced in September, has been discarded in favor of "The Lion and the Mouse," which may be produced in the early fall.

Arrangements have been made with C. M. S. Mellan, author of "The Lion and the Mouse," to produce in September, has been discarded in favor of "The Lion and the Mouse," which may be produced in the early fall.

Managers find considerable difficulty in getting acts and players in San Francisco, as all of the players have gone away. But they will gradually get back to its usual footing, as every one seems to be sanguine of the future.

Civil War period, and that it will open the season at the National Theater, Washington, D. C., on September 17.

A. Baldwin Sloan, composer of the score of "The Submerged Tenth," is writing several new numbers to be introduced into the second act of that musical comedy next season. The most important being entitled "Margie Daw and the Six Little Maidens." Considerable new comedy will be introduced into the piece that will be significant of recent events.

Clay Clements opens his much talked of "San Houston" at the Lyric Theater. He has engaged Leonard Shepard to support Mrs. Frances Starr. The Lyric Theater will also include John Mason, George Ariss and William B. Mack. Mrs. Place will begin her season with the Lyric Theater, New York, early in the Autumn.

Frances Ring has been engaged by Edward A. Braden to play the role of Sonia Stepanik in Stanley Darr's new comedy play, "The Man from the Mountains." The play has already been played in Chicago, New York and Boston.

Margaret Mayo claims the distinction of being the only actress who has played in both the Grand and the Lyric Theaters. Her last season was "The Lion and the Mouse," which was a great success.

The title of Stanley Darr's new play, "The Lion and the Mouse," was taken from the play largely suggested by the following lines in Chaucer's "The Knight's Tale": "If there be man, there is an angel too, And if he did that wrong you charge him with, His angel looks on him."

The play is in a language and four acts, and the scenes are laid in and around London. Through in a measure a problem play, it is one in which the problems are solved.

Edmund Pressa, Marguerite St. John, Richard and Virginia Allen, Joseph Long, Robert Eason, who is sending the Summer at his home near Sag Harbor, Long Island, will inaugurate his third season in "Bronchard" at Newark, N. J., on September 1. His new play, "The Lion and the Mouse," will embrace the South and the Pacific Coast.

In the 12 years "in Old Kentucky" has been written by the author, the enormous sum of \$100,000 has been received for the play since its production in New York in August at Albany, N. Y., with the most elaborate production ever given.

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commended. The press along the circuit says that this quartet is one of the best visiting the Pacific Coast. A comical turn is announced by Clifford and Mack, who will do up something new. John Burns will contribute to the entertainment by rendering the latest musical hit, "Ester," accompanied by illustrations. For the Grandiose there will be one of the most amusing films of the season. This is the bill which will be given every afternoon and evening this week and it should pack the theater.

M. B. CURTIS AT PANTAGES. Eminent Act in Revival of "Sam'l of Posen."

In the announcement that the celebrated actor, E. Curtis, is to appear at Pantages Theater this week is brought to light another story of vaudeville enterprise. No sooner had Mr. Curtis reached Los Angeles, where he had passed several years, than he was besieged with offers from vaudeville managers and others. Several houses advertised having secured him, but he remained at Pantages Theater to put in the most attractive bill. Mr. Curtis will be on hand all week in his "Sam'l of Posen," a comedy which has made him famous, and which all oldtimers will remember. Mr. Curtis will be supported by his wife and his own troupe in this delightful play.

Another distinct feature will be Will Beke, the noted conjurer and magician, who comes direct from Minneapolis to Pantages. He is one of the best magicians of the country and does many new and rare tricks. The Garcia sisters are a team of attractive singing and dancing artists, who will be supported by the bill. Ahern, the whistler, presents a novel whistling act, replete with imitations of birds and musical instruments. His vocal and instrumental talents, and Lord and Meeks are premier comedy sketch artists, who will put on a new sketch called "Jean Wilson" who sing in a most melodious and unassuming style.

The bill ending today is one of the notable vaudeville evenings of the season. There is a lot of everything on hand, from grand opera to farce-comedy. The Metropolitan singers are people of powerful voices, and their scene from "Fra Diavolo" is unsurpassed. Eddie Heien, the California magnet, is worth going far to see; Thomas and Evans are clever comedians, and all the other acts are of a high order.

"THREE MEN IN A CUPBOARD." New Musical Farce Starts at the Star Tomorrow.

In "A Quiet Family," the farce which the Star stock company is playing today for the last time, there are more laughs to the square inch than in any other farce seen here since the stock company's inception. The plot has to do with the tribulations of two married couples, and every married person in town should see "A Quiet Family" for they are guaranteed many hearty laughs from the complications which occur. The vaudeville end of the bill, as usual, will include some of the most popular acts of the season.

With the matinee tomorrow the attraction of the Star stock company will be "Three Men in a Cupboard." This is one of those rousing farces in which there is nothing but action. The title itself indicates that there are some rather funny incidents in the plot of the three principal comedians. The plot is just strong enough to demand recognition, but never intrudes. The comedy is of the rapid-fire type, and also the replete. One thing is always noticeable at the Star—the comedians never hesitate in their dialogue to make the most of their own references which the text will permit, and every gag of this kind is good for a laugh.

For the olio there is a goodly array of talent selected. The principal entertainer will be Harry Johnson, from France. As usual, the program will be augmented by the reinforcement of critics. Maude Beatty is a card which will appeal to music lovers. Miss Beatty is one of the most popular comedians here, and she has just closed an engagement with the San Francisco opera company at Seattle. Both in San Francisco and the Pacific Coast, she has received the highest praise for her excellent voice. A collection of amusing pictures and "Longing for Love" will follow, and will round out the programme.

"A WIFE'S PERIL." Bright, Thrilling, Well Written Melodrama at the Lyric.

"A Wife's Peril," the new bill to open at the Lyric tomorrow (Monday) afternoon, is an emotional melodrama in four acts. It is a splendid, well-written, up-to-date play. It is a story of a woman who is an engineer who is called away from home very much leaving his wife, Beatrice (Miss Howard), by herself, and an easy prey to the villain, Raphael. Du Bois (Whitney), who persuades her to slope with him, leaving home and child just before she arrives. Mrs. Merrilweather (Miss Power), Beatrice's sister, finds a letter explaining the flight. She determines to follow them and bring Beatrice back. She takes along her agent, lover, Gus Chumley (Mr. Conroy), to assist, and they succeed in bringing husband and wife together again. The husband relents because of the dyar illness. They then go for a trip to Europe, where the villain, again forces his attention, and he is challenged to a duel by the hero. The hero is killed, but is supplied by Chumley and Mrs. Merrilweather. The situations are strong and the climax thrilling. The dialogue is interesting and bright. Act first, George Fane's house, second, Rivola's studio, and acts third and fourth a hotel at Naples.

The cast is as follows: George Fane.....Frank Fanning Augustus Chumley.....Charles Conners Raphael of Rivola.....Sterling Whitney Thomas.....Charles Power MacFarland Edwards.....Carroll McFarland Beatrice Fane.....Warda Howard Mrs. Merrilweather.....Adaella Power

Very little opposition, that would naturally enter into the Baker Theater's patronage, was another auspicious circumstance, greater than could be expected. The ideal location of the edifice for the convenience of theater-goers both from the East Side and the West Side, ministered to the success of the theater, and set toward that place of amusement.

GOSSIP OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS

Plans of Actors and Managers for Next Season's Productions.

Eraa Kendall will start his season October 1.
Lynn Heid will tour next season in "A Paris Comedy."
T. B. Sayre has written "Elliott Asthore" for Chauncey Olcott.
Joseph Whasek will star again next season in "Just Out of College."
It is understood that Anna Heid will not be with the Shuberts next season.
Lee Willard is touring the Northwest successively with "A Western Gentleman."
Gus Hill's new musical play, "Around the Clock," will be produced early in September.
A new play by Edmund Day, entitled "The Round Up," is to be an early fall production.
Nance O'Neil has accepted a play from Harry Kire, a Californian, called "The Golden Fleece."
Allen Doane will start the coming season with "Kerry Goo," the play made famous by Joseph Murphy.
Burr McIntosh threatened bodily harm to a man trying to photograph H. K. Taan in Conner's Dookey's theater.
Blanche Bates opens again with "The Girl From the Golden West" at the Belasco Theater in New York, August 7.
The new Astor Theater in New York will be opened August 30 by Annie Russell in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."
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The Schuberts and Max C. Anderson have leased the New York Hippodrome for 27 years. The yearly rental is given as \$250,000.
Miss Rose Stahl will be starred next season in James Forbes' play, "The Chorus Lady." She is now starring in this play in London.
James Slewin, a young New Yorker, has written a new play for James Hill, which will probably be produced in New York the coming season.
Orrin Johnson will play the leading role in the new play, "The Daughters of Men," by Charles Klein, which will be presented at the Hudson Theater next season.
Ernie Prigman is to replace Blanche Ring in the cast of "His Honor the Mayor," when the latter retires from the cast to begin her season in "Miss Dolly Dollars."
David Belasco said, and has been saying for some time, that he will produce a new play, written around Mrs. Leslie Carter, early in November and according to his custom he is maintaining the usual idiotic secrecy.

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TALENTED OREGON GIRL STAGES COMIC OPERA AT NOME



SCENE IN THE AMATEUR PRODUCTION OF "THE MIZABO."

Miss Marguerite Longacre, the talented singer and former Oregon girl whose reputation as a vocalist and dramatic reader is well known in the East, returned yesterday with her accompanist, Miss Spaulding, from a concert tour throughout Alaska. The itinerary covered 15,000 miles through Southeastern Alaska. Britton Columbia, Yukon Territory, Fairbanks and Nome. Miss Longacre has met with most flattering success, the Dawson News devoting two columns to her artistic vocal and dramatic work in that city. The concert referred to was given under the patronage of Major and Mrs. Z. T. Wood, who entertained extensively for Miss Longacre during her stay in Dawson. Major Wood was then the acting Governor of Yukon Territory.

Miss Longacre spent several months in Nome making a study of Eskimau music, which she expects to interpret in London during next season. This unique form of entertainment, which is practically unknown in Europe, will no doubt meet with instantaneous favor. These musicals will be preceded by interesting stories of Eskimau life with appropriate costumes.

During Miss Longacre's stay in Nome she had the distinction of having produced the first comic opera ever presented to an audience at the Arctic Circle. The opera was magnificently staged and estimated, and the cast included prominent society people of that city, with Miss Longacre in the role of Yum-Yum, a picture of which appears in this issue.

NEW BILL AT THE GRAND.

Attractive Vaudeville Programme Today and New Acts Tomorrow. This day closes the engagement of the attractive vaudeville bill which has been at the Grand during the past week. On the list are some very talented people. The bill is headed by the musical duo of Dawson and company, Armstrong and Holly and others. The programme is well arranged, having an assortment of specialties ranging from musical to athletic and singing acts. The performance will be from 2:30 to 5 and again at 7:30 and 9:30 sharp.

Tomorrow begins a new programme and one which promises to even surpass the present offerings. The topliner will be "Her Last Chance," a delightful and strongly acted comedy by Edith Turner and company. To give this little drama the services of four good actors. It will be found one of the most productions presented in vaudeville in the past year. Another especially attractive feature will be "Carissima," a romantic playlet presented by Cora Egan, Turner and company. For this special scenery has been painted and the costumes are pyrotechnic. The play is one dealing with spy life.

EARTHQUAKES AND FIRE.

Moving Pictures of the San Francisco Disaster at the Baker. The most complete series of views ever got together are those of Miles Brothers, now on exhibition at the Baker Theater. These pictures were secured at a great expense and at the risk of life and limb, being the only genuine ones made of the great disaster. They show scenes of San Francisco before and after the earthquake. The pictures run an hour and three quarters, covering the entire business district and the slides, sunbathing and other scenes. There have been many photographs taken of the ruins since the disaster, showing scenes as they are today, but the change of a lifetime is afforded a man who will spare the time to visit the Baker Theater and see vividly portrayed on canvas the burning of a great city. The queer freaks caused by the earthquake, the fire eating up block after block, people running madly here and there looking for places of safety, business blocks blown up and after the destruction, actually shown that one feels the horror of this, the world's greatest disaster. Two shows are given daily, Matinee 2:15 and evening at 8:15.

The Lifeslot Quartet comes well recommended. The press along the circuit says that this quartet is one of the best visiting the Pacific Coast. A comical turn is announced by Clifford and Mack, who will do up something new. John Burns will contribute to the entertainment by rendering the latest musical hit, "Ester," accompanied by illustrations. For the Grandiose there will be one of the most amusing films of the season. This is the bill which will be given every afternoon and evening this week and it should pack the theater.