

# THE THEATERS



FLORENCE BELL AT PANTAGES



RALPH CUTTINGS AT PANTAGES



THE GRUELLE'S COMEDY ACROBATS AT THE GRAND

**V**AUDEVILLE and moderate-priced stock entertainments are waxing stronger and more healthy and more beautiful and more prosperous every day in this gay young city.

The hunger for public theatricals seems to present an insatiable maw which cannot be gorged. All during the Summer, when the larger theaters have been closed, these vaudeville and smaller houses have rattled merrily along on the tide of fat-pocketbookism, never shutting up their doors until the lights were out for the night—to open again at the usual hour of the performances for the next day and evening.

The hot-weather heats to seashore and mountain-side apparently has made little difference in the size of the box-office receipts, and whatever diminution actually happening has more than been made up for by the patronage of the visitors in town. In short, these houses that have remained open the whole Summer long have been drawing large crowds all the time without any cessation whatever.

**C**OMES now some further evidences of this phenomenal prosperity.

Two of these theaters, namely, the Grand and the Star, have just completed repairs and luxurious decorations, looking new as a sock and span as a lovely Summer girl in her sweetest white frock. The Grand is very tastefully redone, and is commented upon by the patrons. The Star is about finished as to repainting, etc., and the Allen Stock Company (known to be excellent) will start the Star on its new policy of exclusive stock tomorrow (Monday) night.

Plans are about matured also for the enlargement and refurbishing of the Lyric, and rumor has it that some important additions are soon to be made to the Lyric Company, the result promised being a pretty little bijou house, with no fine a stock company as anyone would meet in a week's walk around town.

If this sort of thing keeps up, and we can get attractive plays deftly handled by clever artists at a small price, the larger houses will be obliged to put up rather stiff attractions to hold their own in the competition that is to follow.

**O**F COURSE the big shows at above a dollar a throw excite the fashionable appetites in all of us, and we will go there, if we can raise the price, anyway. Fantages has not felt it necessary as yet, apparently, to indulge in the joy of housecleaning and redecorating—but that house has not been a whit behind the others in its successful campaign to win ducks from the public.

Altogether, we may chronicle plenty of present satisfaction, and the prospect of much joy to come in the amusement world in Portland. Soon, only a week or so, and we shall begin to note the openings of the larger houses, the annual visits of the traveling troupes. Everybody in the city has money. So why is it not the time to feel happy?

## A WHIRL IN THE MOTOR PLAY

Come, it is too hot to attempt any heavy thinking about the drama. This is the era of the auto play, so let's write about motors, says C. W. C., in the Chicago Record-Herald.

This mood was inspired by the perusal of an epistle reading in part: "What chance has the young dramatist today whose creations are of the Suderman, Hauptmann, D'Annunzio, Ibsen type, and who cannot even get consideration at the hands of producers because it is his misfortune to be looked upon as a mere youth without any reputation to back him up, and because the commercial spirit of the age hinders his most artistic cravings for the beautiful in literature?" It was the last straw, this appeal as to an oracle for the solution of such a problem in the middle of August, when one feels that he is being stewed on casserole. Reason began to topple on its throne, and a frivolous expedition to study the dramatization of an automobile was the result. This is what happened.

You wander gayly over to the Colonial



MISS ETHEL ROBERTS LEADING LADY AT THE STAR



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DUHAN-FRANCIS CO. IN 'THE HOLD-UP' AT THE GRAND



WARDA HOWARD AT THE LYRIC



LILY BRANSCOMBE AT THE LYRIC

Theater, and explain your fell purpose to Messrs. George Wood and A. Tesen Worm, whose mission in life is to take advantage of the mental aberrations of the representatives of the press. It is

about 10 o'clock; the great race for the Vanderbilt cup is about to begin, and the time is ripe. The pair of critics' guides say the "open-sesame" to the doorkeeper, and a moment later you are behind the

manager, who wears a velvet jacket, and ramble out into the dimly lit chaos behind the drop to investigate. A group of steeze hands in overalls and mechanics wearing motor caps are clustered about two torpedo-boat destroyers mounted on wheels. You join the throng, look the machines over with the owlish eye of a rank amateur and conclude that they are really the real thing. Then you begin to ask a million fool questions.

Do the motors really work? Most emphatically, and at full speed—horsepower. Do the wheels go round? Certainly, but they are thrown out of gear, and are driven by a separate electric motor. Why? To guard against accidents; it would never do to have a machine jump its carriage and but through the side of the building. The auxiliary battery, it seems, can be shut off in the twinkling of an eye. Then you observe that the wheels are set on rollers, like the old-fashioned "home trainer bicycle," and plan that whole device can be moved along the stage in grooves, and begin to grasp the theory of the game.

One of the motors has a sharp beak, and is painted green; it declares to be an exact reproduction in every detail of Barney Oldfield's "Green Dragon." The other has a square nose and is white; it is a model of the White Flyer. Then you feel the tires; they are as hard as rock; you insist upon having the spark started, and comport yourself in the true "show-me" spirit of Missouri journalism. Just as the demonstration is concluded some one says that it is almost time to start the race, and a panic ensues.

"Want to ride in one of the cars?" Mr. Coles asks. "John, Farnon did it last night." You jump at the chance.

Some one grabs your straw hat, turns up your coat collar and jams an automobile bonnet upon your brow. You are guided through the gloom to one of the cars, and hoisted into the saddle, where you sit for a few seconds, expecting the worst. A pistol cracks; a youth in auto costume starts the spark whirring, rushes out to the bowdrip and cranks up; then clambers beside you to take charge of the wheel.

"Chug-chug-chug" goes the engine; the frame begins to vibrate, and the curtain goes up. "Bend over, blisses your accomplice, above the infernal noise. You remember that this is your first and probably only appearance on any stage, and try to give an imitation of Hemery or Sizer.

Not a sensation is lacking except the breeze; you feel as if you are riding upon the pilot of the 20th century limited. You glance at the dark mass of people in the theater, but the only stage fright you feel is a slight apprehension about the exact moment of the explosion, that seems to be at hand. "How do you like the scenery?" asks your driver. You glance at the back drop and see dim, shadowy outlines of hills and trees, cast by a cinematograph, whirling past you. "How fast are we going?" you gasp. "About a hundred miles an hour," he responds with a grin, as he tugs with mimic fierceness at the wheel.

After you have traveled 100 miles, the front drop falls, and a stage mob emits a piercing scream close to your right ear. It is the finish, and you know that out in front Elsie Jarvis, Henry Donnelly, Otis Harlan and Arthur Stanford are doing a

Howdy-do-Come-Again-Good-bye, she whisks away to "go on," and the mania returns.

Then you are delivered into the keeping of Albert Coles, an accommodating stage

cakewalk of rejoicing over the victory. You jump out and stalk about, thinking that it is great to be an actor. You notice that the rival machine which you had been racing is 20 feet ahead of your own. A bitter jest has been played; you were given a ride in the leading car. Then a chauffeur drops a monkey-wrench upon your toes, and you rush for the stage door.

But you will have no worries of "the Suderman, Hauptmann, D'Annunzio, Ibsen type" for some time afterward.

## NEWSPAPER LIFE ON THE STAGE

There has long been a popular supposition that no play dealing with newspaper life would ever succeed, and "The Senator's Vindication," by Henry Gardner Hunting, which deals largely with a reform newspaper in a small town in Illinois, is the latest attempt. It is to be produced in Chicago. The scene of the first act is laid in the office of this country newspaper, and the comedy is largely supplied by those small details of life which are thoroughly familiar to workers on newspapers, but perhaps somewhat foreign to the great public which has never seen the inside of a newspaper office.

It was very difficult to get the necessary properties for such a play as newspaper offices even in the small cities are equipped with so much paraphernalia that it would be almost impossible to transplant one bodily. One of the hardest things Manager Will J. Block had to do in staging this play was to unearth an old Washington hand press, an almost obsolete institution except in the very smallest towns where modern machinery has not supplanted the earlier form of printing press. Very few newspapers use the Washington hand press nowadays, and for that reason it was exceedingly difficult to get hold of one. Mr. Block sent agents to nearly 20 towns between Elgin and Peoria, hoping to get exactly the right model, and he finally succeeded in purchasing what he desired at Peoria, Ill. The press had been used in getting out a small blanket sheet in that town.

One of the duties of Charles Richman, who plays the part of the editor in "The Senator's Vindication," was to manipulate ink rollers and print newspapers in full view of the audience. Mr. Block has been compelled to hire a union printer to get a general foreman of this office in the first act. This printer has never been on the stage before, and will not speak lines, but naturally one could not expect to be able to set type, make up a form and put it on the press without previous experience.

There have only been two other plays in which newspaper atmosphere was introduced. The first of these, "The Power of the Press," enjoyed great popularity about 10 years ago, but no attempt was made to reproduce the inside workings of a newspaper office. Another more recent production was "The Stolen Story," in which two acts take place in the city room of a big New York daily. There is no ground for comparison between "The Stolen Story" and "The Senator's Vindication," however, for the scenes of the latter take place in a small country town and deal almost exclusively with the atmosphere of a small village publication, where the editor writes city items, advertisements, records deaths and births, prints obituary poetry and makes himself a guiding spirit in local politics. The plot of "The Senator's Vindication" is evolved through the efforts of the editor of the Wyndham Clarion to expose what he believes to be a great wrong committed by the leading politician.

## KELLIE IS AT THE GRAND.

Last Performance Today—New Bill Starts Tomorrow.

Today is the last chance to see the wonderfully good show at the Grand. Edward Kellie is by far the best story teller heard here in many a long day and a neater act than that given by Joe Whitehead and the Grierson sisters is seldom if ever put on the stage. Those mentioned are only two of the many good acts on this bill and one cannot do better if an hour is to be killed than attend the Grand in the afternoon from 2:30 to 5 or in the evening from 7:30 to 10:45.

Next week's bill has for a feature Harry La Rose & Co., who present Will M. Cressy's excruciatingly funny one-act playlet, "The Sailor and the Horse." Of this act the Denver Times had the following to say when it appeared at the Orpheum in that city: "There is really a good act at the Orpheum this week which is bound to please. In fact 'The Sailor and the Horse' would be of interest to almost anybody, so different is it from the many clever playlets seen on the Orpheum stage. The Harry La-Rose Company has been featured on vaudeville bills throughout the country, but they came fully up to expectations when they made their bow to Denver last