

# THE STAGE



RICHARD THORNTON, LEADING MAN, BAKER THEATER



SCENE FROM "THE CRISIS" AT THE BAKER

WITH September come the first boom-booms of the theatrical cannonade.

The real season begins during this month. Flags are waving. Huzzas are resounding. Spouts are going up into the blue vault of heaven, saying, "Here, this way for the best ever."

The people are expectant, eager, appreciative, interested. The city was never so full. The population is increasing by leaps and bounds. The theatrical managers have provided bountifully for the civic delectation in the theatrical line. Assuredly, the prospect seems good.

THE event of chief interest today is the opening of the Baker stock season—the play being "The Crisis," Winston Churchill's stirring drama, talky of the Civil War and hauntingly sweet in its love story. Among the most conspicuous factors of the opening performance, in the nature of things, will be the pleasant welcoming of the players home again by the audience. From the time, four years ago when the first Baker Company was a rousing and lovely fad in town, there has never been such genuine and heart-felt applause and salvos of real sentiment in favor of favorite players manifested in any theater in the city. With their home coming it is sure that a semblance of the touching and inspiring old spirit will break forth again when the beloved actor folk step upon the stage. That will be the most beneficent feature of the occasion. Next comes the interest in the play itself, and the play is a very good one, strong and heart-thrilling. Each member of the company will receive a smile and hand-clapping and, in courtesy to newcomers (who appear for the first time in the Baker Company) they also will receive their appropriate testimonial of greeting.

PERHAPS the most interest is felt in the advent of the new leading man, Richard Thornton.

I have never seen him act, but I talked with him the other evening for an hour in his room at the Portland Hotel, and he impressed me as a remarkably sincere young man. He says he has had eight years' experience as an actor, playing first as the Count de Varville in "Camille," on which occasion he put up a job on Karl Herbert (now manager of the New Amsterdam Theater, in New York). The young man was stage struck, and had no experience, but he bluffed his way through and handled the part so well that he was allowed to play a ten weeks' engagement. Since that he has been in several companies. In "Othello," he played in Portland at the Marquam a few years ago. He has also played several engagements in melodrama on the road, and also several stock engagements, in, say San Francisco, where he alternated leads with Jack Gilmore at the Majestic; in Troy, Lowell, Pawtucket, Toledo and Detroit. His wits do not work as swiftly as Nat Goodwin's. But he is handsome and earnest and temperamental. His eyes burn, and he has a soul, and his handling of a role will reveal his intelligence. No one could have spoken more graciously or more earnestly when he said: "I hope they'll like me." I think the company, as it lines up, should give a good performance. The amount of enthusiasm at the Baker today will demonstrate the ascendancy at present of the craze for stock in this town. It will be enticing to a big degree. Everybody should be there, if only to see the people go wild.

FEW plays for the year are beginning already to see daylight in New York. A few have started on their careers in wowing the public favor and purse. It is too soon to announce any decisive failures or emphatic successes. All that is known is that the people are manifesting throughout the United States unusual eagerness to attend any sort of theatrical representation that has external indications of worth. The country is prosperous and exceedingly active during the day, and it unmistakably wants to be amused in the evening. That is the

theatrical manager's opportunity—the necessity of the public for diversion, and the necessity exists just now in a virulent form. It is almost a disease in America, and the managers and producers who keep their head, study the public as to what it likes, and pick wisely in the market, are in line with their competitors to win the good fruits of prosperity. It is certain that the public will be furnished a great amount of praiseworthy entertainment this year, and an immense amount of artistic achievement will be accomplished. Along with the good an enormous amount of bunco and bluff and mediocre offerings together with the utterly bad and meretricious will be presented for sale,

bought, used, liked, disliked, thrown away, accepted, rejected. BUT in the main, it bids fair to be a remarkably interesting season, active to the limit, swift in the extreme, gorgeous, and partially artistic. Within the next two months the bulk of the more important productions will have been brought out in the East at different points, the head center always being New York, and then will come the runs of the winners on Broadway, the spurring of all the road successes, new and old, over the country, the substitution of other bills for fresh failures on Broadway, and, then, after the holidays, when the idea of March hold sway, there

will be another gigantic churning up and yielding of some more fresh productions—the Spring openings and the manifold readjustments that become necessary after the theatrical year is half gone. IT is an exciting and enticing game for all connected with it, the writers of the plays, the owners, the producers, the players, all the infinite multitude who work to put the pieces before the public. And, when the piece is seen, then the public clasps hands with it and welcomes it as a new and valued friend, or it turns its head away and passes by on the other side. We shall get a wide assortment of the theatrical performances here at the Hellig beside the unremitting activity of the (stock houses), legitimate drama, skits, musical comedy, concerts, spectacles, minstrels, stars innumerable, road companies representing nearly every branch of above-average show in many departments of theatrical activity. The point is that there will be no dearth of shows. If the people want them they will go and see them. The prospects are that the people of this city want plenty this year. A. H. BALLARD.

### OPENING OF BAKER STOCK.

#### "The Crisis," Winston Churchill's Famous Drama Begins Season.

Everyone knows that the Baker Theater Stock Company will open its season today. There has been so much said and written about this popular organization the last few weeks that its name has become almost a household word with every amusement-seeker in Portland. When the sale opened last Wednesday for season seats, a line of people over a block long was waiting at the box office and this line continued unbroken throughout the day. It represented the best class of

people of the city and attested above all things else the great popularity of the Baker Theater and its favorite company. Manager George L. Baker spent an entire Summer in company with John M. Sainpolis in New York and the big Eastern cities collecting plays and players for this season, and many surprises and delightful ones are promised. Plays that have never before been seen in stock, some of which it seemed impossible to get, have been secured. The opening bill this afternoon, Winston Churchill's famous drama, "The Crisis," has only been to Portland once before, and that was when Isabel Irving presented it its opening season. It is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful plays of the period. The scenes are laid in the South during the period of the Civil War, and though it is not a war play in any sense of the word, still the intense atmosphere of the awful crisis in the history of the Nation pervades the entire piece. Miss Lillian Lawrence will still be leading woman with the Baker Company and this fact has caused hundreds of expressions of delight from all the old patrons. Richard Thornton, the new leading man, while yet a stranger to Portlanders, has every attribute that will make him dear to the hearts of theatergoers. There are other new faces and many of the old favorites, as will be seen from the cast, which is as follows:

- CAST OF CHARACTERS**
- Stephen Eric.....Richard Thornton
  - Colonel Carvel.....William Gleason
  - Judge Whipple.....John Stepping
  - Clarence Colfax.....Donald Howies
  - Carl Richter.....Howard Russell
  - Elphinst Hopper.....John Sainpolis
  - Tom Catherwood.....James Gleason
  - Jack Brinsmade.....Curtis Wilson
  - Maurice Renault.....Charles Seymour
  - Mr. Carter.....Harry Lang
  - Josephus.....William Harris
  - Ebony.....Thomas Harper
  - Virginia Carvel.....Lillian Lawrence
  - Mrs. Eric.....Mina Gleason
  - Mrs. Colfax.....Frances Arno
  - "Puss" Russell.....Frances Stosson
  - Anne Brinsmade.....Bertha Aalgren
  - Maudie Catherwood.....Lucille Webster



LILLIAN LAWRENCE LEADING WOMAN, BAKER THEATER CO.



GRACE AYLESWORTH IN "LIGHTS OF FRISCO" AT THE EMPIRE THEATER



HERBERT ASHTON AT THE LYRIC



MINA GLEASON BAKER THEATER CO.



FRANCES ROSS LEADING WOMAN, BAKER THEATER CO.



MR CHARLES MING, LEADING MAN, AT THE STAR



CHAS. A. MASON, WITH LEFT MELLO & CO AT THE GRAND

son with today's matinee, and a long line of favorite plays, as well as many that are new to patrons of melodrama, will be given as the weeks advance. This first week a new and thrilling melodrama, entitled "Lights of Frisco," will be the bill, and will without doubt find high favor with the patrons of the Empire. The company presenting "Lights of Frisco" is headed by Miss Grace Aylesworth, a regular Saturday's marked ability, and she is supported by a big New York company of first-class melodramatic people. The play is presented in a sumptuous manner and is full of scenic sensation and thrilling realism. There are many new mechanical effects, and the entire production in most natural and lifelike manner. The principal scenes presented are the Golden Gate harbor at night, the wonderful electric fountain, the beautiful rose garden in full bloom, the terrible earthquake scene, and a Chinese opium den after dark. These features are a few of the sights that will make old San Francisco famous the world over. The story of the play and the plot are withal natural and true to life, and the entire production will doubtless prove a great success in melodrama for many seasons to come. Besides tomorrow's matinee there will be given a special labor matinee Monday, and regular Saturday's matinee. Seats for the entire week are now on sale at the Empire box office.

### GRAND OFFERS ITS BEST BILL.

#### Headliner Mason and Kelly in "The Onion Trust."

Vaudeville, the best in the land, is promising this week at the Grand, beginning with the matinee tomorrow. The programme which the management announces is striking in the number of prominent artists. The acts, without exception, have played the big circuits of the East and made their mark. The headliner is "The Onion Trust," which, as an Eastern critic said, was improperly named since it should be called "The Laugh Trust." This is played by Charles A. Mason, who was starred here twice in "Rudolph and Adolph," and Lew Kelly, featured with "The Headwaters." These men, consequently, are known to Portland's theater-goers, for each of the comedians has made a hit here on former occasions. "The Onion Trust" is a scream from start to finish, and has played with the best managers of the country. In New York the act caused a sensation, it was so comical. Another feature is the Mexican Tourist Quintet, with five cultured singers. The act carries its own picturesque scenery, and is warranted to be one of the specialties that Portland will remember longest. Al Jolson, considered one of the most amusing blackface comedians and whistlers in the vaudeville profession, comes with new laughter material. Louis Pritz-Kow is a Tyrolean warbler and change artist. The act will be novel in many respects. "Hotel Asker" has been selected by Mark Sullivan and Rillie Deaves for exposing their knowledge of fun and humor. The act is a travesty along original lines, and requires the services of several people to present. The illustrated song will be rendered by James Bourke, and the Grandiscope will flash a film of funny incidents. Today is the last of the programme, which has been witnessed by thousands since last Monday. It numbers Bud Snyder, the famous cyclist; Charles P. Love, the wonderful xylophone artist; Dave and Percie Martin, sketch artists; the Trio, Pecker, in a singing specialty and other equally attractive entertainers. Usual Sunday performances.

### "THE STOWAWAY" AT THE STAR

#### Another Thriller the Bill Offered by Stock Company.

At the Star this week, starting with the matinee tomorrow afternoon, the Allen stock company will produce the thrilling melodrama, "The Stowaway." Perhaps this is the most famous melodrama that has ever been offered on the American stage. It was for years the strongest attraction that a theater could offer its patrons, and a dozen years ago

### MELODRAMA AT THE EMPIRE.

#### "Lights of Frisco" Opens Regular Season This Afternoon.

The popular Empire Theater will open its doors to the public for the sea-

### EVERY THEATERGOER HAD SEEN IT SEVERAL TIMES.

The rising generation, however, knows nothing of "The Stowaway," with its sensational situations and its ferocious plot. The revival of this sterling drama will be one of the events of the season in Portland. The play has not been seen in this city in more than ten years. This will make it practically a brand-new offering to the present amusement-seekers. "The Stowaway" was the first play in which a safe explosion was reproduced, and this bit of realism made the reputation and established the popularity of the piece. When the play was sent through the country the management secured the services of two famous safe-robbers to crack the safe in regulation style at every performance. The scenic requirements of