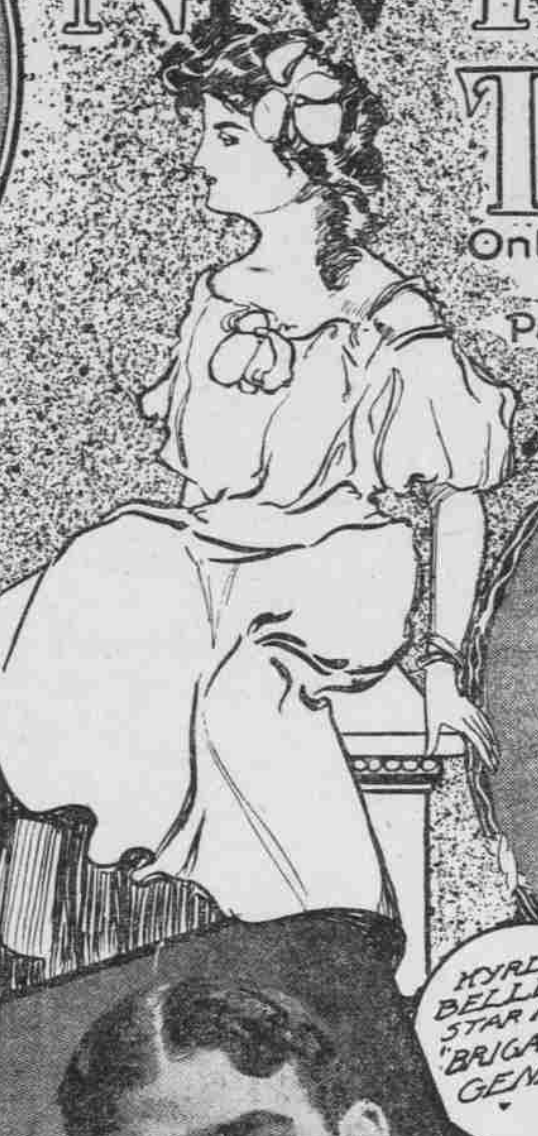


# IN THE THICK OF IT NEW YORK'S THEATERS

Only a Few Distinct Successes  
in the Outward  
Parade of Magnificent Sham



PAULA EDWARDS IN  
THE PRINCESS BEGGAR



KYRLE BELLE,  
STAR IN  
"BRIGADIER  
GENERAL"



FRED STONE  
STAR IN  
"THE RED MILL"



HENRY BLOSSOM,  
AUTHOR OF "THE RED MILL"  
AND  
"THE COMING OF GEORGE ADE"



BLANCHE  
RING  
IN  
"MISS DOLLY  
DOLLARS"



DAVID MONTGOMERY  
STAR IN "THE RED MILL"  
THE HIT OF THE PRESENT  
SEASON IN NEW YORK



FRANK DANIELS, JR., AS  
"SERGEANT BRUCE"

BY A. H. BALLARD.  
NEW YORK, Oct. 19.—(Star Correspondence of The Sunday Oregonian.)—Come with me in your mind's eye to the theaters of New York.

Shall I paint the picture? It cannot be painted in words. I can give you an idea of the color, the atmosphere, the warmth, the wealth of display, the outward parade of magnificent sham. I can note the prominent features over popular entertainments and indicate the reasons, and I can narrate the story of the universal hubbub. But the meaning of it all—the underlying purpose, the goal toward which all is tending—is difficult to perceive and impossible to express.

The season is now fairly begun. Openings follow openings fast and furious. I attended eight "shows" last week, and am in the midst of going to eight more the present week. So it has been since my arrival here, and so it will continue to be until the list has been completed. And by that time there will be abundant new material to hurry me up in going over the scintillating phantasmagoria again.

There has been an unusual amount of activity on the part of all producers of theatrical events, and the race for popular favor is under full way. The running is swift. The spirit of emulation is intense. The people with omnivorous amusement proclivities are overwhelming in numbers. The market will absorb any amount of good material. Yet the bulk of the offerings thus far have been below a high standard. The majority of pieces put on have been practical failures.

Therefore the few successes seem greater than they would if the general average had been better. Several attractions have been about passable and have enjoyed a fair degree of patronage, but the largest number of successes, which are themselves the best successes also, have been prepared by Charles Dillingham and his forces.

**A Perfect Comic Opera.**

Before Fritz Schief finished her splendid run in "Mlle. Modiste" at the Knickerbocker, and then went on the road (don't overlook that exquisite little masterpiece of a comic opera when you get the chance to hear it) it was in the air that Montgomery and Stone in the new musical comedy, "The Red Mill," also under Dillingham's management, would be the humorist of the hour. Well, that opened at the Knickerbocker the other week, and it will run on indefinitely. David Montgomery and Fred Stone are the inimitable and well-remembered "tin man" and "woodman" of the famous "Wizard of Oz."

"The Red Mill" is the very quintessence of all that is latest and best in musical comedy and burlesque combined. Fred Stone's abounding vitality and joy of living permeate his work. His loose-joint dancing and his bubbling fun, the quick and brilliant lines that are put into his mouth by Henry Blossom, who wrote the lyrics of the piece, the lovely air of deviltry, the knightly humor, the unobtrusive dash, the perfect taste, the beautiful stage settings, the quaint Dutch costumes, the big, finished, wonderfully drilled company, the sybil-like dancing and capering of Ethel Johnson, who played and sang "Tina," the barmaid (soubrette role), the really good music (I haven't heard anything in the theatre since Offenbach), it indeed it is reminiscent at certain places—all go to make up what I should call a perfect entertainment in so far as musical comedy can go. It is sweet and tuneful and musically as to music. It is clean and excessively sprightly as to dialogue and story.

It is graceful and beautiful in action, coloring and stage accessories. It is full of engaging character bits, affording a phenomenal cast ample opportunities for the display of their best efforts. The dancing and the ensembles are drama. It deserves all the praise that a theatrically weary brain can utter. It will cheer up any sane being and please any person who has ears or eyes.

and in other cities. Many of them will reach Portland during the year. Therefore it is worth while now to gain some knowledge of them in a bunch, am giving you straight tips on the shows and you may judge for yourself whether you want to attend them when they come to Portland or when you visit New York and they are running there. I met Mr. Feldenheller, the Portland Jeweler, on the street yesterday and he agreed with me as to Dillingham's attractions.

Among Dillingham's nine or ten star companies are some of the best-known and most talented artists on the stage in various branches of theatrical and musical art. The magnitude of his undertaking as a whole, the organization which conducts his work, the mentality that completes the schedule, the necessary judgment required, the knowledge of the public's wants, the brilliance of the stage and the modern stage and drama.

**Taste for Light Opera.**

His activities illustrate anew the general tendency of the public taste. The character of the shows always tell the predominating trend of the public taste. They lean for the most part to musical comedy, with the heightened effect of special stars and their personalities, always with the reservation that what has been known as musical comedy is being supplanted by real comic opera. It is to say, that although the public still wants graceful dancing, the bright colors of a pretty picture and sweet music, the character of the shows and the record of his results and inspecting his stage presentations, will afford an instructive lesson in the history of the modern stage and drama.

His activities illustrate anew the general tendency of the public taste. The character of the shows always tell the predominating trend of the public taste. They lean for the most part to musical comedy, with the heightened effect of special stars and their personalities, always with the reservation that what has been known as musical comedy is being supplanted by real comic opera. It is to say, that although the public still wants graceful dancing, the bright colors of a pretty picture and sweet music, the character of the shows and the record of his results and inspecting his stage presentations, will afford an instructive lesson in the history of the modern stage and drama.

**Bunco Doesn't Go.**

I cite this as a specimen of what a good piece, a good cast and a good theater will do in this city. It is a sure thing.

If a manager wants to attain such a result he must not indulge in any bunco at all. In this instance there is no bunco. In so far as other managements have permitted any element of their productions to admit bunco, they fail. They can let down in any branch the piece, the cast, or the staging—when they put the thing through to success. But they must play square here on Broadway, or they do not get the public in sufficient

numbers to justify the matter being considered a success.

Any one of the big managers could accomplish this fine success any season if they stuck to their intention to select the best of everything. The great difficulty they have in getting a play or getting good work out of a few overworked composers of light music. There are plenty of players and singers to be had by snapping your fingers, or beckoning. In fact, there are enough engageable people every day hanging around the big managers' offices to sink ten ocean-going ships. If I had a relative who contemplated coming to New York to go on the stage, I should feel like congratulating her if I heard that she had succeeded in obtaining a position out to service as a housemaid.

In the case of the actor and the actress who come here seeking engagements, many call, but few are chosen. There are many thousands who have won their spurs, and trade on their names as long as they can—as long as their names will draw the public. There is a large over-supply of unmistakably talented young people who should have first choice until the requirements of the stage labor market is supplied. But this just selection is not by any means followed. It is by many kinds of favor, other than actual merit, that parts are assigned. I should say that artistic merit is the least of the reasons that usually secure an engagement. It often enters into the transaction as a subsidiary consideration, and that is the most that can be said of it.

**Pathetic Poverty.**

Now what becomes of the thousands upon thousands of hold-overs and left-overs and misfits and poor deluded mortals who fail to get work? They constitute a tragedy that might occupy Shakespeare's hand. The fops and jetsam of the stage that loiter on the Rialto and knock at the doors of the managers' offices from day to day, asking the way daily and nightly from the lips of the determination may gleam by the side of some hopeless wreck who radiates failure in each line of countenance. Bales of bleached hair dressed in all the colors of the rainbow, painted masses of wrinkled skin doiled with glowing clothes and high-heeled boots flash in and flash out of the offices and up and down the street to question repeatedly that they have had and of plans they have—and the Lord knows what they are actually doing. Later in the Autumn, when the cold winds blow and the snows come, you could do five thousand favors a day in that Rialto district by buying and presenting to the stage crowd 500 ham sandwiches and 500 cups of coffee on any clear cold noonday of the frosty Winter season.

Yet with destitution glaring them all in the face—starting at least eighty per cent of those who come here to find work (it is conservatively estimated that less than 20 per cent of the whole obtain employment) even the least prosperous of them, and the ones who are worst equipped of all to get along here will answer your suggestion about going elsewhere by the regulation formula, "Oh, but that's so far away from Broadway."

They are worse than gold miners and prospectors. They have the bus irre-

trievably. They are hopeless. They want to do or die here—get a chance on a Broadway stage, or die in the attempt. Some of them get the chance. Some of

them die in the attempt. Most of the attractive girls soon undergo a psychological deterioration that renders them inhuman to the ignominy of self-sur-

## Remarkable Feats of Indian Fakirs

Of Course, All Are Illusions, Yet They Are None the Less Effective on the Astonished Beholders.

**Pearson's Weekly.**  
THE Indian fakir is the world's most wonderful illusionist. It is easy to declare his feats are all humbug; it is easy to laugh at persons who, having seen his performance, regard him with awe and wonderment; yet it is a fact that no European juggler, illusionist, scientist or other person has successfully performed any of the important feats accomplished by Indian fakirs. This article does not attempt to show how the tricks are done. It merely gives the opinion of those best acquainted with the subject—experts in occultism and hypnotism.

Understand, in the first place, that everything in a fakir's performance is illusory. Any attempt to photograph it results in failure. The plate reveals nothing. You are simply made to see things which do not exist.

And what things! This is one trick which you can see being performed in moments later up goes the fakir, until he, too, is lost to view. Suddenly from the sky you see and hear sections of the boy's body fall and strike the ground with a dull thud. Then the fakir reappears, descending the rope, first as a mere speck in the heavens, but gradually becoming larger as he nears the ground. The fakir gathers the boy's head and limbs and body, sticks them together and behold! the boy, all smiles and activity, runs once round the fakir, and then disappears as mysteriously as he came.

## Boy's Body Falls in Pieces.

You hold your breath, while the boy clutches hold of the rope and shines up it, monkey fashion, till he disappears from sight in the clear sky. A few following particulars. Their ship had come to a halt in an East Indian port after a journey of many thousand miles, when the fakir made his appearance, swimming through the surf and scrambling to the deck by the anchor chains. Thus he had no confederate nor any means of assistance aboard.

First he took from the hand of an officer the half of a coconut shell, from which when held aloft he caused twelve pailfuls of water to flow on the deck. A large earthenware dish was next borrowed from the pantry. The fakir poured into it a gallon of water and held it on his outstretched left hand, placing the other hand on his forehead. As the crowd of officers and men stood watching in wonderment the dish began to shrink in size until it entirely disappeared. They still stared as a brown object, like a grain of sand,

## gradually grew larger and larger and assumed its normal dimensions and was found not to have spilled a drop of the substance of our own mind.

Another performance of this same fakir was still more amazing. On first reaching the deck after leaving the water he had untied a large red cloth from the back of his neck, where it had obviously been stowed to keep it dry. This he passed round the company for inspection. It was merely an ordinary cloth, of coarse texture. Spreading it flat upon the deck, the fakir walked around it several times, muttering in his throat and occasionally turning his eyes upward. All eyes were glued to the cloth, under which something was apparently growing in size.

Suddenly out hopped a grinning and chattering monkey, which danced all round the fakir. He was followed a minute later by an ugly and venomous-looking cobra, wriggling away from the cloth to the feet of the astounded beholders. Once again something far larger than the others began to stir beneath the cloth of mystery. Soon a girl of about 14 years of age emerged and stood smiling at all round her. Who those sturdy Jack Tars stood rubbing their eyes and pinching themselves to make sure that it was not a dream the fakir clapped his hands and monkey, cobra and girl vanished into the air. Then quickly folding up the cloth into a bundle and without soliciting money from officers or crew the fakir leaped into the sea, swimming away with easy and graceful strokes.

As an explanation of these marvelous feats it is generally accepted that Indian fakirs, by long sojourns and meditation alone in the jungle and by hereditary or some secret power, are enabled by merely forming pictures in their minds to produce illusions in the minds of those persons who crowd about them expecting to see some wonderful feat. The pictures the fakirs conjure up they mentally impress upon the minds of their spectators.

## of that thing comes into existence within our own mind and is composed of the substance of our own mind.

If by continued practice we gain sufficient power to hold on to that image and prevent its being driven away by other thoughts it will become comparatively dense and be projected upon the mental sphere of others, so that they may actually believe they see that which really exists only as an image within our own mind.

On the other hand, if we can not hold on to that one thought—that mental picture—we can control it at will we can not produce its reflection upon the minds of others. Europeans fail to reproduce the feats of fakirs through weakness of concentration and of control of their own thoughts—which faculties are extraordinarily strong even in the average Hindu.

## Just Once in a While.

Just once in a while if we'd think to convey to those who walk with us life's devious way, in glances or words, half the joys that abide in our hearts because loved ones are close by. If we'd think but to garb in words' tenderest dress. A phrase that were sweet as a mother's accent, Care's road would be shortened by many a mile; If we'd think to be thankful just once in a while.

Just once in a while if we'd lay down our load. Of worry and work by the side of the road. And a bit of the love that we're feeling express. Would not you spur the feet to a magical stride. As they've ended their way down life's main-traveled road? Would not you step aside and thus lighten the load? For ourselves and for others we'd shorten each mile. If we'd think to be thankful just once in a while.