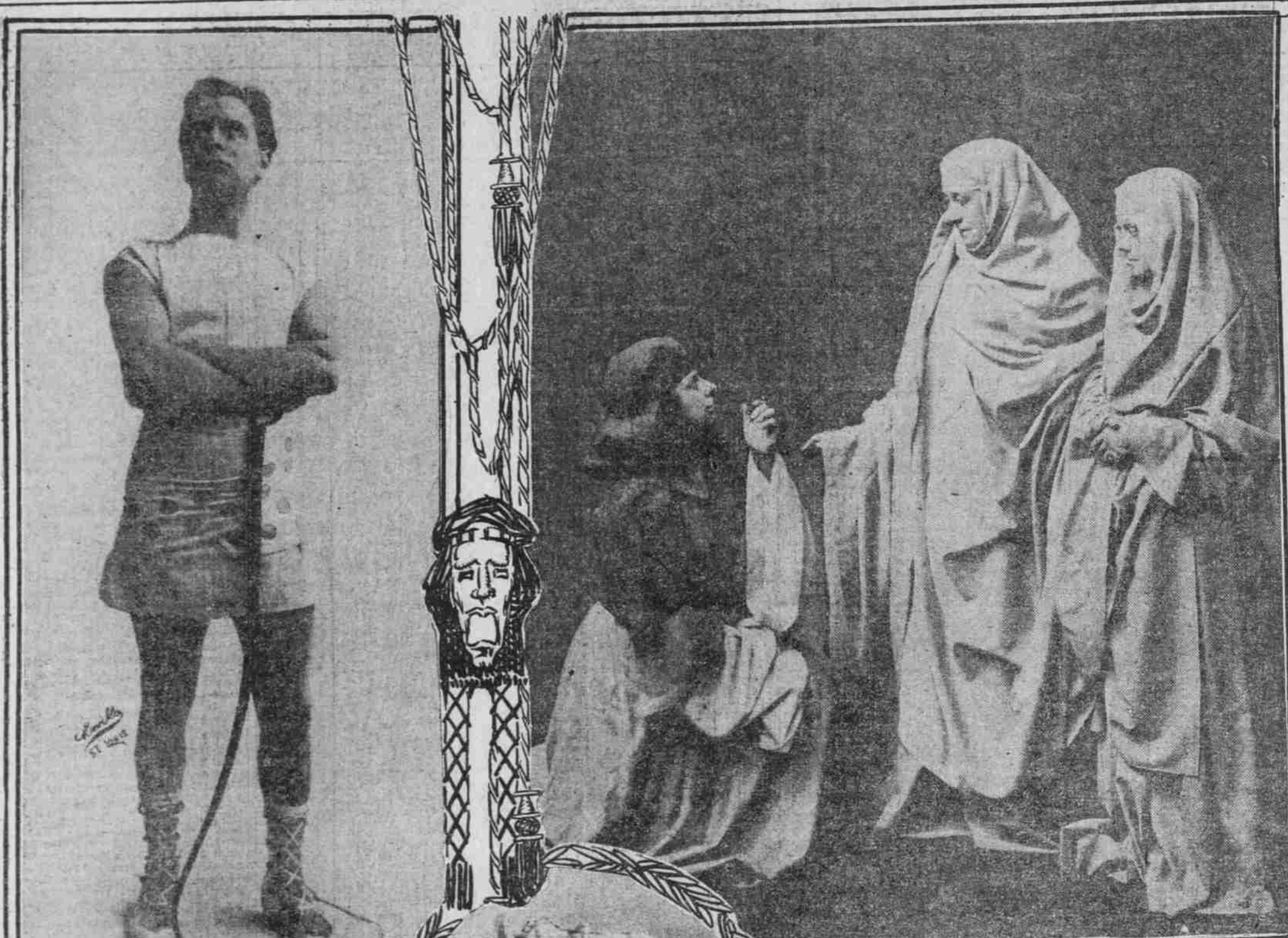


PRODUCTION OF "BEN-HUR" IS TRUE TO CONDITIONS OF PERIOD IN WHICH REMARKABLE SCENES ARE LAID

Excavation of Historic Cities Furnishes Many Suggestions That Are Followed in Klaw & Erlanger Play.



CONWAY TEARLE
AS BEN HUR

CONTEST WILL CLOSE TUESDAY.

Essays in the Oregonian's "Ben Hur" contest must be received by this paper before Wednesday, January 13. Pupils of the eighth and ninth grade grammar schools, of the high schools and of corresponding grades in the Catholic schools, are eligible to compete. The essays must be submitted by the opening of the production of "Ben Hur" at the Heilig Theater the night of January 13. The essays must be about 150 words long and deal with some phase of the story of "Ben Hur."

WHEN the Mussulman with a torch wiped out the great Alexandrian library, much of the written records of the world in which Ben Hur lived and loved perished in the flames. It was the most destructive fire ever started. For centuries the college professor had been trying to piece out the world's history with the pen by delving into ancient writings. Today he has forgotten books and ancient tongues, and among himself with a spade, he has plunged into the wildernesses of Palestine and Egypt and is digging out of heaps of rubbish and stone the confirmation of the stories of the Bible. The inscriptions, utensils and fragments of the armor have revived the interest of the thinking world in the reading of the novel "Ben Hur," and seeing the play, which is the only one on the stage which depicts accurately the life and times of the beginning of the Christian world.

The Palestine Exploration Company has made the newest find—that of the ancient city of Gezer. It is toward the ruins of this capital of an old world that the mother of Hur and Tirah wander when stricken with leprosy. In the Bible the first mention of Gezer is in Joshua 15:37. "Then Hiram, King of Gezer, came to help David; and David smote him and his people until he had left him none remaining." The story is told in I Kings, 12:31-37. "And this is the reason of the levy which King Solomon raised, to build the house of Jehovah and his own house, and Milo, and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer. Pharaoh, King of Egypt, had gone up and taken Gezer and burnt it with fire and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given for a portion unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And Solomon built Gezer."

The search for the city has gone on for many generations. All clues to its situation were vague. The city's importance is realized when its site on the great highway between Egypt and Jerusalem is observed. A few years ago it was agreed generally that Tell Jeter, near the village of Abu Shurah, four miles from Ain, was a point likely on the road from Jatta to Jerusalem. About 20 miles from Jerusalem was the site of the city. Excavations were made and remains of various civilizations found, from the mud walls of houses occupied by the cave dwellers to the dressed stone laid down by Solomon's workmen. Stone altars were found on which the Canaanite sacrificed children and the socket in which stood the sacred tree of the Canaanites, for these people worshipped a tree. A row of jars was unearthed, in which were the remains of sacrificed infants. In a circular pit close to the shrine a bronze snake was found, showing that in the pit had been kept the holy snake. The investigations of archaeologists in

FLORENCE
ST. LEONARD
AS TIRAH IN
"BEN HUR"

Palestine, Egypt and Assyria are constantly adding verifications to the Biblical narrative, but it is not often that so interesting and veritable a find is announced as the site of the ancient city of Gezer.

It is only by watching the reports of finds and copying the descriptions of utensils, houses, etc., that Klaw & Erlanger, the directors of "Ben Hur," can

after and reproduce accurately the details of the costumes, armor and homes of the ancient Holy Land as they do in "Ben Hur." Klaw & Erlanger's agent in London sends each month a full report of the secretary of the Palestine and Egyptian companies. The bulletins are interesting reading and "Ben Hur" becomes almost as modern as a play of the Civil War.

Maud Allen and the Classic Dance

"AS I think and breathe and live, so I dance," says Maud Allen in her book "My Life and Dancing."

Continuing, she says: "How came it about that you adopted the classic methods of dance? How did you get about acquiring the art of antique dancing? What gave you the idea of reviving the style of the ancients in your dances? These are the earliest questions of the curious critic."

"My manner of interpreting the emotional phases of music is a revelation." "This method of dancing is a remarkable novelty." "She has introduced wonderful innovations into the art of dancing." These are the pronouncements of the kindly and courteous critic.

They are wrong—wrong—wrong. This is how Miss Allen corrects them in her autobiography: "How I dance and why and what is my intention in my dance no one can say for certain. I, least of all. As for method, a searching cry from one of the wood-wind instruments in the orchestra, a deeper sigh from the violoncello, a sudden impulsive throb from the great bass, or a warning muffled note from the horns, are what I have to express as I dance above them on the stage changes."

"A novelty? An innovation? No indeed."

"When I first came to London one of my earliest friends, a critic, who was perhaps more poet than critic, said to me: 'You danced while Teocritus read his idylls in the Mediterranean twilights, and then you went to sleep—and have awakened just now. But you have not forgotten how you danced to the waiting and the laughter of the Sicilian dutes and to the commands of the Sicilian tabor.'"

The origin of dancing is fanciful

with the dim magnificence of myth. "We are not to believe," says Lucian in a well-known dialogue, "that dancing is of modern invention, born recently, or even that our ancestors saw its beginning. Those who have spoken the truth of the origin of this art affirm that it takes its birth from the time of the creation of all things and that it is as old as Love, the most ancient of the gods."

"Born in Egypt, the dance became nurtured in the cradle of art—Greece—and I loved to see in imagination the nine muses, led by Terpsichore, as they were seen by Herodotus in their beautiful measures, the violets of Hippocrene, and in other moods my mind conjures up the Bacchantes encircling Silenus with their riot of spontaneous movement. We have it from Aristotle that in dancing, all the passions of man found illustration 200 years before the Augustan era, and no Athenian festivity was shorn of this art which Simoëdes aptly described as 'silent poetry.'"

"If proof were wanting of the importance that the Greeks attached to dancing, it may be found throughout the pages of Plato's Republic, where it is prescribed as one of the principal branches of education. We remember the dances that Homer describes at the banquet in the Odyssey—if you would have them brought more vividly before you, spend an hour among the exquisite figures Panagra and Myrina in the British Museum, and in the galleries of the Louvre. A learned and enthusiastic student and professor of the art, M. de la Harpe, in his Dictionnaire de la Danse, has given us a wonderful study of these Greek dances of the Bacchantes, the Hypocorchora, Gymnopædia and Endymia dances. He says: 'From these four all the dances of antiquity took their derivation, and among them what more idyllic than that known as Caryatides, the dance

SCENE FROM "BEN HUR"



CHAS. M. HARRIS AS MESSALA
IN WALLACE'S "BEN HUR"

sacred to Diana, danced by noble Spartan maidens in the woods near Caryatides. It was a warlike measure representing the labyrinth of the Minotaur at Crete. To her also was sacred the purple dance, so called from the color of the tunic in which it was executed. Sparta, again, was the home of another dance sacred to Diana, the Horos, a kind of farandole, instituted by Lycurus to inculcate in the youths and maidens who danced it without draperies, the fearless modesty which was the boast of the Spartan national character. Even in such early days there were those in whom

girl with golden swords and bearing golden shields. It was a warlike measure representing the labyrinth of the Minotaur at Crete. To her also was sacred the purple dance, so called from the color of the tunic in which it was executed. Sparta, again, was the home of another dance sacred to Diana, the Horos, a kind of farandole, instituted by Lycurus to inculcate in the youths and maidens who danced it without draperies, the fearless modesty which was the boast of the Spartan national character. Even in such early days there were those in whom

nudity in woman awoke base thoughts, to whom Lycurus replied (Plutarch being his biographer): 'I wish them to perform the same exercise as men, that they may equal men in strength, health, virtue and generosity of soul, and that they may learn to despise the opinion of the vulgar.' "The youth of Greece, as we have seen, were educated to the dance with a view to the exercise and training of their muscles. Chief among their exercises were the Pyrrhic and the Memphitic dances, which were military in their character. "I think I can see the boats from Aegina, 700 years before Christ, landing their companies upon the Trinacrian sands. I can skip 500 years, and sit in the theater at Thourina, as it was then, listening to the third voice of Teocritus, himself a settler upon those whispering shores, reciting the idyll, compelling my limbs to away to the music of his thought while the chorus took up the burden of his tale. And then the Carthaginian war, the struggle for our island, the purple splendor and brutalities of the Roman triumph."

"I do sometimes think that I was one of these ancient dancers, whose duty in life was to express in motion the hopes, fears, passions, regrets, which rose in men and women's hearts, and found expression in movement when the world was younger and simpler and more accustomed to what Carlyle has called 'all sorts of sudden alcoholic' development of moods, dance and statueque pose, and they were directed by a leader who punctuated the measure with the click of oyster shells, a practice which finds its parallel in the use of modern castanets."

"The dance known as the Sikinnis was of even later sort, and the Kolias was little more than the twitching of the body muscles, which had its modern equivalent in the dance du ventre of the latter day Almées and Tazewas."

"The Greeks were not the only pupils of the ancient Egyptian dancers. The Hebrews during the time of the Egyptian captivity without doubt learned much of this art from their taskmasters. Most authorities agree that the dance of Salome must have been strongly dramatic representations of human passion, which found expression in the mimetic dance."

"Dancing in Rome speedily attained a development that fell far short of the Greek originals; but the art rapidly reached a condition of degeneracy, which it attained by slower degrees in Greece. Cicero and Horace both stigmatized dancing as an infamous practice."

"The power of dancing as a means of appealing to the populace did not escape the fathers of the early Christian church, and there are accounts extant of those early ritual dances. As early as 74 A. D. these dances were forbidden by a decree of Pope Zacharias. They were subsequently banned by other ecclesiastical dignitaries, but such dances still obtain at festivals in some occidental cities. The religious dances in honor of St. Martial and the dancing of the Devils in the East afford instances of their survival."

"With the birth of chivalry in the early Middle Ages we note the real renaissance of the dance which progressed farthest in France. At the French court dances developed into masquerades, and then into the ballet. Dancing continued to become more elegant and refined during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, who perfected the gavotte and minuet. But the end came suddenly. Men and women ran riot in the streets dancing madly the Carmagnole, the dance of the Revolution."

"Nations dance, when they dance naturally, to the tune of their destinies. The moment that dancing becomes conventionalized it loses the reason for its existence. Who, then, shall say that true dancing can be taught? As well try to teach the birds to sing, butterflies to soar by rote."

"It was in 1865 at the Theater Hall of the Royal Conservatoire of Music in Vienna, that I gave my first performance before an audience composed of distinguished artists, musicians and critics. My feelings can be more easily imagined than described. Many thoughts crowded upon me; pictures jumped haphazard before my eyes; memories of places I have visited; some scenes, Italian women, barefoot, filling past, the copper bowls on their heads flashing in the sun; the memory of a storm of water splashing with the sound of elfin feet against the cabin door. It was a most composite, jumbled crowd of thoughts, many of them seemingly quite inconsequent."

"I do not think in that brief eternity of time before my first public appearance that my craving and anxiety were for loved, at which I had worked with all the power in me, was about to be submitted to judgment. What if it should be misunderstood? That to me would have been bitterness itself."

In "My Life and Dancing," Miss Allen recalls many of the details of her childhood and later years, but neglects to mention the place and date of her birth, though she has elsewhere stated that this was Toronto, Ontario, and she is reported to be not far advanced in her twenties. Her parents moved from Toronto to San Francisco, where she studied music assiduously.

When she was about 15 years of age she saw Sarah Bernhardt act, and the beautiful movements of her body gave her the germ idea which sprang to life in her mind when she was studying music in Europe and in Florence stood gazing at Botticelli's "Primavera." Three years later she made her first performance—Boston Herald.

Shillings in New England.

Boston Transcript. The present generation hardly realizes how much it escapes by the new universal use in this country of the decimal system of money. There are now, not yet so very old, who can remember when a more arbitrary division of denominations prevailed. The writer of the literary letter in the Springfield Republican says that he bought a copy of Thoreau



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Is Martyr to His Stockings.

New York World.

Young Augustus March, who was a teacher in the Middletown, Conn., High School eleven, left that institution of learning in some haste Wednesday. As a consequence, the other students have ceased to wear their trousers "turned up."

They have been rivals in the splendor of their hosiery. Augustus bought and wore socks to school yesterday that were so loud his young lady teacher could not hear herself think; they drowned the sound of the noon whistles so that recess was late. They were pile green in better days, in a vivid red. To better display their glory, Augustus made a double roll in the end of his trousers. So, when he sat cross-legged before the teacher all of one stocking above his low shoes was glaringly visible, and much of a sacrament above the stockings' top.

"Augustus," said the teacher, blushing as red as the clocks on the pupils' socks, "pull down your pants and your trousers."

Augustus only grinned. The teacher reported him to Principal C. H. Woolsey, who suspended him indefinitely.

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