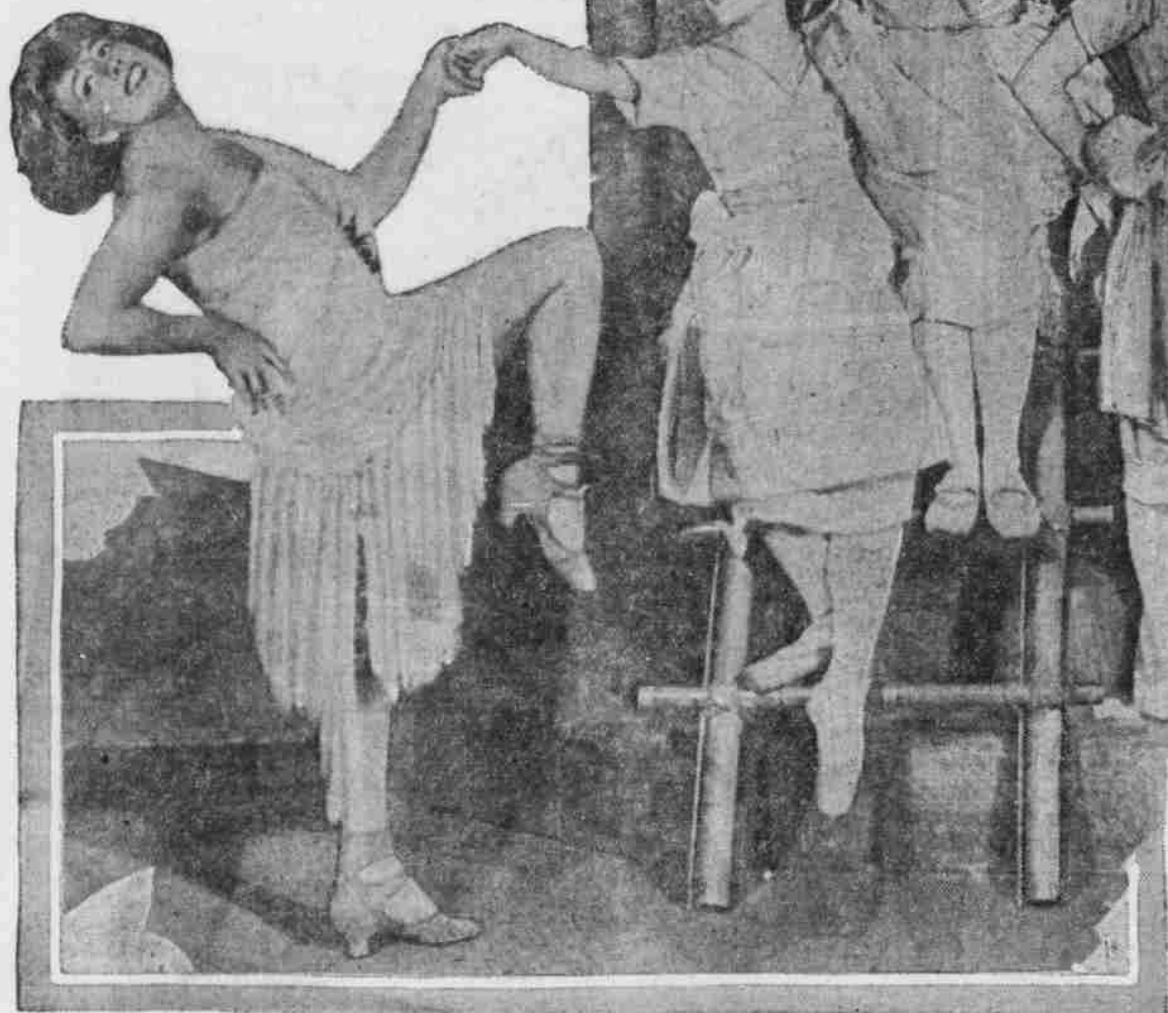


The South Sea Vamp Who Made an Angel's Fortune

For the First Time in the History of Broadway a stage Beauty Repays at the Rate of 2½ to 1 on the Investment—But Nearly Breaks Up Show!



Jeannette Methven, as Noa, shows the American girls some of the advantages of being one of the wives of a Polynesian Potentate.

AMONG those crowded lanes that criss-cross the white-lighted rias of New York City the definition of an angel is somewhat different from the one given in Webster's. He is hardly ethereal—this Broadway angel—though it's almost essential that he walk in some kind of a golden glow.

Generally speaking, he is a creature of the male sex, indeterminate age, bulging purse and a weak heart. Under the softening influence of a backstage friendship he is always supposed to make an appropriate gesture with his check-writing hand and never ask for a receipt. As motives go, in a commercial age, his are not ulterior. That is to say, he scorns a "return on his investment." He abinks at the sound of such brazen words as "profit" and "percentage." He simply yearns to make some dear, pretty person happy and famous—some one, perhaps, who couldn't turn the trick by herself.

But Broadway is now echoing to the crash of a shattered tradition. An "angel" in good standing suddenly decided that he could make the business of being angelic a paying proposition. A merely "personal interest" in one of those dear dancing creatures changes to a coldly professional interest in receipts and balances! And thereby hangs the tale of W. V. Faunce, the Pittsburgh capitalist, and Jeannette Methven, the "South Sea vamp" of a very successful Broadway musical show.

According to authentic reports

which accompanied a suit brought by Mr. Faunce to put the producing company in the hands of a receiver, his original interest in the show was confined to his friendship for Miss Methven. He wanted her to prevail and flourish—and consequently wanted the show to do the same. Toward that end he invested \$50,000.

The show paid from the start. Then suddenly Mr. Faunce lapsed from his status as "angel" to that of business man. He developed a proprietary feeling for the show, which, in the estimation of Mr. Carl Carleton, was all out of proportion to the money he had put in. He wanted a cut of the profits that momentarily staggered the Broadway producer.

All of this ended in court proceedings which Mr. Carleton has now settled by paying Mr. Faunce the sum of \$125,000. The Pittsburgh "angel" thus clears \$75,000 on his "protégé" in 30 days' time. Mr. Carleton will not say whether he considers this excessive. He does say he is glad the affair is settled. This is also taken by many to mean that he is glad that the rumor of Julia Sanderson's retirement from the cast has been officially quashed. This rumor was taken seriously because Julia Sanderson was absent from the cast several days.

Shy Behind the Scenes.

Attaches of the Casino theater remember Mr. Faunce, first of all, as a rather shy sort of man, made shy by his obvious unfamiliarity with the region behind the scenes. "He was as ignorant," said Jobby, the assistant stage carpenter, "as any stage-door John that ever tumbled over a sack-drop with a bouquet of posies in his hand." By ignorant, of course, the stage mechanic meant that Mr. Faunce was innocent of the nuances in backstage etiquette. For even he could hardly have failed to know that Mr. Faunce was a considerable figure in the affairs of men. Then, as now, Mr. Faunce was the general sales manager for the Oldsmobile company in the United States—the biggest job of its kind in the world. For all of his behavior when hedged in by props and pulleys he was respected for his standing and because he was recognized as a potential "angel."

Mr. Faunce's friendship with Miss Jeannette Methven existed prior to her present contract. In fact—though there is something of a discrepancy in their ages, Mr. Faunce being 53 and married—they are "old friends" in the Broadway sense; which means they have known each other ever since Miss Methven started her stage career.

Her stage career, incidentally, had been limited to small parts in a Shubert production about three years ago and in a later production of "Maytime."

Nothing was said about Miss Methven's financial affiliations when she came into the cast. She entered on her own merits and was given a contract to appear in the role of Noa at \$150 a week. She was and is a very pretty girl. Her features are regular. Her complexion is pale and its pallor is accentuated by a mass of black hair

that lends a suggestion of the spirituelle to her countenance.

A short while after he was first seen backstage at the Casino theater, Miss Methven approached Mr. Carleton and suggested to him that Mr. Faunce, a friend of hers, be allowed to make financial contributions to the production in order to assure its financial success.

Mr. Carleton's own words, as set forth in an affidavit filed in the New York supreme court, are as follows: "On June 30 last, while Miss Methven was under contract to me at \$150 a week, she came to me and said that William V. Faunce was interested in her career very much and was desirous of acquiring an interest in the production. She suggested that I arrange to meet him."

The meeting was arranged. Mr. Carleton did not ask for money. In fact, he was so confident that his show would succeed that he rather discouraged the idea. He insisted first and last that he did not want to sell an interest in the production.

"But he (Mr. Faunce) insisted," according to the affidavit, "that in view of his interest in the young lady, Miss Methven, he wanted to be certain above all that the show would be a success and would not fail for lack of money."

Finally, according to Mr. Carleton, an arrangement was made whereby Mr. Faunce was to put \$50,000 into the production. Mr. Carleton had already invested \$62,000 in the show and was personally responsible for many of the contracts made with the corporation by members of the cast.

Among those were agreements with Julia Sanderson, the star, at \$1000 a week in New York and \$1200 on the road; Frank Crumit, \$500 a week; Jack Hazard, \$750 a week; Allen Kearns, \$300 a week.

At the conclusion of their conference Mr. Faunce, who was then hurrying off to Pittsburgh, handed Mr. Carleton a check for \$10,000. He seemed to be afraid that the show might suddenly blow up while his back was turned. He didn't lay down any considerations then. He didn't even ask for a receipt. His sole interest seemed to be in his protégé's career.

Meanwhile, the protégé had been appearing in the role of "Noa," a denizen of that South Sea isle of "Tangier," whose vampish proclivities were always getting the best of her. Dressed in a loose and abbreviated gown garnished with hibiscus she seeks—in the show—to enthrall each of the tourists from Broadway.

Two of her lines are: "I had a million lovers before this one" and "My husband divorced me because I did not know how to cook tripe."

When Mr. Faunce had finally raised his contribution to \$45,000 she was given a song to sing and the plot was shifted a bit so as to give her role an increased importance. The public seemed to ratify this move. If box office receipts could be taken as a guide, things went along swimmingly for a while.

Miss Sanderson Out of Show.

Then complications set in from two directions. First of all, rumors began to reach the ears of Miss Julia

Sanderson, the star, that arrangements were under way to have her supplanted in the production by Miss Methven. As Miss Sanderson had spent 20 years in reaching her present eminence in the theatrical heavens, it is assumed that she didn't enjoy the suggestion that a mere novice might shoulder her out of the limelight.

Just what form Miss Sanderson's indignation took was never made clear in the records. She was absent from her role for a number of days and her name was removed from the electric light in front of the theater and it was freely reported along Broadway that she was out of the show to stay. She later returned, however.

About this same time Mr. Faunce suddenly demanded, according to Mr. Carleton, that the ownership be vested in a three-cornered partnership consisting of Mr. Carleton, himself and Donna Roberts, Faunce's daughter. This, to the producer's mind, was nothing less than a move to oust him from control by placing him in a minority on the dispositive. When this move had been accomplished, Mr. Carleton felt sure that Mr. Faunce would reorganize the company in such a way as to ruin its success. He refused to allow this arrangement, whereupon Mr. Faunce carried the whole transaction into court by asking that Mr. Carleton's affairs be placed in the hands of a receiver.

After papers had been filed and arguments made Messrs. Carleton and Faunce got together for another conference. The result was that Mr.



Left to right—Julia Sanderson, Frank Crumit, Jeannette Methven and John E. Hazard in a scene which gives Miss Methven an excellent opportunity to share the spotlight with Miss Sanderson, the star.

Carleton bought out the Faunce interest for \$125,000. Miss Methven refuses to talk. Several questions that the curious folk would ask her are therefore still unanswered. These curious would like to know among other things: Does Miss Methven feel that Mr. Faunce has sacrificed her career for money?

Is Miss Methven entitled to a broker's percentage of that \$75,000 Mr. Faunce cleaned up on his 30-day investment? What did Miss Methven say to Julia Sanderson when the latter returned to the cast after her already-mentioned absence?

Queer Beliefs and Superstitions About Dolls.

Excavations of ancient cities have brought to light many of the dolls of ancient times and they reflect many curious beliefs and customs. The ancient Egyptian dolls were never complete. The head, the arms, legs or even the whole body were always missing. This was so that if the doll came to life it would not be able to harm the children.

The dolls from the days of the Pharaohs all bear curious markings and the explanation is, according to a writer in Leslie's Weekly, that all of the little girls of about 10 years were employed in dancing choruses by the rich and their principal clothing was a triangular girdle of beads. The dolls all bear triangular markings of more accurate representations of the girdle.

The curious custom of leaving the dolls incomplete is still practiced by the Mohammedans, but for a different reason. The Koran forbids playing with the figure of a human or divine form.

But the mother instinct in little Mohammedan girls is just as strong as in any other race and they want dolls. So to get around the edict of the Koran the dolls are mutilated in some way. It is said that the great Mohammed himself used to sit on the floor for hours at a time playing with just such a doll to amuse the youngest of his many wives. She was 9 years old.

Hugh Capet, the first king of France, away back in the year 987, gave a fancy dress ball, at which he presented the ladies of the court with wonderfully made dolls dressed in exact reproduction of costumes worn by the favored ones. From that time until the Italian Renaissance French dolls were the finest in the world, and French men and women played with them almost as much as did their children.

It is told how sailors of the Spanish armada carried with them dolls as mascots and actually to play with. Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, entering the court of the king, Montezuma, on the evening of November 3, 1519, found the whole court seated on the floor playing with dolls! But for this history might have been different. Later when Cortez sent an expedition northward into what is now Texas, he found a curious worship of dolls among the Hopi Indians, the dolls being given to the children for toys after the ceremonies—a custom which persists among these people to this day.