

# ONE OF THE SCENES IN SPECTACULAR "BEN HUR"



The Dowry of Sheik Ilderim in the Orchard of Palms. A Scene From "Ben Hur."

Gen. Lew Wallace, the author of the celebrated novel of "Ben Hur," was besieged for many years by actor and manager who thought they saw in the novel material for a dramatic presentation, but Gen. Wallace steadily refused all applicants and stated that when a scenario could be shown him that would solve the apparently almost unsurmountable difficulty presented by the action of the story, that then and then only would he even consider such a proposition.

The late Lawrence Barrett at one time thought that he had solved the problem and nearly succeeded in persuading Gen. Wallace that the dramatization was a possibility, but the stage mechanism in those days had not been brought to its present state of perfection, and when

they came to work out the details of Mr. Barrett's scheme it was found that a proper presentation was an impossibility. It remained to Messrs. Klaw & Erlanger to solve the most difficult of all theatrical problems.

They were assisted by the most expert theatrical mechanics to be found in this country and after experimenting for many months a way was found to produce the illusion of the chariot race and the "Star of Bethlehem." It was then discovered that a dramatist was needed. One who not only understood the requirements of the stage but one who could sustain the high literary character of the novel. After a consultation between Messrs. Klaw & Erlanger, Joseph Brooks and Gen. Wallace, it was

unanimously decided that in William Young they would find a dramatist capable of carrying out their ideas—that Mr. Young succeeded in best answer to the words of Gen. Wallace, written after seeing the first performance of his play.

"After nearly 20 years of reluctance to have the scenes and incidents described in my book, 'Ben Hur,' translated to the stage, it is with a spirit of considerable relief that I am able to make acknowledgement now that final acquiescence was not an error, yet I do not regret the hesitation, because I doubt, if 10 years ago, theatrical invention and ingenuity had reached a point where adequate production of 'Ben Hur' could have been made within the limitations of

a stage covering an area of 40x70 feet.

"I was firm in my conviction that the crucifixion of the Divine presence could have no place in a drama of today, but aside from this I foresaw almost unsurmountable obstacles, theatrically speaking, in the meeting of the Wise Men with the 'Star of Bethlehem,' the chariot race, the gallery scene and the treatment of the miracle scene.

"The religious atmosphere, too, had to be preserved, and the greatest jealousy exercised in the general treatment of the theme in order not to jar the sensibilities of the Christian community which had given its greatest support and encouragement to my book.

"Nothing has been spared in the way

of painstaking preparations and they have called to their assistance a corps of experts in the various departments to give a complete and artful presentation to the play. I am particularly gratified at the tact and sensitiveness displayed in the treatment of religious episodes and feel that at last the characters depicted in 'Ben Hur' have given life and movement without profanation of any of the attributes ascribed to them in my book. It was after consultation with devout Christian friends and neighbors that I consented to this, believing if properly done a great moral lesson might be shown. As I said at the outset, I feel tonight after 20 years of waiting, that no mistake in this respect has been committed."

In transferring the book to the stage, the dramatist adhered faithfully to the story, omitting only such parts as would necessitate the representation of the Savior as a personality; the presence of the Savior being suggested merely by a shaft of light of marvelous brilliancy.

"Ben Hur" is a sublime drama, and the stupendous spectacle has a hold on all sections of the public in a manner that has not been characterized in any other production in the history of the native stage. While the scenic and marvelous chariot race and other features of the stage production command the admiration and astonishment of the spectators, the beauty and force of "Ben Hur" as a drama gives a lasting distinction to this, the most uplifting, sympathetic and soul-stirring play of this or any age.

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At no time in the history of the race has a science attracted more attention than is now manifested in Magnetic Healing. Because of the marvelous cures made by means of it, the scientific world is astounded, and the masses of suffering humanity are hastening to apply it to their diseases. One of the many advantages which this science has over all others lies in the fact that it cures without the use of knife or medicine. The most difficult and so-called incurable diseases yield to this method as if by magic.

One of the most successful promoters of Magnetic Healing in this city is Mrs. A. H. Hart, graduate of the Western School of Magnetic Healing. Attracting the attention of the scientific world and the sick and afflicted are turning to her for relief from their sufferings. All those who are ailing in any way should call on or write

**Mrs. A. H. Hart**  
205 Alisky Bldg. Phone, Black 2226.

by his subjects. The Bungloo gives it up in disgust. "All right" is his mournful resignation to the inevitable. It is worth the while to hear the Bungloo play variations on "All Right."

Alma Youlin is the Bungloo's sister, and Countess von Hatzfeldt, who assumes the role of the poundmaster's daughter, glory in the distinction of being the two youngest leading song birds on the stage today. Francis Lieb, tenor, especially engaged for this tour, has one of the sweetest voices in light opera, and is the latest addition to the company. Gilbert Gregory as the shoemaker and court philosopher is very funny. George Shiela, the scoundrel, and George McKay, the silent man of the piece, and Abbot Adams, the sleepy jester form a clever trio. Roguich Dorothy Choate, the inquisitive kid and Ada Deaves, Blimuff's wife, Myra Davis, the beautiful Catherine, a large array of singing and dancing girls, are "all right." The advance sale of seats will open next Tuesday morning for the entire engagement.

**"KING OF THE OPIUM KING."**

Those who attend the Empire theatre next week will have a trip to Chinatown. Commencing with the matinee tomorrow (Sunday), with a special holiday matinee Thursday, Thanksgiving day, an elaborate scenic production of "The King of the Opium King" will be given. The scene is the famous Chinatown of San Francisco. The first act shows the bay of San Francisco, with the Golden Gate in the distance, a revenue cutter in hot pursuit of a smuggler's yacht. The second act is a scene in the Chinese quarters underground and shows the interior of an opium joint. The third act opens with a street scene in Chinatown. A market in the heart of Chinatown on the celebration of Chinese New Year's day is another. In this act the wonderful acrobatic feat of the Chinese gymnasts takes place. Forming a human tower they rescue the heroine from the balcony of a Chinese restaurant, carry her across the stage and deposit her safely upon the balcony on the other side.

**"TOO MUCH JOHNSON."**

"Too Much Johnson" is a roaring comedy, for the fun begins with the opening scene and hardly ceases for a single breath until the curtain goes down on the last act. It will be the attraction at the Baker theatre all week, beginning this afternoon, with a special Thanksgiving day matinee Thursday.

A wealthy man has been deceiving his young wife in order to have a pretext to make periodical little trips out of town, pretending to visit a sugar plantation in Cuba, the property of a friend named Johnson. Finally one day his wife and her mother decide to surprise him by accompanying him on a fit of desperation, he is obliged to carry out his story, trusting to luck to get him through, and down to Cuba they go. A man named Johnson happens to own a sugar plantation, but not the friend Johnson he expected to find, and a series of ridiculous complications ensues.

**"YON YONSON."**

"Yon Yonson" comes to Cordray's theatre next Thursday, opening with a Thanksgiving matinee under the direction of P. J. Kennedy. The great scene of the play is in the second act and represents most faithfully a long and one of the most realistic scenes ever put upon the stage. Mr. Neise Erickson, one of the best baritones in the country, plays "Yon Yonson" and one of the features of his performance will be his singing of Swedish folk songs in the original tongue. Minnie Sharp plays the Widow Lavin, and is one of the best character women in the dramatic profession. Besides these two there are in the company L. W. Little, Harry Bond, James C. Mack, Thomas O'Brien, E. H. Bender, Frank Thorndyke, W. H. Kout, J. F. Powers, F. W. Warren, Miss Helene Ridgeway, Maude Le Page, Madge Wood, Mae Bennett and the Lumbermen's Imperial Comedy Four quartet.

"A Little Outcast" follows "Yon Yonson" at Cordray's theatre, December 2.

**"A MILLIONAIRE TRAMP."**

"A Millionaire Tramp," a comedy-drama, with a good plot, comes to Cordray's theatre tomorrow, opening with a Sunday matinee and remaining until and including Wednesday evening. Several years ago a young man in a small Ohio town conceived the idea of adopting the theatrical profession. He did so and was successful. He was engaged to marry a girl of his own town. Her parents refused to allow their daughter to marry an actor. They had naught against the man, but would not accept his profession. The young man took to drink and soon was unable to retain an engagement with a company. He awoke at last to find himself a tramp. Drifting about from place to place he came one day to a small Indiana town. There was a little repertoria company billed there that night. They were short one actor, so he was dressed up and put on for the part. His first entrance brought him face to face with the leading lady, his old sweetheart. This is the story of Lawrence Russell's "A Millionaire Tramp."

## THEATRES

(Continued from Page Twelve.)

oco houses. The company did well in its week at the Seattle theatre in Seattle, and leaves the Northwest with the well wishes of the theatre-going public.

### "A GENTLEMAN OF FRANCE."

In the third act of "A Gentleman of France," which was the vehicle introducing James Neill and his excellent company to a Portland audience again last night at the Marquam Grand, Mr. Neill engages in a sword combat with six hired assassins, and it is one of the most realistic reproductions of a battle to the death ever portrayed at a local playhouse. The scene has become

justly famous wherever the stage version of Stanley Weyman's thrilling romance has been witnessed, and contains all the elements to key up the interest of the audience to the highest pitch.

Harriet Ford has dramatized the action of the play around the two leading roles. The other characters are for the most part supposed to wear rich court costumes well, talk little and act accordingly. A very entertaining element of comedy is supplied by John W. Burton as Simon Fleck, as servant to Marsac.

James Neill is forceful and very pleasing as Gaston de Marsac, but his

portrayal is not as full of dramatic fire and well-developed action as he achieves in the lighter parts. In the climaxes he was thoroughly convincing, and the audience evinced its appreciation by constant curtain-calls.

Edyth Chapman gave the role of Mile. de la Vire a beautiful interpretation.

take any one who has not the consent of her parents," said the manager.

### CUT DOWN ADVERTISING.

The Theatrical Managers' association has cut down its advertising in the various publications by just one-half. Where they formerly ran a four-column "ad," they now take a two-column "ad." The same economy is displayed with regard to all advertising. The association held a meeting on Thursday evening, but transacted only routine business. Meetings are subject to a call from any member.

### SIGNS FOR NEW PART.

Julius Adler received a letter today from Charles Wynante, formerly of the Baker and Noll-Morocco companies, and his many friends here will no doubt be pleased to hear that he is in perfect health. He is with Nat Goodwin's company for the part of Demetrius in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which will be produced in Boston next week.

### "MR. PICKWICK."

De Wolf Hopper is said to have personally selected every player in his "Mr. Pickwick" company—the attraction at the Marquam Grand theatre next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights, November 24 and 25, with a special matinee Wednesday.

The costumes are from drawings of first edition book illustrations approved by Dickens himself; the scenery is a series of color pictures painted from photographs of the original Pickwickian scenes in rural London. Mr. Hopper engaged those he thought were the best for the Dickens types. The cast is the same as that employed all last season, including the three-months' run on Broadway. The Mr. Pickwick of the cast is of course De Wolf Hopper, the same jolly Hopper whose starring tours in "Castles in the Air," "Wang," "El Capitan" and "The Charlatan" made these operas famous. Sam Weller is interpreted by Digby Bell. Tony Weller is in the hands of Frank Belcher. Alfred Jingle, the character hit that long ago gained fame for Henry Irving, is done by Louie Payne. Arabella is impersonated by Marion Field, who has appeared in grand opera and as Cecilia in "The Show Girl" and in Lucie in "The Wedding Day." Polly is played by dainty Marguerite Clark, who gained fame in a night in this character when Mr. Pickwick was first produced.

The Mrs. Bardell of the Dickens classic is Laura Joyce Bell's idea of this noted Pickwickian character. Mrs. Bell is the wife of Digby Bell. Miss Wardle is cared for by Miss Vivie Ogden. Mr. Winkle is represented by George Chapman. Mr. Snodgrass comes in the person of Augustus Collett, and the Fat Boy is Guy Bartlett, whose stage fat, unlike that of Mr. Hopper, is genuine flesh. Mr. Wardle, Fache's father, is entrusted to J. K. Adams, the stage manager of Mr. Hopper's production. Others of the cast are Frank R. Willing as Mr. Tupman, George Jolland as Colonel Builder, George B. Williams as Dr. Sizzmer, John Barry as the Landlord, Charles Homan as the Waiter, Gertrude Taylor as Miss Tomp-



Neise Erickson, in "Yon Yonson" at Cordray's.

She realized the fullest depths of the character to the manifest satisfaction of every one.

"A Gentleman of France" will be presented for the last time this evening. President Howard Elliott of the Northern Pacific and his party will have boxes.

Mrs. Robert Morris (nee Elsie Esmond) tendered a theatre party to numerous Portland friends at the matinee this afternoon.

### COMPANY BEES DAMAGES.

Because of the delay which resulted in postponing the opening of the Neill company at the Marquam Grand from Thursday to Friday nights, Business Manager Edwin H. Neill will seek to recover damages from the Northern Pacific Railroad company. Mr. Neill claims that the delay was entirely due to negligence, and he wants a sum proportionate to the amount he claims to have lost by missing the performance.

### WANT LOCAL CHORUS GIRLS.

A number of local maids may accompany Mason and Mason in "Rudolph and Adolph" as chorus girls if they try out to the satisfaction of the management. Several of the bevy of former beauties have met with misfortune, two lost their voices, one sprained her ankle, another her wrist, and now the company is six girls short. "Of course, we will not



JOHN M. SULLIVAN. At the Empire.

kins, Florine Murray as Liza, Nellie Victoria as Sully and Felice Robinson as Sue.

Besides the principal players there are 50 other persons in Mr. Hopper's company, bunsmen, gamekeepers, seminary girls, countrymen—in a word—the chorus.

**THANKSGIVING AT THE MARQUAM.**

"The Storks" will be presented as the Thanksgiving attraction at the Marquam Grand theatre, opening with the matinee Thursday, continuing Thursday, Friday

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