

Stage Land



ST. GEORGE DAGLENN



IN THE KING OF COWBOYS STAR

SCENE FROM "PARSIFAL" AT THE MARQUAM GRAND. WEEK OF SUNDAY FEB. 16.



CLAIRE GRENVILLE IN "45 MINUTES FROM BROADWAY" AT THE HEILIG. TUES. & WED. NIGHTS FEB. 18. & 19.



SCENE FROM "45 MINUTES FROM BROADWAY" AT THE HEILIG THEATRE



SCENE FROM "THE BISHOP'S CARRIAGE" AT THE BAKER.



IZETTA JEWEL WHO OPENS IN "BISHOP'S CARRIAGE" AT THE BAKER.

DRAMATIC CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

HEILIG—Tuesday and Wednesday, musical comedy, "Forty-five Minutes From Broadway"; Thursday, Friday, Saturday, "Buster Brown."
 MARQUAM—All week, dramatization of Parsifal.
 BAKER—Resident stock company in "In the Bishop's Carriage."
 LYRIC—Allen stock company, in "The Nancy Hanks."
 EMPIRE—"Dora Thorne."
 GRAND—Vaudeville.
 STAR—French stock company.
 PANTAGES—Vaudeville.

NEXT WEEK'S OFFERINGS

HEILIG—Monday night, Paderewski recital; Wednesday night, Eichenlaub recital.
 MARQUAM—Clay Clement in repertoire, "The New Dominion," "The Bells" and "London Assurance."
 BAKER—Resident stock company in "Graustark."
 LYRIC—Resident stock company in Dumas' "Camille."
 EMPIRE—"A Battle for Life."

BACK TO THE DAYS OF TRAVELING STARS

By J. F. S.

ARE we rapidly drifting back into the old days of the traveling star and stationary stock companies?

Everything points to that outcome. Stock companies, for the past score of years confined to the larger cities, are now springing up everywhere. There are three of more or less merit in Portland. Their managers are forming combines and gradually extending the number of houses, so that men such as Baker in Portland and Denver, Bishop in Oakland, and Ferris and Morosco in Los Angeles practically control the popular priced attractions for the Pacific coast.

The coming of the stock companies themselves, with permanent stars and members of the company was innovation enough for comment. But when these have been succeeded by traveling stars the situation assumes an added, and more fearsome, interest.

It cannot be denied that under the old system the most famous figures of the American stage sprang up and flourished. The Booths, McCullough, Jefferson, in fact nearly all the stars of the century grew up from the hard and somewhat stony soil of stock. But the hurry and rush of the work precluded the possibility of much that was fine and the results when a traveling star attempted to play with a company who did not know him and who pulled against him were hard on the actors and worse on the public.

Just at present the stock companies are generally regarded as a half-way house between Averaus and the Elysian fields. Most actors hate them but console themselves with the thought that they are good training. Personally I'm not particularly interested in training schools for young actors but they appeal to me as an excellent training school for the young critic. They give you an unrivalled opportunity to see how many really bad plays have attained popularity in years past.

It's a great comfort to know that you are to be given a second-hand chance to whack at all the plays of the past 10 years and that one week is bound to come up, like an accommodating tennis ball.

Their merit is that you see plays which otherwise you would probably miss. The fact that they are shown at very reasonable prices puts them within the reach of the poorer classes of people, who may get some good out of them.

Their fault lies, as has been said, in the hurried work of the actors, which precludes careful production. They have no time to "grow into" their parts, to study them carefully and to throw any of the finer shades and shadows into relief. That this trouble will not affect the pleasure of most of the audience is true, but at the same time the great desire of the actor who holds his calling in esteem must be growth, and artistic growth in a stock company is as hard a thing to compass as is literary growth on a modern newspaper.

Mary Anderson, who grew up in the age of the stock companies but kept herself free of them for the most part, has no very high opinion of them as a training school for actors. In her book of published memoirs she refers to the stock companies in the following highly interesting fashion:

"Few theatre-goers today realize the difference between the old traveling star and the stationary stock company system and the present one when individuals who have soared high in the theatrical firmament in spite of it, on dramatic art generally, principally because of the lack of time on the respect and importance due to it as an art.

"Besides it seems to be anything but conducive to intellectual or artistic growth or to originality. It fettered and cramped one and its conventionalities frequently descended to mere tricks. I soon learned that the training of such companies was worse than no training at all. Each week brought a different star, with a round of new plays to the companies (long runs were almost unheard of then), and they had frequently to memorize their parts while standing in the wings during the performance,



EDWIN LAMAR WHO PLAYS "TIGER" IN "DUSTER BROWN" AT THE HEILIG. THUR. FRID. & SAT. NIGHTS FEB. 20-21-22. MAT. SAT.

awaiting their cues—"winging a part" it was called. Rapid study, a hurried rehearsal daily, the rearranging of their costumes for the ever-changing plays, left them no free time to reflect upon the characters they were to enact, and for the uncommon amount of work they gained but a meager salary and a faculty for memorizing, which is the smallest part of an actor's art."

But far be it from me to wish to see the stock companies done away with. One of the chief joys in an otherwise eventless recording of deaths and births lies in the accusations of this or that member of a stock company that she is being spitefully discriminated against, week after week, in spite of evidences of great popular approval, while no traveling star, unless perchance it be the leader of a light opera troupe, would deign to show pique at the ravings of a small-town reviewer.

So, long live the stock companies!

It really looks as though at last we are to be treated to a series of Ibsen matinees. Mr. Baker has given the word that as soon as a competent leading woman arrives he intends putting on some of the more "actable" of the Norwegian classics. And later on in the year, when the weather permits, there is to be an open-air performance of "As You Like It." There should be no doubt of the success of both from the commercial standpoint. It is scarcely conceivable that even in Portland there are not enough people interested in the higher forms of the drama to make these matinees successful from the viewpoint of attendance.

As for their presentation—that of course depends on the members of the company. Nothing is sadder than the usual Shakesperian performance of ordinary players. It can safely be guaranteed to cast gloom upon the liveliest occasion. No doubt some of those matinees will be very bad from the standpoint of achievement, and we'll go away disheartened. But at any rate the effort will have been made and possibly the way paved for better things in the future.

Franklin Fyles, whose reputation as a writer on matters dramatic is either so good or so bad that he has fully one half of the larger newspapers in the country on his list of weekly comments, is also a playwright. Mr. Fyles greatly admires George Cohan and thinks his humor the best of the day. In spite of that his own plays are not so bad. They are usually funny because they combine the old regulation melodramatic effects with the most out of place, grandiloquent language.

His latest was given for the first time by the Allen stock company at the Lyric theatre one day last week. If it didn't do anything else it opened my eyes to the very capable work being done by some members of that little company. We paid 10 cents to see that matinee and were given an abso-



MISS VERNA FELTON IN "THE NANCY HANKS" AT THE LYRIC.

lutely new play, at least as good as Mr. Fyle's others, and saw some uncharacteristically good acting on the part of Miss Verna Felton, and some good character work by Mrs. Allen.

I confess I don't know how Miss Felton did it. There were at least two squalling babies in the house who kept whooping it up at regular intervals through three acts. You know you can't eject babies when you are charging 10 cents a head. But she carried off the part of the young New York bride marooned in the country village excellently. She was perfectly natural and her voice was well controlled. The ease with which she assumed the entirely strange role of Mildred Hoyt was mystifying to me until she told me that she had never attended that most stultifying of institutions for the young actress, the dramatic school.

The play told how Mildred Hoyt had left her husband of three hours and stopped off the first station they reached while on their honeymoon. Why Mr. Newlywed let her go wasn't explained. When he found she was gone, however, he raised an awful rumpus and came to search for her. The bride found a friend in the village lawyer—hence the title, "The Lawyer and the Lady." Things go swimmingly between the two—the lawyer and the lady, that is—until husband reaches the lawyer's house and finds them together. At this juncture the lady utterly confounded the lawyer and me by changing her tone and announcing that she had loved him but could love him no longer—that she could love no one but a strong man. Then she runs upstairs and the curtain falls.

What happens in that last act I shall probably never know. I hadn't the time to wait and see then and now the opportunity is gone. Perhaps the lady agreed with Mathew Arnold

"That will, that energy, though rare, Are yet far, far less rare than love."

I hope so.

OLD ACROBAT LOSES LIFE "SHOWING OFF"

(United Press Lensed Wire.)
 Guadalajara, Mexico, Feb. 15.—Unable to resist the temptation to "show off" before more than 200 people who were watching him from the street below, Mose Decina, an old time acrobat, employed in painting one of the great

towers of the cathedral here, proceeded to walk along one of the narrow corridors of the tower on his hands. Just as he attempted to regain his feet, and while the admiring people were applauding his daring performance, Decina lost his balance and fell. He struck several projections in his descent and was dead when picked up in the court of the cathedral.
 Decina at one time traveled with the Ringling show.

PROMISES MADE BY THE PRESS AGENTS

"45 Minutes From Broadway."

No more capable or better equipped theatrical organization has been sent on tour this season than the large company which the noted managerial firm of Klaw & Erlanger are presenting in the brilliant New York and Chicago success, "Forty-Five Minutes From Broadway." George M. Cohan's original play, with music, and Scott Welch as "Kit" Burns, the ex-convict prize-fighter, said by many to be the most pretentious effort this industrious and ambitious young actor-author has yet evolved, and which comes to the Heilig theatre for two nights, beginning Tuesday, February 18.

"Forty-Five Minutes From Broadway" is in three acts, all of the scenes being laid in different parts of the suburban town of New Rochelle, which is three quarters of an hour from Broadway, New York City, hence the title. While it is in no sense a musical comedy, some of the most popular songs that have yet come from the pen of that prolific composer, such as "Mary is a Grand Old Name," and "So Long, Mary," "I Want to Be a Popular Millionaire," and several others, are rendered during the progress of the action of the play, and what is usually termed the "chorus" in this style of entertainment consists in this production of eight young women who in personal beauty, clever dancing and vocal accomplishments more than atone for any possible lack of numbers.

The unfolding of the plot requires more novel characters than Mr. Cohan has yet introduced in any of his plays, and many of these are types not hitherto presented behind the footlights. Miss Frances Gordon, one of the most popular artists now before the public, portrays the role of Mary, the housemaid.

For the rest of the cast Messrs. Klaw & Erlanger have retained the members of the original company, whose work in this play kept it on the high way of success in New York and Chicago for a continuous run of over a year. Seats are now selling at the theatre.

"Buster Brown" at Heilig Theatre.

"Buster Brown" with his faithful pal, Tige, and 40 others, mostly girls, will be the attraction at the Heilig theatre, Fourteenth and Washington streets, next Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, February 20, 21, 22, with a special price matinee Saturday. As a play actor, Buster has been a success from the start. As the story runs, Buster's father is a retired merchant. Having failed in business and failed "rich," he has plenty of money and is able to pay spot cash for the damages committed by Buster and Tige during their revels from day to day.

The part of Buster Brown is taken by a little 12 inch chub known as Master Reed, who has attained national fame. He is considered a wonder in his impersonation of Buster Brown, as Mr. Outcault has created him in the Sunday comic supplement. In the support of Master Reed, Edwin Lamar, the great English animal impersonator will be seen as "Tige," while Miss Alice Mortlock, the stage's most natural child impersonator, will appear as Mary Jane. The supporting company has the largest and most carefully selected cast

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