

EASTER POLKA DOT CROP ON REHEARSAL

Chorus Spends Merry Sunday Enlivened by Hats, Gowns, Gay Hosiery and Mr. Miller—Short and Simple Annals of the Chorus Lady's Easter Troubles

By J. F. S.

"HERE ain't no costumes came," they told me when I broke into the rehearsal of the San Francisco opera company on Easter Sunday afternoon. No costumes, nor no score, nor nothing. It was most disconcerting, most discouraging. Easter Sunday and no costumes and no score and everybody tired and most everybody mad.

The hall was like bedlam. Mr. Hesley was the only reposeful figure in the room and he sat in a corner as though too weary to move. As for the owners of the costumes that hadn't come, where, oh where, were they? Present, thank you, and ready for business. Oh, yes, indeed, but what a bore! Easter Sunday. And we've got to spend it up here learning these steps. Wouldn't it make you tired? And what's the use? Costumes late. Scores burned up in a week. Got to bed at 4 this morning and didn't want to go then. And now to have to get up and come to rehearsal!

No wonder there were sour looks and the sweet voices which last week had chimed so sweetly in "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden" had a somewhat querulous strain.

They were not the dear things you see from the other side of the house so alluringly arrayed in silk tights and cunning little jackets, with eyebrows, cheeks and lips all so daintily outlined. Far from it. Minerva Fitzwater, 'tis true, had a lovely new Easter hat, all big and black, with waving plumes—each plume was worth a fortune if it was worth a penny. I give you my word—and besides Minerva had a dream of a lavender silk gown—just the thing for Easter, you know. You don't want loud clothes for Easter. You want something delicate-like, that will give a bit of color to suggest that spring, unlike the costumes, has come—but them reds and greens and blues aren't swell. And Minerva's was just right—that new long train effect and all—only the train does get in one's way when one is called upon to do one's dance. Oh, there's that unspeakable Mr. Miller calling now—one must answer when the stage manager calls one, you know.

And then there's Violet, in just a dream of a new spring costume—spring green, they call it—yes, a little thing made for Easter—my modiste insisted—she really wouldn't let me get anything else. Quite a tyrant, in her way—all French dressmakers are, you know—but she picked it up when she called on me and said, "Voylet," she said, "this is the very thing for you, Voylet. Nothing like it out of one or two reserved for special customers in New York." Poor dear. She just would have her way about it, so I gave in, although what I want with a new green Easter frock, even so simple and girlish a thing as this, is more than I can—

But Mr. Miller, that tyrant Miller—wrapped for order and I'll never know what Voylet could do. Mr. Miller is a power. He is a wonder. He is one of the most remarkable men I ever saw. He is young and dark and quite good looking. That is all right. Many of us are that. But who can take the untamed chorus lady in her hair and make her mind on Easter day, in spite of new Easter bonnets and Easter frocks? No one, I venture, but Mr. Miller. Gently but firmly he took each of the little dears—and the big dears, some of them bigger than he—and led them to places and instructed them in the art of terpsichore. Girls, mind you, who are accustomed to say to you and me and the rest of mankind, with a haughty shrug of the little finger, "This lobster is underdone," or "Ain't this American fizz-water?" He took them, I repeat, with never so much as a premonitory quiver and shoved them about and scolded them and ordered them and showed them about and scolded them as meekly as lambs. The very same young person whom I had heard the night before tell two Johnnies who had taken papa's motor to meet her at the stage entrance to go home to their mamas and laughed derisively after them was the meekest of the lot. She said "yes, sir," and "no, sir," with commendable regularity whenever Mr. Miller saw fit to open that remarkable mouth. I watched him furtively but could not make out the secret. I fear it will die with him.

No costumes hadn't come. I realized it remorsefully as I overlooked the crowd. But if the costumes hadn't come, Easter hosiery had. Never have I seen so much hosiery in my life before. It was not a matter of sex. It was purely and simply a matter of polka dots. They were there in every conceivable shade and hue and size. The ladies all had them. The gentlemen all had them even more seriously. It was staggering to look up and down the row of chairs and try and keep track of those polka dots. It made you dizzy. You would fasten your eyes intently on one pattern of dots and announce to yourself in firm tones that you would not move until you had solved the mystery of the dots and their size. You would watch them intently for as much as 10 seconds. Then your vision would begin to blur. Queer noises would ring in your ears. You would see dots flying around in your vision—blue dots and green ones and red and purple varieties. Your senses would reel and everything would be black—but black with variegated polka dots. Then you would give it up. Those dots were not mere styles in hosiery. They approached to the dignity of creations. I can not recall exactly who wore what. But I believe this table of Easter dots to be correct as far as it goes:

Teddy Webb—Blue background with white dots the size of a pea.

Eugene Weiner—Purple background with yellow polka dots, large and staggering.

Georgia Campbell—Green background with white dots.

Amy Leicester—Purple and black dots alternate on a red background.

Gene Ormonde—Lavender and white stripes, with polka dots of maroon.

Wallace Brownlow—Green hose with violet dots.

It's unfortunate that I can't give what the ladies of the chorus wore—that I am forbidden. But the above list will give the careful reader a fair idea of the latest effects in hosiery styles for the profession.

Perhaps Mr. Miller wore them, too. I was too much in awe of him to look. He was the busiest thing imaginable. He picked a girl out here and there and told her she was to sing this part.

"Here, you," he called Violet, "you step up and take this line 'I like naughty men the best!'"

"Oh, sir," said Violet, all in a pretty confusion, "I am afraid I would rather she took it," pointing to the retreating Minerva at her right.

Minerva was there, oh, yes, and Minerva stepped up and spoke her lines.

"No, no, no!" exclaimed the wonder. "That's all

wrong. You look as though you preferred St. Anthony." Then they tried another bit of the act. Frank Bertrand was to make his bow, offer his arm to Amy Leicester and make a successful exit from the stage. They tried it once but when the exit was half made Mr. Bertrand dropped poor Amy's hand in horror. He rushed over to Mr. Miller and whispered in his ear in a buzzing and highly excited fashion. "My exit!" he exclaimed, tragically. "My exit—it is spoiled entirely. Miss Leicester eclipses me completely. She stands right in front and I can not be seen at all."

The entire troupe flocked up to learn the cause of the excitement, and sympathy and advice were extended by all hands. Daphne Pollard rushed in and tried to help. Wallace Brownlow told Mr. Miller how the calamity could be avoided. Gene Ormonde was there with advice and Teddy Webb straggled up to enlighten the mystery of how Bertrand was to be seen behind Amy's ample figure.

"Leave it to me, my dear, I'll arrange it, my dear," said Teddy, marching into the thick of the fight. He got no further, however, for—

"Mister Webb!" exclaimed the heroine of the dilemma, bending her glances upon the diminutive comedian. "Mister Webb!" Miss Leicester straightened up to her most superb figure. It was enough. Visions of home without mother and other things floated across Mr. Webb's mental horizon and he retired gracefully, though withal somewhat precipitously.

Then Mr. Miller stepped in and settled it in two minutes. "Take Mr. Bertrand's arm, Miss Leicester," he said, in a refreshingly snappy manner. "Swing him around a half turn. Now you, Bertrand, keep just a step ahead and bend over slightly. Ah—that's it, perfect. Now you're both in view and everybody happy."

Next came the steps for that grand song, "Follow Me," with all the chorus ladies busy and the principals leading.

"Take your places," commanded Mr. Miller.

With shrugs and moans the energetic young women ambled over to their positions. "Look, merry ladies, and remember that you are dancing through sheer lightness of heart, not for \$15 a week. Now, all ready, one, two, three, one, two, three, and a one, two, three," and they were off. Not for long, however, for "Stop" came out in dreadful intonations from Mr. Miller's throat, and there were more shrugs and more dismal looks.

"That's wrong; entirely wrong. Stop thinking about what you are going to do at 11:30 tomorrow morning. And you over there, forget that 'Merry Widow' hat for a minute, please, and kindly consent to pay some attention to the music and the time. Because if you don't I'll fine you a week's pay"—there was a noticeable stiffening of the backbones—"Now try it again." And this time Mr. Miller himself assumed the active role of dancing master and led the class, stepping here and there, gracefully bending and smiling rapturously in the general direction of Mr. Healy and myself, who represented the audience. It was a lovely smile. You caught yourself trying to flirt with Mr. Miller before you knew it. He is a model show girl.

Then they tried the chorus, singing it to the accompaniment of the professor, who sat at the piano alternately beating time and the keys. It soon became the professor's turn to interrupt the merry-makers. "Ach!" he cried after a particularly brilliant failure to strike the proper notes. "Girls, don't forget dem high G flats; does who get 'em, you know?" and immediately there broke loose a medley of sopranoes aiming at high G flats. The notes went wild and could be heard imbedding themselves all over the plaster of the walls and ceiling.

"There; you've all gone to perdition again," said Mr. Miller, tragically, and advisory committee immediately stepped up to offer its services. "I think it should be this way," said Daphne Pollard, wringing into the forefront of the affair. Miss Leicester thought it should be another way. Mr. Webb gave his opinion. Mr. Brownlow gave his. Mr. Healy, who owns the show, sat meekly by and listened mutely. He was the only one who had not a word to say. He was very humble in the presence of his minions. Occasionally he asked about this or that, but only in the most deferential of tones. The chorus ladies marched up and down before him haughtily, displaying their lovely Easter creations and he scarcely dared lift his eyes.

Then they tried it over again, with Mr. Miller as the center of the fray. Mr. Weiner was to march in holding an imaginary bomb in his hands, to place it down and then retire in an insane horror as someone referred to his voice. He did it—a rather fine bit of work. And it was easy to tell who Mrs. Weiner was. For Georgia Campbell came over to him and whispered encouragingly, "That's it, Gene, fine." And Gene retired satisfied.

Mr. Miller was everywhere and everything. If the Bowery tough was not tough enough Mr. Miller showed him how and fairly yanked the clothes off Miss Gray. If Miss Gray herself was too awkward he took her place and showed her how a lady should dance. Now he led the music and now he led the dance, first on one foot and then on the other. I don't know how much Mr. Miller gets. But I feel that he earns his money. He is the most active person I have seen in Portland. Give him two years and he could reform the city. He would have us all placing our hands on our hips and keeping time with our feet as we whispered, "one, two, three, one, two, three, and a one, two, three." He would go down the Columbia and bring the battleship fleet up by main force. And he'd make them keep time as they did it, too. He would have us cleaning up the streets and command us to look merry as we swept. And no doubt we'd do it, just as he directed us to.

He whipped those poor dears into shape in less than an hour. Few of them struggled after the first words directed towards their part of the hall. They smiled when he told them to. They danced when he gave the word. Easter finery was forgotten. Even the polka dots were transformed into a rainbow haze. The costumes didn't seem to worry him a bit. The lost score was nothing to him. Minerva and her plumes traced it back and forth across the hall and never faltered. It didn't seem to tire Mr. Miller at all. He was indefatigable. But it grew late and Easter dinner had its attractions. If it hadn't been for that I suppose I should still be listening to Mr. Miller's cheery tones as he bolstered up the faltering steps of Ruby and Violet and Agnes and Lily and Marian. The next time I feel in need of a real electric bracer I'm going to watch Mr. Miller drill his chorus. There's nothing like it in town.

HER RED UNDERWEAR CAUSE OF SLANDER SUIT

Lyric Theatre's Wardrobe Mistress Asks \$10,000 Damages of Actress.

Philadelphia, April 25.—Four union suits of glaring red silk underwear play an important part in the suit brought by Mrs. Clara Stone of 1118 Pine street yesterday against Maud Raymond, a leading actress in the "Great White Way" company, for \$10,000 on a charge of slander.

Just what was the matter with the underwear, or what mystery it concealed was not brought out in the papers filed, and Mrs. Stone did not care to discuss it. But whatever it was it seemed sufficient to impel Mrs. Raymond to come to Philadelphia to express her opinion

of Mrs. Stone, and that was where the trouble had its beginning. The filing of the suit may bring explanation of an unusual occurrence at the Lyric theatre, where Mrs. Stone has charge of the wardrobe room, last night. Before the curtain raised, a voice could be heard plainly in all parts of the house denouncing some one as a "thief" and a "dead beat." Indeed, it was apparent that the raising of the curtain was delayed until the strident voices ceased. The accusations, and the orchestra struck up a piece in which the bass drum had an important part to draw out the vocal tumult.

From the papers recorded it seems that Miss Raymond, when she was playing in Philadelphia some weeks ago, ordered Mrs. Stone to make her four suits of the correct cardinal color. The latter was unable to complete the work before Miss Raymond left the city, and frequently afterward the actress would call up Mrs. Stone by long distance telephone to ask about the garments.

Finally, becoming impatient, she told Mrs. Stone to send them on just as they were, and she would have them finished. Mrs. Stone did as requested, she says.

dressing rooms of the Lyric were started by a descent of Miss Raymond on the theatre. Then, it is alleged, she told Mrs. Stone what she thought of her, but, although she talked a great deal, no one was able to find out just what was the matter with the underwear.

SISTER FINDS HIM AFTER 40-YEAR SEARCH

Allentown, Pa., April 25.—To learn after forty years of the most arduous and discouraging search for a brother whom she had never seen, that he is alive, has been the happy experience of Mrs. Elias Gerberich, of No. 133 North Seventh street, and an early reunion of the sister and brother is now a possibility.

Last week she learned that her brother, Scott Rader, was living at Butte Falls, Oregon, where he is a prosperous merchant. Telegrams and letters

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has passed, and in a few months the brother will come to this city to visit his sister.

The Modern Improvement. From Baltimore American.

Atlas from his retreat among the shades, was looking over the methods of the present day, and seemed especially interested in the operations of high finance.

"These fellows," he muttered, "know a lot more about holding up the earth than we did in my young days."

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Decadence of Wagering in England.

From Fry's Magazine.

We have lost our love of wagering, and perhaps this is not a matter for general regret. Yet it seems to me that there was much harmless merriment in the readiness with which men of all classes staked sums, according to the means at their disposal, to show that they had at any rate the courage of their opinions.

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