

:- Amusements of the Week :-

ALLEN—Monday, "The Diamond from the Sky," Tuesday and Wednesday, Margaret Clark in "The Prince and the Pauper."

BIJOU—The great serial, "Graft," is the special attraction at the Bijou this week. See announcement in this issue.

GRAND—"The Girl from Nowhere" is a popular attraction. The big bill at the Orpheum will have as a headline feature the "Dublin Min-

strell. That phenomenal success, "The White Feather," will be put on about the middle of January.

PANTAGES—There will be some excellent headlines at the Pantages for the opening of the New Year, and the talent will be among the best ever seen in Calgary.

PRINCESS—Tuesday, Country Store. Princess Girls during the week.

Theatrical and Picture Play Section of the

Western Standard

CALGARY, ALBERTA.

JANUARY 2, 1916

Gossip of The Great White Way
And What The Players Are Doing

Stories of the Great and Near Great Who Have Become Popular in the Footlight Glow

Unique Christmas of Sousa

"The most unique Christmas in my career," said John Philip Sousa, as he awaited his cue in his dressing room at the Hippodrome, "was spent on the Atlantic ocean on my tour of the world in 1911. We left New York on the Baltic just before Christmas with a not overcrowded first cabin. We occupied the day with breakfast, dinner, supper, and serenades. The captain, all the other officers, the crew, and the first and second class passengers were serenaded. The band would stop in front of Cabin J and give the seafaring passengers a serenade, usually playing 'A Life on the Ocean Wave,' then move on to K and repeat, and so on to all the cabins. In many instances we added to the terror of seasickness on the ocean voyage, for to a man who is seasick a serenade is anything but pleasant. Any time we were in doubt whom to serenade we would go back to the captain's quarters and the band would play every tune from 'Hall to the Chief' to 'The Admiral of the Queen's Navy,' and every song that would place a captain on the highest pedestal of authority.

"There was a wine merchant aboard who was very liberal with his wine, and I think about 1 o'clock on Christmas night there were a great many aboard the ship who didn't know whether the ship was bound for New York or Liverpool, and, furthermore, they didn't care. It was unique in the fact that it was the longest serenade in the history of music.

"We had a grand parade on the deck of the Baltic. One side we called Broadway and the other Fifth avenue, and the entire ship's company of guests all fell in single line and paraded up Broadway and down Fifth avenue, which, if it was stretched out would be about two blocks, as the Baltic is 700 feet long. The band kept playing, and when a man got tired marching he would stand to one side and applaud as the rest marched past. "None of the musicians were seasick, for you can't kill a musician. They never missed a meal. I don't know whether they are stronger or have more moral courage. The globe trot took fourteen months. The second Christmas was spent on the ocean, too, and on that day there was only a very small company aboard the boat, but if everybody had his serenade computed at union rates the fees would have placed the White Star in bankruptcy."

Farnum Gets Reminiscent

"The most nervous moments I can recall since I adopted a theatrical career were those I spent when I first saw myself on the screen," said William Farnum, star of "The Soldier's Oath."

"I am probably the only actor who can claim the distinction of being born on the Fourth of July," continued Mr. Farnum. "The year was 1876, the place was Boston, Mass., not far from the Bunker Hill monument.

"My brother Dustin and I went to the same school, and when I was 14 I made my debut as Lucius in my father's company at the old Boston Academy.

"I often doubled, and often trebled in every minor character the Bard of Avon ever wrote. Those were years of stern schooling. They taught me, although I did not realize it at the time, the inestimable value of a training in the classical drama for young actors. While I was passing through this often very trying period, however, I was more inclined to think of the whole thing as an imposition on brilliant genius.

"When my father's company was disbanded I played for five or six years with various actors of classical repertoire, who were far more common than they are today.

"But those years of varying luck and hard knocks planted in me a veneration for the classical drama that I never lost. I know it is the fashion today to sneer at 'robustious, periwigged fellow,' as actors of such roles are invariably classed, but it is my

firm conviction that it takes infinitely more talent to play Hamlet, for instance, than it does to play the hero of a 'drawing room' drama.

"Speaking of the classical drama, I have good grounds on which to base my opinion. I refer to the time, not so long ago either, when I established the William Farnum stock company in Cleveland and Buffalo, building my own theatre in the latter city. In a successful season of thirty weeks in Buffalo we gave twenty classical dramas. They were the most successful of our productions and played to capacity business, which was more than could be said of some of our other productions.

"During the time that I had those stock companies I had to work like a horse, except that a horse gets an occasional opportunity to rest. I was 'up' in most of the parts, otherwise I think I should have had to quit. I never knew before that time that I possessed nerves, but I did then. I don't suppose that, what with directing, producing, studying and looking after the business end of my affairs I got more than forty-eight hours of solid sleep a week. Then came 'Ben Hur,' which I played for five consecutive years. This was followed by 'The Prince in India.'

"My first experience before the camera came when I played the lead in 'The Spoilers,' Rex Beach's drama of Alaskan wilds. One of the big scenes in it was a hand to hand fight with a giant woodsman played by a man named Sanchez, who stood 6 feet 2 in his boots, and was a physical giant. It was my initial experience in picture work and I wanted to make that fight stand out. It did. We fought like two wildcats. Directors tried to butt in, but only got in the line of fire and retreated precipitately out of range. We fought until we couldn't fight any longer, and then called it a draw.

"Well, neither of us could work for a week and when we were able to we were chastened souls. My right hand was broken and Sanchez, like me, bore other and more visible marks of the fray. When I went to see 'The Spoilers' I thought the fight was the only good thing in it; so far as I was concerned.

"Do I like picture work? You bet I do. I like the outdoor scenes best. I'm an enthusiast on everything that takes men out in the open. The best times I have are when I am sailing my catboat, the Olive Ann, down at Sag Harbor, or up at my camp at Patten's Pond in the Maine woods.

"In a 'Soldier's Oath' my work kept me in the open at all times, and I not only enjoyed every minute of it, but—this without egotism—I feel sure it is the best of my career as a screen star."



The Seven Darlings in "The Girl from Nowhere," at the Grand Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Matinee New Year's Day

Theatrical Comment and Criticism

Orpheum Opens

The notable event of the week in theatrical circles was the opening of the Orpheum at the Grand on Monday night.

The house was packed and jammed to the doors with Calgary's four hundred (all excepting the leader, who was conspicuous by her absence), and many others who would not be classed in the smart set, but whose money was just as welcome in the box office.

If there had been any question in the minds of the Orpheum syndicate regarding Calgary's wishes about the show playing this city, this must be dissipated now, for never did a show receive stronger approbation at the box office and during the performance than this one received this week. The crowds simply went wild at every act that was played and voiced their feelings in loud outbursts and clapping of hands.

Charles Sale, otherwise called Chic, was the fun-maker of the show, as he kept the audience in roars of laughter during the entire act. Mr. Sales has a remarkable conception of the characters he portrays, and his act is probably one of the cleverest on the vaudeville stage.

Pantages Bill Good

Those who visited Pantages this week witnessed a splendid program, with very few weak spots. Bert Wiggins and Co. was a very good juggler, but he could have eliminated some of his jokes, and the girl in dressing with good effect. Stick to juggling, Bert! Keegan and Ellworth, the week-enders, were very entertaining, with some good singing and wholesome comedy. "Before the Mast," which was a nautical travesty featuring Ed. Gallagher and Bob Carlin, was exceptionally splendid, with real singing, clever talk and effective setting. This was one of the best numbers. Rucker and Winnifred, the ebony-hued entertainers, scored triumphs in the comedy world on their looks. Their dialogue was funny and their singing fair. "The Office Girls," with Wm. Craig, Dixie Harris and Belle Montrose, was certainly ahead of last week's headliner, "From Coney Island to the North Pole." The girls were pretty well costumed, Dixie Harris could dance and sing pleasingly, while Belle Montrose could act, and Wm. Craig kept the audience in roars of laughter.

Blackbirds at Allen

One of the most interesting and entertaining films in filmland this week was "Blackbirds," which starred Laura Hope Crews at the Allen theatre this week. This is the second appearance of Miss Crews, and as Leonie Sobalsky she has a chance to show some very clever talent, which proclaims her as one of the leading "movie" actresses. The scene of "Blackbirds" is at first laid in Algiers. Here one gets a wonderful idea of the narrow streets, the beautiful buildings, the quaint stores, with their Oriental curiosities, and the picturesque costumes of the Arabs. The plot revolves around a stolen Oriental "prayer rug" wherein two thieves meet, one Leonie Sobalsky and the other English Jack. The scene of the plot shifts from Algiers to New York. Secret service men trail the thieves, finally get the gang, exonerate the girl, who lives happily ever afterward with English Jack, their marriage resolve being "To go straight."

A Musical Comedy again with Us

It's a long time since Calgary audiences have enjoyed a musical comedy, and it was a real pleasure to those who attended "The Girl from Nowhere," at the Grand this week-end. Miss Zara Clinton was the star and was a very charming little lady, while Billy Oswald, as Septimus Jones, carried off the principal comedy role with much elan.

There are eighteen roles in the piece, all cleverly handled, and the production is beautifully staged. There are some seventy changes of costumes, all new and tasty, and the chorus, a sextette of beautiful young ladies, is a continuous revelation of the costumer's art and their own individual abilities.

"Seats of Mighty" at Regent

Undoubtedly the most interesting picture at the Regent this week was "The Seats of the Mighty," Gilbert Parker's popular novel, dramatized and converted into a picture play. This book, the scenes of which are around Quebec, is one of the few historic novels of Canada, and the pictures were those of the real background, having been taken around St. Anne de Beaupre, Quebec. Lionel Barrymore, a favorite screen actor, starred.

THE FIRST NIGHTER

Matinee Idol No Longer Lives
As of Old, Declares Faversham

One-Time Favorite of Chocolate-Nibbling Schoolgirls Declares Term Has Fallen Into Disfavor With Actors of Real Worth

By William Faversham
There seems to be something ridiculous, if not quite improper, in being known as a matinee idol. It seems to suggest that one courts the admiration of impressionable woman for one's own person as distinct from one's work.

If asked if the matinee idol has passed, I should say that he has deteriorated. His halo does not seem to be quite so bright as it used to be.

That an actor's portrayal of parts which deplete the qualities of youth, courage, high purpose and self-sacrifice, etc., should win the commendation of women who attend matinees is, of course, to be desired. The enthusiasm of the ladies is necessary to the success of these impersonations, and it is particularly the young and ingenuous females who should find such qualities admirable.

I used to play that sort of role myself and was rather glad to think that I had won the good will of young ladies and old ladies for the excellencies of the hero in the play. It is when the young man who interprets these characters takes the enthusiasm to himself as a person, that he becomes tiresome to other men.

But Real Heroes Are Modest Folks

People who really win the Victoria Cross or rescue drowning maidens or defeat several ruffians single-handed, are usually modest and eager to hide under the nearest bushel. It is rather comic, therefore, to see the fellow who has only pretended to do these things, strutting about in the open. And when you speak of the matinee idol, perhaps you fancy him behaving in this somewhat public manner. As a rule, however, you will find him an unassuming party—fond of his home and much concerned about his wife and children—a man of parts in more senses than one.

Now and then a more gay and reckless spirit appears who becomes an authority on waistcoats, and after a short and palpitating career repents at leisure—time and opportunity wasted. This does not happen often, however, and when it does, it must excite respectful sorrow rather than indignation—for it is a very hard job to be that kind of a matinee idol; one has to walk about a great deal and waistcoats don't last forever. Also, they go out of fashion.

I suppose the greatest matinee idol who ever appeared in America was Harry Montague; but he was of quite a different class and is a good example of what a matinee idol may be—a man whom all loved and admired; he was

an actor of such delightful charm that women flocked to see him play, and when he died hundreds wept at his grave. There was nothing comic or contemptible about his popularity. Booth Fascinated in Younger Days Surely Edwin Booth, in his younger days, when he played Hamlet for one hundred nights at the old Winter Garden, may be said to have been a matinee idol. Many old ladies who were young then will tell you how fascinated they were with his work and personal beauty. But can you imagine the most impressionable woman writing a silly love letter to Booth?

I fancy these love letters that we hear about are written to men to whom the writer has reason to believe they will be welcome—in the same way that men may write to a woman who looks and behaves as if she were open to such advances. If a matinee idol tells you that he is in the habit of receiving such letters, two things are evident; first, if he is capable of talking about it, he is capable of lying; second, if he does receive them, it is because certain weak ladies have concluded that he is the sort of man with whom such effusions will prove fruitful.

This kind of correspondence is quite distinct from letters of commendation for work well done. Male and female, young and old, do write this most acceptable sort of letter, and it is a great satisfaction to receive it. The higher the class of work the more frequent the letters are and the more gratifying it is to get them. And here is where the matinee girl comes in in all her glory, for she writes to the popular woman more than the popular man. Her enthusiasm is very proper and precious.

Matinee Idol Is in Disrepute

I wish there could be some other term coined to designate the object of her delight than "matinee idol." This has fallen into disrepute. Those fellows with the waistcoats have made the phrase ridiculous. I don't know what to suggest, but it ought to be some appellation that will not make you want to kick yourself when it is applied to you. "Morning glory" would not do; but "matinee idol" is as offensive now as "top" or "dude" or "dandy."

I remember at the Empire theatre, years ago, when in a certain play I had conquered the villain, rescued the heroine, and sacrificed my fortune without turning a hair, a maiden wrote to me and said: "I saw you last night and something told me that you would pay the mortgage on my home." I recall a great throb of joy at this declaration. I must have played with great conviction, thought I, and I have since waited vainly for some lady who shall see me as Hamlet, to write and say she is sure it is I who will slay her wicked uncle.

Never yet, however, have I been able to create such an illusion! These great moments only happen once or twice in an actor's life. Was it not Edmund Kean who said that only on one occasion had he read successfully "Othello's farewell."

It is by no means a contemptible office to excite emotions of tenderness and pity in ingenuous bosoms.

Appeal to "Gai" Not to Gallery

The message of the matinee idol is not inevitably vulgar—the appeal to the gal is not necessarily an appeal to the gallery, although in the case of the Shakespeare drama that abode of the gods has been surrendered to the goddesses and the gallery girls are even a greater blessing than the gallery boys.

Don't be too hard on the matinee idol. He only blooms for a short day. He grows old, and an old matinee idol is a sad spectacle—unless he has cast off his waistcoat and developed into something newer and less strange. While he is young and while the matinee girl is young, a kindly and healthy interest may be engendered by his noble deeds, his hairbreadth escapes and his soft nothings.

If one can keep him under a bushel in the day time, all is well.



"THE CANNIBAL MAIDS" AT PANTAGES NEXT WEEK

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