

News Notes Gathered From the World of Stage and Screen

SUCCESS CLAIMED FOR CHICAGO GRAND OPERA IN SPITE OF DEFICIT

2200 Citizens are Pledged to Make Up \$350,000 Loss.

Chicago, Jan. 12.—(United Press.)—Ordinarily, one would hardly claim success for a business that spends \$1.54 for every dollar taken in and that finished the season with a deficit of \$350,000. Yet that is the record of the Chicago Civic Opera Company, and its sponsors feel they have achieved a success.

The difference between the opera company and the ordinary enterprise is that the former subsidizes profit to art.

Opera has been struggling for a foothold in Chicago for many years. This is the fourteenth grand opera for Chicago. Up to two years ago Harold P. McCormick and Mrs. Rockefeller McCormick and a small group of backers paid the annual deficits.

McCormick and Mrs. McCormick decided that grand opera would gain a bigger following if more people had a financial interest in the company. So they turned over their holdings to a group of public-spirited Chicagoans and the Chicago Civic Opera Company was formed.

Twenty-two hundred citizens made pledges of from \$5 to \$1,000 per year for a period of five years to pay the deficit in the cost of operation. Samuel Insull, one of the most successful business men of the state, was selected president. Brig-Gen. Charles G. Dawes was selected first vice-president, and L. B. Kuppenheimer, second vice-president. Charles L. Hutchinson was made treasurer, and Stanley Field, secretary. They are leading business men and serve without pay.

Other business men serve with the forgoing on the various committees. The opera company is managed on many of the principles of a business corporation.

Last season the deficit amounted to \$350,000, or 70 per cent of the guarantee. The guarantors were assessed and paid promptly. This season the company has approximately 90 per cent more subscribers, and regular patrons. The subscribers are those who buy the same seat or seats for a subscription series of performances throughout the season.

When the company passed the half-way point of the season, 41 performances of 26 operas had been given. This is twice as many as are given abroad in any one season.

The managers are trying to reduce the cost of grand opera to the lowest possible level. The guarantors are a large number of foreign-born, particularly Italian, are in evidence at the performances. Prices range from \$1 to \$8. Subscriptions average from 91 cents to \$8.95 per seat.

Among the internationally known grand opera stars engaged to sing here are Mary Garden, Amelita Galli-Curi, Rosa Raisa, Calista Fazio, Edith Mason, Louise Homer, Florence Macbeth, Claire Dux, Graciele Paretto, Feodor Chaliapin, Charles Marshall, Fernand Anseu, Charles Hackett, Alfred Piccaver, Giulio Crimi, Georges Baklanoff, Alexander Kipnis, Tito Schipa, Forrest Lamont and Angelo Minghetti. Giorgio Polacco, famous musical director, is conductor, and knows 220 operas by heart.

JOE BRANNELLY IS BIG HIT IN LONDON

Banjoist, Well Known Here, is Delighting Crowds in British Ballrooms.

Member Joe Brannelly, the nimble banjo player who used to sit 'er up in the Venetian Gardens orchestra here a couple of winters ago? Mind how you just couldn't keep still when he used to start in to twang away? Well, just now Joe is cutting quite a wide swath in musical circles in the Old Country. Dear Old London has taken him to its heart and almost nightly thousands of the biggest city's dance enthusiasts are tripping the light fantastic to the rhythm of his—his and his associates—music. Recent visitors to London tell of his great success during the last twelve months in the British metropolis, where—according to their reports—he is considered one of the best banjo artists on the island. This is indeed saying something, for London is a mecca for the cream of the music artists of the continent and if one lone boy from this side of the water is able to drop in and even gain the attention of the vast throngs that people the world's largest centre, he has no great need to worry about his future.

The fashionable ball rooms of the Berkeley and the Savoy are his usual scenes of triumph, but it is for private parties that he has been in greater demand. It is even told of him that the little fashionable affairs given by the Prince of Wales have not been considered complete unless Joe Brannelly was present with his banjo. Mr. Brannelly made many friends while he was in St. John and his success overseas will be heard of with considerable satisfaction.

J. F. BROWNE,
Professor of Organ, Voice, Piano, etc.
Harmony Classes for Beginners in his subject commences on Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8 p. m. Particulars on application.
Phone M. 183-11, 130 Elliott Row.
4609-1-15

Women To Be Used In Feminine Roles

Manover, N. H., Jan. 12.—For the first time in the history of Dartmouth College, women are to be used in feminine roles in forthcoming productions of The Players. Rather than make love to the cold eyes of under-graduate class-mates in the future, the heroes of these new productions, which, in all probability will be used to lighten the drab period between March and May, will look into the tender eyes of pretty Manover girls.

Hub Stage Stars In Old Home Week

Boston, Jan. 12.—Several noted stage stars who started out in life in Boston are playing here this week. Otis Skinner, at the Colonial, was born in Cambridge; Dick Carl, in "Adrienne" at the Tremont, is a native of Somerville; and Frank Craven, star of "First Year," who also is the author of "Up She Goes," playing at the Wilbur, was born in Reading. With some friends he is going out to Reading today to look the old family homestead over.

AN AMERICAN PIONEER FILMED

With the first filming of a huge buffalo stampede, already completed, Thomas H. Ince's special feature, "The Last Frontier," a "Western" of the American pioneer period, is well under way. Readings. With some friends he is going out to Reading today to look the old family homestead over.

A large technical staff, including nine first camera-men, three still camera-men, camouflage artists, actor riders and two directors, was dispatched to Western Canada for the big roundup. Hundreds of Cree Indians and their squaws were secured from the Hohenau reservation through the courtesy of the government Indian agents. Expert cowpunchers and riflemen were summoned from Alberta ranges and carefully instructed before a single scene was shot. Thousands of feet of action were "shot" in Watnright National Park in the province of Alberta, Canada, where 1,000 to 10,000 buffalo were rounded up and stampeded for this picture.

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St. Peter's Hall was packed last evening to witness the second night performance of "The China Shop," the opera which was presented by the drama society and a large company of young boys and girls. The performance was even better than on the first evening and received great applause throughout. There was a feeling that the society had reason to be unusually proud of their work. Special credit was given the younger members of the company who had learned in a short time to do their parts so well. The public will look forward with eagerness to the next play given by these accomplished youngsters.

Only indirectly did Mr. Hays refer to the shooting. He realized the importance of motion pictures in the social fabric of the country, he said, and therefore accepted its responsibilities.

It seems that Constance Talmadge may do "Irene," that very popular musical comedy, for the screen. This was the plan that Hope Hampton wanted, but Joseph M. Schenck, manager of Norma and Constance Talmadge's pictures, is bidding for the screen rights for Connie, the comedienne.

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OPENING OF "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" PROVES HOLD MOVIES HAVE ON PUBLIC

(By Maurice Henle.)

New York, Jan. 10.—Opening of "The Ten Commandments" gave Broadway its biggest thrill in weeks. Folks were necessary to keep in check the crowd that gathered about the entrance of the Cohan Theatre and lined its lobby.

These people were not to see the opening. The house had long since been sold out. But the crowd remained, determined to catch a glimpse of the cinema folk. Cecil De Mille himself was recognized by a few. Nita Naldi, who plays in the film, drew the major part of the crowd's attention. George Fawcett, who does not appear in the picture, was there, too, as were many other celebrities.

After the performance the crowd collected again, emphasizing the strong hold the movies have on the public. Within the theatre two spectacles were to be staged. One on the screen. The other in the orchestra and balcony. It was the finest feathered audience this writer has ever seen at an opening.

Late in the afternoon of the opening day I had a chat with Cecil B. De Mille, director of "The Ten Commandments."

De Mille confirmed once more the now definitely established fact that production of films will move eastward. He laughed at the idea that Hollywood is on the verge of losing out as a centre of production, and said that so far as his company was concerned the change in plans is purely one of convenience. Paramount has been making 75 per cent of its films on the coast; 25 per cent here. Now the ratio will be 60-40 with New York on the small end.

"Many films made on the coast should have been made in the east," he said. "Production costs are not much higher in New York. If they are higher at all."

He also pointed out that many more experienced actors can be obtained in the east; legitimate show actors playing on Broadway who might want to earn an extra penny or two.

How did the east take "The Ten Commandments?" The one thought that remains after this tremendous film is finished is: "How would it seem if presented in an ordinary movie house?"

There is no question the orchestration during the prologue, that part of the film which tells the story of the delivery of the Commandments unto Moses, had a great deal to do with the smashing effect those first four reels make. It is too bad the prologue is so short. Nothing like it ever has been filmed. It is a masterpiece. The "modern part" of the film is just good melodrama. Its only purpose is to parallel the story of the creation of the Commandments. It does that.

Inspiration Pictures now making Dick Barthelmex's next gem, "The Enchanted Cottage," at Fort Lee, N. J., claims to have the most talented family in pictures working for it. John R. Robertson, a legitimate actor, playing in the same company with Josephine Lovett, whom theatre-goers of 10 years ago will remember, Robertson married Miss Lovett, and together with Shaw Lovett, her son, the two devote their time to making pictures.

Robertson, of course, directs. Mrs. Robertson prepares the script. Her son acts as studio manager, seeing that the costs of the film are kept within reason, etc.

Incidentally, possibly to refresh the memory, Robertson married Miss Lovett when both were appearing in "The Lion and the Mouse." Yes—that was a few years ago.

Rodolph Valentino's return to the screen, official announcement of which has just been made, is interpreted here as a victory for both Famous Players and Valentino. Paramount proved the strength of a contract and Valentino won his right to again appear on the screen. Rodolph has signed with Ritz Pictures and as soon as he completes his

contract, he will make five films for his new employers. Just what that means is not known. Probably his contract will end when he finishes only one film, but Valentino's return to the screen is undoubtedly the biggest movie item to come before the fans in months.

The art of pantomime, which he learned in the theatres of Russia, has helped Theodore Kosloff wonderfully in his screen acting. To each characterization he brings a wealth of pantomimic ability. One of his latest roles is that of the musician in "Don't Call It Love." This is Paramount's picture of Julian Street's "Rita Coventry," directed by William De Mille in his usual distinctive manner. It is an interesting picture, with Jack Holt giving an easy performance of the sophisticated man-about-town, and Nita Naldi, in a series of exotic guises, doing excellent work as the temperamental prima donna.

Besides his picture work, Mr. Kosloff conducts a dancing school in Hollywood, where he teaches the screen stars the terechorean art.

The motion-picture exhibitors of the country have not as yet taken any action to have the films starring Mabel Normand barred from their theatres. Exhibitors as a whole, do not wish to place themselves in the position of a jury on the case.

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The Robertson Family, left to right: Shaw, son; John S., father; Josephine Lovett, mother.

Hypnotized Policeman Shoots Up Vienna Theatre Audience

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