

## IN AMUSEMENT LINES

The Lansing theatre has not contained an audience this season that evinced so much genuine pleasure as that which witnessed the production of "Friends" Wednesday evening.

The success of "Friends" is phenomenal. Not a few people who witnessed it Wednesday night went away with the impression that is the "best play they had ever seen."

But most of those who enjoyed the clever dialogue and amusing situations were not unmindful of the fact that the play itself is a very peculiar conglomeration of theatrical odds and ends. It is, in a general way, a combination of comedy and melodrama. The comedy borders on the farcical at times, and the melodramatic element introduced in the third act, is at strange variance from the rest of the play. The fire-escape business is a good deal strained.

Mr. Royle, the author and leading actor, filled his manuscript with pungent sayings and clever repartee, and these, as much as anything else, are responsible for the success of "Friends." The dialogue is generally very clever, that between Jack and his father especially so. But there are many bright things in it. The audience was quick to catch such sayings as—

"Good resolutions, like fainting women, should always be carried out."

"Drink, instead of drowning my troubles, only floats them to the surface."

The introduction of the following poem, recited by Marguerite, is done with much effect:

**Fate.**  
Two shall be born the whole wide world apart,  
And speak in different tongue, and take no thought

Each of the other's being and no heed;  
Yet there o'er unknown seas to unknown lands  
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death,  
And all unconsciously shape every act  
And turn such thought and step unto the end  
That one day out of darkness they shall meet  
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life  
So closely side by side, that should one turn  
Even so little space from left to right  
They needs must stand acknowledged face to face.

Yet there with grasping hands that never clasp  
With wan and wistful eyes that never see  
And lips calling in ears that never hear,  
Shall wander all their weary days unknown  
And die unsatisfied, and this fate.

Marguerite's singing and Karje's (Lucius Henderson) playing are also attractive and unusual features.

The individualities of the players are strongly defined. Selena Felter, (Mrs. Royle,) is a clever actress who has a way of her own. She is not conventional, and she is effective in the lighter shades of comedy, as well as in the emotional parts.

And Royle and Henderson—they have their characteristics. They impress the audience with their peculiarities.

Perhaps the most natural character in the play as interpreted by the company is that of Marguerite's father, which is done by E. D. Lyons.

"Friends" made a decided impression on its first appearance here last season and it was received with ever greater favor this week.

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The Holden Comedy company has played to crowded houses at the Lansing all this week, and they have made a most favorable impression on the theatre going public. The company is an exceptionally strong one of its class, containing some talented people, and the plays presented, have been such as to elicit a warm reception from the audience. Manager Church has a strong and paying attraction in the Holden company. "Mr. McCawber" was presented Thursday night, and a double bill was given last evening. The company will continue at the Lansing until further notice, and a change of bill may be expected nightly.

The Paiges at the Funke.

For next week the Funke management announces the big star popular attraction of the country and this fact will be most thoroughly demonstrated to Lincoln playgoers before the forth coming engagement has expired. In these times it is a miracle how a travelling attraction can carry a company of twenty-six people but this is what Mr. Paige presents at the Funke all of next week and the week following. Paige's players are as familiar and popular in the New England states as Clara Morris is in Lincoln, all owing to the sterling ability of the company to put on the play in a manner that always pleases. To think of a company of twenty-six players supported by a crack band and operatic orchestra, playing at the remarkably low prices of 10, 20, and 30 cents, is one of the miracles of the age and the only reason that they can afford such extravagance is the fact that people admire such enterprise these hard times and appreciate the opportunity offered to see great plays at a price that every one can stand. The company is headed by that princely comedian George W. Paige and the vivacious soubrette Lillian Paige, the opening bill being that peaceful drama, so true to life entitled "Master and Man." That this play will be put on in all its wealth of grandeur is fully assured and the opening will certainly prove a gala opening occasion. For

Monday evening, in order to introduce the Paiges Manager McCoy will admit all ladies free when accompanied by an escort holding a 30 cent ticket. The grand parade to be given Monday will remind you of this important engagement.

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For further information, address M. V. Richards, Land and Immigration Agent B. & O. R. R., Baltimore, Md.

## A NEW ORGANIZATION

The question as to whether Lincoln will have a league base ball team will, in all probability be definitely settled January 9, when a meeting will be held, presumably at Des Moines, to effect the organization of an eight town western league, composed of such cities as Lincoln, Omaha, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Rock Island, Davenport, Dubuque, Peoria, Springfield and Quincy. As before stated there is a great deal of interest manifested in this proposed new league and it is predicted by some who are conversant with the base ball situation that it will outlast and be infinitely more successful than the other Western league to which Lincoln was denied admission, and which is composed of Minneapolis, Kansas City, Sioux City, Milwaukee, Grand Rapids, Indianapolis, Toledo and Detroit.

Col Hickey, who is working the matter up said to a COURIER representative yesterday: "You may say that it is now positively settled that we will have a league club in this city. Enough money has been subscribed to insure the success of the undertaking, and there is no longer any doubt. The only thing that stood in the way was the uncertainty as to whether we could raise the necessary money. That has been removed. The new league will be composed of strong clubs and it will be a success from the start."

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