

THE THEATRES.

A week ago last night there was something going on on the stage of the Lansing theatre. "Side Tracked" I believe is what they called the entertainment. Pity it wasn't side tracked before it got to Lincoln. I haven't a program by me, and am unable to recall the names of the performers. But it doesn't matter. Suffice it to say that the "show" takes rank with the worst afflictions that have visited Lincoln theatre goers this season. It was awful. Beyond the tramp characterization and some musical specialties in one act it was without a redeeming feature. It was if anything, worse than Fisher's "Cold Day" and "The Swannee River" and "Through the War," and when this is said, it is unnecessary to make further comment. Mention might be made however, of a little girl with a dime museum voice, an actor who was evidently engaged for his wardrobe, and a woolly dog. The little girl shuffled her feet and piped her voice. The man with clothes persisted in such combinations as a silk tile, a Prince Albert and tan shoes. The little dog was loaded with lead, and however thrown or kicked about always came up on his haunches. "Side Tracked," in one respect, resembles Clara Morris. Miss will probably not be seen in Lincoln again. In an unguarded moment she embraced religion. "Side Tracked" will not be seen in Lincoln again. It could never bunco its way into Lincoln a second time.

"Our Flat," a comedy farce in three acts, was given at the Lansing theatre Monday night to a small but thoroughly delighted audience. This comedy came to Lincoln with a strong London and New York recommendation: but Lincoln people refused to be guided by the judgment of these two big cities, and stayed away from the performance—in large numbers. "Our Flat," so far as the movement is concerned, resembles "Mr. Wilkinson's Widows," and pieces of that ilk. It is brimful of go, with just a little of French spice. The abilities and versatility of the acting people are not held down by the conventionalities of a plot. Anybody and everybody did his cleverest specialty, introducing features of all sorts susceptible of no possible connection with the thread of the story. Emily Bancker, who had been seen here before in "Gloriana," has a pleasing face and some acting ability. Tom Ricketts, P. H. Reyley, Miss Marian Van Cortland, and Miss Lee Jarvis are all distinctly clever people, and they did not hold themselves in in "Our Flat." The best burlesque of a theatrical scene ever given on the stage of the Lansing was the parody on Marie Burroughs in "The Profligate," given by Miss Bancker and Mr. Ricketts. It lost some of its force in that Lincoln people have not generally seen Miss Burroughs in that play; but all could appreciate the cleverness of the burlesque. In "Our Flat" the people work hard to do the best they can. In the second act where the hard-hearted furniture dealer takes away the furniture, Margery, Miss Bancker, does a great deal of hard manual labor in making up lounges, tables and chairs out of soap boxes, barrels, etc., with the assistance of a liberal quantity of draperies. This scene has the merit of originality. The element of fun enters very largely into this farce, and for wholesome humor it has few equals among the plays that have preceded it the same stage. It is a good play of its kind and it is cleverly put on. It deserved a full house.

When Sousa gave a concert in Lincoln a year or so ago exception was taken to the personal appearance of his chief vocalist and himself. It was said that the gown which the soprano, I

think she was a soprano, wore and the soiled gloves worn by Sousa, indicated a lack of respect for the audience. A notable feature of Sousa's band concert at the Lansing Tuesday afternoon was the immaculate gloves worn by the handsome director. There was no evidence of their having been worn before. And any criticism of the gowns worn by Miss Barnard and Miss Duke could not be otherwise than favorable. In Mr. Sousa's case it seems that a word to the wise is sufficient. Sousa is an ideal band master. It is a pleasure to watch him wield the baton; so graceful are his movements. He is not a gymnast on the conductor's stand like Johann Strauss, and he is altogether different from Theodore Thomas or Victor Herbert. But his mastery of the musicians is well nigh perfect. There is so much more life and spirit in Sousa's band than in Gilmore's, or rather, Herbert's; and of the two I believe intelligent opinion will generally incline toward Sousa's as the better band. Sousa is in close touch with popular taste. He gives the public, both in his own compositions and in selections from other authors, just what it wants. A gentleman was telling me the other day that while in Washington, some months ago, he heard the Marine band, under the new leader playing before a large crowd. Selection after selection, including the new leader's own compositions, were played, with little or no apparent effect on the audience. Toward the end of the program one of Sousa's marches, either the "Washington Post" or "Liberty Bell" was given, and as the first bars of the familiar music were heard, the crowd cheered and applauded so that for a few moments the playing could scarcely be heard. Sousa's music always makes an effective appeal. An attractive program as given Tuesday afternoon ranging from a William Tell overture to an illustrative piece, "Fo de Wa." "Liberty Bell" was on the program, and two other Sousa marches were given as encores. Miss Currie Duke's violin playing was of a high order. Miss Barnard has a soprano voice of much power and clearness, though lacking somewhat in sweetness.

Wednesday night at the Funke Edouard Remenyi, the Hungarian violinist, who has been heard so many times in Lincoln, once more made his bow to the public, and gave one of his popular musical programs. Remenyi's performance on the violin is thoroughly characteristic. It is marked by an athletic vigor. I believe some one has called him the violin-gymnast. But it does not follow that his playing lacks delicacy. There is much expression and feeling in all of his work. Remenyi, throughout the entire program, was wholly, entirely Remenyi. He was assisted Wednesday night by Miss Stein, soprano and Mr. Eames, pianist.

A critic in the *Dramatic Times* discredits the statement that "the present race of actors and actresses is inferior to those who flourished a couple of decades ago." He says: "When we come to consider comedians it is doubtful if there were ever so many clever men on the stage at one time as there are at present. We have them of all types, from the high to the low, from the broadly eccentric to the ultra-refined. Mr. Joseph Jefferson has no predecessor as *Rip Van Winkle* and as *Bob Acres*, *Golightly* and other characters requiring delicate finesse, he is without a rival. E. M. Holland has nothing to fear from the best of the old boys; and N. C. Goodwin and Tim Murphy are a pair to flaunt in the faces of those who say the actors of the Nineteenth century are not equal to those of the Eighteenth. William H. Crane, Thomas H. Burns, John E. Ince, Stuart Robson, Edward E. Sothorn and Chas. Dickson are a

sextette of side-splitting fun-makers that it would be hard to equal and impossible to duplicate, no matter what the admirers of another age may say; for taken as the public pleases, they are good artists."

In at least one respect the stage of "two decades ago" had a decided advantage over the stage of today. It wasn't encumbered with the dead weight of James J. Corbett, John L. Sullivan and Pete Jackson. The prize fighters had not yet acquired the habit of graduating from the ring into the green room. And there weren't any living pictures then.

The appearance of the University of Nebraska Glee and Banjo clubs at the Funke, Monday evening, May 20th, is attracting considerable interest in social and university circles. The concert will undoubtedly prove that the boys have worked hard to get up a program of interesting and amusing college music. The clubs have delighted large audiences at Seward and Wahoo, where they went recently. The glee club is as funny, as stirring as ever. Their ensemble work shows a decided improvement over that of last year. The banjo club's selections will prove a pleasant part of the concert.

"The Passing Show," which will come to the Lansing Friday, the Twenty-fourth, is one of the biggest attractions on the road, and its appearance here will rise to the importance of an event. The company is the same as during the Chicago engagement, and includes John E. Henshaw, George A. Schiller, William Cameron, Seymour Hess, Gus Pixley, E. S. Carr, Vernona Jarbeau, Lucy Daly, Madge Lessing, May Ten Broeck, La Petite Adelaide, Lida Lear, Minnie Miller and Carary & Lederer's Casino pickaninnies. "The Passing Show" is an extravaganza showing a whirl of gauze and laces, a blending of colored lights, a

mixing up of odd conceits, a burlesque of plays both familiar and unknown, a touch of comic opera here and a bit of farce comedy there and a liberal splash of variety. A feature of "The Passing Show" is the ballet of Pierrot. It has been said that "the nicest craft in letters, the liveliest fancy, the sincerity of genius, will not fashion a more beautiful conceit than the story of the Prodigal Son." Translated to the folk-lore of France the story takes an ideal, idyllic quality that lifts it into the realm of pure poetry. Poor little Pierrot—who can help smiling at his worst follies or keep the eye from moistening a bit when these follies turn to sin? The ballet, illustrative of this story, is given with eight dancers, and brings out every phase of the old tradition. This ballet is considered one of the leading elements of "The Passing Show's" success.

This week local theatre goers have been entertained by one of the liveliest and strongest farces seen in Lincoln in many a day, Mrs. Musgrave's "Our Flat," and by Remenyi, the violinist, and Sousa's band.

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