

FUNKE OPERA HOUSE

Frank C. Zehrung,
Manager.

FUNKE OPERA HOUSE

ONE WEEK, COMMENCING MONDAY JUNE 3RD.

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THE THEATRES.

"The Passing Show," Canary & Lederer's big spectacle, which was presented at the Lansing theatre, Friday evening of last week was originally put on in New York as a local skit, intended to fill a yawning gap. It comprised burlesques of incidents and actors in such plays as "Sowing the Wind," "The Amazons," "John A Dreams" and "The Butterfly." It also satirized Messrs Abbey, Schaufel & Grau's grand opera company, and introduced a great deal of purely local matter that was afterwards eliminated when it was decided to place it on "the road. Commodore Eldredge T. Gerry, of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and other prominent or notorious New Yorkers were made the subjects of sketches. New York, that much vaunted centre of culture, is easily attracted by features of this sort. New York sustains Koster & Bial's and Proctor's and Tony Pastor's and always welcomes such fin de siecle attractions as "Sport McAllister," and "A Rag Baby." It was not surprising, therefore that the "Passing Show," even more flimsy and trivial and coarse than the E. E. Rice emanations, should make a big hit. It was declared to be the greatest thing of the season. Jarbeau, who for years struggled against fate in a theatrical mistake called "Starlight," received the most enthusiastic plaudits on her parody of Calve in Carmen, and the various more or less clever people in the cast, including Mr. Henshaw all scored "popular successes." The show succeeded so well and made so much money that the owners decided to send it out in the country. So it was cut in places and slightly rearranged, and sent on its way. It was well received in such cities as Chicago, where most of the plays burlesqued have been seen; but in the smaller, more remote cities like Lincoln it fell short of the expectations of the management. And no wonder; for, as it was presented in this city, the strongest features were unintelligible to the major portion of the audience. What mooted it to the Lincoln theatre goer if there was a clever skit on that opium exploiting play, "John A Dreams," if he never had seen the original play? Of what interest was a satire on John Drew in Henry Guy Carleton's play if one had never seen "The Butterfly?" It was mistaken judgment that ever induced Canary & Lederer to take "The Passing Show" out of the big cities. Send us, oh ye New York managers, your new plays while they are new, if you expect us to take your parodies and burlesques. Otherwise keep your "Passing Shows."

After witnessing "The Passing Show" I think almost anyone would be in a state of mind to endorse Dr. Nordeau's book. The popularity of such trivial, inconsequential, vulgar things as "The Passing Show" makes one believe in "Degeneration." William H. Crane may write letters to the newspapers and Jefferson may discourse hopefully; but meantime the Rices and Proctors, the Hopkinses and the Tony Postors, the Lederers and the Koster control the big end of the stage, and vaudeville flings its skirts and cracks his heels together in triumph. The apotheosis of fleshings has gone on until partial exposure of the person has been followed by raw indecency. Rubald jest has taken the place of wholesome fun, and obscenity stalks unrestricted on the latter day stage. Coarseness and vulgarity, obscenity and indecency are rendered additionally "attractive" by magnificent scenery, and costly settings and fast music. Clever actors and actresses are induced to prostitute their talents—and there you have the popular success of the day.

The dialogue of "The Passing Show" contains many things that no respectable man would dare say to a respectable woman; the jests that were made could not be repeated around your own hearthstone, and the songs, notably the "Trilby" excrement, that were sung—who would care to have them sung in his own house? "The Passing Show" is a gorgeous spectacle of depravity.

John E. Henshaw, Lucy Daly, E. S. Tarr, Madge Lessing, Vernona Jarbeau, and several others in the cast, are capable people, and they ought to be in better business than expliciting the vulgarity and inanity of "The Passing Show."

"The Passing Show" abounded in what are elegantly known as "local gags." Most everything of importance in this town from Billy Barr up, was mentioned. There was a joke about Judge Waters, and more or less nonsensical allusions to University Place and Have-lock. Mayor Graham came in for some consideration at the hands of Mr. Henshaw and the town of Crete was made the butt of one piece of buffoonery. There were many other references of this sort that reflected credit upon the industry, at least, of the performers. The question is often asked, How do show people acquire the information necessary for these gags? Nothing could be more simple. The company generally gets into town in the morning or early in the afternoon, and after the low comedian has had time to get a toothpick between his teeth he makes the acquaintance of the hotel clerk. "Tell me what's been going on here

lately," he remarks. "Anything sensational happened? Give me some names that I can bring into the show. Put me onto the names of the 'men about town' and their characteristics." He learns all the hotel clerk knows and then saunters over to the theatre where he acquires additional information from the manager or attaches, and in the course of a few hours easily secures as much material as he can use. That \$3,000 damage case of Billy Barr's was meat for the comedians of "The Passing show." They seized it with avidity, and made use of it to a considerable extent in the performance. This is part of the business of the modern low comedian, and it is no trouble at all for him to find his leads. It is a very common form of entertainment, but the gags usually catch the audience, and help to make the show a go. "The Passing Show" composed very largely of parodies of theatrical attractions that had never been seen in Lincoln, was but little understood by a large part of the audience. The introduction of local matter gave it, for some of the audience, additional interest.

Goldie and Beatrice Rinehart are members of the Oriole opera company which will be at the Funke next week. The Rinehart sisters will be remembered as leading members of the opera company Manager Hickey had at Lincoln Park three years ago.

Gladys Wallis, who is going to star next season made her debut in comic opera Monday night in Philadelphia in a revival of "The Little Tycoon."

Of the Oriole Opera company, which will open a week's engagement at the Funke opera house Monday night, the St. Joe Herald says: "The Oriole Opera company is one of the cleverest all around musical organizations which has ever come to St. Joseph. * * * The company numbers twenty acting people of cultivated musical voices, including the Misses Beatrice and Goldie Rinehart. Their first production was "Erminie," under the personal directorship of Mr. T. Burt Parks. To all lovers of music it was an assured fact that a rare treat was in store for those who witnessed the performances given by this company. They were not disappointed, as the company more than fulfilled all that was said of them. They presented in a faultless manner the opera of "Erminie." The title role is most creditably assumed by Miss Beatrice Rinehart, who possesses an even, sweet and cultivated soprano voice. J. H. Roberts and William Hicks, the two comedians, are also very clever, while Mr. John Henderson in the part of "Chadeaux" was simply immense in his

portrayal of that character. Miss Rita Harrington, in the character of the "Old Princess," achieved great success in her character. Miss Goldie Rinehart, the bewitching little soubrette, appeared to good advantage in the part of "Javotte," and won many friends for her clever work. None of the larger companies visiting St. Joseph in recent years excel it excepting in point of numbers. Misses Beatrice and Goldie Rinehart are features, but every other member proved themselves exceptionally clever in "Erminie" as produced yesterday. The directing of Mr. Parks is that of a master hand." On Monday evening one 50 cent ticket will admit one lady and gentlemen, or two ladies, if secured before seven o'clock. Seats now on sale at Zehrung's.

Down at—the other evening, says a New York newspaper woman. I met a ruined actor. Of course it was not the first one, by any means, but it was the first one whose pathway from munificence to misery had been along so strange a course.

"I once had a fine baritone voice," he coughed, when I had consented to listen to him. "I sang Devilshoof, in 'Bohemian Girl,' and had to drink about a quart of colored water in the Count's apartments night after night. And the Venetian red or madder or whatever it was they used to stain the water with sapped the wells of my vocalism, and I couldn't sing any better than Jim Gerville does now.

"Then I went to the comedy stage, and drank at fetes and fairs, and felt my art slipping from me with each potation. But it was down in the books and what could I do? I tried melodrama, and swallowed half a gallon of 'booze' in 'The Stowaway,' and that sent me to the concert hall, where I was supplied with cinnamon brown stuff in common tumblers, and was expected to swallow the whole of it, and even then act drunk, when the effect was enough to sober three blocks of the Bowery. After that I went from bad to worse always being cast in plays where there was mock 'booze' to be drunk. And now I can't sing, I can't act, I can't dance, and what the—well, since you insist, I can't drink; though it's seldom enough that I get a chance. Here's to you! And may you never put an enemy into your mouth that comes from the property man."

So, saying, the ruined actor, true to his training, swallowed the genuine draught, and simulated intoxication—so baleful are the influences of the stage.

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