

## THE PASSING SHOW

Mr. Joseph Wittman and his partner Mr. Stack are now in Chicago and playing a week's engagement at Hall's Casino. Next week they will open the Grand opera house, a new vaudeville house in Boston, and after that will play various other engagements through the east. With the exception of Marlowe and Dunham, formerly with Barnum and now playing in Germany, Mr. Stack has a greater reputation as a performer on the triple bars than any other man in this country, and under his instructions there is little doubt that Mr. Wittman will in time even surpass him, as the young man has a grace and finish of execution which his skillful partner does not possess. Mr. Wittman has long been a local celebrity and he seems to find in larger and more critical cities the same enthusiastic recognition that he always found here.

So Felix Morris will quit starring this year. Well, that's another misfortune in a world of trouble. It is a misfortune to Mr. Morris, for when an actor once tries to stand on his own name and fails it generally finishes him for the future, it writes his destiny for him—and reads it. It is a misfortune to the general public, but the public will never know that. Felix Morris is one of few artists in this country. One of the few men who have depth and seriousness. His work in "The Old Musician" was in its way almost perfect. No one act piece on the modern stage is more finished except Beerbhom Tree's "Ballad Monger." Having had the best possible training in leading business Mr. Morris undertook to star. But the public does not want Mr. Morris. It has Eddie Foy and Tim Murphy and a dozen other burning and shining lights. It refused to patronize him. He was praised indeed, by the few whose praise is worth while, and appreciated by fewer still, but man cannot live by praise alone and the money in this world unfortunately does not belong to the appreciative souls. At any rate it did not come Felix Morris' way. He has gone back to leading business.

All this may sound very simple and commonplace, but it's a tragedy in its way just the same, and the worst part of it is that it's only a tragedy of money after all. It is always doubtful whether it is wise for a man of talent to attempt to star in this country. He may strike it indeed, and if he does there's millions in it, but his chances are equally good for a bitter and humiliating failure. In France, in Germany and even in England there is a code and a measure for success. There are men whose power is absolute and whose word is law. They represent the taste and culture of the nation and their judgments are just. If they proclaim a man an artist his future is assured. But in this country there is no court of appeal, nothing but the erratic impulses of the crowd that is too lazy and too good natured and too ignorant to judge at all. The highest salaried man on the American stage is Eddie Foy, and the way that Eddie Foy became the people's idol was this: One night during the World's Fair a young man who had rather more aboard than he could com-

fortably manage was making an exhibition of himself in the street. A theatrical manager who was passing that way stopped and asked who the fellow was and found he was a pork-chopper in a Chicago packing house. Now the manager knew his business. A pork chopper from Chicago who could be as vulgar as that; who could twist his mouth into so many shapes—he ought to make a hit, he ought to achieve greatness and leave a name to posterity. In two years Foy was drawing the highest salary of any American actor, more than Henry Miller, more than Henry Dixey or Maurice Barrymore. Nowhere does the great American people show its originality of taste as it does in the theatre.

Mme. Modjeska is back again and ready for her American season. She has a new play by Clyde Fitch and will make "Magda" her main stay as of yore. Heavens, we will have "Magdas" galore this year! Bernhardt's, Modjeska's and probably Duse's, the French, Polish and Italian version of the woman with a past.

The musical world is rejoicing to hear that Anton Rubinstein's son has "sobered up" and will make his debut in opera this winter. The young man has long been considered a most promising vocalist and more great masters than one have said that he had a future. But like a good many other young men of promise he kept putting his future off until his friends were weary of waiting. In the meantime he devoted most of his talent and capacity to drinking the best wines in St. Petersburg and sampling all the foreign drinks under the sun. It is said that he imported an American bartender for the express purpose of mixing his cocktails and an English one to draw his hock and seltzer. And for every bar tender he engaged he discharged a music master. At length he had the good fortune to meet a young lady who is as lovable as she is musical and whose charms are more engaging than cocktails. He married her and they say she has straightened him out and will make a singer out of him.

Forry Moore and Karcher left Lincoln Thursday, of last week to join the Hopkins Trans-Oceanic Vaudeville company for the season. They are now playing in Chicago.

A play which will appear at the Funke within the next few months in which some Lincoln people will have a special interest, is a revival of "Only a Farmer's Daughter." A Nebraska young lady who has achieved considerable distinction as an actress and who is known socially in this city will star in this play.

Manager Zehrung, of the Funke opera house, has since the first of August, given considerable attention to the work of renovation and decoration, and while no extensive changes have been made the interior of the theater will present a particularly bright and fresh appearance when the house is once more thrown open to the public. A fresh coat of white enamel paint has been put on, and the decorations generally retouched. Everything has been thoroughly cleaned. Some additions

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have been made to the scenery and properties of the house. taken from Mr. Zehrung's date book.

The Funke will formally open the season of '95-'96 September 4, when Roland Reed will present "The Politician," by the late David D. Lloyd, who was the author of "The Senator" in which William H. Crane scored such signal success. "The Politician" was revised and brightened by Sydney Rosenfeld, and it is regarded as the most attractive play in which Mr. Reed has appeared in recent years. Mr. Reed will be supported as usual by Miss Isadore Rush. Along with Miss Rush and Mr. Reed's brother, Julian Reed, the company will include Miss Rose Brahm, daughter of Dave Brahm, the composer. Roland Reed and Miss Rush have many friends and admirers in Lincoln and it is needless to say that the opening of the Funke is awaited with interest.

The list of bookings at the Funke is not complete; and it will probably be some weeks before Mr. Zehrung will be ready to make the annual detailed announcement. But an idea of what may be expected at this play house may be formed by the mention of a few attractions

After Roland Reed will come Pauline Hall, who made such a successful appearance here last season in the operatic comedy "Dorcas." Pauline Hall and Mr. George B. McLelland, her husband, recently returned from Europe. They purchased abroad the American rights for a light opera which was one of last season's successes in Vienna, Paris and London. This new play will probably be presented in Lincoln.

It will be remembered that "Thrilby," the "Trilby" burlesque produced at Richard Mansfield's Garrick theatre in New York by Mr. Mansfield's own company, provoked nearly as much comment and was quite as successful from a financial point of view as Paul Potter's serious dramatization of Du Maurier's book. "Thrilby" has been booked by Mr. Zehrung, and will be produced here by the Garrick theatre company.

Since Lillian Lewis made her first appearance in Lincoln several years ago on the occasion of the opening of the Lansing theatre, this actress has filled numerous metropolitan engagements,

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