

Seeing the Play

Channing Pollock Writes of How His Great Drama Is Viewed by Those in Front

"A PLAY has more facets than a diamond," says Channing Pollock, author of "The Fool," the great New York dramatic...

"Experts on the play's subject, that is the ministers of the church, have been particularly sustaining. For instance, Dr. Edgar A. Ross of the Church of the Redeemer, in Newark, gave me this encouraging reading: 'The meaning of it is not that the actor solves any of the problems of the world faces today, but that he achieves a wonderful joy in the pursuit of loving service in the name of Christ and humanity...'"

"Other clergymen have been equally kind. One included in his comment that the colors used on the altar in the first act are wrong, that white not purple is the color used for Christmas. He said: 'Perhaps just one little insight from a clergyman on a very small matter, but one which really affects the whole play, is an error of stage setting in the first act. The scene and the altar are correctly fixed as to candles but incorrectly in regard to frontal. You now have a purple or violet hanging. That color is suitable for the four weeks before Christmas. It would be white for your scene on Christmas eve. You would find that the whole atmosphere of the first scene would be very much changed in its total effect with that part of the audience who are educated churchgoers, if that were so. White is the sign of Christmas joy. Violet means always to church people repentance and sorrow. This is a minor matter in such a splendid picture.'"

"This kind of criticism arranged for his mother's club to attend the play, asked me to speak before a church society, and the actor playing the clergyman to read the lessons at a Sunday morning service in his church by way of further endorsement of the play."

"In the play the purple hangings used on the altar for the simple reason that the altar has not yet been dressed for the Christmas eve service. It is late afternoon. The Christmas tree is being dressed but the altar committee—and I believe it is called—has not yet dressed the altar for the Christmas festival."

"It is interesting to know that this clergyman with his knowledge of all the beautiful meanings expressed in his church's ritual, did not resent the use of the altar upon the stage, but a member of another congregation felt that I offended by placing the first act of my play in the chancel of the church. And still another felt that Daniel Gilchrist should not smoke."

"A criticism, from another angle, was of the line in the play: 'Whoever heard of a poor Jew?' To this critic I replied: 'I have a very generous strain of Jewish blood myself and am very proud of it—and no one cherishes a greater admiration for the Jewish race. But I have no sympathy with the attitude of any race that feels itself immune from criticism, comment or jest.'"

Old-Time Drama on Rialto Screen

"Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model," at the Rialto, is the screen version of the famous Owen Davis melodrama which enjoyed a popular run in New York several years ago. As a stage play it is one of the most thrilling pieces ever written.

For this production Emmett Flynn selected one of the greatest casts of the year. Claire Windsor plays the title role. Mae Busch, Lew Cody, Raymond Griffith, Edmund Lowe, Hobart Bosworth and Lilyan Tashman, famous Follies beauty, compose the array of celebrities in "Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model."

Flynn took this expensive array of stars to New York city to film scenes on the elevated tracks and various streets in the city. He then returned to California where interviews were made in the studios at Culver City.

The story moves swiftly through these realistic settings. It concerns the thrilling adventures of the beautiful "Nellie," the daughter of wealthy parents, who through circumstances has been living under the care of a foster parent, Thomas Tipton, in the tenement district of New York. Her mother has been searching for years for her daughter. Nellie's foster father becomes ill and Nellie is forced to seek employment in a modiste shop, not knowing that she is help to her mother's fortune. Walter Peck, the worthless nephew of Nellie's mother, knowing that Nellie is alive, tries to convince the mother that Nellie will not be found, thus leaving him heir to her fortune. It is Peck's endeavours to keep Nellie in obscurity that provides action and thrills for the story.



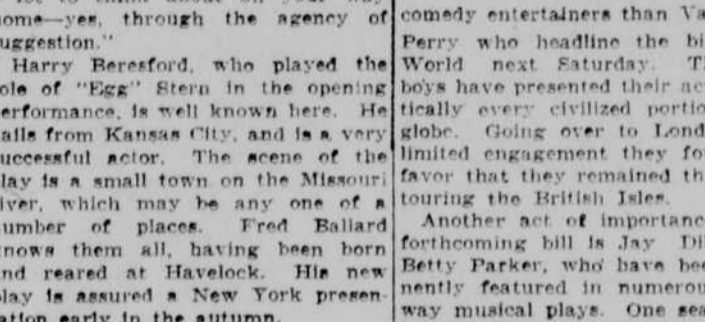
On Stage AND Screen IN Omaha



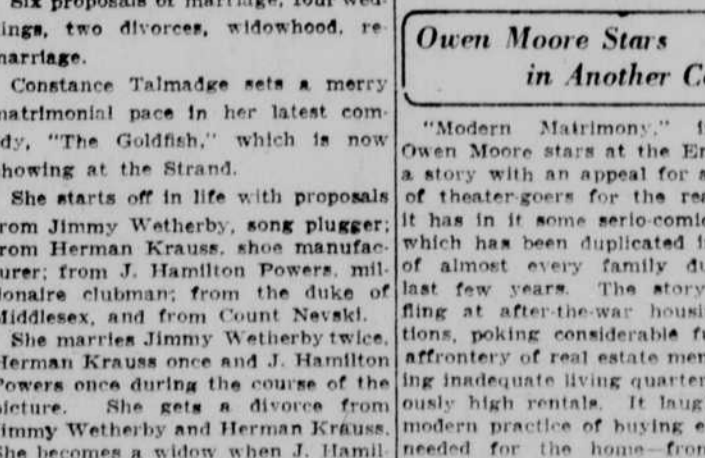
Marian Huslop AT THE BRANDEIS



Fred Ballard's New Play Hits at First Performance



Constance Talmadge IN "GOLDFISH" AT THE STRAND



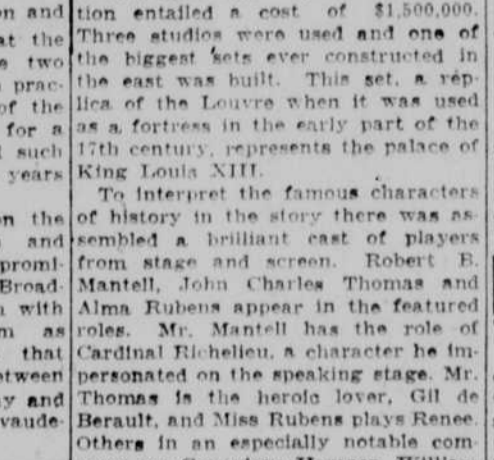
Joe Marion AT THE EMPRESS



Clara Windsor IN "NELLIE, THE BEAUTIFUL CLOAK MODEL" AT THE RIALTO



Miss Stala Shwartz AT THE BRANDEIS



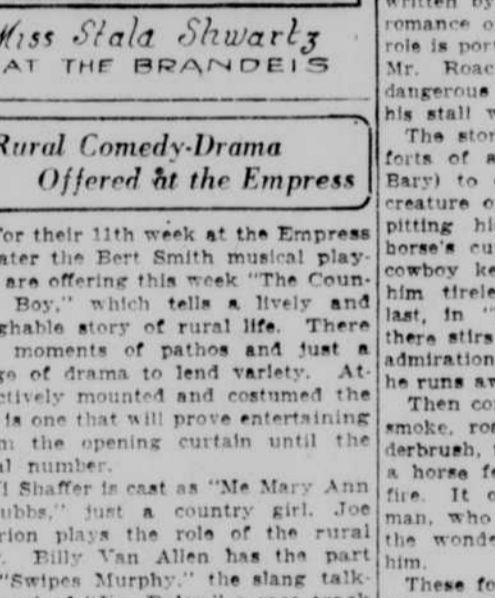
Globe Trotters Down on Schedule at World



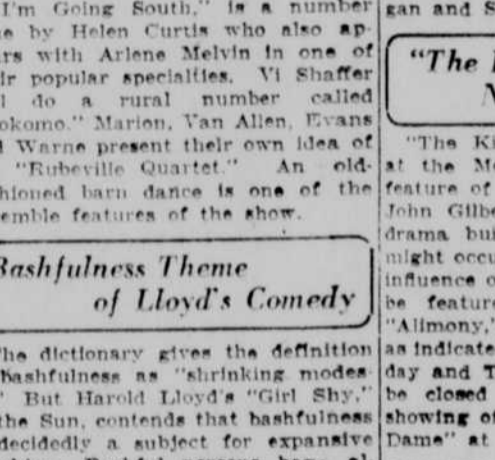
Owen Moore Stars in Another Comedy



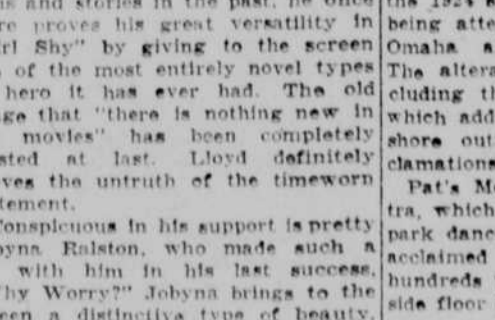
Anna Swirling in "HEART OF A CLOWN" AT THE WORLD



Sensational Film With a Horse Hero



Rural Comedy-Drama Offered at the Empress



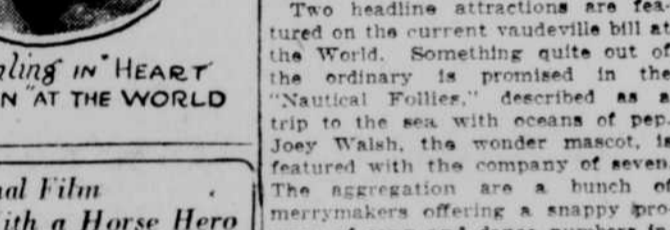
Patsy Ruth Miller IN "THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME" AT THE MUSE



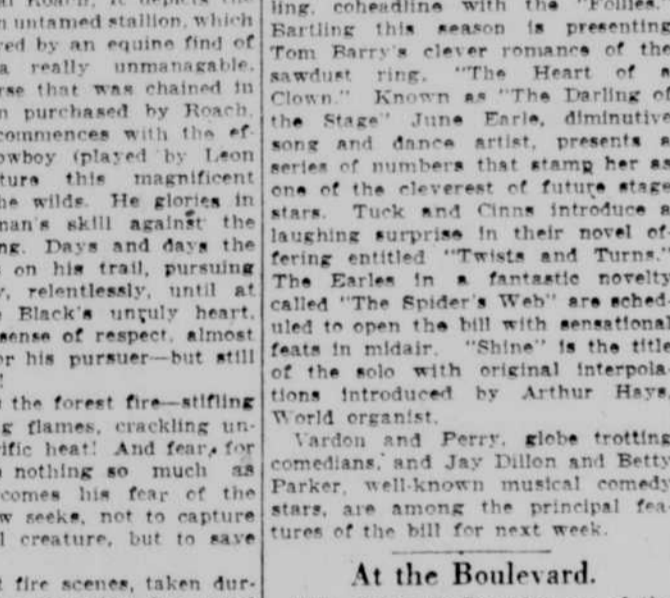
Jobyna Raiston AND Harbord Lloyd IN "GIRL SHY" AT THE SUN



Patsy Ruth Miller IN "THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME" AT THE MUSE



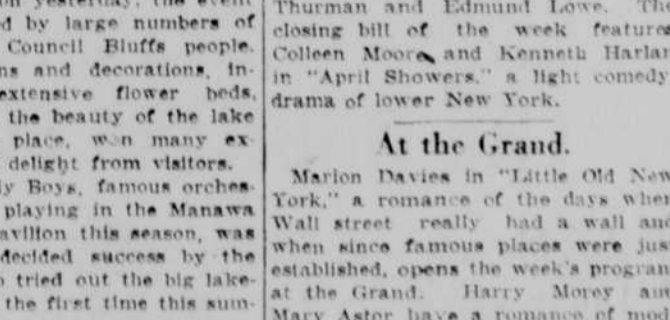
World Features for Week Are Unique



At the Boulevard



The Hunchback of Notre Dame at Muse



Manawa Opens to Big Crowds

O'Neill Play Dud

Mixed Marriage Drama Fails to Start Anything When Shown on Stage

By PERCY HAMMOND. New York, May 24

DESPITE the red-hot preliminary ferment about Eugene O'Neill's "All God's Chillun Got Wings," the result was rather tame. The negro and the white woman were wed, as advertised, the lady went mildly insane in consequence, and the curtain fell without so much as a suggestion of race riots.

Only the mayor was perturbed. At a late hour on the opening night Mr. Hylan sent one of his tipstaffs to the theater with an order forbidding the children in the cast to appear. He seems to have been justified in that prohibition, since the drama explains that it was childhood promiscuity that inspired the unfortunate matrimony between the black man and the white woman. They were schoolmates at the age of 9. Mr. Hylan, having read the play in "The American Mercury," was convinced, no doubt, that it was a valid argument for Jim Crow segregation.

The first night of this overblown spectacle showed the American theater in an amusing aspect. Reams had been written and gabbled about the defiant masterpiece. The drama, however, had been all squaver for and against it. I expected to see the usual parades in Fifth avenue denouncing its evils or advocating its merits. Yet when it came to life it did so most placidly.

Its manager was an ill-ventilated siffk-theater in a gaudy Greenwich Village alley. Its attendant numbered 200—a little gathering of the minor New York component of the drama, than which there is nothing so minor. Between the acts they crowded the narrow sidewalk, chatting volubly about sex, the seven arts and other quarrelsome topics, but never coming to blows.

Meantime they were a bit bored by Mr. O'Neill's dull misanthropies. The passion of the noble negro for the white girl, they discovered, had all the fire of Uncle Tom's affection for Little Eva. Even they suspected that "All God's Chillun Got Wings" is merely awkward, sincere and amateurish audacity.

Considerable uproar has been raised in local art circles by Prof. Brander Matthews' rude reversal of the verdict of the Pulitzer prize play committee. That starchy triune annotated, "The Show-Off," as the year's most worthy wonder-work, preferring it to all the other recent dramatic Kohinors. But Prof. Matthews admitted "Hell Bent for Heaven" more enthusiastically than anything he saw this season on Broadway. So reluctantly he turned his academic thumb down on the committee's judgment and made a new decision.

Malkolms drama-lovers have said that Prof. Matthews was influenced in his action by the fact that "Hell Bent for Heaven" is the product of his assistant instructor at Columbia university, Prof. Hatcher Hughes, and that the play is dedicated to him. This seems to be a bit shallow. Prof. Matthews, though he has been called the drama's old-man-of-the-sea, knows that "Hell Bent for Heaven" is better than "The Show-Off," and he says so. He knows it just as well as you know that "Tarnish," "The Goose Hangs High," "The Pottery," "Chains" or "White Desert" is better than either. He says, as you have, a right to his superior opinion and he exercises it. Though in the process he is forced to humiliate such expert domesmen as William Lyon Phelps of Yale, Clayton Hamilton of Columbia and Owen Johnson of fiction.

I sometimes wonder if the judges in this contest ever suspect that American plays are often produced in places other than New York. Do they know, or does it matter to them, that new "shows" are born in San Francisco, Detroit, Los Angeles, Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul? Do they know that new dramas exist in Grand Rapids and Buffalo? They contemplate the Broadway theater exclusively, and their conclusions are limited and of no great value.

The Pulitzer prize, by the way, is supposed to be awarded to the play that best promotes the welfare of "our people, our good taste, our manners and our education." "Hell Bent for Heaven" is but a vivid study of an insane religious fanatic in the remote, Carolina mountains. "The Show-Off" illustrates amusingly and successfully the life of a chorus girl, an American four-flusher. Both of them are good shows. But neither of them, if you are on the level with Mr. Pulitzer's specifications, deserves his \$1,000.

Popular Musical Play Promised Next Week

"The Three Twins," adapted from Joseph Gates' popular musical success, is the attraction announced for next week at the Empress theater. It will be given the most elaborate stage presentation of any of the Bert Smith shows.

It will be recalled that the original production which had long runs on Broadway and in all the principal cities, brought to theatrical stardom Clifton Crawford and Bessie McCoy. Musical hits from the show include "Cuddle Up a Little Cissie," "Yama Yama Man," and "The Hee-Hoo Hee." The farcical story which has to do with the mistaken identity of two three twins serves to introduce Joe Marion in a clever light comedy role and marks the return of Billy Van Allen to his favorite old man characterization.

"Gag Men," or the fellows who think up laughs for the movies are at a premium in Hollywood. A good gag man can earn more money than a handsome actor.

Hot news: Sylvia Breamer is going to bob her hair.