

TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS A SEASON FOR FUN



ROM time to time in a magazine and newspaper stories dealing with the amount of money expended by the public in its search for amusements, and the aggregate in dollars, running well up toward \$20,000,000 for a single season's theater-going, is a fairly reasonable estimate. What it costs to provide these theatrical amusements for a year, a month, a week, or even a day, is a subject, however, of such indefinite conjecture that it has not yet got into type, or, if it has, in such a desultory and fragmentary way, and with so much omitted and so much taken for granted, that the figures cannot be said to have carried much conviction. It is practically impossible to estimate exactly what amount of money the theatrical producers of America expend in their efforts to cater to the vast clientele which looks to this form of amusement for relief from the dull cares of the daily routine or the highly charged nervous wear and tear of a swift commercial era, but averages are possible. And, though lacking somewhat in definiteness, they tell a story of vast treasure all being poured through practically the one channel of enterprise.

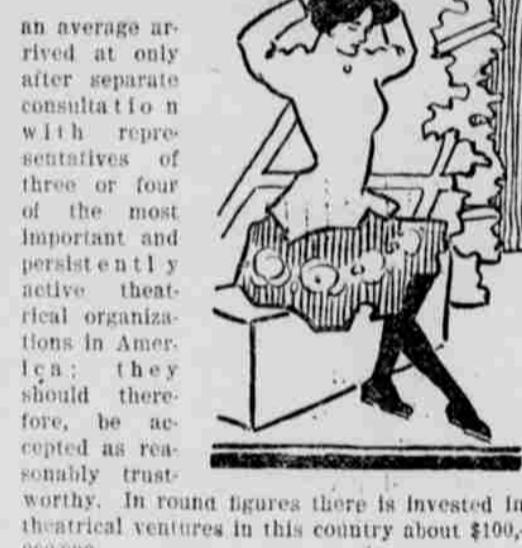
To any one who has not stopped to consider the number of theaters required in a great country like this, the number of people employed, the multifarious business enterprises directly or indirectly affected by the unceasing demand for theatrical amusement, the figures at first sight may seem well-nigh incredible. But it may be borne in mind that any figures quoted here represent

8, Cleveland 8, Columbus 5, Cincinnati 11, Detroit 8, Chicago 27, St. Louis 11, Milwaukee 8, St. Paul 6, Minneapolis 10, Omaha 4, Kansas City 8, Denver 4, San Francisco 7, Los Angeles 7, New Orleans 9, Louisville 5, Indianapolis 4, Toledo 5.

Number of Theaters in Each State—(List does not include theaters in cities mentioned above)—Alabama 27, Arizona 12, Arkansas 19, California 63, Colorado 39, Connecticut 54, Delaware 4, Florida 19, Georgia 25, Idaho 26, Illinois 126, Indiana 95, Indian Territory 7, Iowa 124, Kansas 81, Kentucky 36, Louisiana 24, Maine 37, Maryland 29, Massachusetts 70, Michigan 98, Minnesota 57, Mississippi 26, Missouri 81, Montana 14, Nebraska 76, Nevada 10, New Hampshire 22, New Jersey 33, New York 150, North Carolina 46, Ohio 134, Oklahoma 17, Oregon 22, Pennsylvania 141, Rhode Island 11, South Carolina 27, South Dakota 36, North Dakota 16, Tennessee 31, Texas 90, Utah 39, Vermont 20, Virginia 42, Washington 22, West Virginia 29, Wisconsin 67, Wyoming 13.

Here, then, we have an aggregate of 2,616 theaters of one kind or another which get regular bookings.

It is a peculiar fact that even the most narrow-minded and



an average arrived at only after separate consultation with representatives of three or four of the most important and persistently active theatrical organizations in America; they should therefore, be accepted as reasonably trustworthy. In round figures there is invested in theatrical ventures in this country about \$100,000,000.

Does this sum seem excessive?

Then remember the wide expanse of territory represented by the words United States of America, and try to realize that practically every city and hamlet in the land has its theater or opera house, that in every case the accessibility of the theater itself is a matter of supreme importance, and that this fact at once necessitates the expenditure of high rentals or the purchase of high-priced properties—that the operator of a theater, in fact, must expect at the very outset to pay the maximum of property values, whether he leases or buys.

In New York, for instance, the Rialto has steadily moved uptown, keeping pace with the city's growth northward, and to-day the costliest theaters in the world are centered about Times Square—in Broadway and in the adjacent side streets within a radius of half a dozen blocks from the point of supreme commercial competition.

Main street in the average American village would not be Main street without its theater or "Opera House," and there can be no doubt that in these smaller communities, as in the great metropolitan cities, the theater property will be found listed among the most valuable holdings in reality.

In Chicago there are 27, Baltimore 9, Washington 8, Buffalo 7, Cincinnati 11, while practically every one of the larger cities throughout the country has an average of from three to five theaters, and though for the time being many of them are given over to moving picture shows, they all represent an aggregate of capital invested for the sake of providing amusement for the public. Moreover, in every state of the union the smaller towns as well as the capitals and metropolises are well supplied with temples to the muse. The following table gives an approximate of the number of places in each state where regular attractions are booked, though there are some of the number undoubtedly that are merely public halls rather than well-equipped theaters. But it must be remembered also that innumerable minor towns have halls where theatrical entertainments are given, and these are not comprised in the booking schedules.

Principal Cities: Number of Theaters.—New York 75, Brooklyn 23, Jersey City 4, Hoboken 1, Newark 8, Boston 15, Providence 6, Philadelphia 23, Baltimore 9, Washington 8, Buffalo 7, Rochester 5, Albany 5, Syracuse 3, Pittsburgh

men, 500 scenic artists, 200 shoemakers, 1,000 musicians, 200 electricians, 5,000 costumers, dressmakers, etc. It is estimated that 65 people on an average are employed to operate a big Broadway theater, and with the actors, singers and choruses included, it is possibly no exaggeration to say that such a theater employs more people and pays them better than the largest store in a town of 100,000 inhabitants. In the season there are employed in New York about 5,000 chorus girls, including those who have small roles, and whom the showmen still regard as members of the chorus, though they and their friends would probably resent the imputation. The average salary of these girls is \$18 a week. Principals, of course, command large sums when they can find work, and the few favored ones may earn at times as much as \$1,000. The oft-repeated statement that star actors are better paid than United States senators, supreme court justices, governors or mayors, is probably not untrue in certain specific cases.

The printing bill for large cities in the case of a big show like "Ben Hur" will call for \$1,000 a week, and will not drop much below that in smaller places. The salary sheet, the live stock, the orchestra, and the printing are the fixed charges of a show. These are never changed, except in case business does not come up to expectations, in which case the shrewd manager, as one representative put it, will increase his advertising—the only real method of increasing his receipts.

Variable items are the railroad fares and transfer accounts, the latter being the charges for hauling the scenery and properties, trunks, etc., to and from the theaters to the cars. In a broken week the local transfer charges of about \$300 are doubled.

The average profit of a successful season for a manager is about ten per cent.

It is estimated that Charles Frohman employs, directly or indirectly, in America and England about 10,000 persons. The extent of this manager's enterprises may be imagined from the following letter, which was recently sent by Alf Hayman to Hollis E. Cooley, secretary of the National Association of Theatrical Producing Managers, in response to Mr. Cooley's request, at the time the theatrical copyright was being jointly sought by all the managers, for a statement of Charles Frohman's gross investments in theatrical properties:

Mr. Hollis E. Cooley, Secretary, The National Association of Theatrical Producing Managers, 1419-11 Times Building, City:

Dear Sir: As requested by you, I am here with handing you a statement of the gross investment in theatrical properties, together with tabulated statement of annual expenditures and persons employed. The statement involves the value of the theaters both owned and controlled by us and are as follows:

Theaters \$8,000,000

Annual salaries, performers and theater employees 3,750,000

Annual cost of productions (over) 400,000

Annual railroad fares 750,000

Annual printing and advertising 500,000

Annual transfer and hauling charges 75,000

The foregoing statement is, as you understand, not computed to a penny from our books, but it is an approximate statement and is reasonably accurate. If I can furnish you with any further information in the premises please advise me. Yours sincerely,

ALF HAYMAN.

In a season in New York there are employed in the various theaters and departments about 200 wig makers, 800 ushers, 1,000 bill posters, 2,000 stage hands, 200 property



Now, when it is remembered that in the various estimates and summaries the activities of only the three most active producing organizations have been considered, and that there are at least a dozen firms operating in New York and Chicago who make from



three to ten productions a season, while innumerable companies are operated by individuals, the original estimate of \$100,000,000 invested will seem reasonable enough. With the New York theater occupying an expensive site, and half a dozen other theaters in process of erection in New York, with new theaters projected in Chicago and various other large cities, with a constant increase in competition and the necessity for augmented expenditures, each firm trying to outdo its rival in lavishness of production, more and more money is being poured each year into this one channel of enterprise, and more and more of it, overflowing the confines of its original intention, filters out through various channels to bring profit to innumerable people who would be greatly surprised to learn to whom they

are indebted for their wages. The strictly practical economists might put much of the expenditure under the head of unproductive consumption of wealth, since much of it is ultimately wasted. The same amount, for instance, employed in fertilizing vast acres of barren unused land would ultimately produce a greater communal benefit.

HARD TIMES AND MATRIMONY

There is probably not more than a fraction of one per cent. of truth in that unpleasant old proverb, "When poverty comes in at the door love flies out of the window," but it is not to be denied that when poverty is the first to take possession poor love has to sit on the doorstep and wait.

All through the year 1908 the little god had been shivering outside many homes where he had every expectation of spending a cozy and perfectly delightful twelvemonth. And during the year of hard times marriages fell off 20 per cent.

In Manhattan borough alone nearly 20,000 persons are going about in single blessedness—or otherwise, as they take it—who ought from the statistician's point of view to have been married last year.

The statistician takes a cold-blooded view of it, merely marking it down as an interesting fact to be "footed up" with other interesting facts. He hasn't a word to say about love's young dream and hope deferred and all the furtive tears for which those 10,000 nonexistent marriages are responsible. You can't make averages of such things as a young man's disappointment and a nice girl's heartache.

The results of hard times are always, first of all, fewer diamonds imported and fewer marriages recorded. Jewels and matrimony go hand in hand, as indications of a rising or falling in the barometer of prosperity.

HE BOUGHT

It was one of those moments when after dinner comfort and a pervading atmosphere of congeniality and well being are conducive to a flow of intellectuality. Smith, casting about for a topic that might serve as a vehicle for flight among the upper spheres, hit upon a happy thought.

"How remarkable it is that after Michael Angelo Italy produced so few great architects," he remarked.

Jones heard with a sinister smile. "Why, what's the matter with Lanuche?" he asked.

"Well, Lanuche hardly added anything to the art, should you say?" said Smith.

"Then there's Teruche," commented Jones. "I have always regarded Teruche as rather decadent," was Smith's response, accompanied by a lofty wave.

"Saluche?"

"Oh, distinctly fourth rate."

"There still remains Skabucé," suggested Jones.

Smith turned a fishy eye upon each member of the group and last of all upon Jones. And then came the explosion. When the merriment had subsided somewhat Smith came to the scratch manfully.

"Waiter!" he called.

THE ONLOOKER Wilbur D. Nesbit.

Good Old GRANDPA



Grandpa had a wooden leg.
And throughout his life he boasted
None could take him down a peg.
For few men like he were posted.

Grandpa wore an auburn wig.
And his household always dreaded
Lest some one the wig might prig
And thus make grandpa red-headed.

One of grandpa's eyes was glass,
Its expression was disdainful—
Thus it was come to pass.
People thought his looks were painful.

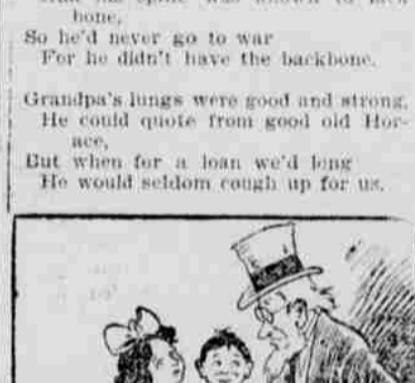
Grandpa's artificial teeth
Often helped the poor old sinner;
When decent he was beneath
He would send his teeth to dinner.

Grandpa's ears were slow to hear.
And this caused him lots of sorrow.
If you'd say, "Let's have a beer,"
He'd not catch it till to-morrow.

Grandpa's stomach once played out.
For it truly needed resting.
When his living was in doubt
He observed that he'd digesting.

Grandpa carried many a scar.
And his spine was known to lack
bone.
So he'd never go to war
For he didn't have the backbone.

Grandpa's lungs were good and strong.
He could quote from good old Horace,
But when for a loan we'd sing
He would seldom cough up for us.



SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

Some of the fixed stars have been appearing every night for 50,000,000 years—and this without being featured in a Clyde Fitch play.

When a fly settles to the ground the whole earth rises to meet it. This is more readily believed when we think how suddenly the whole earth rises to smite a man who falls on the sidewalk.

A fox terrier six inches high and one foot long can dig a hole three feet deep in one minute. To dig the Panama canal in one month would only require a fox terrier 89 feet long and ten feet high.

Ordinary thought moves in waves that radiate at the rate of 80 feet per second. When a man bumps into a chair in the dark his thoughts surge in billows that radiate at a speed of 90 miles per second.

An instrument has been invented that will measure the light and heat of stars that are invisible to the naked eye. It is of similar construction to a gas meter.

The pearl is caused by something an oyster cannot cough up. It is often bought by something that a lobster coughs up.

A woman shopping for a dress consumes 8,000 foot-pounds of energy an hour. Her husband, when he gets the bill, consumes 39,610 pounds of foot energy per minute.

A soft boiled egg contains more energy than a pound of beefsteak. A soft, spoiled egg contains energy enough to clear a stage.

If all the useless questions asked in the world in 24 hours were represented by interrogation points and put in line they would extend ten feet beyond the orbit of Neptune.

The world each day were rolled into one the man smoking it could light it on the center of the sun and use the moon for an ash tray. He would be, in proportion to the cigar, so tall that he would have been dead and buried ten thousand years before he heard his wife telling him that he was smoking too much.

Caesar's Little Jest.

"All Gaul is divided into three parts," wrote Caesar. Putting down his pen he smiled sagely and remarked:

"They'll have to use a lot of logarithms and the differential calculus to figure out the Latin Quarter for Paris."

Gentlemen's Bay Windows.
Asabel Stickney, we are informed by the local papers of Gimblethore, O., is thinking of building a new bay window for himself this spring. Gentlemen who are fortunate enough to have bay windows are usually careful to remodel them as the fashions change.

Melba & Nesbit.