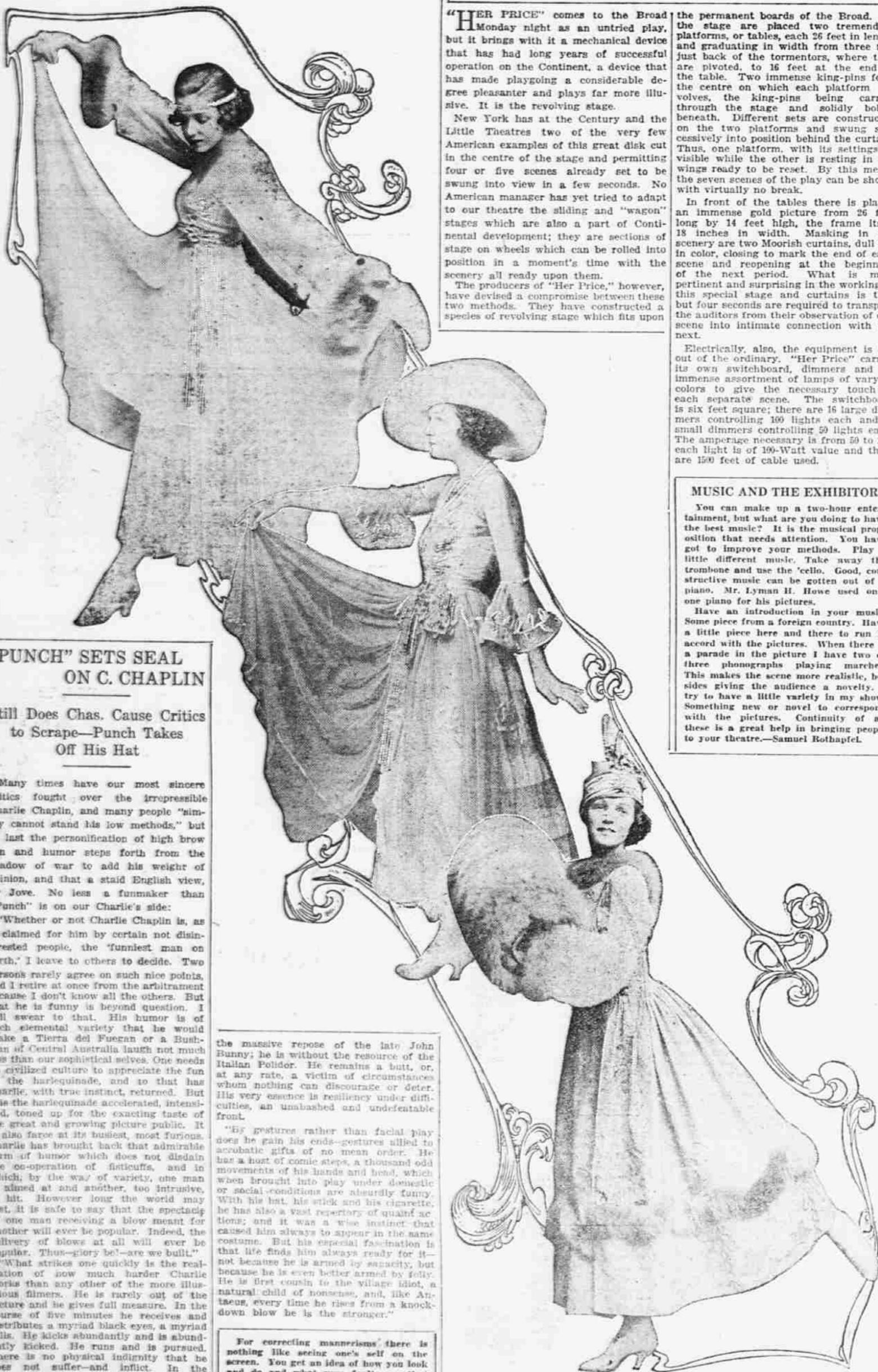


## LOVELIEST OF DANCERS



### "PUNCH" SETS SEAL ON C. CHAPLIN

Still Does Chas. Cause Critics to Scrape—Punch Takes Off His Hat

Many times have our most sincere critics fought over the irrepressible Charlie Chaplin, and many people "simply cannot stand his low methods," but at last the personification of high brow fun and humor steps forth from the shadow of war to add his weight of opinion, and that a staid English view, by Jove. No less a funmaker than "Punch" is on our Charlie's side:

"Whether or not Charlie Chaplin is, as is claimed for him by certain not disinterested people, the 'funniest man on earth,' I leave to others to decide. Two persons rarely agree on such nice points, and I retire at once from the arbitrament because I don't know all the others. But that he is funny is beyond question. I will swear to that. His humor is of such elemental variety that he would make a Tierra del Fuegan or a Bushman of Central Australia laugh not much less than our sophisticated selves. One needs no civilized culture to appreciate the fun of the harlequinade, and to that has Charlie, with true instinct, returned. But it is the harlequinade accelerated, intensified, toned up for the exacting taste of the great and growing picture public. It is also farce at its busiest, most furious. Charlie has brought back that admirable form of humor which does not disdain the co-operation of fisticuffs, and in which, by the way of variety, one man is aimed at and another, too intrusive, is hit. However long the world may last, it is safe to say that the spectacle of one man receiving a blow meant for another will ever be popular. Indeed, the delivery of blows at all will ever be popular. Thus—glory be!—are we built."

"What strikes one quickly is the realization of how much harder Charlie works than any other of the more illustrious filmers. He is rarely out of the picture and he gives full measure. In the course of five minutes he receives and distributes a myriad black eyes, a myriad falls. He kicks abundantly and is abundantly kicked. He runs and is pursued. There is no physical indignity that he does not suffer—and inflict. In the pictures Charlie has no immediate rival, although on the actual variety stage I have seen several drolls very much in his tradition, which is associated with the name of Karno. One detects the Karno brand at once, but in Charlie Chaplin, on the synthesizing film, it has an extra drop of nervous fluid. He has none of the bland masterfulness of the urbane and adventurous Max Linder; he has none of

the massive repose of the late John Bunny; he is without the resource of the Italian Polidor. He remains a butt, or, at any rate, a victim of circumstances whom nothing can discourage or deter. His very essence is resiliency under difficulties, an unabashed and undefeatable front.

"By gestures rather than facial play does he gain his ends—gestures allied to acrobatic gifts of no mean order. He has a host of comic steps, a thousand odd movements of his hands and head, which when brought into play under domestic or social conditions are absurdly funny. With his hat, his stick and his cigarette, he has also a vast repertory of quaint actions; and it was a wise instinct that caused him always to appear in the same costume. But his especial fascination is that life finds him always ready for it—not because he is armed by sagacity, but because he is even better armed by folly. He is first cousin to the village idiot, a natural child of nonsense, and, like Antaeus, every time he rises from a knock-down blow he is the stronger."

For correcting mannerisms there is nothing like seeing one's self on the screen. You get an idea of how you look and do and what your faults are that you can get in no other way. No friend will tell you what your faults are, but the camera is merciless and shows up your imperfections along with your virtues. I know now that since I have seen myself as others see me I can correct a number of little things I never knew that I did while I was acting.—Laura Hope Crews.

## THE REVOLVING STAGE AT LAST

"HER PRICE" comes to the Broad Monday night as an untried play, but it brings with it a mechanical device that has had long years of successful operation on the Continent, a device that has made playgoing a considerable degree pleasanter and plays far more illusive. It is the revolving stage.

New York has at the Century and the Little Theatres two of the very few American examples of this great disk cut in the centre of the stage and permitting four or five scenes already set to be swung into view in a few seconds. No American manager has yet tried to adapt to our theatre the sliding and "wagon" stages which are also a part of Continental development; they are sections of stage on wheels which can be rolled into position in a moment's time with the scenery all ready upon them.

The producers of "Her Price," however, have devised a compromise between these two methods. They have constructed a species of revolving stage which fits upon

the permanent boards of the Broad. On the stage are placed two tremendous platforms, or tables, each 26 feet in length and graduating in width from three feet just back of the tormentors, where they are pivoted, to 16 feet at the end of the table. Two immense king-pins form the centre on which each platform revolves, the king-pins being carried through the stage and solidly bolted beneath. Different sets are constructed on the two platforms and swung successively into position behind the curtain. Thus, one platform, with its settings, is visible while the other is resting in the wings ready to be reset. By this means the seven scenes of the play can be shown with virtually no break.

In front of the tables there is placed an immense gold picture from 26 feet long by 14 feet high, the frame itself 18 inches in width. Masking in the scenery are two Moorish curtains, dull red in color, closing to mark the end of each scene and reopening at the beginning of the next period. What is most pertinent and surprising in the working in this special stage and curtains is that but four seconds are required to transport the auditors from their observation of one scene into intimate connection with the next.

Electrically, also, the equipment is out out of the ordinary. "Her Price" carries its own switchboard, dimmers and an immense assortment of lamps of varying colors to give the necessary touch to each separate scene. The switchboard is six feet square; there are 16 large dimmers controlling 100 lights each and 12 small dimmers controlling 50 lights each. The amperage necessary is from 50 to 200; each light is of 100-Watt value and there are 150 feet of cable used.

## MUSIC AND THE EXHIBITOR

You can make up a two-hour entertainment, but what are you doing to have the best music? It is the musical proposition that needs attention. You have got to improve your methods. Play a little different music. Take away the trombone and use the cello. Good, constructive music can be gotten out of a piano. Mr. Lyman H. Howe used only one piano for his pictures.

Have an introduction in your music. Some piece from a foreign country. Have a little piece here and there to run in accord with the pictures. When there is a parade in the picture I have two or three phonographs playing marches. This makes the scene more realistic, besides giving the audience a novelty. I try to have a little variety in my show. Something new or novel to correspond with the pictures. Continuity of all these is a great help in bringing people to your theatre.—Samuel Rothapel.

Mrs. Verena Castle, of "Watch Your Step!" charmingly photographed by Ira L. Hill, who catches the airy grace of the airiest of dancers. Not an easy thing to do in the still poses of a photographic studio. Mrs. Castle, it may also be remarked, is as expert a wearer of advance modes in clothes as she is a dancer of the very latest steps. All these qualities, which Mr. Hill reflects so skilfully in his photography, will soon be visible at the Forrest.