

# AT THE THEATERS

### The Week's Bills

MASON—Maude Adams in repertoire.  
 BELASCO—"The County Fair."  
 ORPHEUM—Vaudeville.  
 GRAND—"A Lion's Heart."  
 AUDITORIUM—Dark.  
 FISCHER'S—Burlesque.  
 UNIQUE—Vaudeville.  
 EMPIRE—Vaudeville.  
 PEOPLE'S—Vaudeville.

NO PLAY given in Los Angeles in years has aroused the discussion and given vent to the divergent opinions that have hedged about "Peter Pan." Scarcely two persons have seen it exactly alike, and the views enunciated vary from the most rhapsodical praise to the farthest degree of disgust.

Yet scarcely ever has Los Angeles had a play wherein the trained critics of the various papers so heartily and unanimously rejoiced, or one over which they have been so enthusiastic. Without a dissenting voice the expert writers on things dramatic have lined up in paeans of delight. It has entranced, enthralled, thrilled and satisfied these usually captious and caustic gentlemen, and they have fairly unloosed the floodgates of their rhetorical encomiums.

These two propositions in themselves establish "Peter Pan" as a play extraordinary. For not only does the general public usually strike an average and denominate a drama briefly as "good," "fair" or "rotten," and let it go at that as its consensus of opinion, but the trained writers for the press almost always find, each for himself, faults of construction, technique, production or depiction—as well as, on the other hand, causes of praise in varying degree—which each proceeds to thrash over, elaborate or excuse, as his personal bent or inclination may tend. Thus, one gets the play passed upon from the ineffectual viewpoint of the casual playgoer, in brevity and usually in unanimity, and from the expert side of the skilled expositor of the drama, in variability and idiosyncrasy through the daily press. In this case the matter is directly reversed; the critics are the united enthusiasts, free from all bias or individual like or dislike, while the public itself is utterly at sea.

The reason for this is peculiar—and at the same time is a most excellent defense of the functions of the trained critic, whom many affect to despise. The general public flocked to "Peter Pan" without having previously informed itself in the slightest degree as to what it might expect therefrom. The magic drawing power of the name of Maude Adams was a talisman in itself, and had she been called "Tom show," they would have filled the seats just the same. True, "Peter Pan" had been heard of, but only in the most vague way; it was known to be a "fairy play"—so, one may say, is "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and was considered more for grownups than for children. That's really all the public in general possessed in the way of knowledge of it.

On the other hand, the critics—at least one, and probably all, for they must so do to be successful—had been reading about and studying up on "Peter Pan" for these many months past. Its first announcement was enough to arouse their attention; they followed its production and wonderful success in London and in New York; they absorbed the synopsis of it, had a glimpse of its atmosphere, knew its import and were in a measure prepared for it. They must do this; it is part of the routine of a conscientious critic to know not only of and about dramas that he has seen, but also of those he may see—and even of such as he never can hope to witness, but which form a part of theatricals as such. Thus he is in a way in touch with the whole mimic world of the stage; his faculties are kept in training by almost daily familiarity with new offerings, and when he is called upon to estimate one coldly and calmly, he is seldom taken by surprise. He and his conferees may differ—they view from varying angles. But he can give reasons for the faith that is in him, intelligently and honestly. He is not surprised into incoherence.

Had the playgoers possessed any real comprehension of "Peter Pan," they could have gone in the proper spirit, enveloped in a sympathetic atmosphere, and witnessed one of the most fascinatingly dainty and appealing stage productions ever made, with hearts open to its beauties, its charm and its cleverness. Most of those who saw it early succumbed to its compelling enthrallments, and they are the ones who came away clamorous in their enthusiasms. The few never got within its ken; they left early, sore and disgusted; they saw nothing but gibberish nonsense in it—and they hope never to be similarly afflicted again. The former are "Peter Pan's" staunchest adherents; the latter condemn it utterly. There is no middle ground—such seems to be inevitable.

And the more it is discussed the wider apart the two classes are; this, too, is the expected, for its charm is too intangible to describe. Those who love it as a blessed memory know that they do, and never can be convinced to the contrary; those who dislike it hate it with the deep seated, inbred hate of the uncomprehending. So it has been here; so it has been everywhere it has been presented.

### Coming Attractions

MASON—A repertoire of her three greatest stage successes is announced for Maude Adams' final week at the Mason opera house beginning tomorrow night. The bill for tomorrow night, Tuesday, and Wednesday matinee, will be Edmund Rostand's well-known Napoleonic drama "L'Aiglon." On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings Miss Adams will be seen for the first time in this city, and for one of the first times since its original New York production, as Phoebe Throssell, in J. M. Barrie's quaint comedy, "Quality Street." On Saturday afternoon and evening the bill will again be changed, Miss Adams appearing in two farewell performances of the famous "Peter Pan."

Maude Adams' portrayal of the Eaglet in Rostand's classic, "L'Aiglon," is well enough known as an accomplishment of rare distinction to make an extended exposition of her interpretation unnecessary. J. M. Barrie's "Quality Street" is in spirit practically a second "Little Minister." It is written in the quaintly humorous comedy vein that is peculiar to the author of "Peter Pan," and of all modern writers, peculiar to him alone. BELASCO—"The Belasco theater stock company will give Victorian Sardou's



MAUDE ADAMS AS NAPOLEON II IN A SCENE FROM "L'AIGLON"—MASON



LALLA SELBINI—ORPHEUM

brilliant comedy, "Divorcens," this week, with Hobart Bosworth in the same part that he played in this city when he appeared here as leading man with Mrs. Fiske. The role of Cryptome will be played by Lillian Abartson. The services of the entire Belasco company will be engaged in "Divorcens," and a performance of exceptional merit is promised by the Belasco management. Sardou's famous old comedy is seemingly having a new series of successes for Grace George, after season in New York, has captured the staid playgoers of London with the play, and it is evidently in for a new lease of life. Following "Divorcens" the Belascos will offer Henry Arthur Jones' great play, "Mrs. Dane's Defense."

BURBANK—This afternoon's matinee will mark the beginning of a week's run of Neil Burgess' racing drama, "The County Fair," by the Burbank theater stock company. The Burbank company played "The County Fair" just a little over two years ago and scored heavily with the piece—so heavily in fact that a third week was threatened. Since then Manager Morosco has had his seasons booked solid, and it is doubtful if he would have found room for the old favorite even if he had not been for the many requests he has had for a revival of the play. Louise Royce will have her first real opportunity for good work since her advent with the Burbank company. She will be seen as the old aunt, played so long by Neil Burgess. Every other Burbanker has been cast advantageously. The great race scene will come in the last act.

GRAND—This week's bill at the Grand is "A Lion's Heart," a play in which Carl Haswin made his money and his reputation. It is the story of a villain, Gaspard Dobre, who steals another man's wife and child and deserts them after a few years. The husband, a lion tamer named Rizardo, swears to devote his life to revenge, and follows the errant wife and her lover relentlessly but unsuccessfully. When Rizardo finds the man the woman has disappeared and the secret

of her disappearance is known to none save Dobre. This saves him from vengeance for a time, but fate, conscience and the relentless pursuit of the husband at last break down his defense. He dies while telling Rizardo of the death of his wife and the whereabouts of his child.

ORPHEUM—Virginia Earl is the stellar feature of the coming week's bill at the Orpheum. This well known actress will be heard in a new musical comedy, Lalla Selbini, the bathing beauty, a cycling, dancing and aerial performer who has created a sensation in New York, is also among next week's newcomers. Harry Armstrong and Billy Clark will present a musical act entitled "Finding a Partner." Paul M. Friedhofer, formerly of the Damrosch orchestra, later of Holmes' quartet in San Francisco, will be heard in cello numbers. Mr. Friedhofer is already an Orpheum favorite. The acts held over from this week are Emil Hoch and company in "Love's Young Dream," Julia Heinrich and Margaret Easter, the Kinsons and Mile Nadje.

EMPIRE—This week the Empire stock company will be under the direction of Miss Ella Wilson, presenting her own border farce comedies. Miss Wilson is a writer of several successful plays, such as "In Cherry Valley," "What Happened to Brown," "The Furniture Man" and "His Only Child." She is the daughter of the late George Wilson, formerly of Barlow, Wilson, Primrose and West's minstrels, and has appeared in leading roles in "The Wicklow Postmaster," "Remember the Maine," etc.; was also a prominent factor with the Frohman forces, and such well known stars as the late Frank Daniels and Frederick Brighton. The bill will also include the Parisian grand opera duo, Trask and Gladden, singers and dancers, and Thomas Curtis and company, presenting "The Derby Day."

UNIQUE—The Unique theater has prepared an unusually attractive bill



ELLA WILSON—EMPIRE



DOLLY GRAHAM—FISCHER'S

for the coming week, the feature of which will be the Sharrocks, travesty and second-sight entertainers, Reed



MYRTLE SELWYN—GRAND

and Evans are on with a comedy sketch, and the Excella sisters, sou-brettes, will appear in a singing and dancing turn. "The Artist's Model," Richard Cummings' latest creation, will be the offering of the Unique Comedy company.

FISCHER'S—At Fischer's theater next Monday the musical comedy will be entitled "School Days." It is a special offering, written for this week by Johnnie Zeb for the N. E. A., which now is in the city on its annual convention. The leading character is Prof. Wacham, the principal of the school. This role will be carried by Mr. Zeb. The trouble makers are Billy Onslow and Lev Dunbar, who are in the role of the Dill twins, or as they might better be called the Dill Pickles.

### Greenroom Gossip

Charles E. Blaney is perfecting a school to send moving pictures of complete melodramas over the country, together with a phonograph which will speak the lines of all the players. Thus a complete play may be given through the medium of the phonograph, a film of pictures and an operator. The films will be taken during the summer months and thus all-star casts may be obtained for the plays.

The trouble over the use in Paris of "Carmen" by Miss Olga Nethersole was settled finally, but she was forbidden to use the music or the name. In renaming the piece several titles were suggested, including "Don Jose's Sweetheart," "The Girl from Andalusia" and "The Spanish Gipsy," which latter was at last chosen. Miss Nethersole has received several offers to return to Paris after the close of her American tour.

Rumor has it that Klaw & Erlanger have already secured control of a theater in Los Angeles and every other city of considerable population on this coast and that their attractions will be in

direct competition with the Orpheum circuit next fall. If all this is true patrons of vaudeville and the performers will have no reason to complain, and if Mr. Erlanger is to be believed there will be no reason for carping by the impresarios. Just what theater they have here no one even guesses, unless they have the Majestic.

Until February 13, 1916, Max Dill of Kolb and Dill is to pay a graduated alimony to his wife, Elizabeth Dill, who was divorced from him by Judge Keeler in Cleveland on June 21. He must pay \$750 at once, \$75 a month for the next year and \$100 a month after that. The wife gets the two children. Mrs. Dill testified that her husband is making \$200 a week.

Minnie Maddern Fiske is to spend the summer in California. Last year Mrs. Fiske passed three months with friends in the Santa Cruz mountains. This season she has rented the Campbell place in Sausalito and will remain there until September.

Ezra Kendall will continue "Swell Elegant Jones" next season, beginning his tour on July 15 at Ogden, Utah, following it up with an engagement of two weeks in San Francisco on July 21, and then he comes here.

Agnes Cain Brown, formerly with the Bostonians, is to have the prima donna role in "The Alaskan," the new John Cort comic opera. One of the other characters in the piece to be taken by a human is that of a polar bear. A manager in Chicago, evidently with a huge sense of humor, announces that he is going to produce the worst play ever offered him. Lots of Chicago managers do this, however—and not as a joke, either. A niece of the late William J. Florence, Winifred Florence, recently made her debut on the stage in Toledo. James K. Hackett has gone to London to see the play he is to have next season, "Mr. George."

### NOTES BY THE MATINEE MAN

MELVIN BARTLETT, press agent for the Orpheum and Grand—and the only real sinner-pure press agent in town—has a grutch. Bartlett says that the newspapers only want fakes about his showshops and that when he does have a genuine story they won't print it. "I never knew it to fall," says he. "I can always land some farcical doings about an actress or some yarn about a vaudevillian, but let me spring a real one, and—no go."

Now, here is a choice, genuine, true story about Countess Rossi, who has been pursued from Russia by detectives in her divorced husband's employ, the detectives aforesaid being after her child. She went to the police about it, and Los Angeles sleuths have been watching her all during her stay here. Do you think a paper in town would print that, even when I offered to bring an affidavit from Capt. Flammer? Not on your life. But let me spring a tale about some girl losing her diamonds and see 'em bite."

All of which is doubtless true. But, my dear Bartlett, in recognition of your hard work, here is the story in print, fake or no fake.

Speaking of press agents, Jack Blackwood says he wishes some theater in town would get a real one.

"Then I'd have to go to work," says he. "As it is now, the game is so easy that I am getting too fat."

Which Mr. Bartlett may or may not consider a personal insult.

Our erstwhile "greatest soprano who ever trilled," as Sparks Berry used to say, Ester Adelstein, prima donna of the late Lombardi season, is now singing in a beer garden park in Kansas City, with Ferullo's band. Which rather sets at rest the stories that Hammerstein and Corried were threatening to shed each other's ruddy gore for her, and that Henri Russell had engaged her for next year. Singers who take primal roles in these companies do not sing out of doors in the summer, to the ruin of their voices, against the glare of a brass band. They prize their vocal organs too highly.

Another member of the Californians is to step out of the chorus into the soloist ranks. Grace Marvin, the young woman of rather more than usual bulk in the "merry, merry," will sing Dame Durden in "Robin Hood" for the edification of the Venetians this coming week. Miss Marvin has a good voice and her figure is ideal for Durden's part, and I am sure she will make a success in the role. Here's my best wishes for her.

Incidentally, the Californians are delighted that their prima donna, Ester Adelstein, is to be in town for two weeks by the seaside. They have hopes that the Santa Cruz end of it will also pan out; it will be great to have two months' vacation drawing pay all the while. Wish I could do that.

Lewis Stone reminds me of the London cobby, who, having 2 days off for the first time in twenty-seven years, spent it riding up and down on the box of a fellow cobby's vehicle. He has a vacation now, and I swear I have seen him and Mrs. Stone (Margaret Langham) at a theater every night since his layoff began. I don't blame them for seeing Maude Adams, for Mrs. Stone is much a Miss Adams sort of actress, but why should they go to the Belasco, where she plays every night? Perhaps they wanted to gey their fellow thespians, but I hardly think that.

T. Daniel Frawley's ex-players from San Francisco were all in town, on their way back east this last week. I don't know why Tim brought them down here first unless he wanted to show them a real live town before they re-entered the great white way. Anyhow, they saw it right. T. Dan is to be the drawing card for the Burbank for a few weeks to come while "Bill" Desmond seeks rest and recreation.

Captain Hope, he may call himself, but Captain Peacock he is to his friends. And lots of them have seen him at the People's the last few days in his new sketch. I have not seen it, but I think the captain is going to be a regular vaudevillian, but the stage has lots of room for actors as clever as he.

The rumor that Sparks Berry is to be dramatized is officially denied. Dr. Bachmann says he has no such intention.

The latest about the old itochkias is that it is to be the home of burlesque; that a series of companies is to be organized on the coast; that they will alternate between here and the more northern cities, one giving two or three shows here for as many weeks, then passing on to let another come, and so on. I do not know how authentic this is, but give it for what it is worth. It looks feasible, and, if true, with plenty of pretty girls and some clever comedians, ought to go well.

Ethel Barrymore is headed this way in her play of the old days, wherein the women wear hoopskirts and the "before de war" togs. I have seen this play and can recommend it as "cute," if nothing else. Then, too, it is a study to see how women manage and react to hoops, and the younger generation will find it full of interest.

I didn't see one "Peter Pan" suit worn at "Peter Pan." Can it be that Peter never heard of that garb?

Also, where was Humane Officer Reynolds when the kids came out? Did Harry Cashman's roast in "The Serenade" put him wise to his own ridiculousness?

### Dramatic Notes

Early in August Jules Murry will produce "Cupid at Vassar," a new dramatic comedy with music. The book is by Owen Davis, with music and lyrics by A. Baldwin Sloane and George Tottam Smith. Florence Gear, who played the Grand here last season in "The Marriage of Kitty," will be placed in the leading part. "Cupid at Vassar" calls for a cast of fifteen principals, besides which there have already been engaged about twenty young women to play the parts of Vassar girls.

Miss Minnie Seligman, the actress and divorced wife of Robert Livingston Cutting, Jr., was married to William Bramwell Downing, an actor, who has headed several prominent stock companies in the last few years under the stage name of William Bramwell.

William Faraum has made an offer to Jane Oaker to be his leading woman next season in his starring tour. It is said that Miss Oaker has received an offer of a starring tour herself. Her husband was with Dick Ferris' last season.

Melbourne McDowell is to appear in Kansas City in a revival of Sardou's plays. Miss Florence Stone will not be with him.