AT THE THEATERS

ACTORS ARE OPPOSED TO SUNDAY CLOSING

STRANGE as it may seem to the good people now promoting a campaign for Sunday closing of the Los Angeles theaters, and ungrateful withal, the strongest opposition to the scheme comes from the very persons it is ostensibly designed to benefit—the player folk and employes generally about the theaters.

The Sunday Rest league, it is understood, bases its canvass for signatures to its proposed petitions on the claim that the actors are overworked; that they have to give seven performances a week, and have no day off; that theatrical employes, from managers to ushers, are in the same category, and that it is inhuman. Therefore, without regard to the religiosity or morality of Sunday opening, they seek to close the playhouses on the Sabbath on humanitarian grounds exclusively.

But actors, actresses and theater employes do not see it that way. On the other hand, they condemn the movement. They declare it a distinct source of harm; mischievous and not needed, in that the very thing that is sought to be accomplished—one day a week off—is already a fact with all of them.

Besides, they say, the promoters of the scheme do not understand the facts and are unfamiliar with theatrical usages. In the first place, say the players, they now get a day off a week, always. In one house this is Sunday, in aother Friday, in a third Thursday, and so on. For this off day they are paid.

Fear Smaller Salaries

In case Sunday closing were enforced, it would mean a dockage of one-seventh or more in their salaries, as they would be put on a six days' basis. And it would mean rehearsals every Sunday without pay, thus depriving them of any time to themselves. So that, it would seem, they really would lose financially and in point of leisure by the proposition. And the same rules apply, of course, to all other theatrical employes.

As an example of this, the stock actors quote the recent experience of the Californians at the Auditorium. This house is closed Sundays to plays, so contracts were all made on a six-day basis. Yet every Sunday the company rehearsed all day at the Gamut club, without pay, and really worked harder than any stock company in town.

Another phase of the subject which seems not to have struck the advocates of the scheme is that were the local stock houses closed on Sunday it would mean undoubtedly daily matinees, to make up for the losses sustained. If any one wants to know what the twice-a-day horror is, let him ask the players who have undergone this torture in the east, where no Sunday performances are given. This is the very reason why Los Angeles attracts the best stock players in the United States—because they avoid the daily matinee and have time to do artistic work. And conditions are so happy here that many of these favorites have remained with one company for years, have bought their own homes, and are permanent additions to the community.

All Employes Agree

Of course, the musicians, stage hands and other employes are not only in sympathy with the actors, but are likely to suffer in the same way. They have actively begun to oppose the plan and their unions have already taken cognizance of the situation and are planning a counter fight. Both stage employes and musicians' unions have only recently made contracts on a seven days' basis after a severe struggle, and they do not care, they say, to reopen the controversy, with everything to indicate that they will get the worst of it in longer hours and reduced pay.

That the unions will generally back the theatrical employes is already strongly indicated. They claim that Sunday is the workingman's holiday, his one chance to go to the theaters, and that he should be free to do so if his own conscience approves. Also, they say, they do not countenance a financial loss for a purely sentimental reason, which has only one object—a weekly holiday—already enforced.

Don't Know Ireland

Another point, and a very good one, that the actors make is that the Rev. Mr. Ireland, who is understood to be at the bottom of the agitation, is unknown to them, either as an ex-actor or as a preacher. He has, they assert, never called on them or consulted them in any way, but has spoken disparagingly of stage folk so often that they are constrained to repudiate him and his evident good intentions.

The morale of the question and its spirituality—the right and wrong of Sunday theatricals—seems not to be involved in the controversy as stated, on either side. It has been placed by the Rest league purely upon humanitarian grounds. As such it seems debatable from either angle, and the case as the stage folk make it out is undoubtedly a strong one. As to their own welfare, they certainly ought to be considered the best judges, and if they are satisfied, nay, pleased, with the present status of affairs, quien sabe?

HE COMES IN PEACE AND NOT IN WAR

Matters are moving swiftly at the Los Angeles theater, which will be opened September 1 by the San Francisco opera company. The engagement will continue for three weeks, and perhaps longer. Beyond that, managerial plans are managerial secrets.

Calvin Heilig who, with John Cort, is at the head of the organization which has taken over the Los Angeles, arrived in the city Tuesday. The first thing he did after he reached here was to announce that he came in peace and not in war. Then he interrupted himself long enough to let the porter brush the dust from his clothes and to pass over the customary tip.

"I seem to have been stirring up considerable excitement here in Los Angeles," he continued, "without the least intention of doing so. We have come here not to fight the Mason or anybody else, but because we believe there is room in Los Angeles for another theater, to be managed as we proposed to manage ours. We have been fortunate in securing a central location. I believe we have a nice little house. It will be bigger later on, but at present we are not in a position to book the large Klaw and Erlanger attractions even if we were disposed to do so.

"The only thing I can say it this: We propose to give the theater-going public the best line of moderate priced attractions Los Angeles has ever seen, and we prefer to let those attractions do our talking for us. The bookings will be made in New York and I myself do not now know who they will be. I'm not much on the talk and if I was it wouldn't do any good. You can't talk the public into patronizing a theater. You've got to give them what they want, at a price they are willing to pay. That's what we expect to do."

The new foyer at the Los Angeles has been completed and decorators will begin work upon the house immediately. Once it is opened it will remain so fifty-two weeks in the year. There will be no summer vacation, nor will the summer be filled by stock organizations.

Without doubt the Los Angeles, formerly the Hotchkiss, is destined to become an important factor in local amusement enterprises. The house is small, but the management now in charge expects to enlarge it just as soon as existing leases on adjacent properties expire. Enlargement at first will be to the rear, the stage wall being moved back. This would have been done before had not the holders of leases demanded an exorbitant sum for their rights.

That the Los Angeles will play numerous attractions which have heretofore appeared at the Mason is not unlikely. Likewise it is certain that the Mason, this season, will offer the best line of important bookings in its history. Klaw & Erlanger attractions, the companies of both Charles and Daniel Frohman, the Shubert and Hayman shows, all these will continue on Broadway, and there will be more of them than ever before. On the other hand, numerous former Mason stars will appear at the new house, and at cheaper prices.

Before the present season closes Los Angeles will be better supplied with theaters than any city on the Pacific coast; better, probably, than any city west of Chicago. This is a good "show town"; for its size, the best in the country. Geographically it has much to contend with, but the liberal patronage accorded traveling companies here has more than offset this disadvantage.

By spring there will be open in Los Angeles the Auditorium, Belasco, Burbank, Grand, Los Angeles and Orpheum theaters, in addition to the house which Adolf Ramish is building for John Blackwood and which has not yet been named. Then there will be also Fischer's, the People's, the Empire and Unique, in addition to other cheaper vaudeville houses and picture shows. No other city of like size in the country can make such a showing.

—Photo by Mojonier.

BLANCHE STODDARD, BELASCO

THE WEEK'S BILLS

AUDITORIUM—Dark.
BELASCO—"Her Own Way."
BURBANK—"Sherlock Holmes."
GRAND—"A Race Across the Continent."
MASON—Dark.
ORPHEUM—Vaudeville.
EMPIRE—Vaudeville.
FISCHER'S—"In Zulu Land."
PEOPLE'S—Vaudeville.
UNIQUE—Vaudeville.

KATE CARLSON, FISCHER'S

FLORENCE BARKER, GRAND

OBSERVATIONS BY A FIRST-NIGHTER

OLLIE MOROSCO is writing another play. This time it is to be a modern society drama. The piece will be produced for the first time on any stage at the Burbank, about the first of the year, and if it duplicates "The Halfbreed's" Los Angeles run of five weeks Morosco will be more than satisfied. One of the features of "The Halfbreed," you may remember, was an extremely realistic rain storm. The Burbank manager is a great believer in realism. He believes in real rain, real plays and even real actors; and in the new piece he will have three "effects" that are expected to prove sensations. Just what these latest attempts at stage realism will be, the genial, mahogany-haired press agent of the Burbank declines to divulge, but he is willing to wager a first class, name-blown-in-the-bottle pipe dream that they will be the goods.

* * *

Miss Blanche Stoddard, the new leading woman at the Belasco, is an Ibsenite. Likewise Miss Stoddard has an ambition and that ambition is to play Hedda Gabler. Now do not misunderstand me. I know as well as you do that Ibsen didn't write "Hedda," but the facts remain as stated. Recently Miss Stoddard has had much valuable experience in Ibsen and Sudermann roles, having appeared in support of Mme. Alla Nazimova, the distinguished Russian player who created a furore in New York last winter, and in the company of Nance O'Neill. Other recent engagements were with Guy Standing in "Double Harness," and with the William Morris stock company at the Lincoln Square theater, New York. She has little to say about her own work, but regarding Mme. Nazimova she is enthusiastic, pronouncing the Russian the greatest actress she ever has seen. Mme. Nazimova, by the way, will appear in an American play, "The Millstones," this season, and will play an American character. That will be the great test, so far as American audiences are concerned. If she comes through the ordeal safely her continued popularity will be assured.

* * *

Besides being an actress of experience Miss Stoddard is a young woman of charming personality. Moreover, she comes well within the Blackwood definition of greatness. Her hair is of the favorite Blackwood color. In "Her Own Way" the new leading woman will have a congenial and not too exacting role, in which she should make an nudeniably favorable first impression. Later will come more difficult work, but much depends upon first impressions, and the Belasco manager doubtless had this in mind when he selected the Clyde Fitch play for the opening.

* * *

Mace Greenleaf and his handsome wife, formerly Lucy Banning, are passing the summer at Ocean Park. Mrs. Greenleaf divides her time about evenly between horseback riding and study. Her husband is instructing her in the art of acting with a view to a vaudeville engagement later. They have not fully determined their plans, but probably will appear on the Orpheum circuit in a sketch which requires three persons, one man and two women. If this plan falls through, however, they will go to Paris for the winter and may, it is said, make the French capital their future home.

* * *

Following "Sherlock Holmes" the Burbank company will revive "The Halfbreed," and Bill Desmond will be back to play his old part. That should be good news for the matinee girls. By the way, and merely as a hint, Desmond's favorite flower is the humble dandelion. He thinks the yellow goes nicely with his complexion and if posies are to go over the Burbank footlights next week, this is a preference worth remembering. Tim Frawley's engagement with the company expires Saturday, but an effort will be made to induce him to stay over and play the halfbreed. If this fails, however, Byron Beasley will have the part. Miss Louise Royce will have the role formerly played by Mrs. Willis Marks; and if Frawley remains Beasley will play Robert Homan's old part. For the rest the cast will be about the same as it was last year.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Morosco, Joe Montrose and Miss Mersch are enjoying a two weeks' camping expedition at Camp Rincon in the mountains. Morosco and Montrose come to town occasionally to see that Klaw & Erlanger haven't stolen the Burbank for vaudeville purposes, but beyond this they are rusticating lazily and luxuriously. On his last trip in Montrose brought with him the antlers of a deer Mrs. Morosco had shot. Likewise a bundle of fish stories. Miss Mersch, he says, is the most successful Waltonian in the party. I haven't the nerve to repeat to you Montrose's tales of her skill with a trout rod, but if the game warden ever hears them—and fails to remember Joe's professional habits—that young woman will find herself in trouble. As for Morosco he is modest. He tells a heart-rending tale of traveling many miles, fishing all day and catching two measly little trout, only to return home and catch so many yellowtail, right in front of his own house at Playa del Rey, that their weight almost swamped the boat.

* * *

Henry Sonnenberg, who presides over the Orpheum box office, has a "soft thing" in sight. Henry went away for a holiday about two weeks ago, leaving the money and tickets in charge of Brother Julius. While Brother Henry has been slaughtering goats and tuna in the isle of hotels and eating houses, Brother Julius has been keeping the Orpheum running, and business has picked up to such an extent and the money has come in so fast that Manager Drown is contemplating paying Brother Henry a salary to remain at Catalina the year 'round.

Brother Henry has no kick coming on the salary proposition, but shies at Catalina, because the hills are too steep for his motorcycle. He is sparring for time and the final settlement seems rather doubtful.

Margaret Anglin has written a letter to a friend in this city saying that she has arranged an Australian tour for this fall and expects to proceed from the antipodes to London. She will present "The Great Divide," and probably will be accompanied by her husband-manager, Henry Miller.

Henry Woodruff returns from Europe in time to begin his third starring tour in "Brown of Harvard" at the Grand opera house, New York, September 2. He will take the play this year into a hundred cities where it has never been seen, the new territory including the Pacific coast and Pacific northwest country.

"My next musical production will be 'Miss Hook of Holland.' Then will come 'Nellie Neil,' and a new play called 'The Hoyden,' with music by Paul Rubens and others."

CYRIL SCOTT

ETHEL GREEN, ORPHEUM

COMING ATTRACTIONS

BELASCO—More than ordinary interest is attached to the performance of Clyde Fitch's comedy, "Her Own Way," at the Belasco theater tomorrow night. It will be the first time the piece has ever been given by a stock company and it will also serve to introduce the new leading woman, Blanche Stoddard, in the role made known by Maxine Elliott. Miss Stoddard ought to give a first class interpretation of the chief role in the Fitch play; she possesses the requisite physical qualifications, and reports from the east, where she has recently been playing with Margaret Anglin and Mme. Alla Nazimova, the Russian actress, are to the effect that she is uncommonly clever.

The production will also introduce Violet Rand, a new ingenue, to the Belasco audiences. Lewis S. Stone and Richard Vivian, two of the most popular of the Belasco actors who have been on vacations for the past six weeks, will be in the cast of "Her Own Way" and are sure of a royal welcome when they make their reappearance.

Following "Her Own Way" the Belasco players will offer J. M. Barrie's delightful fantasy, "The Admiral Crichton," with Lewis Stone in the role of the butler Crichton, whose cleverness manifests itself in every conceivable manner when his titled employer and yachting party are shipwrecked. "The Admirable Crichton" was given on the Belasco stage two years ago, at which time it was one of the notable hits of the year. It will require the services of the entire Belasco company, as well as a score or more of auxiliary players.

MASON—The house will be dark this week. Next week Cyril Scott and "The Prince Chap," from the Madison Square theater and Weber's theater, New York, will be here. "The Prince Chap" is by Edward Peple and enjoyed a run of 209 nights in Manhattan. It proved to be one of the most successful plays presented in New York and London last season. Cyril Scott and the best of the original cast will play the piece here. Not since "Little Lord Fauntleroy" has a play of this class met with such favor. However, the "Prince Chap" is by no means a play for juveniles, for it is a story that interests everybody. The seat sale will open at the box office Thursday morning.

BURBANK.—For the week beginning this afternoon Manager Morosco will offer T. Daniel Frawley and the entire strength of the Burbank theater company in a revival of Dr. A. Conan Doyle's success, "Sherlock Holmes," the play that ran two record weeks at the Burbank theater just a year ago.

Mr. Frawley will play the name part and other Burbank favorites will be seen in roles in which they scored heavily upon the occasion of the last presentation of the popular play. Mr. Beasley, a new addition to the ranks of the company, will appear as the wily criminal, Moriarity. Maude Gilbert, H. J. Ginn, Henry Stockbridge, who will be seen as the "tough"; Robert Morris, H. S. Duffield, Arthur Rutledge, Louise Royce, Elsie Esmond, Gerald Harcourt and Willis Marks also will have their places in the cast. "Sherlock Holmes" is limited to one week's run, as contracts for another important play have already been signed.

ORPHEUM—Frank Seymour and Emma Hill, a comedy acrobatic team, lead the list of Orpheum attractions for the week beginning with tomorrow evening's performance. John W. World, whose comedy and dancing have carried him around the world, returns, bringing Mendell Dreyfus Kingston in a one-act comedy with music. Billy Gaston and Ethel Green offer some clever "Bits of Musical Comedy" in the capital style of their entertaining roles in "Babes in Toyland" and "Wizard of Oz," of which plays they were recognized features. The five musical Byrons are "cullud gemmen," who play divers musical instruments with skill and abandon. The Neills remain for another week, playing a new dramatic sketch not hitherto presented on any stage. The Stunning Grenadiers are retained for the coming week, as well as Roberts, Hayes and Roberts and Les Jardy.

GRAND OPERA HOUSE—"A Race Across the Continent" opens this afternoon. It is a story of adventure suggested by Jules Verne's story "Around the World in Eighty Days." The heroine, Sylvia Crane, is an adventure-seeking young woman who goes to Alaska with her brother, a pioneer of the Klondike rush. While there she hears of a legacy which had been left her years before by a relative in New York. The money must be claimed within a certain period or it will pass to another heir. After many adventures she reaches New York in time to defeat the designs of the other claimants. The various scenes describe the obstacles placed in her way and tell how they were overcome.

FISCHER'S—That catchy musical farce comedy "In Zulu Land," written by Jolly Zeb especially for production in Fischer's First street theater, holds down the boards at the popular playhouse this week. It is a humming affair, with the scenes laid in Chicago. "Ain't It Tough to Be Poor?" is a musical hit sungs by that dashing little soubrette, Kate Carlson. Lew Dunbar has a snappy number entitled "The Dough, Dough, Dough," and "Hot Air, That's All," is a warm one by the producer himself, Jolly Zeb. Billy Onslow has a characteristic role as O. I. Hush, a ne'er-do-well about whom the whole plot hangs. Tracy McDermott is a landlord, H. Hardcash, and Dollie Graham is Mrs. Pot, while Kate Carlson is her daughter. Zeb takes the character of Jack Pot and Bessie Jardinere is Annie How, a sympathetic neighbor. Manager Fischer has had a full new set of costumes made for the beauty chorus. Motion pictures and a clever vaudeville turn also are features of the bill.

PEOPLE'S—The bill for next week at the popular Main street vaudeville house will present several novelty acts. The feature of the program will be Adele Palmer and company, eastern comedy stars of note. Another feature act, and one that will interest every one, will be the appearance of Captain Henry with his wonderful demonstrations of wireless telegraphy. This act has been creating a genuine sensation all over the circuit, and should prove a fine drawing card for the People's. Miss Dolly Milton will appear in clever songs and dances, while Homer Long will render a new illustrated song. The People's comedy company will present James P. Lee's farce comedy, "The Wrong Man in the Wrong Place." Manager Al G. Flournoy, who took a much needed rest last week, will appear in the cast, assuming one of the comedy parts. Miss Marion Manners will play a prominent role in this production.

UNIQUE—Four high-class acts compose the new olio at the Unique, headed by the three Kobers, daring aerial trapeze artists. Thos. Moss, a comedy juggler who is said to be unusually clever, is also on the list, as well as West and Benton in a refined dancing and singing turn, and Geraldine LaRue, soubrette. The Unique comedy company will present "My Darling Nancy," a roaring farce comedy by Richard Cummings, that promises some novel features. Edythe Edmonds and Harry Edmondson will sing the illustrated songs and the Unique-o-scope operator will show three interesting films.

AMERICAN PLAYS SEEN IN LONDON

There was a time, not many years ago, when British influence and British plays dominated the American stage, practically to the exclusion of the home-made product. Today the pendulum has swung to the other side of its arc, and for this condition the theatrical syndicate, which is blamed for much, should have the credit.

London today is experiencing an American theatrical invasion of more important proportions than ever before in its history. Here are a few of the current bills, as announced in the columns of the London Daily Express:

"The Earl of Pawtucket," written by an American; "The Truth," by Clyde Fitch; "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," presented by the New York cast headed by Madge Carr Cook; "Mrs. Ponderbury's Past," which was used on this side several seasons ago by W. H. Crane, and "Brewster's Millons," one of last season's New York successes, dramatized by an American playwright from a book of American authorship.

The name of Charles Frohman appears almost as prominently in the London theatrical announcements as it does in New York.

PERSONAL ODDITY HAS MONEY VALUE

WHEN in "The Mikado" Gilbert endowed Katisha with an elbow to behold which persons journeyed many miles, the arch humorist made fun of a trait of leading actresses of today, which trait is taken seriously by its possessors. So far as is known there is no actress of today who prides herself especially upon her elbow. There, however, are hosts of actresses who have one distinctive feature which they capitalize and out of which they make lots of money and a high place in their possession.

Young actresses would do well to remember that it is infinitely better to have cross eyes, about which everybody talks, than to have perfectly good eyes that are accepted at their face value and about which no one takes pains to waste a single word of comment. For it is the actor and the actress that are discussed that win.

Lily Langtry, who in "The Degenerates," the last play in which she appeared in the United States, played with pinkly tinted footlights, and who in a dramatic sketch has just made her farewell tour of America in the vaudevilles, has a pair of shoulders that have been emphasized. Mary Mannering made a great deal of headway with "the Janice Meredith curl." This mode of letting the hair hang down over the shoulders still is prevalent in some sections of the rural delivery routes. It is passe in the larger centers. The "Della Fox curl" preceded the Janice Meredith. Miss Fox used to twist a lock of her hair down over her forehead in the manner described in the biographical poem about the little girl who had the little curl, etc. Miss Fox wore her curl first when she played Prince Mataya in "Wang."

Mrs. Carter's flaming hair has become as much identified with her as any feature is with any actress. When Mrs. Carter was under the management of David Belasco the latter used to insist that the reddish hair be featured as much as possible. It got to be called "Zaza" hair. The color was reproduced in goods of various sorts and a chorus girl called herself "Zaza Belasco."

With Sarah Bernhardt the one attribute about which most is heard is her "voice of gold." This beautiful conceit sprang from the wit of a French man of letters a great many years ago, and has been used industriously since. Still Bernhardt has half a hundred other attractions in addition to her voice. Her elocution, even if it were delivered in an imperfect voice, would be marvelous, and her grace and panther-like quickness and smoothness would make the fortune of a deaf mute.

Emma Eames long has been credited with being the possessor of the most beautiful arms to be seen on the stage. Her husband, Julian Story—yes, this was long before the quarrel and the talk about divorce—painted Mme. Eames in postures in which the beauty of the wondrous arms was brought out.

The demureness of Edna May has passed out of the natural state in which it flourished when "little Edna," as her letter carrying father called her in Syracuse, N. Y., lived at home, when she was the wife of Fred Titus, the professional bicycle rider, and before she became famous.

At the opposite zone is Anna Held, who persistently has played upon the fact that she is anything but demure.

Lillian Russell's blond beauty long has been a watchword. Of late years she has been featured something as Sarah Bernhardt is, "the voice of gold" figure of speech being used pretty freely.

Maude Adams and "Peter Pan" have given their names to plenty of things. "Peter Pan" has become a style of clothing, just as "Buster Brown" is.

To be the tallest woman singer in the world is something. That is Marie Stuart. She is six feet two inches in height, and this fact about her is given as much prominence as is the other fact that she can sing.

Ellen Beach Yaw, who really can sing in the lower and middle registers, always was featured as a wonderful performer in the upper register. That she could sing a higher note than any other living woman was the one dominant fact that was forced forward about her all the time. It was cleverly burlesqued in the song that began "Sit tight, hold fast, sister's going to sing," and which lyric of warning was called "Sister Mary Jane's Top Note."

With some actresses their jewel collections are relied upon to attract so much attention that they themselves can come in upon the swell of discussion raised by their jewels. This old gag of stealing one's diamonds oneself or losing them has been in existence for years. It was used first by Ben Stren, when he was managing Pauline Hall away back yonder. Yet this year both Lillian Russell and Anna Held have used it to attract attention to themselves. In the Held case F. Ziegfeld, Miss Held's husband and manager, went so far as to spend a great deal of money upon detectives "and sich" when he was promulgating the narrative of the disaster.

DRAMATIC NOTES

"I have a new comedy by Alfred Sutro called 'The Barrier.' When I produce this play in London the chief role will be played by Marie Tempest. I have secured a comedy by Clyde Fitch, a comedy by H. V. Esmond and a farcical play by Broadhurst and Dazey.

The revival of "The Sho-Gun" and "Woodland," promised by Henry W. Savage for the coming season, will probably take place in Chicago, after which both companies will be sent on a tour to Los Angeles before appearing in the east.

Mildred Holland gave on July 8 at Buffalo a production of a new play, "The Provider," written for her by Matthew Barry. Built upon somewhat conventional and melodramatic lines, the piece scored a success by the intensity of its scenes.

Eleanor Robson, it is said, will play in London the season of 1908-09. She is at present in the English capital with her mother, Madge Carr Cooke. She will sail for America on July 30 and will be seen in New York for six weeks in "Salomy Jane."

Emma Eames is to sing the title role in Puccini's new Japanese music drama, "Iris." Caruso is to have a role in the same piece.