

WHAT TO SEE THIS WEEK AT LOCAL THEATERS

Playwright Is Caught by Lure of Charms of Golden State

Thomas Dixon, Jr., author of "The Clansman," which will be played at the Mason opera house, intends soon to make his home in California. He came to the state to get material for his new story, "Comrades," and was so charmed with the attraction of the coast that he decided to come here to live.

Mr. Dixon is one of the most extraordinary characters in the public eye. "Once a clergyman, always a clergyman," is the usual rule; but not so with Tom Dixon. Pulpitizing held his exclusive time and attention for fifteen years. Then he swung to the other extreme, bridging the chasm from the house of worship to the theater. After this it is hardly surprising to learn that in early manhood he was a lawyer and sat as a member of the South Carolina legislature.

Dixon derived his ideas for "The Clansman" from his childhood home at Shelby, N. C. He is of Scotch-Irish stock, and his uncle, Colonel McAfee, was a grand titan of the Ku Klux Klan. The clan was thoroughly organized in western North Carolina. Although founded in the neighboring state of Tennessee, it was native to the spirit and ancestry of the Carolinians, who retained the fire, ardor and clannishness of their Scotch Highland forebears. Often young Tom saw the mysterious, shrouded night riders pass his door; the household "mammy" put him to sleep with stories of these awesome visitants.

Father Was Evangelist
The future playwright's father was Rev. Thomas Dixon, sr., a shouting evangelist of the Moody and Sankey type. He was a typical mountaineer, self-educated, brave, believing every line and syllable of the Good Book from cover to cover. Dixon's mother was a woman of cultivation and refinement. The literary impulse in Dixon is hers, while the sturdy fighting qualities spring from the redoubtable praying mountaineer.

The young man made his mark at Wake Forest college and at law school, and his eloquence won him a seat in the legislature before he was 21 years old. It was the mother's influence that turned him to the pulpit. He did not remain long in the pine tree states. Baptist deacons of Boston and New York churches had their committees angling for him. He went north to occupy a fashionable pulpit at the Hub, and within a few years was called to the pastorate of the People's Baptist church of New York.

In Gotham the North Carolinian became a pulpit attraction second only to Parkhurst. Tall, gaunt, raven-haired and eagle-eyed, he exercised a hypnotic influence on audiences, and especially on the younger men before whom he lectured every Sunday in the Y. M. C. A. auditorium. He took the lead in the fight against Tammany. An effort was made to have him indicted for libel, but failed, and the Baptist

preacher's onslaught had much to do with the overthrow of the corrupt machine and the bringing of the reform forces into power.

Turned to Literature
Soon after this Mr. Dixon decided to devote himself to literature. He retired from the pulpit and from the Baptist church and began his trilogy of novels recently completed, "The Clansman," "The Leopard's Spots" and "The Traitor." A native southerner, he saw the reconstruction era in the south from



THOMAS DIXON JR.

the southerner's viewpoint. Fifteen years' residence in the north had not modified his attitude. The wrongs and oppression of the south, as inflicted on her by carpetbaggers, political adventurers and enfranchised blacks, cried within him for utterance, and he spoke. Dixon startled the nation with a new-old view of the racial problem. He declared that the white and colored races would find it impossible to live amicably together, and he favored the deportation of the negro to Africa or some other place of exile. Abraham Lincoln advocated practically the same thing fifty years ago, but since then the negro has been so long the ward and dependent of the nation that Dixon's words sounded like a revolutionary challenge. "The Clansman" as a book made a sensation, yet a feeble one compared with the tremendous storm and opposition raised against it as a play. Mr. Dixon described the drama as both a sequel and an answer to "Uncle Tom's Cabin." He portrayed the Ku Klux Klan as the saviors of southern society from the negro peril, instead of as a band of outlaws and midnight assassins.

"The Traitor" Completes Trilogy
With the recent production on the

stage of Dixon's last dramatized book, "The Traitor," the race problem trilogy comes to a close, and the author announces that hereafter he will devote himself to an anti-Socialistic propaganda he has had much at heart. Believing that California will be the battleground of many of the world's greatest questions, he has laid the scene of the new story in this state. It is called "Comrades," and the theme is the failure of a Socialistic colony wrecked by the passions and jealousies of human nature unfettered by the usual conventional restraints. It will be seen that Dixon, though radical in his utterances, is a conservative at heart. He was for the old established order in the south, and as against Karl Marx and his adherents he is for society in the old-fashioned meaning of the word, the hierarchy of interests and duties and privileges.

CURRENT BILLS AT LOCAL PLAYHOUSES

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in a series of complete and well rounded productions.

Owing to the length of the performance the curtain will rise at 8:10 o'clock at the evening performances and at 2:10 o'clock at both matinees today and next Saturday.

ORPHEUM—Charles Kenyon's dramatic one-act play, "The Operator," is included in this week's bill at the Orpheum. It tells the thrilling story of a lone operator in a flag station on the Nevada desert. He mistakes an order, owing to overwork, and awaits in breathless expectancy the second which will decide whether a trainload of unsuspecting travelers shall be hurled to eternity—or nothing happens. And the woman he loves helps him in the trying hour and saves his life while they await news of the fate of the unknown train full. It is intense, of course, and strong, and cannot fail to interest.

Then there is our old friend "Slivers," the best clown ever, whose depiction of the national game as played by a one-man nine, is very timely, now Assisted by Artie Nelson, he gives an extremely good act. His capture from Barnum & Bailey caused the big show a loss it has never ceased to regret.

And again come Redford and Winchester from the Palace, London, where they won fame in their burlesque juggery, by which they make lots of fun, but do feats few attempt in all seriousness. Their act has the finesse of the true artist.

La Petite Mignon, that best of child artists, comes back after a trip abroad with a lot of new impersonations, among her victims being Marie Dressler, Eddie Foy, Eva Tanguay, George Cohan, Anna Held and then some. Mignon has none of the disagreeable mannerisms usually to be found in young actors, but is bright, clever and appealing.

Holding over are Gennaro and his Venetian Gondolier band, he with his sinuosity and gyratory eccentricities, and his men with all the true musical artistry of Italy. Miss K. Carter proves a capable soprano, and her part of the act is much appreciated also. Gracie Emmett & Co., in that embodiment of all that is ridiculous, "Mrs.



FERRIS HARTMAN OF THE FERRIS HARTMAN COMPANY

Murphy's Second Husband," are still here, as are the Jupiter brothers in their mystery cabinet, and Theresa Renz with her superb equines.

LOS ANGELES—The Abdallah troupe of Arabian acrobats, six in number, will be at the Los Angeles theater for the week beginning with a matinee performance Monday afternoon. Their specialty is whirlwind athletics, tumbling, pyramid building and other acrobatic sensations. In the summer time this troupe is one of the big features of a well known circus. In the winter, however, they play in vaudeville. The ace is one of the biggest on the Sullivan & Considine list, and incidentally one of the most expensive.

J. K. Emmet and his company of three will present a farcical playlet entitled "A South Dakota Divorce." Mr. Emmet is a son of the Fritz Emmet who won fame a generation ago, and who in his day was one of the best loved comedians of the American stage. The young man is said to have inherited a good share of his father's ability as a funmaker, and his supporting company is promised to be clever. Rinaldo, announced as "the wandering violinist," has been well received elsewhere on the circuit and has been highly praised by critics who know good violin playing when they hear it. His repertoire includes both classic and so-called popular numbers. Maie Scheffels, who calls herself the "English

song bird," will be heard in melodies which she has popularized. Sam Holdsworth's picture ballad and motion pictures will complete the program.

GRAND—The real Cohan song show, "The Honeymooners," which opens at the Grand this afternoon for a week, is the same that appeared at the New Amsterdam theater in New York for an entire summer season with George M. Cohan in the role of Augustus Wright, the role in which Willie Dunlay now is appearing. Mr. Cohan never has produced a more entertaining musical comedy than "The Honeymooners" for the reason that in the piece he put forth every effort to make it as entertaining as possible, and he combined music and comedy in a manner that has pleased not only the critical New Yorkers, but the theatergoing public wherever it has been presented. In "The Honeymooners" Mr. Cohan tells an engrossing story of love, politics, sport, mistaken identity and several other things which go to make up an entire song show, the like of which has not been seen heretofore on the Pacific coast. The plot is laid in the town of Tigerville, Vt., to the accompaniment of a score of rattling, rousing musical numbers that go with a typical Cohan dash and swing. The number of catchy songs and musical numbers are of especial interest and never fail to please the most fastidious of theatergoers. One of the features of the piece

is the excellence of the chorus work and the cleverness of the several principals who have been engaged with Mr. Cohan's approval for the production. There are more than twenty musical numbers in the piece and fully a dozen topical songs which are of the greatest interest. Mr. Dunlay sings four songs the titles and story of which generally catch the audiences and applause and enthusiasm run rampant throughout. His "Nothing New Beneath the Sun," "Honest, Little Girl, I'm Strong for You" and "San Francisco Is My Home" are three of the noted songs on the stage this season. They have been produced in New York with great success and Mr. Dunlay is the only comedian now singing them on the road. Mr. Dunlay is ably supported by Miss Anna Wheaton, Miss Rose Gildea and Miss Gertrude LeBrandt and a full and complete cast. The chorus is ample and adequate.

PEOPLE'S—When Lincoln J. Carter devised "The Fast Mail," a decade or so ago, it was enough that the limit had been reached in stage realism. Since then, however, advancement has been both steady and rapid, until today the sensational aspects of the California play have little more than mild interest on the part of an audience. In "The Rocky Mountain Express," which will be at the People's theater for a week beginning with a matinee this afternoon, there is shown not one train, but two—and in collision. This is only one of the several sensational scenes which mark this most successful of western railroad plays. The author has written a story of much interest, well developed, frequent incidents, and with a strong and coherent plot. The play will come here under the management of the Kilmt & Gazzolo Amusement company, which promises both an elaborate scenic production and a competent cast of players.

FISCHER'S—"A Day at Arcadia," this week's bill at Fischer's, is particularly appropriate in view of the fact that the coming racing season at Baldwin's ranch soon is to open. The dramatic personae all are followers of and devotees to the "sport of kings," while the plot has to do with happenings at the track, very largely. Ben T. Dillon is cast as General D'Livery, an all-around sportsman; Libby Blondell is his wife, a woman whose previous matrimonial entanglements cause many of the plot complications; Max Bloom is a Teutonic horseman; Aubrey Carr, a young blood whose affections are about equally divided between pretty girls and fast horses; Nellie Montgomery, as a society bud, is the particular "girl" in his fancy, and Miss Laurel Atkins, who is seen as her mother, assists in the comedy of the piece. "Blew, Blew, Blew," a popular song of the topical variety, will be rendered as a quartet by Messrs. Dillon and Bloom and Misses Montgomery and Atkins. "Sloe Eyes" will provide Miss Blondell and Mr. Carr with a specially requested duet, and other song numbers are "What You Goin' to Tell St. Peter at the Gate," Miss Montgomery; "Fishin'," Miss Blondell, and "I Want Someone to Call Me Dearly," Mr. Carr.

EMPIRE—Floyd Sylvester, former premier aerial gymnast with Ringling Bros' circus, heads the olio at the Empire this week. Mr. Sylvester's performance includes work on the trapeze, Roman rings and horizontal bars. It is said that some of his feats are extremely hazardous, and that he has not

a peer in his particular line. Lillian Gardner, the clever little serio-comic, whose engagement at Manager Balein's theater some months since made for her a host of friends, has, owing to popular request, been engaged for a return week. Les Boulangers, rag picture painters, scheduled for last week but who were unable to reach Los Angeles owing to faulty train service, will exhibit their unique specialty. Last of the newcomers, but by no means least, is Billy Cullen, the popular singing-comedian. Illustrated songs and motion pictures complete the bill.

UNIQUE—During the present week the Unique musical comedy company will present another two-act farce-comedy entitled "Fun on the Santa Rosa." The action of the farce is ashore and at sea, during which an Irish widow, cast by James P. Lee, becomes enamored of an Italian count, who afterward turns out to be John Waffles, a bigamist. Millar Bacon is cast for the fake count; Marie Barber and Olga Stech, the two daughters; Lillian Sutherland and Harry Wardell, colored servants, and Jack Curtis, the old sea dog.

During the two acts the following musical numbers will be interpolated: "The Bogie Man," by Eldrie Gilmore; "Let Me Be Your Lemon Coo," by Millar Bacon; "In Seville," by Olga Stech; "Virginia," a coon specialty, by Lillian Sutherland; "The Kiss," duet from "Said Pasha," by Bacon and Stech; Marie Barber in a French chanson, and Harry Wardell in "Bill, You Done Me Wrong."

Among the chorus numbers are "Good-bye, Dear Old Manhattan," and "Lagga Like a Big Night Tonight." During the intermission between the two acts Millar Bacon will be heard in illustrated songs, and the Unique-oscope will project some of the latest moving pictures.

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