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AMUSEMENTS

LYRIC.

Mr. MacFarlane has had a most interesting career as an opera singer and ballad singer for a number of years, but until he went into the all-star cast of "Trilby" at the Shubert theatre in New York last summer, and in Boston last autumn, and in which he played the part of "The Laird," he had never appeared in a dramatic performance. In his new play, "The Heart of the Heather," he portrays the role of a rollicking young Scot, who leaves his home as a boy to become a soldier of fortune, and wins his way in strange climes with his charm of personality, his effervescent spirits and a rich, natural voice. Love, romance, adventure and thrills are harmoniously blended in this charming story of Scotland in the early 19th century. The costumes are unique, attractive and absolutely correct as to the period, etc. The play is sweet, wholesome, and clean as the proverbial whistle. Mr. MacDonough, the author, has provided many striking situations which gives the comedy many interesting characters. A company of thirty distinguished artists support the young star, including Viola Gillette, Walter Connolly, Colin Campbell, Gilda Leary, Jack McGraw, A. P. Kaye, Barlowe Borland, Madge Corcoran, H. Henry Handon, James Cooper, Henry Travers, Eleanor Daniels, and others, who have been at different times prominent in successful plays of recent vintage. During the action of the comedy Mr. MacFarlane will sing several new songs, including "No Man's Land," "Heart of the Heather," "Lass of My Dreams" and "A Longin' for Mother." The incidental and atmospheric music is composed by Mr. Raymond Hubbell, the musical director of the New York Hippodrome.

EMPRESS THEATRE.

One of the best, most brilliantly equipped and splendidly artistic character comedians in America will, with his company of clever associates next week headline a remarkable show at the Empress theatre. The distinguished visitor is Edward Esmonde, who has always previously appeared under the costliest vaudeville conditions, and whose performance here next week is an event of considerable importance.

Mr. Esmonde, in addition to his praiseworthy gift as an actor of notable finish and ability, is justly regarded as the foremost artist in "make-up" on the American stage, and although practically a young man, his assumption of old age is so true to life that it is realistic. For the last ten years his prominence in the theatrical world has been such that he has continuously held one of the high positions in the White Rats Actors' Union—now affiliated with the American Federation of Labor; and, unless all signs fail, he will soon be elected president of that influential organization.

Mr. Esmonde will make his appearance in the Empress show in his latest play, one of superior calibre and of screaming delight, "The Soldier of Propriety." It will be a rare treat for Empress audiences.

Another act on the same bill of equal merit and excellence, but of a different type, is that of West and Van Sien, who have also appeared in the highest-priced vaudeville theatres in the country as a big feature of their shows. They call their beautiful and elaborately staged act "The Rose Arbor." It is dainty and harmonious.

Also on the bill are these first-class acts: Charles Gibbs, the prince of mimics and the human photograph; the Dandin Duo, whose acts abound in many surprises; Kath Brothers, in a novel study in Brawn; Lewis and Chapin, in a volley of screaming "nut" specialties; and two reels of comedy film.

OLYMPIC THEATER.

At the Olympic Theater, Manager Harry Hart offers as its next week's (April 9th) attraction, the heavily advertised and much heralded Girls from the Follies Company, headed by the clever Jew comedian, Harry Stepp, who is well-known to the lovers of burlesque in this city. Always a clever entertainer in any part he portrayed, it is said that his character of Milt Cohen in the two-act musical burlesque, "Cohen in Chinatown," eclipses his former efforts. The first act is laid in Chinatown, New York, and the second on top of the Palace roof garden. He is assisted by an able cast and a chorus of thirty-five young and shapely girls, in songs and dances of the period. Matinees will be given daily.

Added Attractions—Tuesday night, plantation and battle royal; Wednesday night, chorus girl waltz contest; Thursday night, sparring contests; Friday night, a real amateur show; Saturday night, the big country store.

Unionizing of Clerks Has Caused Government Uneasiness

The Charter Granted Government Clerks by the A. F. of L. Expressly Omits the Power of the Federation to Call a Strike—But the Right of Wholesale Resignation Still Exists.—The Case of France Called to Mind.

Washington, D. C.—Considerable curiosity and not a little uneasiness has been occasioned in Governmental circles over the recently-developed activity of the American Federation of Labor in the direction of effecting an organization of Government clerks, which is to be affiliated with the Federation. Considerable progress has been made, the work being systematically carried on in the various departments, and a charter has been issued describing the new organization as the Federal Civil Service Employees' Union No. 15007 of the A. F. of L. This charter has been modified to comply with the act of August 21, 1912, which forbids Government clerks to affiliate with outside organizations which would have the right to call them on strike, or which would aid them in a strike. The charter issued to the new union specifically states that there will be no obligation on the part of its members to strike, and apparently nullifies any power the Federation might have to call a strike of Federal employees. In spite of these assurances the Government, it may fairly be stated, regards the transaction with a good deal of suspicion. If not organized to carry out the fundamental principle of the Federation that it shall enforce its demands wherever necessary by means of a strike—the strike being the great and powerful weapon of organized labor—what then, is being asked, is the real purpose for which the union has been formed?

Borland is Responsible.

Congressman Borland, of Missouri, is in large measure responsible for the general response of Federal clerks to the invitation of the A. F. of L. to enter the field of labor politics. Mr. Borland, in a rider to the legislative appropriation bill, endeavored to increase the working hours of the clerks, without corresponding increase in their pay, and although the attempt failed in the House, it occasioned a great deal of irritation among Uncle Sam's civil service employees. The Borland rider unquestionably made the Federation propaganda more palatable to the clerks and much easier for the Federation. And yet, on the surface of things, the clerks would appear to gain nothing by organization except what might be called the moral support of the Federation, and the Federation itself would seem to gain nothing from the new affiliation. Members of Congress who are not fully reconciled to the situation point to a statement made in 1911 before the House Committee on Reform in the Civil Service, when Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., took the position that if Government clerks did not strike, they had the right to resign, and that "if one man has the right to resign, a thousand men have the right to resign." But the answer is made that, if the basic idea thus advanced is that if the clerks, as an organized body, purpose to enforce their demand by wholesale resignation, prosecution under the law defining conspiracy certainly would result. If the clerks are proceeding under the assumption that action of concerted character could thus be had without violating the law against striking, they would be confronted by a situation quite as menacing and disturbing.

The movement looking to the unionization of Government clerks is not of recent origin. In the thirty-first annual convention of the A. F. of L., held in Atlanta, Ga., in 1911, a vigorous statement as to the necessity of promoting such unionization was made. The report of the convention proceedings promises that during the next session of Congress, "every endeavor will be made to secure the enactment of this legislation (a bill to permit civil service employees to organize) in order that all Government employees may thoroughly and completely enjoy" the constitutional right of free speech, peaceful assemblage and petitioning of Congress. The 1912 convention adopted a resolution instructing all organizers of the Federation to use every effort to organize Government clerks. A similar resolution was adopted in 1913, again in 1915. The organizers kept to their tasks, but met with little success until the feeling produced by the presentation of the Borland amendment played into their hands.

Treatment Not Liberal.

It is conceded that the Government's treatment of its employees is not as liberal as it should be, and that many reforms in the service are demanded. The pay is regarded as inadequate and there has been popular agitation in favor of a civil pension system. But in spite of these grievances, the Government has never yielded its contention that there is a decided difference between the position of clerks working for the Government and of the employees of private corporations. If Government employees, because of dissatisfaction with the acts of Congress, are to be permitted to strike, chaos in the Government service is predicted. If Government clerks are to be permitted to organize for purposes of strike, carrying the idea to its logical conclusion, soldiers and sailors should have the same privilege. The Government has stood by this contention, although not denying the Federal workers the right to organize for the purpose of promoting their own interests; but their organization in affiliation with the great labor body of the nation has given rise to doubts and misgivings.

Some of the executive orders which from time to time have been issued denying clerks the right to take active part in politics or to present petitions for changes in working conditions, except through their superior officers, without appeal to members of Congress, have been the occasion of dissatisfaction and annoyance. But these restrictions, excepting the prohibition of political activity, have substantially vanished, and the clerks' side of any situation is now readily presented to the attention of Congress. Opponents of the plan of unionization point as an argument to the railway mail clerks' strike in 1893, when Debs was the active agent and when 27 railroads were paralyzed, entailing interruption of the mail service and serious interference with all commerce. The French government railway strike of 1910 is referred to as another instance of the effect of unionizing Government employees. On October 13 of that year a general strike of railroad employees was called and the railway service of the country was crippled. Communication with Great Britain was interrupted and the food supply of Paris was cut off. The strike was settled peremptorily when the prime minister issued his call to the colors and the striking employees, being liable to military duty, had to respond and were then assigned to the military task of operating the railways. That particular power, however, is not vested in this government, and it probably would have to proceed under the anti-strike or anti-conspiracy statutes already mentioned.

The Government has taken no action to discourage the clerks from joining the union which is now being organized. But it is evident that the proceedings are being watched with increasing curiosity, and an eye is being held open to the developments which may disclose whether or not the purposes to be accomplished are in harmony with the best interests of the Government service and the public.

NEWS FROM FALL RIVER.

Fall River, Mass.—Iron molders have secured wage increases of 25 cents a day in one shop. After a three days' strike in another shop the management posted the increase and stated it "was being considered when the strike was called." When the union's committee visited the company officials, they declared they intended running a non-union, or so-called "open shop." The strike is still on at this place, as the iron molders refuse to exchange their unionism for 25 cents a day.

At a meeting of Portuguese, Hebrew, French and English-speaking carpenters' locals a demand for an increase of 40 cents an hour, to take effect May 1, was agreed to.

The strike of freight handlers and longshoremen for wage increases from 19 to 25 cents an hour and one hour for supper, is still on. A gang of strike-breakers was imported from Boston, but 50 of them have been discharged because of their destruction of the company's property.

STAGE STARS AWAKE; UNIONISM FAVORED

New York.—Failure to secure an equitable contract between theatrical managers and themselves has resulted in the unanimous adoption of a resolution by the Actors' Equity Association, last week, that the question of joining with the American Federation of Labor be submitted at the annual meeting of the association, to be held next May. Nearly 900 actors and actresses attended the meeting, which was presided over by its president, Francis Wilson. Before the vote was taken Wilton Lackey, Digby Bell and other actors spoke in favor of the plan. President Wilson said:

"Our members, having suffered for years under various injustices, or from various injustices, felt, of course, that our demands were equitable, and the managers felt that they were equitable. They not only felt that they were equitable but knew they were. But they also said, equitable as they may be, let us see you come on and get them. They even dared us to come and get them, and up to the present time we have been afraid to take the dare.

"Are we any less important as a profession, as a people, than the stage mechanics? They took the dare, and they now have equitable contracts. Are we any less important than the musicians? Are we not more artistic? Are we not more hysterical than musicians? Yet these temperamental and hysterical musicians, from the snare drummer up to Paderewski, took the dare and they now have equitable contracts.

"I am not discouraged. I have great confidence in the fact that the actor will not stand forever under the insulting declaration of the manager of being the chief business boob of the universe, blind to his own interests and to his own dignity. We must move in this matter. Listening to the voice of caution, we have delayed, and delayed, and delayed until nothing has been accomplished toward our equitable demands."

Similar meetings were held on the same day in other sections of the country. Vaudeville actors and actresses are organized in the White Rats' Actors' Union and are affiliated to the American Federation of Labor.

Chicago.—About 200 actors and actresses, members of the Actors' Equity Association, discussed joining with the American Federation of Labor at a meeting last week. Among the prominent stage folk present were John Drew and Blanche Ring. It was agreed that final action should not be taken until all members of the association could vote on the question.

UNIONISTS CALL ON PRESIDENT

Washington.—President Gompers, Vice-President O'Connell, Treasurer Lemon and Secretary Morrison of the American Federation of Labor urged President Wilson, last week to put a stop to the competition of enlisted musicians of the government with civilian musicians. It was shown that the government furnishes uniforms and instruments to these enlisted men and pays them good salaries, and that they then enter into competition with civilian musicians, who walk the streets while the government musicians play in hotels and elsewhere at a rate lower than the private citizen can afford.

The unionists also asked the President to favor the Smith-Hughes bill for industrial education and vocational training.

President Wilson was presented copies of a resolution passed by the A. F. of L. convention against ship subsidies, which take public moneys for the purpose of promoting private gain. The resolution favors the creation of an American merchant marine to be manned by American seamen under conditions that will make them an effective naval reserve.

LONGSHOREMEN MAKE GAINS.

Baltimore.—For the first time in the history of their organization the Longshoremen's union has signed contracts with the principal ship owners at this port. Wages are increased and working conditions improved. About 2,500 longshoremen are benefited.

The International Longshoremen's association is conducting an organizing campaign along the Atlantic seaboard, and officials say their membership has been increased from 3,000 to 9,000 as a result. They predict that 15,000 members will be enrolled in New York City alone by July 1.

SECURE EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

Detroit, Mich.—Two hundred employees of the American Electrical Heater company have reduced hours from ten to eight with a 10-hour wage after a four days' strike. These workers, both men and women, are organized.

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