

With The First Nighters

EMPRESS STOCK

When Bayard Veiller was pounding out copy up in a Main street newspaper office at \$25 a week, and dreaming of the day when one of his successes would be flashed in the electric lights on Forty-Second street for month after month, he probably didn't figure that a short time after that a splendid stock company in a new theatre across the road from the window where he was wrestling with an Underwood, would be playing his first success "Within the Law," right here in Salt Lake where he chased news and threw it into the hopper in time for the afternoon mail edition. Well, that's what has happened.

"Within the Law," the first play presented by the William Ernest Wilkes stock company is going strong before big audiences who are seeing a production well finished and splendidly acted and who from the nature of the expressions heard, are anticipating a fine season of stock at the upper Main street house. It is not so very long ago that Margaret Blington and her people were seen here in the play, and an involuntary comparison is natural. Suffice to say that the present production suffers little by comparison and in many instances the players are better. To close students of the drama, the most noticeable work at the Empress is that of Mr. Wilkes as Joe Carson, the forger. The understanding and interpretation of the part is perfection itself, but then we are getting a little ahead of our story.

Miss Nana Bryant as Mary Turner, the saleswoman who has done her "bit" after having been railroaded for a crime she did not commit, has made a stronger appeal to Salt Lakers who know actresses, than any leading lady who has been here in stock since Marjorie Rambeau, and with the series of plays which the management promises to produce immediately, this actress will have ample opportunity to prove that first impressions are not amiss. There is feeling, fire, intensity, humor, everything in her makeup that the part demands. And it is easy to anticipate what she will do in "The Yellow Ticket." The characters are so various in "Within the Law" and the lines give everyone such an opportunity to make a hit that it is difficult to exactly judge the abilities of the others, but there wasn't one who didn't fill the bill, with the possible exception of Dora Mae Howe,

who as Amy Lynch, the confidence woman, fell a little short of the mark reached by famous predecessors. However, such parts are probably not her forte, for she is said to be a capable actress. Clifford Thompson as the younger Gilder, made an instantaneous hit, the inspector Burke of Guy Hittner was not overdone as is usually the case and Mr. McNulty's "English Eddy" was excellent considering the star performers before him.

There is this beauty about the Ernest Wilkes stock companies, playing in three cities, two on the coast and one here: there will be constant changes in the personnel of the performers, those who are better in different parts than others who may be on the ground being switched for a week or two at a time. Something new in stock and something which will undoubtedly mean a great deal to theatregoers. This much is certain, there is a real stock company up at the Empress and it is to be hoped that Mr. William Ernest Wilkes and his people in their contemplated presentation of America's best royalty plays will reap the artistic and financial success they so richly deserve.

SALT LAKE THEATRE

Next week the Salt Lake theatre will offer Owen Davis' success, "Sinners," which William A. Brady, Ltd., brings to town Monday night for an engagement of four nights and Wednesday matinee. "Sinners" has to its credit three hundred and twenty-one performances at the Playhouse, New York.

A synopsis of "Sinners" is as follows:

Mary Horton comes to New York from a small town to seek her fortune. Chance takes her to Hilda Newton, who hails from the same village. Among Hilda's associates is a young man, Bob Merrick, who has just turned from a life of money grubbing to one of pleasure. He falls in love with Mary. As Mary is about to take the wrong path, her sanctimonious lover from the old home town comes to take her back to her dying father. Mary's New York friends come on an unexpected visit and what happens afterward happens quickly. The insufferable lover, who had misjudged Mary from her associations, makes an attempt to "jug" everybody's happiness, but fails. Mrs. Horton will not hear a word against her

daughter, and in the end, emerge triumphant virtue, repentance and love.

"Sinners" is in four acts and is said to be neither dull nor preachy, but rather is aglow with buoyant and infectuous humor.

William David, Walter Walker, George D. MacQuarrie, William Caryl, Harry E. Humphrey, Helen MacKellar, Gertrude Dallas (of the New York cast), and who is well remembered here in Salt Lake City as former leading lady at the Colonial theatre stock, Roselle Knott, Beatrice Noyes and Florence Beresford.

UTAH STOCK

"The Misleading Lady," the quaint comedy of Charles Goddard and Paul Dickey which had some success in New York and which has never before been seen here, was the opening offering at the Utah, our new community theatre, and was presented by a company of players, most of whom evidence the fact that the Utah theatre is going to enjoy a successful season and its patrons a series of artistic treats.

"The Misleading Lady" is a peculiar combination of comedy with a well defined love story running through, and is so very different from most modern comedies, that the interest seldom slackens. As Helen Steele, the girl who is carried away to the cabin in the Adirondacks, Roxanne Lansing, gave an idea of what she can accomplish in more important roles. As it was, her comedy was delicious, she has youth and vivacity and a latent strength that needs only the occasion to bring it out. Tom Powers, as Jack Craigen created a very favorable impression, acting the part with a reserve and understanding that won him many admirers.

A character comedy role, that of "Boney," played by Harry Hayden, is one of the drollest offerings seen here in a long long time, and Mr. Hayden assumed the difficulties of the part in a way that stamps him as an earnest, painstaking, versatile actor. "Boney" is an escaped lunatic, harmless, however, his hallucination being that he is Napoleon. There is not one touch in the characterization that escapes him and his first appearance here has truly been a triumphant one.

With one or two unimportant exceptions, the other players rendered excellent support, and if in

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