

With the First Nighters

"LOLA FROM BERLIN."

It was a sw—smell show, and that's no typographical error. Our only excuse for this extended review is an implied promise to a fortunate clientele which was not present, to the effect that we would tell them how it was.

ORPHEUM.

Whatever is worth seeing at the Orpheum this week is lost sight of in the agony that comes with "The Feud," "The Girl of the Times," and "La Petite Mignon."

"Betwixt the three disappointments, varying as they do, it is almost impossible to judge which comes the closest to the limit, though "The Feud" would seem to win by a narrow margin. Described as a dramatic sensation in the bill of the play, it accords very well with the description, for after the fifteen or twenty minutes that Griffith Wray, Robert Ellsworth, and Laura Hudson struggle through this heart-rending tale of the Kentucky mountains, those who witness the pretty little sketch imagine they have been conducting a Cook's tour through an abbatoir.

The color scheme in this informal little affair is a deep dark red, and before the struggle is over the proverbial forty buckets is really only a drop on the landscape. There are only three people who cavort in this clarety sea before the denouement. Every one concerned is the color of an over-draft before the finish, and there would have been no question in the minds of the audience that virtue is its own reward if everyone could have been killed for the time being.

If Hall McAllister paid \$1,000 for this sketch, as advertised, it ought to be an easy matter for us all to get rich at half the price. There was nothing original or distinctive in "The Girl of the Times" as a headliner, though with a fair chance in something else the company might have possibilities.

"La Petite Mignon" in her impersonations of distinguished stage favorites is about as dainty as a bicycle-rider on the last lap, and from an advertising standpoint her work is scarcely advantageous to those whom she is supposed to imitate.

The bill opens with Bob & Tip company—not so bad, followed by Agnes Mahr in "The American Tommy Atkins"—good by comparison with the acts which immediately follow her, and a Neapolitan Trio, and Powers, Walters & Crooker in "The Three Rubes" struggle heroically and entertainingly to make one forget what preceded them. In the composite, the Orpheum offering is a grand little quince with enough sweet spots to tempt the appetite for another week.

COLONIAL.

"In those strange days, people coming from God knows where, joined forces in that far Western land, and according to the rude custom of the camp, their very names were soon lost and unrecorded, and here they struggled, laughed, gambled, cursed, killed, loved and worked out their strange destinies in a manner incredible to us today. Of only one thing we are sure: They lived."

It is with this program preface that David Belasco begins his story of "The Girl of the Golden West." Not that people of the west need such a preface or, indeed, that east of the river it is necessary to an appreciation of Belasco's play, but rather that it forms an entering wedge for a sequence of events supposed to have taken place over a period of a week or so, back in the

days of the California gold fever, in '49 and early fifties, that are so filled with the color and atmosphere of those days that when the story of "The Girl of the Golden West" is finished, one realizes that Mr. Belasco has caught the spirit of that memorable period in California's making, faithfully and surely.

The preface Mr. Belasco asks you to read before he rolls up the curtain on The Girl, Cloudy Mountain, the Polka Saloon, Jack Rance, the Stranger, and the Boys, covers in its truthfulness almost all one can write of his story. Interest

across the bar of the Polka toward each other, it's the old, old story re-told. His gang waits for him in vain; it's a matter of only a few hours that his identity is learned, and he is traced to the Girl's cabin up the gulch. She shields him, of course, and in the end bids Cloudy Mountain and her Sierras "Gool-bye," and with hand on the shoulder of the Stranger, turns her back on as much of the old life as is not hers by birth and breeding. Jack Rance, the sheriff, is a rather interesting feature of the story, and in Mr. Belasco's original production proved a character that added



Miss Blanche Douglas, at the Colonial.

centers instinctively around The Girl, so red-blooded and typical of the days of which the playwright has written is she.

In the story of "The Girl of the Golden West," Rammerez is a strong, tender-hearted man, and as a professional road-agent is the bane of that part of California he infests at the head of a gang of Mexicans. His father was a road-agent before him. The Girl runs the Polka Saloon and dance hall, just as her father ran it before her. Rammerez blows into the Polka one summer's day to size it up for a clean-up. With the first flash of their eyes, as The Girl and The Stranger lean

greatly to the success of the play. It's a big, rough story of that type that never seems to grow old or to tire, and in the present instance, with its unmistakable Belasco stamp, it's one of the best of the many.

Mr. Mack and Miss Douglas, with their company, have presented the play all this week at the Colonial, and for a stock production the presentation is very creditable. Miss Douglas, as The Girl, has caught a wonderfully good characterization, and in the emotional moments of her lines she is particularly strong and capable. Mr. Mack, as Rammerez, is not so good, there being