

With the First Nighters

"A PAIR OF SIXES"

Has it ever occurred to you that the things we laugh at are the troubles, disappointments and sorrows of others? If you want to convince yourself how true this is, just take a look at "A Pair of Sixes," a three-act farce by Edward Peple, which is to be presented at the Salt Lake theatre next Tuesday and Wednesday with Wednesday matinee.

Ordinarily you would think that another person's pain would cause you grief. The fact that the sufferers are merely pretending in play-acting does not alter the case. In tragic drama the sufferers are no less "pretended" than in comedy, and yet we weep for the hero and heroine; while in comedy we laugh over their self-same calamities. In "A Pair of Sixes" the troubles, disappointments and shocks which they sustain with whom you sympathize most keep you fairly convulsed with laughter from curtain rise to finish. What is the reason for this difference?

It cannot be uninteresting to try to analyze so remarkable a phenomenon. And surely, it must be capable of analysis.

This, perhaps, is the solution. In tragedy the sufferings are depicted as final; in comedy as momentary. Life's ills mirrored in the tragic hero's fate are irremediable. When the curtain descends we know that "the rest is silence." Fate has played her trump card. The game is ended. In comedy, the hero's troubles are transitory and he emerges victorious in the end; and all through the play we laugh at his sufferings because we know that sooner or later they are bound to resolve themselves in joy.

When in "A Pair of Sixes," George B. Nettleton, and his partner, T. Boggs Johns play a hand of poker to decide which of them shall be master, and both stake everything which they hold dear, do you think you could laugh if you knew that the outcome would be permanent?

Meanwhile it is significant that even in comedy it is the ills of life that are the material out of which the funny situations are woven. When we view these ills in a tragic play we are made to feel the vanity, the nothingness of all human endeavors; we turn, heart-sick, from the pomps, the empty joys, the much-promising, little-performing prospects of life.

The evenscence of the ills portrayed by comedy, on the other hand, shows us that, after all, life is not such an unmitigated evil. It reconciles us to troubles and disappointments and gives us assurance that, for all the toil, the buffets, the injustices and whatever else may embitter our existence, life, taken all in all, is worth while in the end.

Tragedy is the evangel of the pessimist; comedy, that of the optimist. Tragedy tends to produce the condition of the mind known as "resignation" (the ultimate virtue of a noble soul); comedy causes us to avert our hearts from the solemn, innermost meanings of existence; it makes us crave to live; for it invests with a halo of hope even what seems most hopeless in life.

If you want the spirit of optimism burnished up within you, do not fail to see "A Pair of Sixes."

UTAH.

One instinctively draws a comparison when witnessing "The Girl of the Golden West," and for that reason the players of the Utah Stock company have suffered a little in producing the Belasco play. As The Girl, Miss Kemble carried the role effectively when calls were made upon her emotional powers, but at other times

she was scarcely The Girl we have seen on numerous occasions before. Mr. Mackay was disappointing as Ramerrez. The Jack Rance of Wilson Reynolds was splendid and the Sonora Slim of Arthur Moon was happily done. The finest part of the production was seen in the stage settings which were superior to past efforts in this play in stock.

"The Conspiracy," said to be the pioneer of all so-called white slave plays; one which deals with crooks and the police; sensational but realistic and intensely human, will be the offering to patrons of the Utah theatre next week. The play was written by Robert Baker and John Emerson, the latter, stage director of the Charles Frohman staff.

It is a play that is said to differ from "The Lure" and "The Traffic" stripe in that it is not in the least revolting. There are no unspeakable scenes in "The Conspiracy" yet it reveals actual conditions in the criminal world. A young girl falls prey to a band of crooks but succeeds in making her escape, and there the action of the play begins. It occurs in New York in 1912, during the investigation of graft in the police department of District Attorney Whitman.

The plays begins with a scene of a refuge for outcasts in New York where the girl has gone for protection. There she meets a young newspaper man who takes a keen interest in her. She also meets an old book-worm who thinks he is a criminologist and the girl goes to work for him as his secretary. He constructs a story that is exact in detail with that of her own. This strange character dominates the action of the entire play. It is full of thrilling situations and is said to expose to a startling degree methods employed in the underworld to lure victims.

ORPHEUM.

Sure there is a dancing act at the Orpheum this week—no vaudeville bill of any description is complete without one, these days, though this out of the ordinary, in that it combines the new modern dances with a remarkable exhibition of acrobatic dancing exemplified by Ernette Asoria and Miss Elianete, assisted by Chevalier De Mar.

Ward Bell and Ward open the bill in an old style knock-about act, though Miss Bell, whose dancing is quite wonderful, saves the offering. With the facial expressions she possesses, we should imagine there would be a fortune for her in the movies.

Walter De Leon and "Muggins" Davies made a hit, not with their songs and chatter, but with their burlesque of a screen drama which was scream.

Edmond Hayes, well remembered by theatergoers who remember local stock days of twenty years ago, and Thomas Snyder—the headline attraction—have so pleased the audiences that there has been near hysteria out in front during the progress of their act.

Vinle Daly, the other headliner, has pleased Orpheum patrons with her renditions of a number of selections from some of the Puccinni operas and others, though on the opening day she had a hard struggle with Mr. Harman's orchestra, which greatly handicapped her work.

Hilda Thomas and Lou Hall are here again in their little comedy, "The Substitute," and the bill closes with an interesting exhibition given by Emil Pallenburg and his trained bears who do things bears are supposed never to do, taking to skates and bicycles as naturally as human high rollers.

Bertha Kalich will appear at the Orpheum next week, commencing Sunday matinee, September 20, in the epilogue to Echegary's

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