

Evening Ledger

AMUSEMENT SECTION

Address all communications to Dramatic Editor Evening Ledger, Independence Square, Philadelphia.

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PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 1916

The "Ben Hur" Problem Again

The arrival of "Pollyanna" has brought up the "Ben Hur" problem for the second time in a fortnight. What is a critic to do in the face of the popular acclaim of twaddle? The "mere popularity" of "Sinners" happened to evanesce about as quickly as its claims to art. But "Pollyanna" had a full house the first night, amused and moved it all the evening, and is doubtless doing the same right along. More sophisticated Broadway may not "fall for it" as it fell for "Daddy Long Legs." Its managers are wisely cultivating "the road," where readers of the "glad books" flourish. But what a crop they harvest!

"A Full House" Why Not "Pollyanna"?

Also, what a crop of critical crabbedness and maledictions! It raises the issue between the popular and the artistic as no other class of play does. People who roar over the comic unrealities of "A Full House," and grow tense and perhaps a bit self-consciously-overworked about the melodrama of "On Trial" and the moral heaviness of "The Yellow Ticket"; people who have a considerable amount of taste in their noddle, frequently enjoy the popular successes along those lines quite as much as the general public. But give them successes like "Pollyanna" and they blow. Why?

Snob Versus Prig

There are probably a great many reasons, abstruse esthetic ones, too; but here is a simple enough possibility. We have to take "Pollyanna" seriously—even its funniness—for it appeals on a serious basis or a sentimental basis or both. Its laughs have "ethics" in them, and its ethics insist on smiling bravely. In general this sort of play is guilty of keeping up a pose. It doesn't go in for violently being itself. If the critic who looks at its popularity with a jaundiced eye is convicted of intellectual snobbery, the playwright must answer to the charge of intellectual priggishness.

The Ultimate Test

Of course, the issue is finally one of truth—not an uncommon test of art. We don't apply it to melodrama or farce successes, but we instinctively do to "Pollyannas." And we don't indorse the "glad game." A little cheerfulness is all right, even if it hasn't any backing or reality. In moderate doses, it is good medicine. But this carload of sugar pills!

And that is letting off the "glad game" easily. For if we consider this sort of gladness as reflection of actuality instead of a cure for it, what do we find? Is the world a very easy, cheerful or comfortable place? We go on living in it because that's our earth-borne or heaven-given nature. But we know that the realities of the moment are against us. And perhaps the untruthfulness of "Pollyanna" arrives most forcibly when this amazing little creature explains how glad the stum folks ought to be. It is all right for Mrs. Wiggs to be glad. That is her infirmity and maybe her salvation. Experience hasn't been able to change her temperament. But what business has this chit of 12 with the anodyne bottle? The world is badly in need of a little more discontent.

Name, Please!

A play-goer who once flourished the goose quill brings the following interesting observation to our attention: Have we observed the necessary anachronism of the high-powered automobile in the last act of "On Trial"? Thirteen years before the play begins—or in 1900—it is there, aiding in the escape of Trask. Of course, it does a lot more. It does it so well that it quite escapes the critics' attention and also the charge of bad art. The noise of the car makes the escape of Trask a dozen times plainer than any explanation about a horse and buggy and does it with a twelfth the effort. It aids the action without violating the laws of history by more than four or five years or arousing our antagonism. Ruskin discovered and christened the "pathetic fallacy." But our present discoverer has no name for this intellectual offspring which he leaves at our doorstep. Who will be godfather?

Young But Lusty

The newly formed Motion Picture Board of Trade is rapidly proving its worth. The great dinner in New York Thursday night, at which President Wilson was the guest of honor, is proof enough of its thorough grasp of the magnitude, dignity and distinction of the art and the industry. But it has done far more practical work in Washington the past fortnight in its fight on the Hughes' bill. Thanks to its efforts, pernicious Federal censorship seems doomed, while in its place will come the sane and equitable regulation proposed by the Board of Trade itself and embodied in a measure placing the films on the same basis in interstate commerce as pictures and printed matter. K. M.

"Hell Raised"

Just for Movies

Sixteen wagonloads of earth were being carted up the huge freight elevator in the rear of the Rolfe-Metro studio, in West 64th street, New York city, when a man, puzzled by this unusual procedure, stopped to ask one of the workmen what it meant.

"We are raising a little hell," he said, as he kept to his task with an offended air. But the workman was speaking the truth. They were "raising a little hell." In "Black Fear," the sensational five-part Metro production, in which Grace Elliott is starred, and Grace Valentine and Edward Brennan are featured, the principal scene in the prologue is an allegory which pictures a scene in hell. Charles Shulter, the technical director at the studio, arranged to reproduce one of the startling pictures of Dore, from Dante's "Inferno." Instead of using scenery, to represent the ground shown in the set, he insisted on having real earth, and the 15 wagonloads were de-

livered to the sixth and top floor of the building. John W. Noble is directing the feature, assisted by William Bailey. The scene in hell is where the character of "Miss Cocaine" appears before his Satanic Majesty and offers a new medium to entice souls to perdition. The scene is one of the most elaborate things of its kind ever produced in a studio, and more than 100 persons participated.

Chiding Charlie A writer in the World Outlook reports that films of Charlie Chaplin have a Japanese audience unamused and bored. What is fame but vain vexation? Honors but prelude disgraces. Hell is bubble the character of "Miss Cocaine" appears before his Satanic Majesty and offers a new medium to entice souls to perdition. The scene is one of the most elaborate things of its kind ever produced in a studio, and more than 100 persons participated.

Warring nations bowed before him. Healed to see each new production. While they venturers rise and swore him. To be bastards their destruction. Little reeked the mob nor wiggled. Underneath their loss of shame. Still they went and saw and giggled. Just the same.

Ah, but in Japan the geisha. Native scenes. "The papers!" There the stolid Oriental. Yawn. Broad all his choicest caesars. All in vain he tries to prove his. Art that sought to leave them allied—Charlie, the Monarch of the Movies. Gets the Bird! —Manchester Guardian.

There is no higher ideal for stage art than the illusion of reality.—Louis Mann.

CHESTNUT ST. Opera House Matinee, 1:30 to 5 P. M.—10c, 15c. Nights, 7 to 11 P. M.—10c, 15c, 20c. EXCLUSIVE THEDA BARA SHOWING! "THE FLYING TORPEDO" IN THE FOX MASTERPIECE "CARMEN"

ARCADIA CHESTNUT Below 10th Daily, 15c; Evngs., 25c. Bessie Barriscale Walter Edwards in "HONOR'S ALTAR" Next Mon., Tues., Wed., "The Flying Torpedo"

STANLEY MARKET ABOVE 16TH IN FIRST SHOWING THE SPIDER Next Mon., Tues., Wed., Pudd'n Head Wilson. ALL THIS WEEK PALACE 106-1214 MARKET—20c. MARY PICKFORD Continuous 10 A. M. "The Foundling" to 11 P. M.

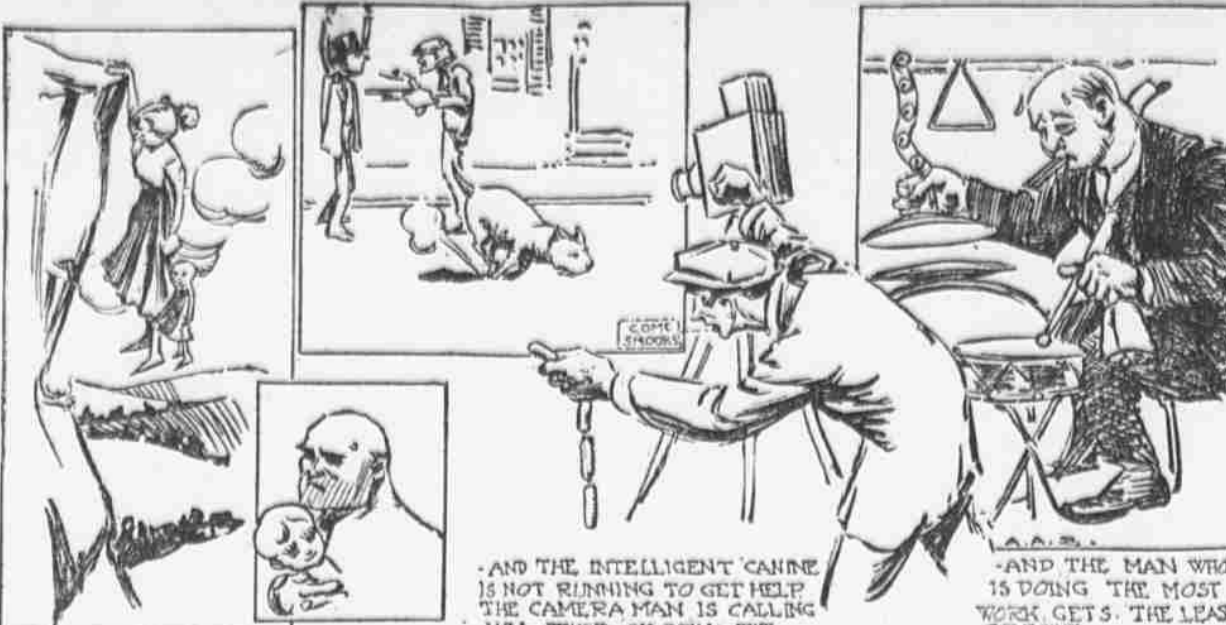
NIXON'S GRAND Willard The Man Who Grows 4 Big Acts and Pictures. Beginning Monday 8 of CLAYTON'S BUN. Today 2:15, 7 & 9. CHILD OF SAT. MAT. NIXON Today Emily Bentley & Co. at 2:15. Owen Morrison; Tonight at 7 and 9. Ike Brow and Bobby. The Four Sickers; Duncan & Holt. Others.

Trocadero THE AUTO GIRLS and La Bergere American Arvins "Within the Law" Players



CLAIRE WHITNEY In "The Ruling Passion," at the Chestnut Street Opera House, next week.

MOVIE EXPOSURE



WHEN THE HEROINE IS DOING A HEROIC STUNT, AT A DISTANCE, DO NOT APPLAUD AS THE FAIR DAMSEL IS "SPUG SANDOUGH" THE ACROBAT. AT CLOSE RANGE.

MISS SHANNON AND HER STAGE LOVER, MR. KELCEY



When Effie Shannon, of "Pollyanna" at the Broad, was the bud of girlhood she was one of the ideal ingenues of the American stage. Now, in maturity, she is known for many striking characterizations resulting from a ripened artistic understanding.

"I have few personal vanities and no illusions whatsoever concerning the stage and its obligations," said Miss Shannon, "and yet I like better to portray the softer side of Aunt Polly in 'Pollyanna' after she has been thawed out of her bitterness and austerity and after the flame of early romance with Doctor Chilton is rekindled by her orphan niece, the girl girl. Just so it used to hurt a little when I had to comb my hair straight back and wear the dowdyish attire of the plain woman in 'Years of Discretion' before she made up her mind to know the real joy of living and blossom out gorgeously in the full glory of silks, laces and chiffons fashioned into the latest modes.

"Herbert Kelcey, my adorer in 'Pollyanna' has been my ardent stage wooer these many years. Had he really been all the different men who pursued me to the dramatic altar he would have to serve a full century for polygamy. We were stage lovers in the original productions of 'The Wife,' 'The Charity Ball,' 'Lady Bountiful,' 'The Idler,' 'The Moth and the Flame' and innumerable other successes of the New York Lyceum and Empire. So we were also a couple of years ago in 'Years of Discretion,' and are now in 'Pollyanna.' We have even strayed down the path of a first and only love in polite vaudeville.

"I wonder them doesn't hate the sight of me. It would break the monotony if he could make violent stage love to some other woman once in a while. But he is too good an actor not to dissemble. The engagement rings and wedding bands he has bestowed upon me in the interest of dramatic art would fill Tiffany's show window; the orange blossoms that I have worn for him would lay a freight train a mile long. Some day I want to play a really wronged lady and have Mr. Kelcey enact a polite villain, who spurns me with cold, insolent disdain—one whom I can round on with blistering, burning outbursts of virtuous indignation. It would be a pleasant change."

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To the Farthest South

Punta Arenas, the southernmost city in the world, some 600 miles farther south than Cape Town, at the southern tip of the African Continent, is to be included in the itinerary of the easy-chair travelers who accompany E. M. Newman on the third stage of his South American Journey, at the Academy of Music, Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, February 4 and 5. Many romantic tales have been woven about this city on the Straits of Magellan, but today it is the thriving center for the cattle and sheep raising and hide industries of Patagonia and the Island of Tierra del Fuego. There are other interesting cities to be included in this travel-talk—Montevideo, the ultra-American capital of Uruguay, which has a population of a half million; Santiago, the romantic and highly cultured capital of Chile, set like a gem in a cluster of Andean Mountain peaks; Concepcion and Valdivia, in southern Chile, which have a quaintness all their own, and Valparaiso, the thriving port, which is rivaling Seattle.

THE LIGHTING OF THE PHOTOPLAY

Continued from Page One suggests the "clang" and smash of Japanese music. In "Carmen," however, the Rembrandt idea was followed. The lighting and grouping of the characters in the soft shadows were all worked out in keeping with the "school" of that famous master. We are trying, in our pictures, to give the public the "artistic" element in photography, as well as the "commercial," never, however, neglecting the latter, which consists in the careful technicalities of camera and laboratory work.

It was only after months of hard work and study that our recent effects were obtained, as it becomes infinitely more difficult to obtain light effects on a rapidly moving film than upon a properly arranged and carefully timed plate. And always it should be borne in mind these effects must be subdued to the action of the artist, as that they are merely incidental—never obtrusive.

I doubt if one person out of every 10 who sees our pictures appreciates the enormous amount of work that must be done in order to secure these effects; but I do feel that, gradually, more people are beginning to notice our efforts and appreciate them. However, 100 per cent who see our productions has an additional treat in store for himself.

FORREST—Last Mat. & Evg. Julian ELTINGE in His New Success, COUSIN LUCCY. NEXT MON.—SEATS NOW Klaw & Erlanger's Peerless Musical Production

AROUND THE MAP Don't Wait—Don't Be Late; You Can't Afford to Hesitate! Best Seats \$1.50 at Wednesday Matinees.

BROAD—Mat. Today TONIGHT 2d Joyous Week Evngs., 8:15 to 8:45. Week Klaw & Erlanger and George Tyler Present THE RAINBOW COMEDY.

POLLY-ANNA That Has Swept the Entire Community With a Tidal Wave of Gladness. Best Seats \$1.50 at Wednesday Matinees.

GARRICK—Mat. Today TONIGHT Next Night at 8:15. Next Week COHAN & HARRIS Present THE BEST PLAY PHILADELPHIA HAS SEEN IN 25 YEARS ON TRIAL. Nights & Sat. Mat., 50c, 75c, \$1, \$1.50. No higher. Popular Price Wed. Mat. Best Seats \$1.

7 Twin Beds Starting FEBRUARY 7. AMERICAN THEATRE Grand Ave. bet. 8th & 9th. ARVINE STOCK COMPANY Presents LOUIS MANN'S SUCCESSFUL DRAMA "All On Account of Eliza" Special Appearance Friday Evening Next MR. EARLE METCALF the Leading Male Character. Next Week—"The Yellow Ticket"

Knickerbocker THEATRE PLAYERS First Presentation "INSIDE THE LINES" Dumont's Dumont's Minstrels, 8th & Arch Sts. MAT. TODAY, 10c & 20c.

LETTERS

Thinks Morris on the Wane

To the Dramatic Editor: Sir—From the very outset of the 1915-16 theatrical season I have been noticing with delight the rapid reversion to the playgoer from the movies back to the spoken stage. The 12 months is a thing of the past. The ideal of the Triangle Film Company has been shattered to the ground, so that, although they represent about the best there is in the motion picture art, they are, nevertheless, only movie producers and distributors. They hung on to the 12 polley at the Knickerbocker in New York city as long as they were foolish enough to do so. Then, when Billie Burke was being exhibited for the first time on the screen, they reduced their admission fee to 20 cents. While Billie Burke was the attraction, think of it!

Then came the most telling blow against the movies, the passing out of existence of the Vitaphone moving-picture theatre. The house now bears its former name, the Criterion, and is to be the home of the spoken drama. James K. Hackett and Viola Allen in Shakespearean repertoire will open the house. "Movies to Shakespeare" is certainly an identification of something!

Also, if "The Birth of a Nation" marks a new era in motion-picture art, why is there no successor? Since it stands alone as a work of a freak of nature, surely it marks no tendency in the theatrical world. "Chin-Chin," on the other hand, completely changed the style of theatrical entertainment and gave us the ever-increasing list of musical revues. So the

Chestnut St. Opera House CHESTNUT BELOW 10th STREET MATS. DAILY, 1:30 to 5 P. M.—10c, 15c. Evngs., 7 to 11 P. M.—10c, 15c, 20c. Beginning Next Monday Matinee Exclusive Showing of Wm. Fox's Sensational Masterpiece, with the Gifted Star MISS CLAIRE WHITNEY in "THE RULING PASSION" Supported by WILLIAM E. SHAY Produced in Jersey by Herbert Brenon. Special Organ Music; All-Star Comedies.

NIXON'S GRAND WHO IS PAULINE? The world's greatest hypnotist. Some call it fake and others science, but whatever you call it, that's what it is—Screamingly funny. 6 BIG ACTS AND PICTURES BROAD AND MONTGOMERY E. G. Nixon-Niddler—Gen. Mgr. DAILY MATS., 10c; 7 & 9, 10c and 20c

LYRIC Last 2 Weeks Beginning Monday Matinee Today, 2:15; Tonight, 8:15

THE MASTODONTIC MUSICAL MARVEL OF MODERN TIMES IT BEGINS WITH GIRLS, ENDS WITH GIRLS AND IS COMPLETELY SUBMERGED BY GIRLS. 12 COLossal SCENES—INCLUDING THE DESTRUCTIVE FORCE OF A GREAT CITY BY A ZEPPELIN. THE FLYING BALLET OF BEAUTIFUL SIRENS WHO FLY FROM STAGE TO GALLERY. Strongest Musical Comedy Cast Ever Seen in Philadelphia, Including George Monroe, Eugene & Willie Howard, Marilynn Miller, JOHN T. MURRAY, DARFNE POLLARD, DINIE GIRARD, HELEN RILEY, MILLER and MARY ERNEST HARRIS, CLARENCE HARVEY, SAM HEARN, MARGARET WARDE, LYDA CARLISLE, MARIE FLOOD, EDMUND GOULDING, and ALEXIS KOSLOFF with THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN BALLET. 100 BEWITCHING BEAUTIES WHO REALLY ARE YOUTHFUL

ADELPHI BEGINNING MONDAY EVENING MATINEES THURSDAY AND SATURDAY SPECIAL! ENGAGEMENT EXTRAORDINARY! DAVID BELASCO Presents FRANCES STARR MARIE--ODILE In the Most Widely Discussed Play of the Year DIRECT FROM ITS SUCCESSFUL RUN OF OVER HALF A YEAR IN THE BELASCO THEATRE, NEW YORK ORIGINAL CAST AND PRODUCTION

LILY LANGTRY The English actress coming to Keith's next week. B. F. Keith's Theatre CHESTNUT AND TWELFTH STS. Mat. 2 P. M. 2 Shows Daily, Night, 8 P. M. NEXT WEEK Farewell American Tour Mrs. Langtry (Lady de Bathe) Supported by Lionel Atwill and Leopold Stark in a Society Play called "Aches" A Popular Duo Paul Morton & Naomi Glass Presenting "Before and After" A Record-Breaking Hit WILLARD SIMMS & CO. in "Gilder's Furnished Flat" Santly & Norton, Marie Fitzgibbon, Alfred Berzen, Bradley & Norris, Robbie Gordone, Saxo Sixtette.

GLOBE Theatre MARKET and JUNIPER STS. VALDOWILLE—11 A. M. to 11 P. M. 10c, 15c, 25c. KLEIN BROS. MINSTRELS DELMORE & LEE Olive Briscoe, Jarrow, the Lemon King. Others.

CONVENTION HALL BEGINNING MONDAY TWICE DAILY MATS. 3 P. M. EVG'S 8 ONE WEEK ONLY LU LU TEMPLE, NOBLES OF THE MYSTIC SHRINE SHRINER'S DAY, MONDAY

"BIG TOP" SHOW Frank P. Spellman's WINTER CIRCUS AMERICA'S ONE RIVAL TO THE BIG RESIDENT CIRCUSES OF EUROPE THREE RINGS 30 Elephants, Trained Camels, Bears, Over two hundred and thirty horses. Other animals and all the Star Performers of the Sawdust Arena, including Dare-Devil NERVO in his death-defying plunge from the top of the Hoop. Prices, 25c, 50c, 75c and \$1.00. TEN THOUSAND SEATS AT 25 CENTS. MATINEE, 25c and 50c. No Higher. On Sale at Gimbel's, 9th and Market.

WALNUT Pop. Mat. Tues. & Thurs., 10c, 25c & 50c. Evng. Mat. Sat.—Night, 10c, 25c & 50c. No Higher. Matinee Today—Tonight, Last Time, "SCHOOL DAYS." BEGINNING MONDAY EVENING ROGERS AMUSEMENT COMPANY Presents "HELLO PEOPLE" THE NEWEST NEW YORK MUSICAL REVIEW WITH AN ALL-STAR CAST, SURROUNDED WITH A BEAUTY CHORUS OF 60-30 SONG HITS A \$2 NEW YORK MUSICAL REVUE AT POPULAR PRICES

The Barnum & Bailey Musical Shows As big as a Circus "THE PASSING SHOW" OF 1915 Strongest Musical Comedy Cast Ever Seen in Philadelphia, Including George Monroe, Eugene & Willie Howard, Marilynn Miller, JOHN T. MURRAY, DARFNE POLLARD, DINIE GIRARD, HELEN RILEY, MILLER and MARY ERNEST HARRIS, CLARENCE HARVEY, SAM HEARN, MARGARET WARDE, LYDA CARLISLE, MARIE FLOOD, EDMUND GOULDING, and ALEXIS KOSLOFF with THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN BALLET. 100 BEWITCHING BEAUTIES WHO REALLY ARE YOUTHFUL

THE MOVIE NUT! LENT. A BUY-A-GRAF BELUGERENTAL DRAMA IN TWO DOSES. PHOOLEM AWLE THE CLEVER BYZOOOLIAN SPY IS ON THE JOB IN THE ENEMY'S RANKS. PHOOLEM BORROWS A FEW SHILLINGS FROM THE ENEMY'S GENERAL AND THEN PROCEEDS TO MAKE A GETAWAY. HOWDY GENERAL? 'LO KID! 'B-2-2-2 SURE! DON'T FORGET AND FEEL IT BACK. SOFT. BUT: 2ND PART WILL B SHOWN ACROSS THE WAY