

that box on the right of the second tier a man has entered. What an Apollo he is? How the audience quails under the fire of that eye? Genius is written in every line of that face. "Who is he," every one is asking? Here came the answer from a lady right behind us—"It is Mr. Weidner, the great critic of the Drama, and a man of great talent. Is he not charming?" Every seat now is filled and yon usher announces that hundreds have been turned away from the door. We have observed all this while the orchestra have been recovering their breath, and now we will turn our eyes toward the stage, and Banker Lester. "My daughter—wants—to—be—married," he exclaims in agonized tones as though his heart were breaking at the thought, "Oh can—I spare—her." Just here a loud unearthly scream comes from the peanut gallery, which causes the banker to tremble visibly for he thinks that the house is starting to fall; but it is found out to be Mr. Cartwright executing his fog horn.

Now the play is progressing; the plot thickens and the relatives of the actors are cheering tremendously.

At last comes the star. Augustus Read applauds loudly and Miss Herr gives him a lovely smile of encouragement from the manager's box. It is Senor Pickle who is posing to-night as a sable son of Africa.

"This," cries Irishman O'Flynn producing a rifle, "is a gun."

"And this," answers the quickwitted Etheopian presenting a pistol, "is a son of a gun."

My! how the house thunders applause; the very building shakes under the storm, and even Mr. Williamson wakens and cries "good, good," as is always his wont at the Pine Grove singing school.

Now the whole audience is on the *qui vive*, for the plot is fast thickening and something must happen soon. The ladies are paling visibly in their excitement; and sweet Mary Lester has conquered the sympathy of the gallery gods by the touching love which she bears toward the villainous baron.

All are convulsed with sorrow for see, Murphy Small is weeping quartz of tears into the coal scuttle bonnet, of yon society dame from Puddingtown below him.

Intense interest is written on every face now, and all are carried away by the natural acting of the company and the realistic stage settings.

Now we are in another scene, in a narrow gully in the wild west. Baron Harefoot has turned out to be a border desperado, Joe Dempsey by name, and the day after we see him in Banker Lester's New York residence we find him fighting a duel in this Rocky Mountain canyon. The first assistant villain, Harry from the chemical laboratory, is there as his second. The other participants in the affair are not known to us, but suffice it to say that when the curtain falls for the first act it leaves Joe Dempsey, alias Baron Herefoot, bleeding in the arms of his assistant in villainy.

Once more the wheezy strains of the orchestra float through the air, but the house is rapidly emptying now. There are little knots of men out in the lobby discussing the tragedy; there are hundreds of others rushing down the broad stairway and in a few minutes they will be standing in a mass fifty deep around Snyder's soda fountain. The music is blazing away. At last Mr. Neidigh, the leader, has succeeded in catching up and now they are letting us have it at full blast. The first violin has broken three strings of his instrument, but it makes no difference to him—he is giving it to us on one string now with full force.

The warning bell rings; the crowds leave the soda fountain with thirst unsatisfied; there is a rush for the seats, and in another moment the house is filled to the utmost. The last melodious strain of "Marching through Georgia" has disappeared through the chinks in the roof above; the curtain rises, and we are introduced to Mad Polly Lester and her youthful lover. The acting here is superb. The mystic mazes of the plot are now beginning to unfold themselves to the delighted spectators. Baron Harefoot is proposing to the banker's beautiful daughter and exclaims, "I—