



THE WEATHER. Forecast for April 17: San Francisco and vicinity—Cloudy Tuesday, with some fog in the morning; light west winds, increasing. A. G. McADIE, District Forecaster.

# THE CALL

THE THEATERS. ALCAZAR—"Are You a Mason?" ALHAMBRA—"Queen of the High-binders" CALIFORNIA—"The Cherry Blossoms" Matinee. CENTRAL—"Dangers of Working Girls" CHUTES—Vandeville. Matinee. COLUMBIA—"Babes in Toyland" GRAND OPERA—HOUSE—Grand Opera. MAJESTIC—"Who Goes There?" ORPHEUM—Vandeville. TIVOLI—"Miss Timidity."

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## BRILLIANT ASSEMBLAGE CROWDS GRAND OPERA-HOUSE

### Goldmark's "Queen of Sheba," Magnificently Staged, Marks the Opening of the Season

BEAUTIFUL SPECTACLE PRESENTED

Its Grandeur Never Equaled Here Before.

Miss Walker Plays the Regal Part Splendidly.

Van Rooy Is Great in the Role of Solomon.

Performance Is One of Rare Merit Throughout.

By Blanche Parington.

My friend Sally Sharp tells me that the audience did not wear its best gown at the Grand Opera-house last night. It was a wise audience. It had probably heard—or rather seen—"The Queen of Sheba" before. It knew that no mere garb of today could hold its own against Solomon in all his glory, not to speak of the Queen of Sheba. It was absolutely right. No spectacle of greater gorgeousness, not even "Mother Goose"—I speak advisedly—has ever been seen here than last night's "Queen of Sheba," with which the year's grand opera season began. Color, a mad riot and blaze of it, a clash and clang and very thunder of it, is "The Queen of Sheba." This for the eye.

For the ear, the same. Not the most piercing greens, the shrillest pinks, the most daring vermilion of the spectacle but have their intimate counterpart in the music. It is written in purple and gold, orange and azure—in everything and anything but the gray of things.

The production is magnificently adequate. Splendor for splendor the artist has put down with the composer. Absolutely satisfying on the scenic side is the production. And herein comes the artist with the composer to the weariness of the audience. Both pile riches upon riches; strange scented themes upon curious wealth of silk and gold; great cir-cuses of sound upon dazzling pageantries of picture, climax upon climax until eye and ear at length become surfeited. One lough for quiet spaces; for bare walls; for beauty less adorned.

Sulamith's plain purple garb in the third act, comes with the grace of a violet in a bed of tulips—as does the gentle little plaint she sings here. The rest is musical and scenic sumptuousness at their last word.

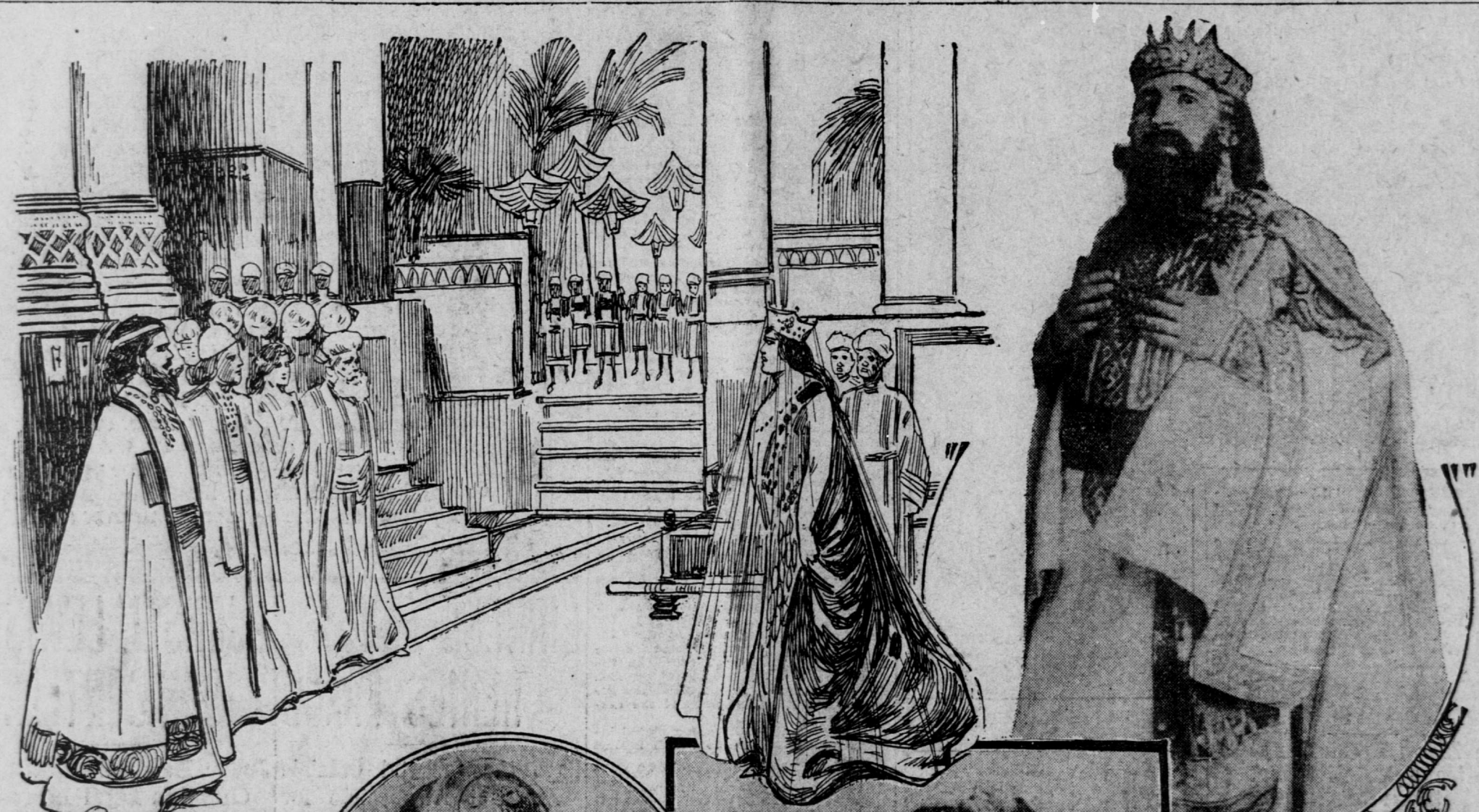
#### IN CLASS BY ITSELF.

As to its class the opera stands alone. Like "Hamlet," however, it is "reminiscent" of much that followed it. Of any particular opera that it reminds, "Aida," of course, immediately presents itself, though "The Queen of Sheba" might have been written today so far as the form goes. Puccini's "Tosca" is no more modern. Here, as in the later "Merlin," the set forms are almost wholly abandoned, the continuous performance themes, the intricate individual orchestration, being throughout in evidence. Wagner undoubtedly influenced Goldmark in the form of the opera, though tonality, rhythms and cadence are all his own. One curious thing that goes to testify to the intensely characteristic orientalism of the color.

The libretto is in German, and a good one, by Dr. Mosenthal, who wrote "Leah, the Forsaken." It is, note, a Jewish edition of an old Jewish story, with the music written by a Jew. And so strongly have both caught the Oriental atmosphere that every "ich" and "dich" comes with a distinct shock. It cries for the Hebrew.

The performance lacked a Knot last night, which perhaps accounted for a certain tepidity of enthusiasm. Dippel was the lover, Assad, and though he gave a fine outline of the part, it was hardly, at the kindest, to be called more. Miss Edith Walker's Queen of Sheba, a quite splendid affair, hardly helped Mr. Dippel. It is a pity some one can't buy him a voice. He would sing so well. And as the smart Oriental Dippel may be a very attractive picture, acting the part besides in right mainly fashion.

But barring Mr. Dippel the cast was a splendidly vocal one. Van Rooy brought his mellow thunder to the part of King Solomon; Miss Walker poured out one of the biggest and sweetest voices we have heard here as the Queen of Sheba, and the new Rappold revealed



ENTRANCE OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA ACT I



MME. RAPPOLD "SULAMITH"



M. ANDREAS DIPPEL "ASSAD"



MME. EDYTH WALKER "QUEEN OF SHEBA"



ALFRED HERTZ CONDUCTOR

SCENE FROM "THE QUEEN OF SHEBA," WHICH WAS GIVEN BY THE CONRIED COMPANY AT THE GRAND OPERA-HOUSE LAST NIGHT, AND SOME OF THE VOCAL STARS WHO TOOK PART IN THE PRODUCTION THAT MARKED THE OPENING OF THE SEASON.

## LOUNGERS IN THE LOBBY EXPRESS SATISFACTION WITH THE OPENING

Many Veteran First-Nighters and Recruits Galore Consume Tobacco, Swap Opinions and Promenade the Tiles.

By James C. Crawford.

Viewed in any light—artistic, financial or sartorial—the opening was unprecedentedly indicative of a record-breaking season. After the first act every man in the lobby asked every man with whom he talked if the management did not have reason for self-gratulation, and no man received negative answer to the query.

After the second act, when the clothes inspection was finished and everybody knew what everybody else "had on" and decided whether it was becoming or otherwise, the opera and the people who sang it monopolized the gossip. The criticism was altogether favorable. That it would be a night of nights was apparent to any person who saw the tail-end of the slow-moving vehicular procession that approached the theater entrance. While the foremost carriage or automobile was depositing its human freight upon the carpeted sidewalk the hind-most conveyance perforce rested where Market street stops Third. Ere the last load alighted the initial curtain had long ascended.

Strict enforcement of the wise ordinance which prohibits the occupation of standing room in playhouses was preventive of an incalculable number of music-lovers augmenting the audience. To witness the stream of eager humankind that

surged to the box office and turned away in disappointment must have been galling to the gentlemen who are peculiarly interested in the season. But they showed imperturbable fortitude. Perhaps they found some solace in the reflection that all the seats were filled by persons who paid \$7 or less for that privilege.

#### RECRUITS AMONG LOUNGERS.

In the lobby were most of the loungers of yore, with many recruits. It was generally expected—aye, one society mentor had even gone so far as to positively predict it—that between acts the fairer sex would flock to the lobbies this season even as their masculine escorts have done since grand opera became an annual certainty, but the prophecy failed of fulfillment. One or two venturesome ladies, whose costumes the Queen of Sheba her gorgeously-clad self might have envied, did appear among the somberly-coated tobacco-burners, but their stay was very brief. Nor did they seem to enjoy it while it lasted.

Among those who strutted the tiles and gave high handshakes and chatted with year-old acquaintances was Caruso, the conceded star of the present Conried aggregation. He smoked long Turkish cigarettes and informed all with whom he conversed that never

in all his career was he so glad to return to any dear place as when he arrived in this dear San Francisco, with climate so like that of his own dear Italia. Several other songbirds mingled with the throng, but the Caruso was IT. If he had given his elevated handshake to all the gentlemen who expressed desire to be introduced to him, his arm would surely be out of commission this evening, when he undertakes to tame Bizet's untamable cigarette-maker.

#### STRINE IS COMPLIMENTED.

Another recipient of great attention was Charles W. Strine, the man whose brilliant preliminary work is chiefly responsible for the yet-to-be-beaten sale of seats. He was showered with inquiries as to the authenticity of the report that the city is to have a new opera-house within this year and that he is to be its director general, and he confirmed both stories.

"The project is a twelve-month old," was his invariable statement. "It was started when I was here with the last Conried company, and since my latest arrival it has been as good as consummated. The new theater will fill a long-felt want, without interfering in any way with any existing institution. It will neither supplant nor succeed,

but it is assured of success just the same."

Paul Steindorff, who recognizes good opera when he hears it, pronounced "The Queen of Sheba" a big production musically, and Max Meyerfeld, whose management of the Orpheum circuit qualifies him to identify a good stage picture when he sees it, was unreserved in his approval of the "production." Then, among the laity, were such "incurable first-nighters as Superior Judge Lawlor and Paul Cowles and Manager Harry Bishop of the Majestic, all of whom expressed satisfaction with what they received vocally and spectacularly.

If the opera-going gentler sex showed no advancement in the matter of visiting the lobbies they certainly displayed an enhanced appreciation of what is en regie in the matter of applauding. There was marked and refreshing absence of the spasmodic hand-clapping accompaniment that marred the effect of well-sung vocal numbers in past seasons. But when a deserving number was finished it received due glove-patters from below the lusty "Bravas" from above. The encore fiends, too, were well disciplined very early in the proceedings. Sibilant "H-i-s-hes" gave them to understand that their insistence was bad form, and ere first curtain fall they were completely subjugated.

#### CHIEF DINAN PRESENT.

To see that the policing was thorough Chief Dinan, in muft, hovered in the foyer and kept sharp surveillance of a small army of his men, in and out of uniform. Detectives mingled with the gaping crowd that surrounded the theater doors and persons of suspicious character were speedily and noiselessly removed beyond the temptation afforded them by the dazzling jewel show. Within the

LAST NIGHT NOT SO BIG AS EXPECTED

Smart Set in Boxes Gives Evening Quality.

WOMEN FAN LIKE DEMONS

Fail to Comprehend Great Moments of Opera.

MEN ENJOY THE BALLET

By Laura Bride Powers.

One hates to take things back—lest it be an errant loan. But like the rest of my adjectival sisters, I prophesied a "brilliant" (worn lusterless by kitchen usage) house for the opening opera night—and it really didn't make good—which wasn't all my fault, nor my sisters'.

The dear public preferred to make tonight the real opening night, and it's the public that performs—not the smart-set-penny-a-liner, who follows the drum corps of society, as does the war correspondent at the front. And it isn't his fault—nor hers—if the regiment doesn't rise to expectations.

But, analytically the body of the house was smart, notably the proscenium boxes and a part of the "bath tubs" in the orchestra.

And, speaking of "bath tubs," none of the gowns in them resemble in the least a bathing get-up—most of them were anemic gowns—gotten up for thin women, stretching tenderly up to the chin, and revealing no family lamentations, whatever they may be in the privacy of the boudoir.

But incidentally, in the name of adorable esthetics, I would beg the enlistment of a good masseur before the end of the season.

Particularly smart were the left hand proscenium boxes, where the gowns were of the tones of the rainbow. And indeed were they as simple in outline as the beautiful blend and bend of the arch of the sky in a sun-shower.

And, what do you think? There, athwart the gaping, gazing house was a low, V-shaped bodice, even as that of the dashing Mrs. Peter, and the wearer was none other than Miss Helen de Young, who, it may be mentioned in passing, who, it with charming abandon, and with the good excuse of having a fetching back beneath it.

Mrs. Peter? Why, she wasn't there! To be sure she was missed, for last year she made gay the ensemble of the boxes—it's in her to enrapture things, even dull box parties.

But apropos to the Martin family, dear Mrs. Eleanor—the idol of the young and of the army—was not a box fixture, but like the plebeians was wedged in the congregate mass of the multitude, away back in the orchestra under the drapery of the dress circle.

And let it be recorded that she seemed happy, in the face of the fact that mere social "ringers-in" were receiving the homage of the untutored part of the house—that part that has merely money, but no coat of arms, and therefore don't count in the Greenway rodeo.

From the point of human interest in the goings-on upon the stage, it struck me rather forcibly that women as a class—excepting, of course, the units—do not get the essence out of the great passionate scenes of the play, or the opera.

During the tremendous climax in the garden-scene, where the Queen of Sheba lures Assad and ingulfs him in the folds of her drapery—when they are lost in the sultry indulgence of lips dissolved in the nectar of love, and in the silence of the night, they drink deep of its maddening quaffs—the women fussed and fanned, and were not bayoneted by the intensity of the moment, as were the men. Gertrude Atherton is right when she says women as a class have no adequate understanding of the great passions that sway the world.

In fact, the absent-mindedness of feminine fanning reminded me of a great German pianist—whose name is lost in the upstairs of my mental garret—who, while playing a brilliant concerto, suddenly stopped short, and turning to a woman near him, cried out, "Madam, if you must fan yourself, please fan yourself in time."

## CARUSO AND FREMSTAD TO SING TONIGHT

### CARMEN

Opera in Four Acts. Music by Bizet. Book by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halevy. (In French.) Carmen ..... Mme. Fremstad Mirella ..... Mme. Abbott (First appearance here.) Frasquita ..... Mme. Ralph Mercedes ..... Mme. Jacoby Don Jose ..... M. Caruso Escamillo ..... M. Journet Zuniga ..... M. Begue Morales ..... M. Parvis Dancaire ..... M. Dufriehe Remendado ..... M. Retz Conductor, Arturo Vigna. Stage manager, Eugene Dufriehe.

theater the same precaution was in evidence to the initiated. Unformed officers stood within the inner doors and kept the aisles clear.

But brilliant as the first evening was, it promises to be eclipsed in every respect by the second one. "Carmen" is the offering, and with Fremstad in the title part and Caruso as Don Jose a tremendous vocal presentation is guaranteed. Indeed there were folk in the lobby who offer to wager even money that the excerpts of to-night's performance will excel those of the latter. As every seat was sold for the latter, and as standing room is not to be obtained at any price, it is difficult to see how the would-be bettors could possibly win.