

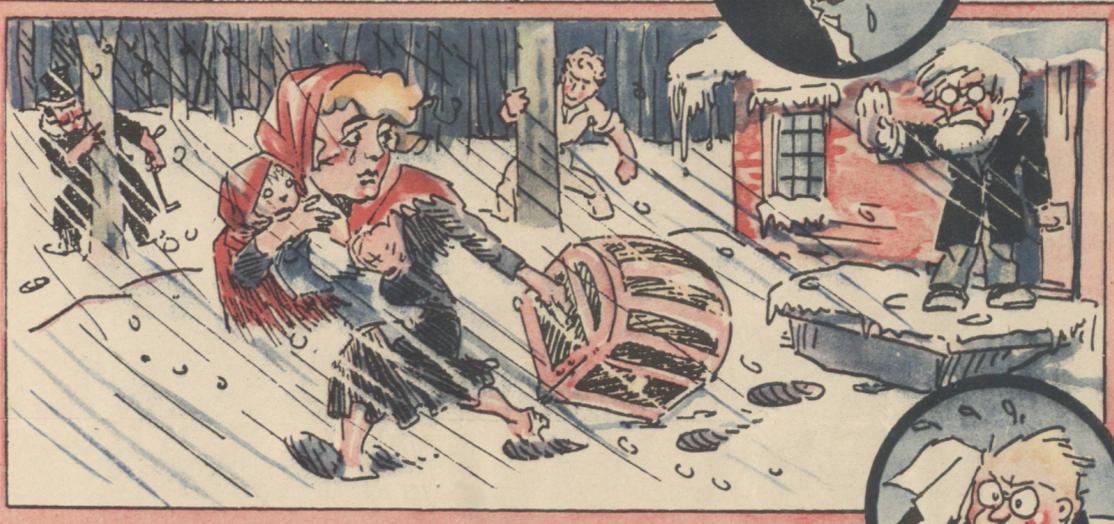
WE HAVE WITH US TODAY

THE THEATRE By GRANTLAND RICE AND J.N. DING

In other days, now somewhat dim,
 We saw the villain start in clover,
 Well knowing what they'd hand to him
 Before the final act was over;
 And while the hero was a blur
 In early acts we knew for certain
 That he would save and marry HER
 Before they dropped the closing curtain.

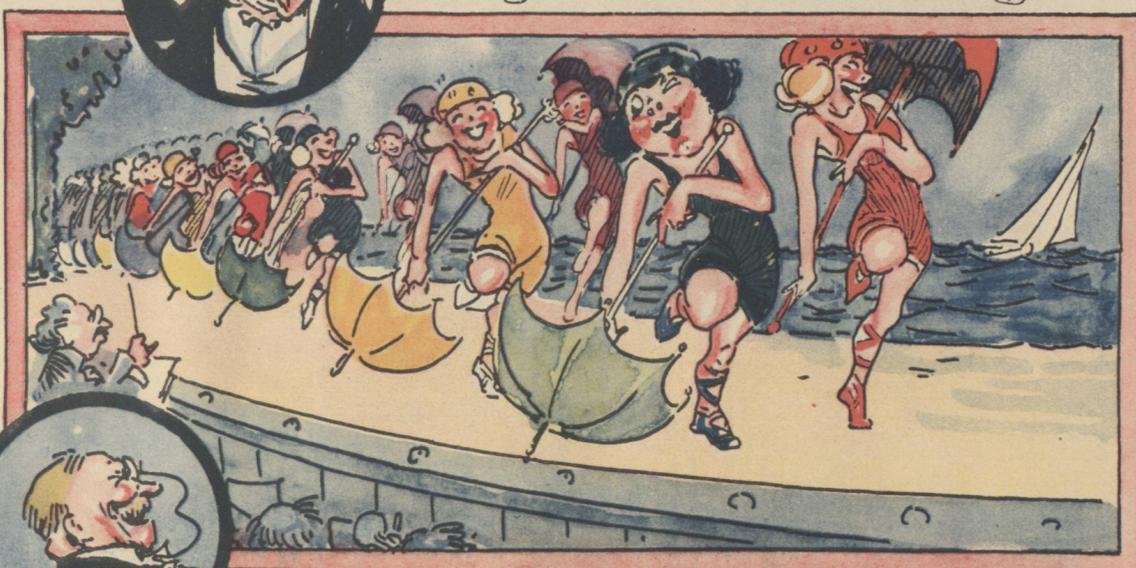


Those were the days of festive thrills,
 When East Lynne held our close attention,
 Where howling snowstorms brought their chills,
 And few undressed to shock convention;
 Yes, few undressed, for winds and snows
 And night gowns do not go together,
 And bedroom scenes from modern shows
 Could hardly stand that East Lynne weather.



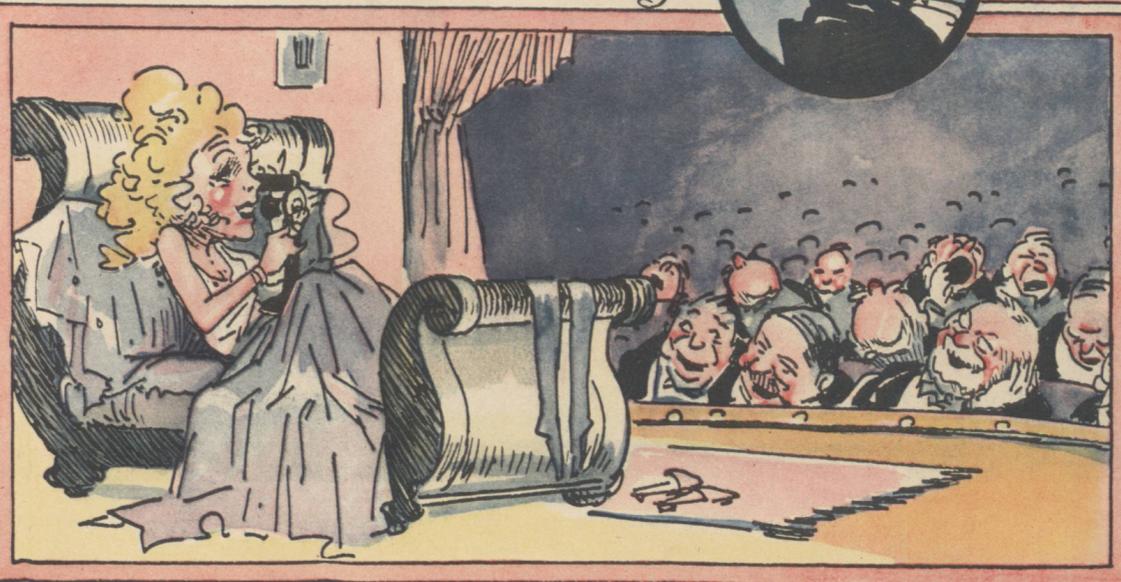
Where are those melodramas now
 Wherein the hero struts and capers,
 Or where the Villain makes his vow
 And roughly says "Give me the papers!"
 And where the child soon disappears
 And leaves us cold and almost clammy,
 Until the end of act three steers
 Her safely back to Pa and Mammy.
 Alas - it seems in trouble mired
 Through turns that grew more complicated,
 The business man at last grew tired
 And had to be re-resented;
 He wanted frivol fun and joy,
 Between the fluffy and the shady,
 Where he could murmur "Attahoy!"
 Although she was a Perfect Lady.

The chorus swirls in dizzy blend,
 And you can see his pulses quicken -
 He pipes "The second from the end"
 And gurgles to himself - "Some Chicken."
 The plot? who wants a plot, old dear,
 When dashing maidens gaily gather?
 Don't you prefer light hearted cheer
 To Ibsen's moody pen? well, rather.



They fed him "shimmy" on the wing
 And jazzed him with a flock of linnets,
 Where some one felt impelled to ring
 About each six or seven minutes.
 Then tracking down his weary spoor
 (Far be it from me to disparage)
 They introduced the Ostermoor
 And very seldom spoke of marriage.

Act One presents a bed room scene;
 Act Two unfolds a pair of couches;
 Act Three a bed of purple sheen
 In back of which some female crouches,
 And as these varied beds drift past,
 And one can sense the languor stealing
 The tired business man at last
 Can gather in that restful feeling



Some zip? You said it in a phrase,
 And yet I hold an ancient passion,
 A craving for forgotten days
 Where night gowns did not sway the fashion
 To have the playwright say again
 Where howling winds proclaim December,
 "Sir, rags are royal raiment when
 They're worn for virtue's sake" - remember?