

'JOHN FERGUSON' IS STRANGE STUDY

George Somnes, Lillian Fraser Hamilton and Others Give Best All-Round Little Theatre Performance of the Present Season.

BY WALTER D. HICKMAN

St. John G. Ervine in writing his four-act play, "John Ferguson," has attempted to construct a play of as many moods as characters.

"John Ferguson" is a gloomy play and as far as I am concerned its logic is as confusing as its characters.

Indianapolis had its first chance last night to see this highly discussed play. Its demands upon the actor is gigantic.

"John Ferguson" is a serious study of faith upon a household on a farm in County Down many years ago. It is so serious in some of its moods and so ridiculous in others from the standpoint of modern logic that one shudders to see it presented by experts.

I am more than willing to go on record here and state that the cast headed by George Somnes and Lillian Fraser Hamilton gave the most careful, thoughtful and sincere performance of the current season.

I realize that such a statement is in the language of the day "a mouthful" but I can best prove my statement by asking you to go to the playhouse this week and study both the play and the acting.

First let us approach the great demands made upon the cast by studying the characters. First we have John Ferguson, an invalid, who is first seen in his chair reading his Bible. He is waiting for a letter from his brother in America with sufficient money to pay a mortgage upon the farm. He trusts in the words he reads in the Bible, but he has some little faith in the mail and his brother.

While he is waiting and praying, he fails to study the numerous dangers in his own home. Into the home comes a weak chap by the name of James Caesar, who wants to marry Hannah Ferguson, John's daughter. James is a coward and he says he will pay the mortgage if he can marry Hannah. Hannah knows that he is weak, even pitiful.

Hannah listens to the high sounding lecture of her father to follow her own desires but at the same time he regrets leaving the old farm. In the meantime, her mother, Sarah, is taking all care to persuade her

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Zion Choir to Be Here Friday



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Eight big choral numbers will be featured on the program to be given at Cadie Tabernacle Friday night of this week, by the famous Zion Choir of Zion, Ill. They include the works of such celebrated composers as Farmer, Mendelssohn, Haydn, Rossini, Gaul, Rubinstein and Handel.

The choir of 300 voices will be conducted by John D. Thomas, himself the composer of many choruses and quartets, and who ranks as one of the foremost choral conductors in America. Vocal soloists will be Mrs. J. D. Rossini's

grabs his gun and starts after Withrow.

Now we are up to the last act. The elder Ferguson is worrying over Caesar, who is missing. Finally, Caesar arrives and admits that he was a coward and had failed to kill Withrow. Some of the situations that follow are mighty disgusting on Caesar's part.

Then the news arrives that Withrow has actually been killed. Andrew points out that Caesar is a coward. Caesar is led off to jail, protesting his innocence while the elder Ferguson cries out for him to confess.

Then for some time we see Andrew battling and finally confesses that he killed the man who attacked his sister. And then another pretty kettle of fish. John Ferguson forgets his Bible and insists that his son run off to America and join his brother, whose late letter had arrived with the money.

Mrs. Ferguson aids her husband in his desire to have his son escape. For a little while they do not care if Caesar gets hanged by the neck until dead or not for a crime that he did not do.

But Andrew sees that he is the coward in hiding behind Caesar and digs enough teachings of his father from the Bible to give him strength

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ignorance of what love and faith always mean. Here is one of the biggest performances of the season.

The entire cast is as follows:

Sarah Ferguson....Lillian Fraser Hamilton
John Ferguson.....George Somnes
Hannah Ferguson.....Dorothy Farley
James Caesar.....Neil Hartman
Henry Withrow.....Roger Hutchinson
Sam Mawhinney.....Donald J. Sehl
Clara Ferguson.....Hattie Hartman
Andrew Ferguson.....Albert O. Deluse
Sergeant Kernahan.....Hamilton Clark
Two Constables.....Charles Doehl, Edward Callender
VILLAGERS.....Jane Ogborn, Mary Florence
Fleming, Mrs. Mabel, Mrs. May, Mrs. Bessie
Byers, Robert Waltz and Ewell Newman
Splendid is the work of Mrs. Hamilton as Sarah Ferguson. She is always in character and gives a most satisfying performance of a difficult role. They will be talking about Miss Farley, who is making her first appearance with the Little Theatre. Here is true and honest acting as well as bitter and cruel work. A big triumph. I should go into detail concerning all in the cast. I have only praise for all of them.

The stage set is as perfect as the acting. "John Ferguson" is at this writing the big accomplishment of the Little Theatre so far this season.

At the Playhouse tonight and rest of the week.

Other theaters today offer: Thurston, magician, at English's; Siamese Twins at the Lyric; Gaston and Andre, European adagio dancers at Keith's; Ben-Hur" at the Ohio; "Feel My Pulse" at the Apollo; "My Best Girl" at Loew's; "Bright Eyes" at the Mutual; "Chicago" at the Circle; "Sporting Goods" at the Indiana and movies at the Bandbox.



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