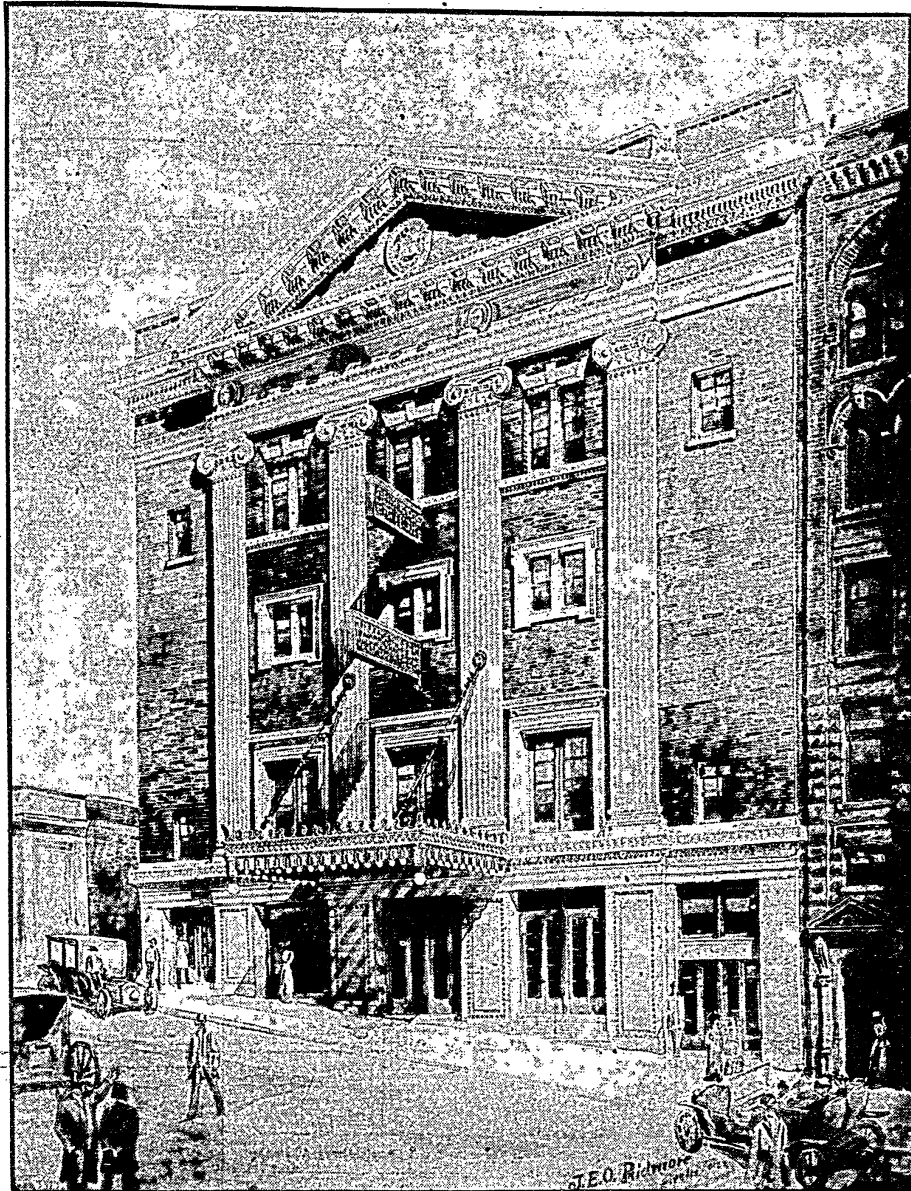


THE NEW ORPHEUM THEATER NOW IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION



BEAUTIFUL NEW
MODERN THEATER

Duluth's Orpheum Will Be Absolutely Fireproof and Complete in Every Detail.

Bookings are already being made for Duluth's new theater, the Orpheum, which will be ready to open July 1.

When the curtain is rung up those present will have an opportunity to view the result of what the years have taught the theater builders, an example of what is most modern and absolutely complete in the art by itself. Such a house Duluth will have.

Disastrous fires and panics and the greatly increased popularity of theatrical entertainment during the past ten years have served to teach much in the way of theater construction. The designing of an up-to-date house, one that will make its patrons comfortable, keep them supplied with an abundance of pure, tempered air, supply seats that will not fire, preserve to them the privileges they have paid for, to see and hear perfectly from any seat in the house and beyond all, protect them from panics by making fire impossible—this is an art by itself. Such a house Duluth will have.

White not as large a house as many in eastern cities, it will be far from small, seating comfortably considerably over sixteen hundred people, and in completeness of appointment it will not be excelled in America.

Construction is well under way and its doors may be opened considerably in advance of the date set—if the contractors' plans do not go amiss. The rear walls are now 40 feet high and the front is fast catching up.

The accompanying cut gives a very exact idea of the front as it will appear, without the brick coloring, which is most effective. The theater building has a frontage of seventy feet on Second avenue east, and a depth of one hundred and thirty feet, with entrance on the avenue. It will be seventy-two feet from curb to capstone.

The entire building from basement to roof will be strictly theater and this fact alone, giving entire freedom to the architect within the four walls, has resulted in a perfection of arrangement greatly to be desired and too often seriously interfered with in a theater building devoted to other purposes. This fact has made the house roomy and made possible the inclusion of ladies' and gentlemen's retiring and lounging rooms,

spacious and comfortable, with outside view and light, so that during intermission patrons of the house may stroll about in broad corridors, meet friends, smoke before the open fire place and relieve the tedium of the wait and go back to their seats with greater zest for the remainder of the bill.

Although adapted to the requirements and equipped for every character of theatrical presentation, this theater will be opened as a vaudeville house, under a lease given for a term of years to the company operating the Orpheum circuit of theaters, and Duluth will secure on its stage the same attractions booked by this popular and powerful organization for its Chicago and Twin City theaters.

Description of Building.

The front is of true Colonial design, carried out in pilaster, entablature and window effect. The material for pilasters, first floor, front and entablature is white terra cotta, the intervening brick work laid in the manner builders know as Flemish bond, red brick predominating and alternating with brick of darker color, serving to set off the terra cotta in a most effective manner. Enough of this wall has already been completed to make certain a very pleasing whole. An artistic, ornamental iron canopy over the front entrance extending considerably outside of the curb, equipped for brilliant illumination, will add all necessary to complete the whole and afford protection in stormy weather to arriving and departing carriage occupants.

With an eye single first of all to the safeguarding of its audiences against fire, the architect has left nothing in this respect to be added. The building is cut into three separate sections by fireproof walls, these sections being connected only by fire-proof metal doors.

The first, or entrance section, will include on the various floors, the main lobby, ticket and manager's office, corridors in rear of seats on main, balcony and gallery floors and toilet, retiring and lounging rooms.

The second section comprises the main auditorium and the third, the stage and dressing rooms. If there were enough combustible material to burn, a fire could start and burn itself out in any of these three sections of the house without in any wise affecting either of the other two or endangering their occupants. Constructed of brick, stone, steel, tile and concrete, with the sole exception of wooden floor to which seats must be attached (this floor laid flat on solid concrete), it is hard to imagine how a fire could find anything to burn. Window sash, castings and doors throughout will be of metal, stairways will be of steel and marble, beams and supporting girders of the stage will be constructed of steel and fly galleries and gridiron of the same material, complete. Dressing rooms and equipment under the stage are of fireproof material, and the stage

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proper will be equipped with a sprinkler system.

The design of the fire curtain is of especial interest. It will be a steel curtain made up of a number of dead air spaces and steel and asbestos six inches in thickness in all, trussed throughout to maintain its rigidity, will weigh over four tons and will run in grooves made of two channel irons, one at each side of the stage. It will be capable of withstanding a lateral pressure of 38 pounds to the square inch, and when hung, counterbalanced and equipped, can be operated by a child and will drop automatically in case of fire.

This house will have 27 fire exits, eight from the main floor, eight from the balcony, six from the lower gallery and five from the upper gallery. The fire exit doors themselves will be equipped with Von Duprins exit latch, by the use of which even the pressure of the body against the door or the pressure of a child's hand will instantly release the bolts and allow the doors to swing out. Fire escapes will be metal enclosed, removing all hazard from surrounding fire or injury from falling from them, in fact, throughout the house one will be at a loss to suggest a single improvement for fire protection, and he will find countless safeguards painstakingly worked out that would never have occurred to him, so perfectly has the architect forestalled every idea.

The heating and ventilating systems as planned, vouchsafe perfect comfort and pure air at all times, the ample capacity of the ventilating system making certain an entire change of air in an incredibly short space of time, the incoming air to be "scrubbed" or purified and freed from dust by passing through screens and falling sprays of water so that this system can be used equally well to cool the house during the hot season as in the winter in forcing in the warm air, a feature which will be greatly appreciated during the warm days of summer. Thermostatic heat regulation will keep the temperature throughout the house uniform, as no hand regulated system can.

The theater will have four entrance doors from Second avenue. The two middle ones lead to the main floor lobby, the other two, one to the balcony and mezzanine floor and the other to the gallery floor. The balcony and mezzanine floors can also be reached from the main floor, inside.

The main lobby will be finished in white marble, with a tile floor and countersunk rubber mats, walls of caen stone with marble base and richly ornamented cornice. This cornice will consist, outside of the plaster moulds, of hand painted scenic panels, a treatment much in favor in the latest schemes of decoration.

Stairways leading to upper parts of the house will be of ornamental iron, with marble treads, landings and wainscoting. Doors leading to auditorium will be metal, finished in mahogany.

The entire main and balcony floors will have seats of mahogany, upholstered in silk velour, with rows and individual seats so spaced as to give the maximum of comfort to the occupant.

There will be two tiers of boxes on each side of the house, commanding an excellent view of the stage.

The orchestra pit is built after the latest method, so low as to practically remove the orchestra from view, only the leader having a view of the stage, while the sight line from the front row of seats will be four inches above the stage level.

The proscenium arch will be 30 feet wide and 23 feet high.

One feature of this house which will appeal to every patron is the fact that there is not a single supporting pillar or post throughout the whole seating area. There will not be a bad seat in the house and every seat occupant will have an uninterrupted view of the stage. This result is arrived at by the use of the cantilever system of supports for upper tier of boxes, balcony and gallery floors. This idea was first used by the architect of this theater in his construction of the new Cort theater in Chicago and was considered daring in its architectural features at the start, the departure from the old post system was so great, but so satisfactory has it proved that it is being widely complimented and commented upon and its use in all new houses is a fixed certainty.

On the mezzanine floors will be located toilet rooms, the ladies' and gentlemen's retiring rooms and gentlemen's smoking and lounging room will be spacious and an open fireplace will add to it an air of comfort. This room will be baronial in design, rich draperies, decorations and furniture carrying out the plan of decoration.

The ladies' retiring room will also be inviting, finished in enameled white, hanging draperies and comfortable furniture making it an especially attractive feature.

The balcony floor, supported by a girder six feet high, and cantilevers, is constructed of tile. Level with the

lower part of the balcony will be the second tier of boxes.

The electric lighting for the house will be furnished through especially designed fixtures, two separate mains leading into the building supplying the city current. The two mains are installed to guard against failure of current and as an added precaution, gas lighting will be installed throughout. It is the owner's ultimate intention to install complete, electric generating equipment in the basement of the theater, but necessity for early completion of the building, under the terms of lease given, precludes such installation at present.

The decoration of the auditorium will be classic, with fluted columns and caps and ornamental pilaster panels, box, gallery and balcony fronts and ceiling carrying out the general plan.

Some of the most noted decorative artists of the country are now at work on the canvases which will be hung in the panels and when decoration is completed this auditorium, rich in artistic design and unity of treatment will compel unusual interest and admiration.

Draperies and upholstering will be of rich material, in keeping with the rest of the house, while the act, or drop curtain, will be of green silk velour with gold border and fringe.

The perfect completeness of the house throughout, in appearance, arrangement and equipment, is all that could be desired and Duluth will have reason to feel proud of it, for when completed this new Duluth playhouse will mark a new epoch in theater building west of Chicago. This theater is being built by G. G. Hartley, of this city. The architect is J. E. O. Pridmore, of Chicago, while the general contractors are MacLeod & Smith, of Duluth. Gust H. Karlsteen, of Chicago, is the superintendent of construction, representing the owner and architect.