

## DRAMA OF CREATION DRAWS BIG CROWDS

Religious History of the World Produced on Screen Here Longest and Most Elaborate Ever Presented in Frostburg; Entertainments Are Free to Public.

The religious history of the world from the first moment when the "earth was without form and void," down through the corridors of time to the present day, is traced in detail in the photo-drama, "Creation," at the Frostburg Opera House, under the auspices of the International Bible Students' Association. It is free to the public.

The exhibition, which is one of the longest and most elaborate picture spectacles, with music accompaniment and lectures, ever arranged, will continue during the next three weeks, each Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday every afternoon and evening at 8 and 9 o'clock.

The entire exhibition requires more than eight hours to be shown. It is therefore divided into four parts, each of two hours duration.

### Creation Story Feature.

The story of creation so graphically depicted in the photo-play is instructive, educational, scientific and distinctly religious in spirit. It is drawn as accurately as possible from the bible story. First to be shown are a series of stereopticon slides, gradually changing form from one to the other. There appears first the earth, apparently no more than a dot among the many stars in the blue sky. The second slide shows the earth in the process of cooling, and then are shown in sequence the seven creative "days" or periods. The slides are made to revolve to teach geographical and astronomical principles. Throughout the exhibition a lecture is given by a phonograph, which is so constructed that it is strong enough to fill the hall. The enunciation of the message is so clear that every word may be heard distinctly in the remotest corners of the auditorium. Besides giving the lectures, which are timed to fit in exactly with the pictures, the phonograph also furnishes the music, which consists of an elaborate overture and choruses during the impressive scenes.

### Drama Required Study.

The drama in its entirety represents the study and work of three years. The moving pictures, which are the main feature of the performance, and tell the most impressive and inspiring stories of both the old and new testaments, were actually taken in Palestine, the Holy Land, with the exception of those which tell the story of Exodus. These pictures were taken in Egypt. The wonderfully beautiful scenes which tell the story of the last agonized hour of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane were photographed by moving picture experts on the very spot where Jesus is believed to have knelt in prayer, before Judas Iscariot betrayed him to the Romans with a kiss. The expense to which the association was put in order to secure these pictures can not be estimated, but is enormous.

### Movies After Bible Story.

The story of man's creation in his maker's image, of his disobedience, of the result of the fall from divine favor, of the downward tendency of sin, is brought out by easy stages in stereopticon views up to the time of the deluge. In delineating the philosophy of the deluge, the bible account is strictly followed. Here the moving pictures begin.

### Wanderings of Israelites.

The second great division of the film story has to do with the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness and the illustration and explanation of their affairs during the reigns of Kings Saul, David and Solomon. A beautiful feature of this part of the story is the film illustrating the Prophet Elisha's restoration of the Shulamite's son. Israel's history follows according to the biblical accounts, and then opens the story which leads up through the most wonderful period of the world's history to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. Stereopticon pictures of delicate color and realistic in the description of people, costumes and modes of living introduce the beginning of a new era.

### See Star of East.

The atmosphere of reverence, of awe, of wonderful peace and good will among men, seems to be transferred from the picture screen to the vast audience as it sits breathlessly and watches the star of the east rise before the shepherds watching over their sleeping flocks. The heavenly choir of angels appears and the shepherds fall upon their knees and give thanks. Then they arise and follow the star to the manger where the Christ-child sleeps. The three wise men are seen traversing the desert on their camels. To them the great moving star appears, and they follow it, as do the shepherds.

### Jesus as Radiant Child.

But more awe-inspiring than all this, is the film which shows the appearance of Jesus as an infant to Joseph and Mary. They have come to Bethlehem to pay their taxes and have found the inns overcrowded. The only place of shelter they can find is a stable, and there they lie down to rest among the cattle. As the assembly awakes Mary preparing to retire for the night, they see her bend for a moment over the manger. She places her hand in the straw, and gradually the Radiant Child materializes from the straw, and she lifts him in her arms. Then come the shepherds and the three wise men, who fall down and worship and present gifts to the child. Jesus' boyhood at 9 and 14, and his manhood at 30, when, according to the law, he might enter upon his work, is traced. His laying aside his carpenter's tools and going to join John at the Jordan, and the preaching of John the Baptist, are pictured and explained. The baptism of Jesus is illustrated, the descent upon him of the holy spirit in the beginning of his ministry, the selection of his disciples, and the performance of many of the miracles bring to an end the second section of the exhibition.

### Crucifixion Last Section.

The third and final section of the films begins with the events that led up to the crucifixion. The last supper is shown in contrast with the typical Jewish feast of the Passover. The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is illustrated in detail. Following the last supper, Christ's agonized prayer in Gethsemane and the arrival above him of the comforting angel is shown. Then follows the scene of his betrayal by a disciple's kiss, his trial before Pilate and the crucifixion.

In illustrating the scenes of the crucifixion, also, no effort seems to have been spared to make the picture realistic and impressive. Jesus is seen wearing a crown of thorns and bleeding from the cruel thrusts of the sharp points which pierce his brow, staggering under the weight of the cross. The slow march up the hill is shown. The erection of the cross between those put up for two thieves is given in detail. Then the Saviour of the world is nailed to the cross. Great spikes, in the hands of workmen, are pounded into his flesh, and he is left to die slowly. The patient suffering on his face as he speaks to the poor creatures on either side of him is so strongly brought out that many in the audience are brought to tears.

### Martyrdom Vividly Shown.

From his resurrection, which is also clearly demonstrated, the story leads into the narrative of early Christianity. There is shown the pentecostal blessing and the preaching by the apostles, the martyrdom of St. Stephen, who was stoned to death, and there are also representations of the early church and its methods, drawing on history till the time of the Crusades, and later the great cathedrals. In this section of the film show is delineated the persecutions and martyrdom of the thousands of early Christians. The massacres of the faithful in the Roman arena before Nero are shown. In the midst of this story, the film show is stopped and a slide is inserted to illustrate more fully the actual horrors of the time. The slide was made from the great painting of Nero's circus, which shows hundreds of Christians crucified in the arena. The original painting was destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. The stereopticon slide is a reproduction from this painting, and is faithful to the original in every detail of form and color. It is a magnificent, although terrifying, illustration of the barbarity of the times.

### Before Nero Is Next.

The moving pictures following this bring out a feature of human interest in the story of Marcellus and the lion. Marcellus was an early Christian who had succeeded in taming a great lion during his wanderings through a forest near Rome. He fed the lion daily with bowls of milk and meat. Later Marcellus and his wife were captured by the Romans with other Christians and sentenced to die in the arena. The decision of Nero was that the strongest Christian was to do battle alone and unarmed with the greatest lion in the dens. Marcellus is selected and appears before the spectators in the big arena stripped for the fray. He falls on his knees and prays. In a moment the keepers, armed with whips and bludgeons, force a huge, growling lion into the ring. The animal approaches Marcellus, who is crouched in the middle of the ring. It shows its fangs and shakes its great mane. In another instant it will spring upon him and with one blow from its great paw will end the unequal encounter. But now Marcellus arises from his crouched position and speaks to the brute. The animal walks toward him, sniffs at his knees, rubs its tawny mane against his body and licks his hand. Marcellus puts out his arm and clasps the lion about the neck. Then he leads the great beast up before Nero's throne. The audience cries out: "A miracle! A miracle!" and demands mercy by lifting up thumbs that the emperor may see. Three times is Marcellus forced to lead his tame lion to the throne before he gains the leniency of the monarch. The lion he faced proved to be the one he had tamed in the forest.

Church history down to the present time is then traced. Luther's struggle against Catholicism, the history of Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, John Calvin and Servetus is told in pictures. There is also shown the rise of Methodism and other protestant creeds, with the attendant persecutions. Then follow pictures showing the scriptural prophecies down a thousand years into the future, revealing the blessings of the millennium. The exhibition closes with pictures which show the peoples, customs and mode of living of India, Japan and China, in contrast with the people of the United States.

One of the motion pictures shown as part of the great photo-play, "Creation," has for its theme the story of Abraham offering his son Isaac for sacrifice on the altar. This picture, according to Manager Pottle, was acted by two members of the International Bible Students' association. One of them, a Hebrew, is a member of the board of directors of the organization. He takes the part of Isaac. The other is a Syrian. Both live in New York. The thrilling story is acted out in every detail. Isaac, with the bundle of faggots on his shoulders, is seen struggling up the mountain side. Abraham, clothed in his flowing robes, follows, more slowly. Under the direction of his father, Isaac builds the altar and distributes the wood about it. When he has finished he turns to Abraham with the query: "Where is the lamb for sacrifice?" Then Abraham answers, "God has directed that you shall be the lamb, my dear son."

The agony of both at this utterance is well portrayed by the actors. Obediently Isaac stretches himself at full length upon the dry faggots. Abraham tearfully ties his hands and feet and is about to apply the knife to the boy's throat when his attention is directed by an angel to the rock east of the altar. Then Isaac is released. He bounds joyfully from the altar and secures the sacrifice.

## Frostburg State Normal School.

(Continued from first page.)

State Board of Education, and Archibald C. Willison and Dr. J. Marshall Price, representing the Allegany County School Board, the Training School, consisting of two teachers with pupils from the primary department of the Beach High School, which was very much congested, was organized. This department of the school has grown until it now consists of a school of eight grades housed in a new building, secured through the untiring efforts of the Hon. Frank G. Metzger, a member of the Legislature of 1912. The four teachers in this department, selected on account of their special aptitude for the work, each have two grades of fifteen pupils per grade. In this department the Junior class of the Normal School observes the expert work of the teachers in their respective departments, and the Senior class both observes and teaches one period a day for twenty weeks under the supervision of Dr. S. A. Baer and personal direction of the

teachers in each grade. So that the graduates of the school are thus given experience in managing and instructing a school of thirty pupils. Thus they not only learn the theory of teaching, but are taught to put this theory in practice, just as the medical student having learned the theory of medicine and anatomy, before receiving his certificate as a practitioner of medicine must serve so much time in the hospital putting to practice the theories learned in the class room.

### First Graduating Class.

June, 1904, witnessed its first commencement, when the following young ladies were graduated and given the stamp of the seal of the State of Maryland as teachers: Misses Jennie Dixon, Viola Hepburn, Nan Jeffries, Hilda Lambert, Christine McAlpine, Nellie Powell, Ethel Taylor, and Anna Webster.

Too much can not be said to the credit of the first principal of the school, Mr. Edmund Dandridge Murdaugh, whose labors and untiring energy, guided by a wide experience and a master mind, placed the school on a sound educational and professional basis. Much of the life of an institution depends upon the guiding principles of its organization, just as the strength of a building depends upon the security of its foundation. That Mr. Murdaugh's theories were good is evidenced by the fact that many of them are in force today. The faculty at the time of the first commencement consisted of four teachers: Professors Murdaugh and Dryden, and Misses Katherine Hibbs and Ethel D. Baker. In the year 1908, Mr. Murdaugh resigned to accept the principalship of a larger normal school in Oklahoma.

### Progress of the School.

Mr. Murdaugh was followed in 1908, by Mr. Reginald H. Ridgely, who for a number of years had held the chair of science and mathematics. Under Mr. Ridgely's able management the school continued the steady growth that had characterized the institution from its beginning in 1902. In the spring of 1912 Mr. Ridgely resigned, having been elected to the chair of science of St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland. In the fall of 1912, Mr. Edward F. Webb, a graduate of Washington College, with a broad experience in Maryland's schools, who had pursued post graduate work at the summer sessions of Johns Hopkins University, in Education, English and Supervision, was elected principal. Since Mr. Webb assumed charge of the school a noteworthy advancement has been made in every department. A discipline, more efficient than the school had ever before enjoyed, has been established and is the admiration of every visitor to the school. A system of daily routine has also been created that reduces friction between the various departments to a minimum and by the harmonious cooperation of the members of the faculty makes conditions as near perfect for scholastic work as they can be made with the available equipment.

Under Mr. Webb's leadership the professional work of the school has not only been advanced but the social atmosphere surrounding the institution has been improved.

Much attention is given to a strict observance of the rules of propriety in conducting the school's various functions. Whether it be a musicale, a reception, a gymnasium exhibition, a literary society debate or class day function, the affair is conducted along approved lines. All guests, whether they be school as visitors or as patrons of one of its functions, are received courteously and made to feel at home.

Under the present administration the course of study has also been expanded and made more comprehensive in every department. Principal Webb's executive ability and tact in directing the work of the institution has been such as to demand the respect and esteem of all interested in the school, which is at last performing the functions for which it was originally established by the State. The graduates of the school are going out and performing their work in a manner reflecting credit upon the teaching profession. It can be said without any degree of exaggeration that the work of the present principal and faculty during the past two years has placed the school on the highest level it ever occupied, made it a more potential factor in the educational affairs of the State and started it on a career that is destined to make the Frostburg State Normal School one of the most important educational institutions in Western Maryland.

The future of every institution must be judged by its past. Like a tree it is known by its fruits. Thus far the Frostburg State Normal School has given to Maryland a type of graduates of which the State may well be proud, for they have won success in every field in which their labors have been called. By their example and high ideals they are leading the youth of the State into a higher and nobler conception of true womanhood and manhood.

To the foregoing article, the editor of The Spirit deems it but just to add that J. B. Oder, the veteran editor who for 41 years edited and published The Frostburg Mining Journal, the predecessor of this paper, did not mean scorn through the columns of his paper to secure for Frostburg the State Normal School, and his name should have been prominently mentioned among others who are specially mentioned in the historical sketch of the school, as set forth in the otherwise creditable article reproduced from our Cumberland contemporary.

An account of the commencement exercises will be given in next week's issue of The Spirit.

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