

# THAT ATMOSPHERIC THEATRE

McKEESPORT, Penn., April 6.—When on Friday, April 26, the new million dollar J. P. Harris Memorial Theatre at Fifth Avenue and Market Street, McKeesport, is dedicated to the public, Western Pennsylvania may boast of a playhouse unique in this part of the country.

It is an atmospheric theatre, and, critics believe, the best example of a series of achievements attained by the father of this idea—Architect John Eberson of New York and Chicago.

The atmospheric theatre represents a new thought and a new idea in theatre design. In it audiences enjoy the illusion of an outdoor atmosphere, surrounded by picturesque facades of old world palaces, colonnades of graceful arches, romantic balconies, towers of ancient castles, and the mystical beauty of old Spanish cathedral windows. Over all this is the deep blue of the Mediterranean sky with an occasional twinkle of afar-off star and the restful tranquility of fleecy clouds drifting slowly by. Beautiful white pigeons and gala colored parrots are perched here and there. Some on the wing searched out midst the moving heavens by a cleverly concealed baby spotlight.

All of the best in the art of architecture from the various countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea has been combined in harmonious assembly. The Spanish type predominates, which in itself is enriched by the influence of Spain's erstwhile conquerors, the colorful Moors. This Moorish touch will be observed by those who enter the theatre on the opening night especially in the tile work, ancient iron grille work, lighting fixtures, and an occasional Oriental bizaareness of color. Throughout, the beautiful patio lobby, foyer, mezzanine passages, lounge and rest rooms, are adorned with wonderful samples of appropriate furniture in wrought iron, wood and old leather. Venetian lantern top torches, old Spanish and Italian pottery, terrà cotta jars, old brass and copper jugs, reproduction of old paintings, mirrors, banners, drapes and hangings richly embroidered and fine old tapestries, copies of the priceless Cluny weavings of old France—these will give the versimilitude of the old Spanish locale, in which the interior of the theatre is set, and cast over all the warm atmosphere of the blue Mediterranean. Most of these furnishings are genuine antiques, a notable example being an ancient Vargueno.

The theatre seats approximately 2,500 people—seats them in broad, comfy opera chairs, done in red morocco and cut velour, supported by steel standards which are painted in the riotous hues of the Orient and from which tiny incandescents throw a soft light upon rich weaves of specially designed carpet.