

THEATER CLOSED; TROUPE JOBLESS

**Owner W. M. Abrahamson and
Players in Controversy
Over Salaries.**

**PERFORMERS STRANDED;
OWNER HAS CLAIMS, TOO**

**Answering Demand for Money
for Costumes, He Says Men
Played in Street Clothes.**

Cancellation by W. M. Abrahamson, owner of the New Empress theater, of the engagement of the Manhattan Musical Comedy company yesterday revealed a novel situation in which the troupe claims salaries while Abrahamson has a counter claim of \$200 against the players.

As a result of the temporary closing of the playhouse, about 10 members of the company are stranded here.

In reply to the demand for money which the company claims to be due for costumes, Abrahamson said last night that the players had "no costumes to speak of" and that the chorus was "something awful." The principals possess ability, he said.

"Chorus Couldn't Sing."

"The chorus, which was new to the stage, could not sing and had but few 'changes,'" declared Abrahamson. "The men appeared in their street clothes. I advanced the players \$200 by wire before they came and when I saw them play for the first time I told Manager Knill that the show was not satisfactory. He asked for time to get a few new chorus girls. The girls did not arrive and when I saw 'The Telephone Girl' Sunday I decided that the public had endured enough. I have not received a cent of the money advanced for their fares."

Abrahamson said that the New Empress will open next Sunday with a new show.

Claim Salaries.

According to Hudson Freeborn, one of the leading players of the Manhattan company, the organization has claims for salaries due on a six-week's contract. He admitted that the salaries for the first week were paid.

The players will continue reporting regularly for matinee and night performances, Freeborn said.