IN FRANCE'S FAMOUS OPERA HOUSE

The Free Shows Generally Result in a Riotous Evening—Character of the Crowd.

So magnificent a palace is the Paris Opera that the Parisians long ago ceased to consider whether other nations have good music or good artists. It is a temple for music so surpassing all others, with such troops of governmental priests, all decorated with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, with such throngs of worshipers in diamonds, silks and black dress coats, that good old favorites like "Faust" and "Les Huguenots" suffice it. It is true that lately they have taken up Wagner, so that the tourists of the summer may hear such novelties as "Tannhäuser" and "The Valkyrie;" but this must be taken as an extraordinary innovation. The Paris Opera is for French composers. And as French composers just now are not making great successes the repertoire is made up from the good old ordinary. Owned and patronized by the government, the Paris Opera is administered on well-considered civil service principles. No disloyal rivalry may mar its decent regularity. No unripe enterprise disturbs its mild serenity. It is content to bring out two new failures every year, and say that all is well.

The public of the Opera would not have it otherwise. The orchestra and parquet chairs, reserved to men in evening dress, make calm digesting stools for clubmen, where the well-known arias comfort them and aid their calculations for tomorrow's races and tonight's baccarat. Between the acts you stand up, put on your hat, adjust your opera glasses, and stare upon the ladies in the boxes with prolonged and comprehensive familiarity. "Tiens, Mme. X." "Her diamonds are imitations!" "The belle Mme. G. Qaelle décolletage! Why does she keep her gaze lowered?"

They talk aloud now, having whispered through the act. To do otherwise is to show that you have no acquaintances around you, and to be alone in the orchestra indicates that you are an outsider.

A la bonne heure! as they say in French, a great change comes over the scene on the afternoon of a free representation." Really, these free performances at government playhouses, the Opera, Opera Comique, the Theater Francais and the Odeon, present one of the most remarkable spectacles of up-to-date Paris. They take place regularly on the various grand fete days of the year, and cost heavily in breakages and cleaning up. They are no newer than the idea of socialism itself. Ancient Rome offered free spectacles at the Colosseum to its citizens, just as it made gratuitous distributions of wheat. Panem et circenses! was the word—bread and shows! The "people" pay a good part of the taxes, and the subventioned playhouses of Paris take a good slice of the public revenue. Therefore it is just. It is an attractive sight to see the riff-raff tumbling into the great monument of the Third empire's greatest effort—individuals of every age and both sexes, of all conditions, with their bottles and their bundles, eager to enjoy for a few hours the splendors and the luxury belonging to their betters. Some of them sit all night upon the steps, and all the morning of the day itself, to be in time to occupy "the royal box," or the logia of the Jockey Club. Then they throw orange peel upon the floor. The character of the crowd depends much on the weather. If the long waiting must be done in the wet, cramps will abound, poor devils with enough of the local still in them to save half their brandy bottle to attune their nerves to the sweet strains of "Samson et Dalila" and fire their imaginations to the heights of the bacchanalian ballet. If the day is fine, the crowd will be of a more definite social situation — clerks, workingmen and all the little bourgeoisie. But the head of the string will always be composed of speculating loafers, with no music in their souls. They are there to sell their places for three francs, or even two francs. A mother and three daughters coming late—an hour or so before the opening of the doors—will squeeze their way into the place of one of them. It is the custom, and nobody protests. But when such customers are rare the speculators, "threatened with the performance," sadly slip away to pick up pennies elsewhere. The crowd is good-natured, singing, eating, drinking, chaffing, four deep all around the opera house, hedged in by ropes. Now and then a woman faints or a child gets an arm broken, but the general cheerfulness is irrepressible.

When the doors open the great "push" rolls into the aristocratic vestibule and up the magnificent escalier d'honneur like a tidal wave. Out of this flood with thoughtful delicacy the entrance to the cheapest seats of the Paris opera is by way of the great stairway. There is no side entrance for the gallery gods. Well, such is the force of habit that a great part of the crowd always starts to rush up those four flights, when the best seats of the orchestra are waiting for them.

THE RUSH OF THE PEOPLE UP GRAND STAIRWAY.

The ordinary odor of a Paris Opera night is that of femininity and perfumes. But when the populace has gained possession the smell is of ham, wine, oranges and peppermint. Those who get into the boxes — and there are many boxes at the Paris Opera — spread their table. A quart bottle of red wine for each individual, plenty of cold ham and chicken, with bread and cheese and fruit, is thought to be a model lunch.

SCENE IN A PROSCENIUM BOX.

The constant change in bicycles is easy of solution, For every time the wheels go round There is a revolution.

Lakefront—That circus man must be a fool.

Wabash—What's he been doing?

Lakefront—Why, he actually wants us to pay money to watch animals eat.

RELIC PILFERING MINISTERS.

They Chip Pieces off the Washington Monument and Pay Well for Them.

From the New York Mail and Express: Colonel Bingham, superintendent of public buildings and grounds, who has charge of the Washington monument, says one of the greatest troubles the watchmen at the monument have to contend with is the chipping of these memorial stones by relic hunters. "One of the strangest things in regard to these relic hunters," said Colonel Bingham, "is the fact that more than one-half of the men arrested for chipping off relics are clergymen. When the police arrest these despoilers and start with them to the station house the man will begin to ask what is the penalty and try to beg off. He is told that the fine is a heavy one, but that $15 security can be put up for appearance in the police court. Then the prisoner explains that he is a minister of the gospel and meant no harm, and that he could not stand the disgrace of appearing in a police court. He ends up by giving up the collateral, after generally trying to cut it down to $10, saying he has only that amount with him."

The Dean and the Lunatic.

Dean Stanley had great respect for presence of mind, and used with great delight to tell a story of presence of mind by which he liberated himself from a dangerous visitor. Since he was willing to see almost any one who asked for him, he once told his servant to usher into his study a gentleman who had called, and who happened to bear a name which was familiar to him. When the gentleman appeared he proved to be an entire stranger. It was evident there had been some mistake. This became still more evident when, advancing with an air of great excitement, the gentleman exclaimed: "Sir, I have a message to the queen from the Most High. I beg that you deliver it instantly." "In that case," said the dean, taking up his hat, "there is not a moment to be lost. Let us go at once." They went downstairs into the hall, and, opening the door, the dean requested his visitor to step out. No sooner had he done so than the dean shut the door behind the lunatic.

How to Make a Fernery.

An unsightly or dark corner of a back yard or garden may, without much difficulty, be converted into quite an attractive spot by the construction of a fernery. This can be done by removing the flags, if any, rearing them on edge as a kind of border line, filling in behind with good garden soil, if leaf mold and sandy peat are not obtainable for mixing it. See that there is plenty of drainage by placing a thick layer of broken stones or bricks at the bottom, then add the soil in the shape of a gently sloping bank, studding it with rough stones (the rougher the better) from a sandstone quarry. In gathering wild ferns do not attempt to bring home large specimens. Be content with small plants with plenty of root. They will make a fair show in themselves if properly attended to.

She Had Fears.

Mrs. C.—"I wonder where in the world the alarm clock has gone. I saw it on the mantel yesterday." Mr. C.—"It was there yesterday, but I heard it going off this morning."—Yonkers Statesman.

QUEER NAMES OF SOME FLATS

Do They Affect the Characters of Those Who Dwell Within?

"As for me," ventured the man with the wooden head, "I can't indorse your views. You lay claim that our apartment-house—our flat—nomenclature, as given expression in Chicago, is too airy, too exalted, too fanciful. On the contrary it is not the one nor the other nor the last of these. You say: "Here; a man lives in the Santa Maria. He comes home with a Saturday night tolerance of feeling for all men. He is willing to sleep on the grass in the inner court. He is even ready to indorse the views of the janitor—to carry the white man's burden for the off-scouring of our social system. Then, you say, into what unhappy contempt does he bring a name conveying such tenderness as does Santa Maria? My contention is that is all wrong with the decency of the man and all right with the name of the apartment-building. The Abbotsford," you say. 'Great Scott! can a man live up to that? Can he dwell always upon the pinnacles of romance while stuffing cheese and beer in a little back room? Can he live up to the idea of dwelling in the companionship of fatted knights, who rescue distressed maidens when at his daily business he has to haggle over the salt price of a pair of pants and to figure with the girl who brings him his lunch upon the relative merits of corned beef hash and chicken wing puree with rice?' While you are right in part, you are wrong in most. All of us admit that the sentimental atmosphere surrounding a man makes for much in his daily conduct. I say that it makes for everything. If I live in the 'Washington' don't you perceive I am going to be a higher, decenter, cleaner, more devoted citizen than I would be if I lived in the "Aaron Burr?" There is a standard set for me; if I am half honest to my environment I must try to attain it. Don't you suppose that a resident of the 'John B. Dough' flats will pay more taxes in the end than the dweller in 'Bacchante' apartments? Wouldn't your chest expansion be greater on the twelfth floor of the 'Mastodon' than in the parlor suite of the 'Little Jennie?' Some names, of course, are ill chosen and comparatively meaningless. I do not myself like to see a twenty-foot front, story-and-a-half bit of brick and mortar called the 'Pantheon,' nor a nest amid a world of downtown stories called the 'Plaza del Mesa del Virginia,' but, generally speaking, there is a good deal in a name. In a flat name, Shakespeare notwithstanding."

"Now would you prefer to live in the Otis' or the 'Aquinildo?'" asked one of the carpers. "Lest I incriminate myself," said the original speaker, "I decline to answer. Come up with me to the House of David and I will see what can be done to remove this dust."—Chicago Chronicle.

A GRAVEDIGGERS' PHILOSOPHY

Queer Traits of Character Analyzed by the Cemetery Worker.

The gravediggers in the different burying grounds have their own philosophy of life. One of them who has been in the business nearly 25 years, and who takes an exceedingly cheerful view of life notwithstanding his occupation, said that when he first went into it he felt "kind of shaky," but that now he would as soon dig a grave as do anything else, says the Baltimore Sun. "I've seen some mighty queer things in my time," he said. "I've seen people—mourners, I mean—catch sight of a name on the card tied on to some flower piece and then they have gone straight to work to tear up the whole thing. I'll tell you another thing I've noticed. When a woman comes along and makes a big fuss at her husband's funeral and says, 'I can't live without him!' I know that in a few weeks' time I'll see her out here leaning on some young fellow's arm. It's never failed. It's happened every time. But the people—women and men too—who don't take on a lot, but just keep still and sometimes don't even shed a tear, that's the kind that grieves. You don't see that kind marrying again so soon."

Within its circle of going and coming the unknown of all things becomes known, and the ultimate of all things is revealed to the eye of wisdom.—T. B. Wilson.

WONDERS OF ALASKA.

CAPTAIN BAYSE DISCOVERS A CAVE OF RELICS.

Bloody Battle with Two Big Bears—Evidences That Many Centuries Ago the Klondyke Was Not the Frigid Arctic Region It Now Is.

(Special Letter.)

Capt. D. C. Bayse of the Standard Oil company's Yukon river steamer Oil City was one of the skippers caught midway between Dawson and St. Michael by the freezing of the Yukon last October. He spent the winter hunting and exploring, often making long trips into the interior from the steamer. On one of these trips he had an exciting bear hunt and discovered traces of ancient Alaskan history that may prove valuable when properly investigated. "The beginning of last winter on the Yukon found the sternwheel steamer Oil City midway between Dawson and St. Michael, with a big cargo of oil on board," he said. "There were unmistakable signs of an early closing of the stream. In consequence I ran the steamer into a short but deep stream that flows into the Yukon opposite the Russian mission. We got everything in good order before the river finally closed on Oct. 15. It was a case of killing time until the river opened six months later, and there were few ways of doing it. Hunting was not good, as game was scarce, but we had no choice. My companion on these trips was usually Lin Que, the Americanized Chinese steward of the steamer. One day we made the crest of a low range of white sandstone hills, took a detour for the purpose of reaching a higher ridge of the same kind of rick, and finally found ourselves in a sort of cove entirely shut oft by rocks, except for the entrance we had made use of. While I was resting Lin went out on a private prospecting trip. I was soon aroused by hearing him call

AN INTERIOR VIEW.

"'Captain! Captain! Come long quick; heavy hole in rock!'

"I found him peering into what I took to be the entrance to a bear den. After clearing away some of the fresh rock slide that almost blocked the entrance, and making an improvised torch we entered the hole cautiously. With Lin in advance we crawled some six feet and found ourselves in a sort of room. It was about twenty feet square, with a high rock in the corner which had evidently been used as a table. On the north side was a crude sort of fireplace. Going further back we noticed the entrance to a somewhat larger chamber. We no sooner entered this than I saw six balls of fire glaring out of the darkness directly ahead. Lin moved his light to one side, and by its glare I saw a monster form rise and come toward me with a rush. The beast was almost upon me before I remembered the Winchester. I raised the weapon, and with no aim at all pulled the trigger. As luck would have it I killed the bear. In the excitement I lost sight of Lin, who was having a touch of excitement on his own account. He, too, had seen balls of fire approaching. He took one hurried shot with his revolver, but fired low, and hit the bear that was making for him in the loin. He threw away the gun, and, whipping out his long cooking knife, prepared for a hand to hand struggle. His opponent, a half-grown bear, was on him in an instant. The pair rolled over and over. Whenever Lin was on top he plunged his big knife in to the hilt. I could not shoot, as the Chinaman and the bear were too mixed up. The Chinaman finally won out, but not until the flesh about his arms and limbs had been badly torn. The other cub was easily killed. We decided to return to the boat that night and send after the meat the next day. As soon as the Arctic sky indicated a stretch of good weather Lin and I started out to investigate our discovery. We found the cave with little trouble. After carefully brushing off the wall with some hay that we wore inside our Arctic socks, a carefully drawn panorama, which I judged to be the history of the people who occupied the cave in former times, was disclosed. The first scene drawn in red on the white sandstone, was quite plain. It showed three small boats, with three people in each, putting out on a stormy sea from a rugged coast. About three feet further along was another drawing in which the same boats figured. The boats had evidently crossed the sea and were landing on a low shore. Between the pictures were drawings of whales, walrus and seals. The third drawing was four feet from the second and showed the three boats coming up a wide river. Further investigation showed other sketches, of the chase after buffalo, deer, bear and moose. The hunters always appeared with dogs and canoes. In none of the sketches were there any indication of sleds or snow. This led me to wonder if the Yukon country at that time had the same terrible winters it now has. It seems strange that the ancient historian would forget the cold winters when he was so accurate in putting in other details.

A BEAUTIFUL GAME.

And Most Rarely Well Played—The Diplomatic Beggar.

There is a street beggar with a new mode of operation. No, not exactly a beggar, either; he ought rather to be called a diplomat, says the New York Commercial Advertiser. His present sphere of action lies in the quiet streets surrounding Gramercy park. His attire is scrupulously neat and he approaches you with uplifted hat. "Sir," he says, gently, "pardon my troubling you, but I am a stranger and need directions. Can you tell me the name of an institution that can render immediate assistance to a needy and most worthy person. I am interested in such a person and wish to help him at once." Struck by the man's evident respectability and touched by his interest in another, you reply, with courtesy, that you cannot think of such an institution at the moment, but—"Ah!" interrupts the well-bred stranger, in accents more of mournfulness than indignation, "is it not pitiful that in a splendid city like this really worthy persons must starve while their worthiness is being investigated?" And he thereupon launches forth into an elaborate disquisition upon the proper methods for the distribution of public charity, his diction being so faultless and his arguments so sound that you permit him to walk along beside you, impressed in spite of yourself. At the climax of his argument your friend stops short, gasps a little, clutches at his collar and staggers weakly against the park railings, head drooping and arms hanging limp. Alarmed interrogations on your part. Laborious replies on his. Then the confession, gasped brokenly: "It is I who am starving. I was too proud—" That is all. If you fail to produce a half dollar you are less than human. You are also a brute if you feel cynical—until the next night, when, if you are in the same place, at the same time, you will see the same semi-collapse carried out, with equal artistic perfection, for the benefit of another gudgeon. It is a beautiful game and most rarely well played.

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Often Dangerous.

"By the way," said a lady at a dinner party, "do you know that there are times when it is dangerous to enter an Episcopal church?"

"What is that, madam?" said the bishop with a dignity, straightening himself up in his chair. "I say there are times when it is positively dangerous to enter an Episcopal church," she replied at once. "That cannot be," said the bishop. "Pray explain, madam?" "Why," said she, "it is when there is a canon in the reading desk, a great gun in the pulpit, when the bishop is charging the clergy, the choir is murdering the anthem and the organist is trying to drown the choir."

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Jeweler's Weekly: Mrs. Skinner—"Wasn't that sad about Mrs. Richman?" Mrs. Goode—"What?" Mrs. Skinner—"Her husband was drowned with his six-carat diamond stud on,and his body cannot be found."

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A man who can be fooled the same way four times is a fool.

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You should remember that people are quick to "notice" things.

If you have your own way see that your way is right.

Mrs. Barnard Thanks
MRS. PINKHAM FOR HEALTH.

[LETTER TO MRS. PINKHAM NO. 18,992]

"DEAR FRIEND—I feel it my duty to express my gratitude and thanks to you for what your medicine has done for me. I was very miserable and losing flesh very fast, had bladder trouble, fluttering pains about the heart and would get so dizzy and suffered with painful menstruation. I was reading in a paper about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, so I wrote to you and after taking two bottles I felt like a new person. Your Vegetable Compound has entirely cured me and I cannot praise it enough."—MRS. J. O. BARNARD, MILLTOWN, WASHINGTON CO., ME.

An Iowa Woman's Convincing Statement.

"I tried three doctors, and the last one said nothing but an operation would help me. My trouble was profuse flowing; sometimes I would think I would flow to death. I was so weak that the least work would tire me. Reading of so many being cured by your medicine, I made up my mind to write to you for advice, and I am so glad that I did. I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and Liver Pills and followed your directions, and am now well and strong. I shall recommend your medicine to all, for it saved my life."—MISS A. P., BOX 21 ABBOTT, IOWA.

BOYS WHIPPED BY MACHINERY

New Engine of Discipline Introduced in Scotch Schools.

Airdrie correspondence London Star: I specially visited the mud row, situated between Tollcross and Carmyle, about eight miles from Airdrie, this afternoon, to interview the lads who recently received the first honors and four stripes from the newly acquired whipping apparatus at Airdrie. The apparatus is shaped like the breast-piece of a violin, is about five feet long by three feet broad. The boy is fastened on by leather straps on his arms and knees and the weapon is an ordinary birch rod. "You show up the Airdrie authorities," said the mother of a lad named Allen to me. I asked him, a bright wee chap of 9—if he would like to visit Airdrie again. The boy was equal to the occasion and promptly answered no. He was the first to be birched; he had four stripes, and all he has to complain of was that the man waited such a long time between the strokes. He was not favorably impressed with the executioner. He was a big man, says he, with a great big red face—and a doctor looked on. He did not smile when he received the first lash; it was very sore (Anglice, painful). It felt like a big bunch of "jaggy" leather. A brother said he would have paid £5 if he could have prevented the lad being lashed. The other boys spoke in the same strain and did not relish the introduction of machinery, though the punishment appears no more degrading than a school birching. That is a form of school discipline unknown in Scotch board schools, where palmies or strokes on the palm of the hand with a cane, is the prevailing method of administering punishment.

Substitutes.

Mrs. Virus—"John, I have long thought you were a coward and now I know it; I have reliable information to the effect that during the war, when your country sadly needed your services, you shrank from your patriotic duty and sent a substitute." Mr. Virus—"Yes, and I wish I'd done the same during my courting days."—Richmond Dispatch.

If afflicted with sore eyes, use Thompson's Eye Water.

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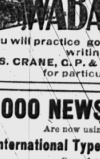

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