



REPAIRING STEAMER ST. LAWRENCE, ON THE RICHELIEU, NEAR SOREL.

Our New York Letter.

This is how Mrs. Langton, whose translation of "Le Mouchard" will shortly be brought out by the Minerva Company, "sizes up" the divine Sara: Last night we went to see Sara Bernhardt as Cleopatra, and think, if we had not been kept waiting for half an hour between each of the six acts, that we might have enjoyed it very much. The extreme weakness of the orchestra was only rivalled by the faintness of the applause which greeted the "divine one" when she made her first appearance on the stage. She was led on, haltingly, giving one the idea (if one did not at once recognize that Sara's match-like proportions had considerably extended since last we saw her) that she was a very infirm, elderly lady; or, possibly, that the tremendous amount of manicuring that must have taken place to reduce her toes to that pink state of perfection might have in some way injured her walking powers. At last, however, she is fairly landed off her sumptuous galley; she seems very weak and faint; possibly, "Ye Ancient Roman History" does not tell us so, she has had a very rough voyage, and has suffered, like the "lowest of her slaves"—upon whom, by the way, she loves to set her dainty foot—from the awful effects of mal-de-mer. One forgives, however, all these little infirmities and eccentricities when, after much arranging of her very lovely Eastern robes by two hideously ugly slaves, Cleopatra, "not Rider Haggard's nor another's," but something quite original and unique, first speaks. Her voice is truly that "most desirable thing in woman," and her accent and gestures "beyond reproach." The entire play seems to be a succession of lovers' quarrels, very fierce and exciting at first; but, after an act or two, such a "dead sure" thing that Cleopatra wins that all betting on the much oiled and becurled Antony's side dies out. As Cleopatra, Sara Bernhardt is exquisitely graceful. If not statuesque, she is distinctly Sara-esque, and manages to throw herself into more positions in a few minutes than any one (short of a Japanese acrobat) could imagine. Her love-making is a thing to dream of. We are not surprised at Antony "going back" on his uninteresting young wife, Octavia, when the imperious Sara gives him another lesson in the art. The death scene is a really wonderful piece of acting. The asp, a little overgrown—the local snake is

too tall and slender in its figure to play the "Worm of Nilus" successfully—is brought in, in a cradle several sizes too large for him. Cleopatra takes him out and pets him (Antony is dead, and she must love something); then, after a magnificent oration, all about death and the meeting of her beloved once more (where, we wonder) she deliberately drops the slimy, wriggling little beast down her neck, and with a piercing shriek falls dead over her lover's body. (Fun for Antony, but death for the snake, as Sara must weigh 160 pounds.) Two minutes afterwards she and her departed lord are up again, bowing to the feeble applause of their weary audience. We were really overcome by Sara's acting in the death scene. I was thinking of wiping my eyes, had not the inevitable American boy just as she dropped the snake down her neck started humming "Down Went McGinty."

The *Herald*, which is a curiously sane paper, says this morning: "Apropos of the proposed naval review in the harbour of New York as an accessory to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, it can be made a very interesting affair, especially if any considerable number of foreign ships take part in it. If, for instance, Great Britain should send a fleet of twenty or twenty-five of her best battle ships and twice that number of cruisers they would present to our people an object lesson of striking value. Not even the most stupid could fail to understand what would be the danger to our sea-ports if such a fleet were here on a war-like instead of a peaceful errand. If an appropriation for such a review will tend toward securing a contrast between our weakness and other nations' strength, it will be money well spent."

Here is another piece of *Herald* common sense: Here is a Canadian marksman who hit the bull's-eye and rang the bell. He says: When any one asks you the meaning of the McKinley act, tell him that it came into being because a great people lost their heads; and it will vanish into oblivion whenever they fully recover their senses. And it has been talking in the most level-headed and withering way of that disgraceful plot of Wiman, Attorney-General Longley and the *Toronto Globe*. The *Herald* "has no use" for such men.

Inspector Byrnes is frightening well to-do New Yorkers. Mr. Bartlett asked him if any of Porter's census enumerators were known to him as untrustworthy persons. He

replied "yes," with an emphasis which ought to make Mr. Porter's hair stand on end. He named two, at least, whose pictures hang in the Rogue's Gallery. One is a professional thief, the other a notorious shoplifter. Perhaps these are the gentlemen who stole from the city of New York the extra two hundred thousand inhabitants she claims, with the accompanying increase of representation in Congress and the Electoral College.

One of the saddest things for a pen to have to record is the death of an only child. Mr. and Mrs. Rider Haggard have lost their only child in the city of Mexico. Details have not arrived yet.

The event of last week was, of course, General Sherman's funeral. There was not a great deal of decoration. Those of the Brunswick Hotel, which draped its balconies in black, and the Fifth Avenue Hotel, which draped its fine porch, being the principal features. The procession was well-managed, and impressive to a degree, with the exception of the disposition of the Grand Army of the Republic. Something ought to be done about this old chestnut of the G. A. R. on procession days. Everybody respects such of these sturdy old veterans as fought for their country. But why ten, or twenty, or thirty thousand of them should intrude themselves into the middle of a procession passes the understanding of man. If they are going to turn out in such numbers their place is at the end. After all the interesting part of a procession is over, enabling spectators to get home—there would be no objection to a million of them taking part, provided that they walked as they usually do—in line—at company or half company distance, so as to allow traffic to cross them. It was getting on for seven o'clock before the last of them passed us on Fifth Avenue at the corner of 32nd street, and the procession was advertised to start from 71st street, only forty blocks up, at two o'clock. Processions ought to be selections of the very best appropriate material. The English Jubilee, with its couple of thousand picked troops and dozen or two of princes, was far more imposing and infinitely more gratifying to a spectator than a New York procession with fifty thousand or more participants, only one-twentieth of whom are really picturesque enough for a procession at all. Processions should be for the benefit of spectators, and not for the benefit of those who wish to advertise themselves by taking part in the march.

DOUGLAS SLADEN,