

effect of *Laertes'* poisoned blade, throws himself on the throne and dies on its steps. Booth seats himself on the throne as if half accidentally and half as claiming it for his rightful place. The rest of the company is good, though the Broadway Theatre is so large that it is difficult to hear. The drop curtain and hangings of this theatre are of asbestos, and so are fireproof. They are all of a very pretty fawn colour, shaded.

I must tell of a most uncomfortable little adventure we had. Mother has the pleasure of knowing Mme. Modjeska personally, and Madame very kindly asked us to come round after the performance. When we came out by the stage door we lost our bearings. We intended taking the elevated railway on Sixth Avenue, and we walked further and further and further, wondering that the distance had grown so strangely long, when all of a sudden we came to an immense gas tank. My dear, my heart jumped into my mouth. I knew we never had passed that. Here was a pretty state of things, *lost in New York at ten o'clock at night*. We dared not turn directly back. The place was fearfully lonely looking, and we had just passed a group of villainous looking men, at least, so they seemed to my excited imagination. However, it was evident we were going in the wrong direction, so crossing the road we turned and went back. After a few blocks we came to a lamp with 9th Avenue painted on it. I shall never, never forget my feeling of relief. I never felt so thankful in my life. We were twelve blocks from the station—ten miles in all from home; but we did not know where we were. The relief was so great I could have jumped for joy. Do you see the little advertisement I have enclosed? I cut it from last Sunday's *World*. Is not that an original idea?

PERSONAL.—A middle-aged gentleman, of unexceptionable character and social standing, will, for a trifling consideration, escort ladies to places of amusement, etc. Address, for one week, I. W. S., 189 World Office.

If I was about as much afraid of this strange man as any other strange man, I *might*, only *might*, be tempted to employ him. What do you think, Katie dear? Perhaps my ideas are slow; but, between ourselves, I would not like it.

On Friday we paid the Historical Society another flying visit. We began at the lowest gallery this time, and, coming up the first flight of stairs, were confronted by a row of the most extraordinary looking paintings—portraits of fourteen Incas of Peru, and they are at least five hundred years old. Each Inca displays an emblem, sometimes a sun, sometimes a star, or a leaf of some sort. The crowns, suns, stars and jewellery are all gilded. Most of the faces are very effeminate, indeed at first I mistook some of them for women. The complexion, so far as I could judge, was very like that of our own Indians. A beautiful painting, "St. Paul," by Domenichino, has for foreground a lovely deep blue sky. St. Paul with outstretched arms is upborne by two youthful angels. St. Paul, a man of about 33 or 34, has a powerful, earnest face. The angel on the right gazes up into his face with a rapt look on his beautiful boyish face. The other angel looks down to earth, seeming fearful lest St. Paul be dashed against something. The face of the first angel resembles a good deal one of Raphael's well-known cherubs. Upstairs is Paul Veronese's "Christ at Emmaus." Our Lord is breaking the bread. One of the disciples has turned to look at Him with startling gaze, while the others look on with amazement and fear. Christ's aspect is most touching. He bears the marks of one who has gone through the "Valley of the Shadow of Death." His whole appearance denotes past suffering,—the fire of agony, though conquered at last, has left its scars. Down in the left hand foreground a little girl plays all unwitting of the strange scene enacted so near her. The child's heedless merriment throws into sharper contrast the deep emotion and awe of the disciples. Opposite this picture another group of Teniers (the younger) paintings of boor life—sometimes it is a fete, sometimes a tavern, but in all there are verve and motion. Whether it be the dance on the village green or the movement in the street, in all the action is equally well depicted. But, my dear, the faces are so ugly. If poor Teniers saw only those ugly people during his lifetime, I wonder the unfortunate man did not go melancholy mad. In all the collection of his pictures I could not find one good-looking face.

In the evening we went to hear the Juch Opera Company at the Harlem Opera House. The opera was "Carmen." Melle. Juch's *Carmen* is entirely different from Minnie Hauck's. Though I admire Melle. Hauck more, I think Melle. Juch's is more true to Bizet's idea. Minnie Hauck's *Carmen* is a heedless, reckless gypsy girl, shallow and fickle-hearted, but not deliberately bad. Melle. Juch's *Carmen* is thoroughly bad. The very moment she comes upon the stage one feels she is unholy, fascinating, bold, beautiful and brilliant, yet a thing of evil. The siren that allures men to dishonour and the grave by unhallowed charms, but one is not surprised that all men yield to her spells. Melle. Juch's voice is fresh and rich, and her rendering of "O this Love" was beautiful, and *Carmen's* veiled hint to each man that he was the favoured one remarkably well suggested. Mr. Stoddart's *Escamillo the Toreador*, was very good. All the company possessed good voices. *Don Jose* is more of a baritone than a tenor. His voice and acting are equally good. Some of the acting was rather mechanical, noticeably *Michela's* and *Escamillo's*. Melle. Juch's costume in the last scene was positively dazzling. A pale mauve underdress, with an overdress of gilt tricotine, and a long white lace veil. The tricotine flashed and glittered with every movement.

The stage of the Opera House is illuminated with incandescent loop lights, and I must say I think the effect very disagreeable and garish. All the paint and "get up" of

the actors is visible from any part of the house. The armour and weapons look "tinny," and perplexing shadows are cast all over the stage, and altogether I think it anything but an improvement.

I am going to tell you about one pretty hat I saw in one of the boxes. It was a small Gainsborough shape, covered with old rose velvet, and a lovely shaded plume laid round the crown, while another drooped over the turned-up side, and near it a bow of pale old rose. The inside was lined with a darker shade of old rose.

On Saturday we went to the Madison Square Theatre to see Walter Eddinger in "Little Lord Fauntleroy." He is a clever little fellow and does his part remarkably well. The company was fair, but the scenery poor. *Beris's* wife (Miss Lytton) was very good, especially in the last scene. In the evening we saw Wilson Barrett and Miss Eastlake at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in their new play "Ben-my-chree," which means girl of my heart. The time is the 18th century, and the scene is laid in the Isle of Man. This island is a strange little place, with a parliament of its own called the House of Keys. The women vote, the cats have no tails, and the coat of arms is three legs bent at the knee, so that in whatever way it is thrown it falls kneeling in acknowledgement of England's supremacy. The motto is: "Quocunque jeceris stabit." The dress and customs are very peculiar. The incidental music is of very ancient origin, and has a weird, wailing sound. The play and its settings are unusual and picturesque. Church and State rule with almost equal authority; but the ecclesiastical sometimes transcends the temporal power. It can temper but not set aside the decrees of the secular court. The three ruling powers there are the Governor, sent from England; the Bishop and the Deemster. The functions of the last I cannot exactly explain. But the Government seems to be divided as follows: The Bishop holds all spiritual sway, the Deemster all temporal, the Governor a sort of figure-head over them all. He and the Deemster sit together in judgment.

In "Ben-my-chree" the Deemster and the Bishop are brothers. The family of *Thorheld My Crea* consists of *Mona* (Miss Eastlake) and *Ewan*, her brother. *Dan* (Wilson Barrett) is the Bishop's son. He is a wild, reckless, hot-tempered fellow, looked upon and avoided as incorrigible by all save *Mona*, his cousin, whom he loves, and by whom he is beloved. The Deemster forbids *Mona* to hold any communication with *Dan*. *Davy* (George Barrett), *Dan's* faithful servant, comes to tell *Mona* that *Dan*, stung by his uncle's taunts, is drinking at the "Three Legs," and begs her to send him a message, asking him to come to her, which she does. The Governor, who loves *Mona* himself, overhears the conversation and sends *Ewan* a mysterious message, hoping that he may interrupt the lovers. *Mona* sees the Deemster returning, and dreading a meeting between her father and her lover, implores him to withdraw into the house, and directs him to go through the upper hall to her room, and when he hears the Deemster enter, to jump from her window. *Dan* jumps from his cousin's window and lands almost in front of *Ewan*, who is horror-stricken. In vain *Dan* attempts explanation. His uncle, hearing loud voices, comes to ask the reason, when the Governor, who was concealed in the garden, steps forward and says he saw a man leap from *Mona's* window. Furious, the Deemster turns to *Mona*, when *Ewan* says: "Father, it was I!" and saves his sister's name. The next scene is the Tynwald or Corn Festival. The *Corn Queen* is dressed in a suit of straw, there is a pretty chorus and dance and the Bishop blesses the harvest. All depart except *Ewan* and *Mona*, who thanks *Ewan* for his service the night before; but *Ewan* thinks evil of her and will not listen. *Mona* leaves and *Ewan* and *Dan* meet. A quarrel begins and *Dan* declares his innocence, and declines *Ewan's* challenge to fight with knives then and there, till his cousin exclaims: "Then, by God, I'll kill you." They close and *Dan* kills *Ewan*. Overcome by remorse and grief he hides the body. When the dead man is found, *Dan*, to save an innocent man accused of the murder, gives himself up and declares his guilt. Sentence of death is passed by the Deemster and the Governor, but the Bishop reminds them that *Dan*, as his spiritual subject, is under his jurisdiction. He ascends the judgment seat, but has power only to commute the sentence and to communicate the prisoner. No one shall give him fire, food, or drink, shall look upon him or communicate with him; and, if he break this decree, the punishment is death. The Governor is rejected by *Mona*, but warns her that if she persists in her refusal, he will declare publicly that he saw *Dan* jump from her window, and that that was the cause of the quarrel between *Dan* and *Ewan*, who also believed her guilty. By an old Manx law a woman, whose fair fame is impugned, can go before the altar with the man and her accuser and take the oath of purgation, declaring her innocence, and, if her slanderer cannot support his charges, he is severely punished. The Bishop begs *Mona* to take this oath. She agrees, but prepares for flight, for *Dan*, according to the decree, has disappeared from all human haunts, and even were he there, if he spoke, the sentence is death. *Davy*, the faithful servant, knowing *Mona* is in trouble, risks all to find *Dan*, who appears on the scene as *Mona* takes the oath, and sacrificing life for her dear sake, reveals himself, and, kneeling beside her, takes the oath too, thus restoring her good name. The world has been too hard for *Mona*, and turning, she dies broken-hearted in *Dan's* arms. The Governor's accusation has proved false and he is led away to prison, and *Dan* must die, for he has broken the decree. *Dan* is a character that in less able hands than Mr. Wilson Barrett's might

easily become repulsive, but Mr. Barrett's powerful acting would redeem almost any character, though it seems to me a mistake to allow *Dan* to come into his sweetheart's presence intoxicated. It made a disagreeable impression upon me. However, this is the author's fault, not the actor. Miss Eastlake is a very sweet and sympathetic actress, with a world of pathos in her gentle voice, though she was very hoarse the night we heard her. George Barrett gives promise of being as fine an actor as his elder brother.

And now I must tell you about the fashions. Carrick capes and Directoire mantlettes are all the rage. The Carrick capes are made of cloth and the edges "pricked." The Directoire mantlette is a very deep cape, reaching to the waist. The yoke is V shaped, and accordion pleating forms the cape. An imported one they showed me at O'Neils' was dark olive green. Both yoke and accordion had a border of gold thread in Greek pattern. Accordion and knife pleating are very much alike; but accordion is not sewn flat, but hangs open. It is done by machine, and the allowance is a yard of plain to a quarter of a yard of accordion. Most of the cloaks have double sleeves. Some very long, like angel sleeves, you know; others shorter, falling only ten or twelve inches below the elbow.

All New York went crazy over the Kendals, and since their engagement everything is Kendal. Mrs. Kendal has invented several very clever little things, which sell under the name of "Ladnek," which is "Kendal" backward. The latest and one of the cleverest is a fan and toilet case combined. It is of black gauze and has silver sticks. The decoration is a black velvet Venetian mask with two eye-holes, through which one can see and not be seen. The outer stick turns back, revealing a tiny mirror. The other outside stick has a place for a few pins, hair pins, little glove-hook and scissors. At the bottom of the fan is a little silver box for a powder puff. Black and scarlet—scarlet, my dear, not red—is a very favourite combination. I see quite a number of theatre bonnets of scarlet crepe de Chine and black velvet, and the inevitable passermerie, generally of black jet. It is effective, but audacious. Some of the large shops here have toilet, reading rooms and restaurants attached. Everything to make shopping easier, and it is so tiring under the best circumstances. I do wish they would adopt this idea in Canada.

And now, dear Kate, I must close for the present, your sincere cousin,
HELEN E. GREGORY.

MUSIC AND THE STAGE.

TORONTO ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—On Saturday last Miss Marie Wainwright brought to a close a most successful engagement. Her production is in every detail thoroughly first-class, and the finest representation of "Twelfth Night" we have ever had in Toronto. Her support was only fairly good, with the exception of *Sir Toby*, which character was played in a most efficient manner and in a way that reminded many of their conceptions of what that part should be. Monday of the present week saw the opening of a most successful engagement of the latest Madison Square Theatre success, "Captain Swift." This play is one of exceptional merit, and is the virgin effort of the author, Mr. H. Chambers. The rôle of *Captain Swift* is played by Mr. Arthur Forrest, and he makes the most of it. For a clever actor the part is a good one, and Mr. Forrest is a most clever and finished one. In the second and last act he is particularly strong, and his effective performance was well received, and special mention should be made of the scene between *Mrs. Scabrook* (played by Miss Rose Eyttinge), his mother, and himself, in which she acknowledges him to be her son (cast off and forgotten in childhood) and pleads forgiveness. Mr. Forrest did some strong acting in this passage, and his quick forgiveness, accorded in such a generous way, was a manly and natural conception of human sympathy and filial love. Miss Eyttinge is a most feeling actress and received great applause. The company is a strong one and evenly balanced, and we do not wonder that crowded houses greet this fine drama on each occasion of its production.

GRAND OPERA HOUSE.—Mlle. Rhea played to good houses in "Josephine" for the first three nights of the present week. This piece is somewhat heavy and sad throughout, but serves to bring out some strong and sympathetic acting on the part of the popular star, Mlle. Rhea. The Bostonians, an opera troupe of high standing, appear in a repertoire of "Pygmalion and Galatea," "Mignon," "The Musketeers" and "Don Quixote," for three nights, commencing Thursday. They come to Toronto well spoken of.

JACOB'S & SPARROW'S OPERA HOUSE.—Shook & Collier's drama hold the boards at this house, and is greeted by crowded houses on each night. The play is a strong one, well put on and well played.
G. E. M.

A CANADIAN SINGER ABROAD.—Mrs. Agnes Thomson's appearance in Boston in a song recital before an audience of critics, professors and students of that centre of culture, has excited great interest. She was pronounced on all sides to be nothing less than a wonderful songstress. The recital was given at the New England Conservatory by special invitation from the faculty, and only Patti, Gerster, Sunbrich, Albani, and such like artists, have been previously thus honoured. Mrs. Thomson's success will be a delight to all Canadians, and especially to her native province, Ontario.