

thing that came into his head in a loud voice, as he started the horses back on their steady plod.

There was a great crowd in front of the theatre when Fritz, having stabled his broncho, took his place along with those who were pushing toward the entrance so as to be ready to burst in and get good places when the doors were opened. For Fritz was one of the gallery crowd; he had never purchased a reserved seat at the play in his life—he would have counted it an extravagance. Helter-skelter up the stairs he ran, and succeeded in getting a good place in the very front of the gallery, which commanded a view not only of the stage, but of most of the auditorium. The theatre rapidly began to fill, the great attraction being Mdle. Solferino, who was to take the principal female part in the opera. Even the gallery prices had been advanced for this performance. The popularity of the great soprano had been very remarkable. New York, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Montreal, Toronto had successively pronounced her the most remarkable operatic artist of recent years. The newspapers had been full of her portraits and her praise.

The musicians came in, took their places and began quietly to tune up. At that moment a theatre party began to enter the lower box on the right hand of the stage. A young lady appeared, attired in an elegant light blue opera cloak