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WASHING BIG BEN.

For the first time in three years Big Ben at Westminster is having his hands and face washed. The process occupies three weeks, for each of the dials has a diameter of 22 feet; the figures are two feet long, and the spaces between each minute are a foot square. The work has necessarily to be thoroughly done for probably three years more will elapse before the soot and grime deposited by London's atmosphere is again removed.

The dial on which the men are working to-day is the dirtiest of the four. It is the one which looks on to Westminster Bridge. The change, that has been wrought almost startles the citizen who takes his time from the great clock and has perhaps forgotten that the face is set in a gilded frame. Two dwarfs—who are in reality burly men—swing in a "cradle" a hundred and eighty feet above the pavement. They are the cleaners.

Actually, Big Ben's hands have not been washed for eighteen years. They have been taken down from the southern dial, and they will be painted before they are put back in their place. From the street people have the impression that they are black; as a matter of fact, however, their color is dark blue. Before this work is completed a good deal of paint will have been used, for each of the minute-hands is 14 feet long, and weighs about 224 pounds.

Rusholme Experts Win. The Rusholme Lawn Tennis Club entertained North Toronto Tennis Club on Labor Day, the game resulting in a victory for Rusholme by the score of 6 to 2. The visitors played a good, steady game, and some very interesting and closely contested games were witnessed.



You take no chances when you pick your Fall Suit from our new materials.

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PATHOS AND HUMOR AT THE CONSERVATOIRE

A Captivating Sidelight Into the Ways of Life in the Gay Capital of France—

When I stopped at the concierge's lodge to get my mail the other morning I saw a beautiful creature of some twenty summers and winters, sitting therein, dressed in white satin, flushed of face and radiant of eye.

It was some moments before I recognized, in this apotheosis, the daughter of the concierge herself. I have been accustomed to see her entering or leaving the house in modest garb, with a music-roll under her arm, which I always thought contained her lund (American inventions catch on so quickly over here).

My evident surprise brought an explanation at once: "So Monsieur does not know that Gabrielle competes for the first prize of opera at the Conservatoire to-day?"

Monsieur had not even known that Mlle. Gabrielle attended the Conservatoire, which, as you know, is the old time-honored school which turns out the musical and dramatic artists of France. It is true I did not often find her at home in the daytime, but then I never looked for her; it appeared also true that this young woman had aspired to musical honors of an official nature for some years past, so many, in fact, that she was now about to enter a competition before the greatest judges of the art in France with a view to a professional engagement.

This was interesting, and I asked if I might ride a few rods down the street with the white satin vision, for there was a carriage at the door to take her to the Opera Comique, where the event was to occur. Before I began to question her she took a ticket from her pocket and offered it to me. "Poor man! at the last minute could not go. The landlord is coming, this day of all days! If you like, Monsieur, this ticket will take you inside, where you may understand all better than I can tell."

In another quarter hour I had, indeed, been admitted to this ceremony, one of the most sought-after experiences of the French yearly program. To see the future Bernhards and Alvaroses, Aktes and Coquelines at the very earliest budding of their genius! Mlle. Gabrielle, humble daughter of a Paris concierge, had been able to do this for me! There should be at least one pair of hands to applaud her when her ordeal should come.

"One says that the jury is severer than ever this year," remarked Gabrielle, as we rolled along. "Perhaps there will be no first prize!" She trembled a little. And here we were at the door.

Building on Success Inside we found groups of well-known men and women chatting together. They were the professional and intellectual aristocracy of Paris; the other aristocracy knows nothing of this grand fête. And they were discussing the chances of the different candidates that were outcompete as if this were the most important thing in the world. The day was given up to piano and soprano voices. Yesterday was flute and double bass, to-morrow tragedy and the French horn, next day comedy and the viola.

The score of rivals were here, too, some evidently nervous, others anxious for the bell to ring up stairs and start things. I noticed half a dozen young women gorgeously dressed who descended from automobiles before entering. I asked Gabrielle who they were.

"Mlle. Monsieur, they are pupils, too, and are to compete. They are in the tragedy and comedy classes. They are not of us—we other musicians!" And I understood, from the tone of her voice, the truth. The newcomers are not officially actress at all yet, but certain of the privileges of a candidate they have taken on already. Certainly nothing else could explain the luxury in which they live and their equipages and automobiles and fine trappings.

"Oh!" exclaimed Gabrielle, divining my thoughts from my expression. "I suppose," they say it must be that way in their profession. And then, in order to go to the Conservatoire at all, that one with the mouseline de soie skirt had to run away from home. Her father is a rich doctor, the one with her who has the red hair, never had any parents. She was raised by the Assistance Publique, and Monsieur knows what that means! Oh, it is not all gay here. But one always has the hope of success."

A Solemn Ceremony. When I reached my place in the first row of lodges upstairs, the first sounds of the piano concerto chosen for the competition of piano students were beginning. It was played, superbly, I thought, by a youth of fifteen who had all the self-confidence of a Paderewski, and certainly more "speaking," as the Germans call it. Then came a girl with a pretty white muslin dress to her ankles, and yellow braids down her back.

"She is thirty if a day!" some one whispered near me (a woman, of course). "She dresses that way to impose on the jury. They are mostly old men." By the time the fifth competitor had played the piece it had become frightfully familiar. After the tenth time it became almost unbearable. You remember Berlioz's story? Thirty-one students played the same concerto over in succession on the same afternoon.

He was one of the judges, so he had to stay; but as he tells it, after the first twenty-five had played, the keys began dancing of themselves, and finally the piano had to be taken out into the courtyard and demolished with an axe. Even that did no good! The fragments continued to bob up and down, until in fright the jurors and pupils alike fled, and the great concert was over for that year.

The prize was finally awarded to a young man of twenty. He will be great some day.



Good Clothes For Men!

A man may wear "good clothes"—ready-to-wear—and have them good to the fullest meaning of the word if he selects the kinds with the "FAIR-WEATHER'S" label in them—And just now when we slipped from summer business and over into autumn is the best of times to see the men's store at its best.

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roles. All those in a given competition would sing the same role, with obliging and already "arrived" singers sustaining the other parts.

I saw little Gabrielle go thru her part admirably. It was a long time before I recognized her, for she had on a yellow wig and something that looked like white bunting in the role of Margaret.

Its modesty, timidity, purity, suited her, and I saw she was making an effect with her clear, high voice, with a note of childlikeness in it which is rare in these competitions.

There was later a superb young Jewess who sang "Carmen," and seemed to menace the audience and the jury, to threaten to storm, and to try to put a metaphorical hand upon the judicial throat. A chorus of "Ah! ah!" and a bit of relief greeted her finish, but I heard afterwards she had something they call an "accessit," or kind of honorable mention that means probable success the next time.

There were some tenors with fine voices who knew nothing about acting, and whose teachers were obviously instructing them up to the last moment in the wings. There were baritone and basses who just laid back their heads, bared their throats and made the welkin ring.

One got uneasy, M. Etouffernes 45 Constant mopped his heated forehead. "This must have been a signal, for in a trice it was all over, and we were again in the foyer below, congratulating the happy winners, and in a confusion made up of mothers crying for joy—or sorrow, and fathers embracing their big brown sons, and professors clapping their pupils on the shoulders with a "Bravo, mon petit," or a "Next time, mon vieux."

As Gabrielle took me there, I called a cab and took her home. She cried softly, for she had a second instead of a first prize, and finally, in all unconsciousness of mere me, put her head on my shoulder and sobbed it out. Then she dried her eyes in a business-like way and set up. "There!" she cried, cheerfully, "it is all over. I cannot try again. We have no more money to support me while I study. Pauvre maman! I must begin to find some pupils to-morrow. But it would have been 20 fine."

Inside, the concierge was scrubbing the tile pavement.

Lenahan Inquest. Coroner Orr opened an enquiry in the police court last night as to the death of James Lenahan, the young man who was killed by a street car on Yonge-street, near Grosvenor, Saturday afternoon.

As more evidence is needed the inquest was adjourned until next Monday.

O'DONOGHUE FOR ST. MARY'S

Toronto Man Nominated for Administration for Commons.

Montreal, Sept. 3.—(Special).—J. G. O'Donoghue, barrister, of Toronto, and general counsel for the Trades and Labor Council, has been approached by certain labor representatives with a view to that gentleman's candidature in St. Mary's.

It has been thought in certain quarters that the different factories might unite on Mr. O'Donoghue, and as he is a Liberal, and would give the Laurier government an independent support he might be accepted by the powers that be.

Some of those who have discussed the matter say, however, that St. Mary's being largely French, that nationality might not enthuse over the Irish-Canadian lawyer from Toronto. Mr. O'Donoghue spoke at several places in Maisonneuve for Mr. Verville, and was highly thought of.

WRITING AND SPELLING.

Winnipeg Telegram: Canadians, especially those of us of Manitoba and Ontario, are prone to speak with pride of the educational systems instituted in the various provinces, and claim that what may practically be called the Canadian educational system surpasses in effectiveness even that of the Scotch system, upon which it was to some extent modeled.

In the face of this conviction the frequent statements of business and professional men come somewhat as a surprise, that great difficulty is found in procuring clerks, assistants and employees generally among the young men and women of Canada who have been trained in the public schools, who are capable of spelling with a fair degree of correctness the ordinary words of their own language.

Business offices show that despite our vaunted educational system, its modern methods and improved facilities, that the product of the Canadian public schools is frequently neither competent to spell efficiently or write readily and legibly.

Business men in general are not correctly and also write legibly is not the question, say the business men. The question is, what a large proportion of the applicants for positions in the public schools are incompetent in the first two qualifications necessary to their clerical usefulness?

The three "R's" were the traditional necessities of any form of school education of our forefathers, and the introduction of a more extended curriculum of study, with music, botany, object lessons, physiology, etc., overshadowing such unattractive branches as spelling and writing, that many of the young people of both sexes attempt short cuts to fortune without being able to spell? It cannot be, as pessimists say, evidence of the indifference and inaccuracy of the age.

The tendency is, however, towards phonetic spelling among advanced educationists. It is embarrassing, however, when the young man in the midst of the land estate is asked to spell? It cannot be, as pessimists say, evidence of the indifference and inaccuracy of the age.

Game Protection in Canada. Prince Edward Island is the latest of the Canadian provinces to adopt modern methods of game protection. Its recent statute, enacted this year, fixes the season, provides for a 15 non-resident license, creates the office of game inspector, incorporates an auxiliary body, the Prince Edward Island Game Protection Association, to cooperate in the enforcement of game laws, and prohibits export, this law and a statute passed by Quebec, which requires that all shipments of game be tagged with game laws, and that have heretofore existed, so that now every state in the Union and practically every province in Canada places more or less restriction on the shipment of game beyond its boundaries.

Quebec has substituted a uniform 150 non-resident license for the graded system. Canada also establishes two new game preserves, one of 16 sections in the Province of Alberta, about 30 miles northeast of Edmonton, the other on the Gaspe Peninsula in Quebec. The latter, to be known as the Gaspesian Preserve, has an area of about 250 square miles, thus taking rank with the Laurentides National Park in Quebec (2400 square miles), the Algonquin Park in Ontario (about 2000 square miles), and the Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming (3348 square miles).

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2000 Lockets to Be Undersold \$2.00 and \$2.50 Lockets With Their 14k Chains, 89c Can you look far enough ahead to see next Christmas? If you can put one or two of these lockets away till then. If four months is too long to wait buy one and wear it yourself right now. The manufacturer says they'll never be made so cheaply again. We had to take two thousand to get the figure down to where it is. 89c! It's unique. 4000 Lockets and Neck Chains, 14k gold-filled fine or heavy rope pattern neck chains, gold-soldered links, 14k gold-filled curb or fancy link chains, 16 inches long; 14k gold-filled round, oval, square and heart shape lockets, room for two pictures, all well finished, regular \$2, \$2.25 and \$2.50 each, Wednesday, each 89c

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Cor. King and Victoria Sts., Toronto. Either Attacked by Porpoise. An extraordinary instance of a bather being attacked by a porpoise is reported from Belfast. A Belfast constable was bathing at the twin islands near the city. When some 150 yards from the shore he was attacked by a large porpoise, which inflicted three wounds about three inches long on the inside of the legs. The constable, who is a powerful man, kicked at his assailant, which, however, continued the attack. It was only beaten off by the repeated kicks of the bather. A large

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