GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

WHO AND WHAT THE MAN IS AND WHY HE IS CALLED "CITIZEN."

A Singular Character Whose Sanity Is Doubted but Who Is Level Headed at Times—A Varied Career.

Megargee, in Philadelphia Times.

The presence of Citizen George Francis Train at the Clover Club table the other night and newspaper notices of some of the few things he said and did there have led to a flood of inquiries as to why he is called Citizen—with a capital C—who he is and what he is, and there are some queries as to whether or not he is sane. This is probably the most difficult problem that the narrator has ever been confronted with. As to who he is and what he is, the answer is easy. To begin with, any one who has met him will admit that he is a most remarkable man. His birth was in Boston sixty-eight years ago. According to his own statement, made at the Clover Club board, he first opened his eyes at 21 High street upon a town and a people whom he now holds in the supremest contempt. He looks like a San Domingan, with the swarthy countenance of a mulatto, and crisp, curly hair of gray, suggesting Dumas. His eyes are restless, his whole manner feverish; his forehead receding, but his tongue glib and his brain ever active.

To study the man, we must study his career. He was engaged in business in Boston for some years, and in 1853, when he was twenty-four years of age, he went to Australia. Well, he founded the famous house of Caldwell, Train & Co. He amassed large wealth; was reputed at one time to be possessed of several millions of dollars. He traveled extensively, and finally made his abode in England, where he made strenuous efforts to introduce street railways—they call them tramways over there—to London and Birkenhead. This was in 1859. He met with violent opposition—the same sort of opposition that greeted the introduction of horse cars to the citizens of this goodly Quaker City of ours—and was unsuccessful. This first failure of his life appears to have soured his naturally kindly nature and thenceforth he became a misanthrope. If he couldn't make the British people see things as he saw them, he could at least scold them, which he proceeded to do in a highly exciting manner, lecturing through England, Scotland and Ireland before large audiences on the weaknesses and defects of British society, lashing the social evils of the country and the times with an unsparing tongue.

Train returned to this country in 1862 and since that time has been noted as a writer, a lecturer and what most people term a crank. Before proceeding further with this cursory narrative of his career, it may be well to enumerate the books he has written, for probably few people of the present generation are aware of the fact that he has been a very industrious author. He has written "An American Merchant in Europe, Asia and Australia" (New York, 1857), "Young America Abroad" (1857), "Young America in Wall Street" (1858), "Spread-Eagleism" (1859), "London" (1860), "Every Man His Own Autocrat," chiefly biographical (1859), "Young America on Slavery" (1860), "Observations on Street Railways" (Liverpool, 1860), "George Francis Train, Unionist, on Thomas Colley Grattan, Secessionist" (London, 1861), "Union Speeches Delivered in England During the Present American War" (Philadelphia and London, four volumes, 1862), "Downfall of England" (1865), "Irish Independency" (1865) and "Championship of Women" (Leavenworth, Kan., 1868.)

AT THE CLOVER CLUB.

Since Train's return to the country of his birth he has spent most of his voice in declaiming against its institutions and the cities of his birth and adoption. Whether he is entirely serious or not it is difficult to tell. At the Clover Club mahogany he said with a smiling visage and with no appearance of ill-feeling that he would have given one thousand dollars if he had been on sufficient terms of acquaintanceship with his mother to have induced her to have his birthplace elsewhere. He said that his first recollection of Boston town was a codfish swinging over a storehouse and that ever since he looked upon that as an emblem of the aristocracy of the Hub. He said many things of an ugly character about the town of his birth and yet did it with no suggestion of malevolence. For instance, "I was taught as an innocent child and led to believe that at the battle of Lexington ten thousand Americans were killed. What are the facts? Six were shot, and one of these in the rear. Then the story that my infant mind was nurtured with about the men of Boston casting the tea overboard! Who ever heard of a Boston merchant throwing away anything? It was a put-up job to fool the public." And then he went off wittily, it must be confessed, into one of the brightest speeches that ever tickled human ear into suggestions that John Hancock—he of the sweeping signature to the Declaration of Independence—and John Adams were smugglers working in the interests of the East of Chatham. Train did not conceal his contempt for the American Athens, but in an earlier speech—he made two—he spoke of the city of his adoption, New York, as "the State prison of the country, the Botany bay of all nations and the penal colony of the world." Yet there he makes his abode, and has for years, in the old Continental Hotel, Twenty-third street and Broadway.

Look upon that picture; a man with such fierce utterances.

Then endeavor to bring this before your mind.

An oasis in the desert life of a busy city; a breathing spot, green and restful, in the heart of the metropolis. Madison-square Garden, surrounded by great hotels, tall buildings, the turmoil and conflict of Broadway. A little space set apart where trees grow green and where nature asserts herself against man. Benches under the verdant branches. Tramps, tattered and torn, seated upon many of them. Birds nipping in the foliage. On one bench sits a man in a white suit, swarthy of hue, with crisp, gray hair; like Dumas. About him chattering, laughing, bubbling, brightening the scene, a horde of children; some poorly clad, some with nurses standing apart, listening over a maid's knee; whispering in his ears; robbing him of the nuts and sweetmeats he had brought for them, and amid them all sparrows chattering amid the very feet of the little ones and picking up the crumbs that the strange dictator in infants' kingdom had thrown to their ready beaks. That is the picture of George Francis Train as it presents itself to the narrator's mind. The other picture is that of a man who, at the Clover Club dinner, delivered one of the cleverest speeches that ever flashed across the board of that organization. They say he is crazy.

Perhaps!

Who can tell? Who can determine his mental equipoise, and who is mad and who is not?

IS HE CRAZY.

There are some people who contend that all great actors are really insane, but, of course, it should be understood that the term insanity means simply a departure from the normal mental condition. And who is to determine what the normal condition is? A bod-carrier would certainly look upon a Shakspeare as a maniac. Train has gone to prison a number of times—he said fifteen at the Clover Club board—for violently declaring his views on various questions. It will be recalled that he came to this city in 1877 at the time of a strike of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers against the Reading Railroad Company and was announced to deliver a lecture on behalf of that organization in Association Hall. The afternoon of the day for his appearance the following remarkable communication was received from his business manager:

My psychology has evolved into demonology. The one is harmless; the other dangerous. The two conditions ebb and flow through my blood like the tides in the Bay of Fundy. Possessing great power for good, I cannot do wrong. Hence must ask you to release me from two promises.

First—To furnish copy for the G. F. T. newspapers.

Second—To deliver a lecture in Philadelphia.

Although the Y. M. C. A. are too polite to refuse the hall, I know they would prefer to be released, and as the papers, with one exception, declined my ad., that expense is saved. The more I see of the people the less I like them. To be conscious of silently floating into the maelstrom of Fate without the power of resistance produces a strong sensation. Some unconquerable destiny influences my action. The changes going on in my nature vary with the elements. I am as inconsistent as the weather and never know my mind two minutes in succession. My next evolution may be in your advantage. The magnetic psychology of the children calls to me through the air, saying: "Give us the papers and lectures and come back to us, for we are as lonely without you as you are unhappy without us. The adult community has failed to comprehend you after almost half a century's experience, while we little people understand you at sight." Once more, then, good-bye to journalism and the public stage forever. G. F. T.

One hour later Train changed his mind and came to this city and delivered the prearranged lecture in Association Hall against what he called the "Stokley-Drexel-Scott-Childs-Cameron-Tweed ring." At the conclusion of his talk a number of men went upon the stage to congratulate him upon his fervent utterances, but he waved them all aside and announced that he had made an agreement with himself never to again shake hands with a human being, as he believed that such contact robbed him of his vital force. He has never broken that agreement from that day to this. At the Clover Club dinner Congressman Grosvenor, of Ohio, a boom friend of President-elect McKinley, came towards him with outstretched hands to congratulate him upon his wonderfully clever speech. Train waved him back. Grosvenor looked abashed; as though he were mortified. He had no reason to be. He did not know that George Francis Train never shakes hands with man. That is one of his peculiarities. He has a right to it. But whether he is sane or not, the fact remains that he is capable of a keenness of wit, a breadth of philosophy, a depth of wisdom and a condition of erraticism that few men possess.

Solve the problem for yourself.

TO TEACH NOVEL WRITING.

Miss Florence Marryat Tired of Giving Instruction for Nothing.

London Letter in New York Press.

Florence Marryat is going to start a school for novelists. "For years past," she says at the rate of 150 words a minute, "I've been bored almost to extinction by about five hundred friends who, believing that they can write, have brought their work to me for examination and correction. They come in shoals with manuscript and say: 'Oh, Miss Marryat, is this right?' 'Does that end properly?' 'Ought I to kill off the villain?' 'Do you think my hero ought to have whiskers?' 'How would you end up the story? I don't see how it's ever to end.' And so on. Mind you, for years I have done this, and for the most part these people have come with a tale of sorrow about the return of the manuscript.

"Now, I am not going to do it any more. In painting, sculpture and music there are schools and academies for students who are fitted for the arts. Why, then, should there be no school for those who, having the essentials—originality and imagination—have no means of learning the technicalities of the profession. For the young painter there are examples of the great masters, for the young literateur I will provide something similar by making the study of great writers part of my scheme. Half the young writers of to-day don't read at all, and to know human nature in all its phases you must read, and read deeply.

"In the first place, I shall test the fitness of applicants by setting them to write short stories on given subjects. If I feel assured of the unfitness of any I shall tell them plainly that it is useless to continue.

"Then I shall run a newspaper, just for circulation among ourselves. The work of the contributors will be continually changed, so that the one who does the political article in one issue will deal with the crops or write a dramatic criticism in the next, and so on. Thereby I hope to cultivate versatility of style and a varied knowledge of subject. Then I shall give weekly lectures on the leading authors and why they became successful. I shall point to Hall Caine as a master of detail, to Hardy for force, and so on. I want my people to think.

"One of the most important branches of literary training is what may be called the carpentering of a story—the construction, the piecing together of incident, the working out of the plot, and the gathering in of the strings at the finish. I shall ask my pupils to regard a great play as something in close sympathy with a great book.

"Art work I have mentioned as a branch of work in which I shall devote special care. Many young writers who sorrow over rejected manuscripts fail because they lack the essential art of condensation. The editor wants a three-volume novel in three thousand words, and special training in that respect will form an important feature of my scheme.

"The other day an editor wrote to tell me that I was embarking upon a hopeless project. 'You'll get no thanks for it,' he said. I replied that I didn't want thanks; I wanted the occupation—and the fees. I don't suppose I could compel successful writers who have been trained by me to add to their names 'Pupils of M. Florence Marryat;' but that won't matter much, will it?"

THE DUCHESS A PEN NAME.

Mrs. Hungerford Got It When Poverty Compelled Her to Write.

New York Press.

Many a feminine heart bled when the Duchess died last week. To thousands of her readers Mrs. Hungerford was known only by her pen name. How she came by it she told nearly four years ago.

"While engaged upon my first novel, 'Phyllis,' " she said, "I happened to attend an 'at home' at the house of one of my intimate friends. As I was about to enter the reception room my host saw me and came forward. He waved the footman back and himself announced me to the guests within as 'her Grace the Duchess.' Very solemnly he said it, and, being all well known to each other, the laugh was universal. Then somebody else took up the plot and said the title well became me. I was a person of such an august presence, being full five feet in height and at that time very young and slight. This further delighted us all and from that hour the sobriquet clung to me. It was all very foolish, very frivolous, very light hearted, but we were all young together, and a laugh seemed to us then the best life could give.

"In England I am not known by this title. My editors here strongly disapprove of my making use of it, but on the first sheets of 'Phyllis' it was inadvertently printed, and these sheets, uncorrected, were sent across the water."

Before Margaret Hamilton became Mrs. Argles at an early age she wrote for pleasure. Soon she was left a widow with three little hungry mouths to fill, and then she wrote for profit. Poverty bore hard upon her, but not for long. Her first story, "Phyllis," published in 1877, was completed before she was twenty and was accepted by James Payn for Smith & Elder. Before her death twenty years later she had the satisfaction of knowing that 250,000 copies of this story had been sold. She became Mrs. Henry Hungerford in 1883 and added three more to her family. Her people were Irish, she married in Ireland and most of her twenty-seven stories are laid in Ireland. Mrs. Hungerford's home was near Bandon, an hour's ride from Cork. She lived in an old-fashioned house remote from the haunts of men. Her hospitality was delightful. Family cares and plots and writing minglednto a degree astonishing to those who have to compose in closets. Her stories were the outcome of notes taken wherever she happened to be and on anything handy. Margins of newspapers, old envelopes, odd scraps of paper contained suggestions and ideas worth thousands of dollars to herself and her family.

Mrs. Hungerford seldom found time to go to London, and so her personality remained largely unknown, so much so that occasionally reports have crept out that she was dead or had sold her right to her pen name. Once in a while she took pains to deny these rumors.

The Managing Editor's Office Boy.

New York Press.

When the late John C. Reid was managing editor of the Times he had an office boy whose nerve and cheek were colossal. Greatness never embarrassed him, for he was no respecter of persons. One day he entertained in the reception room a waiting visitor, whose patronizing way nettled him. All kinds of questions concerning his life and occupation was fired at him, and finally he was asked how much he earned a week. His reply was "Fifty dollars," which caused the interrogator to whistle. At that moment the visitor was summoned by Reid, to whom he related his experience with an office boy who said he made $50 a week.

Reid rang bell; enter boy.

"Did you tell this gentleman you made $50 a week here?"

"I did not tell him any such thing."

"What!" exclaimed the gentleman. "You mean to say you didn't tell me a moment or two ago that you made $50 a week?"

"Never said any such thing."

"Why, you little liar! You——"

"What did you tell the gentleman?" put in Reid.

"I told him I earned $50 a week, but you pay me only $2."

The visitor was so excited that he forgot his business with the managing editor. When he had taken leave of the office Reid raised the boy's salary to $6.

It Was Proper Then.

Washington Post.

The same young girl, an old, old lady when I knew her, used to tell with delight of an occasion on which she went with a kinswoman to dine with Mr. and Mrs. John Quincy Adams. The table was beautifully set in the fashion of the times, and at Mr. Adams's place lay a four-tined silver fork. The other persons at table had merely the two-pronged forks then in use. Mrs. Adams apologized for her husband's little eccentricity, saying that in his long sojourn in France he had acquired the habit of eating with his fork, a habit of which he had been unable to break himself.

"And, my dear," the old lady used to say with a twinkle in her eye, "the elegant Mrs. Adams and the rest of us ate with a knife."

CRANKS PESTER CALVE

DOZENS RING SWEET SINGER'S DOOR BELL DAILY FOR FAVORS.

Melba, Nordica, Sapio and Other Prima Donnas Also Besieged by Curious Visitors.

New York Herald.

The popularity of a prima donna when on the stage warbling operatic airs is nothing when compared with her popularity when off the stage and in the supposed seclusion of her own apartments. The number of callers, freakish and otherwise, to whom an operatic star is expected to give audience when she ought to be resting from the fatigues of a night before the footlights is legion. Nearly all expect the prima donna to grant some favor, and seem to labor under the peculiar delusion that the singer is as much public property as an exhibit in the Central Park menagerie or a picture in the museum. The good natured among the prima donnas take it in good part and endeavor to receive as many of these callers as they can. Others refuse to be annoyed by them and prefer to risk losing their popularity rather than their temper by shutting themselves up in their rooms and denying admittance to all but personal friends.

Mlle. Calve is approachable only to those who can speak French, Spanish or Italian. Her English is not good enough to enable her to converse with callers speaking only that language. Nevertheless, Calve is too good natured to refuse admission to a caller who is especially anxious to shake hands with the prima donna.

A friend of Calve, who recently spent the day with her at her rooms in the Plaza Hotel, gives the following as the manner in which the prima donna "rested." Early in the morning a card was sent up on which appeared the name of Calve's medical attendant. As Calve was not feeling well, she welcomed the doctor's arrival and sent word for him to come up. What was the astonishment of the prima donna and her visitor to see come in, not the doctor, but a queer looking little man, evidently of German nationality, who wore a cloth cap and carried in his hand a bulky looking box.

Putting the box down on the floor in front of him, as though he were about to perform sleight of hand tricks, in which the box was a feature, the caller went down on his knees on the carpet. This attitude of adoration is one to which Calve is not unused, both on the stage and off, but the caller's looks were not reassuring, and the prima donna was about to ring for assistance when the visitor opened the box, disclosing a peddler's outfit, over which he proceeded to lecture in voluble German, declaring that he had come many miles in order to give Calve an opportunity to purchase his unequaled curiosities.

In order to get rid of the apparition Calve asked the price of one article, which the peddler declared he could not afford to sell for less than $3. It was worth about 10 cents, but Calve would have paid the amount had it not been for the intervention of her guest, who sent the peddler to the right about.

CALVE'S QUEER CALLERS.

The next caller was a lady who came to inform Calve, to whom she was a total stranger, that she was about to sail for France, and would be exceedingly obliged if the prima donna would favor her with a few letters of introduction to her friends on the other side. It took a little time to convince this modest lady that the prima donna was not overwhelmed by her condescension. She gave place to a young girl, who called to ask Calve to hear her sing and tell her frankly whether or not she was cut out for the operatic stage.

The singing was atrocious, but Calve listened patiently, and then told the girl frankly that she would never make a hit with people who liked good singing. Then came a lady who had purchased one of Calve's photographs at a Broadway store, and begged the favor of the singer's autograph at the bottom of it, in order to make it a priceless possession. Calve signed the photograph, and another lady was ushered in who desired very much to take a photograph of Calve's vocal cords for a sensational weekly. This caller got no nearer to Calve than the interpreter, who, to the caller's intense disgust, declined to allow her even to see the prima donna. Naming a well-known music-hall star the visitor said, in injured tones:

"She consented, and why sheuldn't Calve?"

Calve's well-known charitable propensities lead many people to waylay her with begging schemes and designs, not only on her bank account, but on her voice. Composers and would-be composers formed a great proportion of the steady procession of callers that kept the bell boys at the Plaza on the run between the hotel desk and Calve's rooms on the fifth floor.

"If I gave admission to all the ambitious women, admirers and advertising agents who call upon me in the course of a day my life would be a burden to me," said Mme. Melba when asked regarding her visitors. "They usually begin coming about 9 o'clock in the morning, although I seldom go before 12 noon, I sing at the opera, in the list are women who have thrown flowers to me on the previous night and who think that that act entitles them to some favor in return from me—my photograph, my autograph or some little acknowledgement of the gift; then come the agents for new summer drinks and patent medicines, who think that the use of my name will start them on the road to fortune, and women in society and out of it who think that I shall be flattered by their acquaintance without introduction. I try as far as possible to answer all requests for my autograph, especially when girls write me from far off cities, but the army of callers must be treated with some sort of coldness or they would prevent me from eating or sleeping."

NORDICA HAS A SUBSTITUTE.

"When I am in town," said Mme. Nordica, "my acquaintance is usually sought by strangers through the agency of my French poodle. I have to watch that dog closely or he would be dosed to death with dainties at the hands of people who wish to scrape up an acquaintance for some personal reason. I am bothered in the same manner as the other prima donnas by applicants who wish me to sing for all sorts of charitable and alleged charitable performances. These people would not ask me for money, but they think that to go to their entertainments and sing for a night is no loss to me and would be of great gain to them, provided they could induce me to do it for nothing.

"Many of my callers are not familiar with my appearance off the stage, and it is possible to let some one else see them and give them the opportunity for which their ambitious souls long—a talk with a real, live prima donna. The are blissfully ignorant of the fact that they have not seen me, and they can go away and boast of having called on Nordica and been graciously received, and the little deception is harmless all around. There seems to be the object of much of the strange women who call on me. To be able to say they were received seems to give them a peculiar gratification, and I suppose among 'cheap' people they are regarded with envy thereafter."

Of all the singers who have visited this country probably none has been more unapproachable than Adelina Patti Rumman. The few who possess her signature value it as they do diamonds.

"I speak only German," said Frau Lehmann when asked regarding the visitors who make life a burden to prima donnas. "If the caller does not speak German I do not receive her. They come to me with the most ridiculous requests. Some even ask if I will give them lessons in German singing. I am glad to help people when I can, but the only way for a prima donna to get the rest she needs when singing in grand opera is to deny herself to callers who come with these foolish requests."

The latest addition to the list of grand opera stars, Mme. Clementine De Vere Sapio, is already beginning to find her apartments at the Savoy besieged with callers who are anxious to help her, and incidentally help themselves, to make the most of her sudden rise in the operatic world.

It's Human Nature.

Detroit Free Press.

"I tell you," declared the reformed gambler, "that there are people in this country who insist upon being swindled. Nine out of ten of the men who are caught know that they are going up against some kind of a bunco game. They have read all about it, but it is the infernal egotism of the average man that leads him into the trap. He knows that others have been caught, but he's too smart for anything of that kind, don't you see.

"I was at a county fair in Iowa exposing the tricks of gamblers. My graft was in selling a little book that I had on the subject. There was a pretty lively gang there from a back township and when I showed them how the shell trick was done, one big fellow insisted that he could locate the elusive pea and was bound to bet on his proposition. I told him that I was out of the business, but that he was mistaken. Then they set up a cry that I was a fraud and afraid of my own game. I went over the whole thing again and showed them how they were fooled, but I must give the fellow a chance or they would wreck my whole outfit.

"At last, just to save myself, I let him put up his money and tendered it back to him after I had won. Then it took three other men to keep him from whipping me because I took him for a squealer. One or two others insisted on having a try at it and never turned a hair because of their losses. When it came to three-card monte, it was the same. Each of half a dozen men was sure that he could pick the card and, despite warning, would have a try at it, and some of them two or three tries. When they were cleaned out there went up a howl that I was the rankest kind of a fraud and they chased me three miles into the country before it was dark enough for me to escape."

PEOPLE OF THE SPREEWALD.

Slavs Who Maintain the Customs of the Fourteenth Century.

Berlin Letter.

The recreation ground of German's capital, both winter and summer, is the River Spree, or, more properly, the Spreewald, the wooded country fringing the two hundred miles of river from its birthplace in the eastern hills of Saxony to Spandau, where it runs into the Havel. In winter it is frozen from source to mouth, and the glistening surface of ice is dotted with skaters and sleighs. In summer it is canopied with foliage, immense elms, willows and oaks rising to a prodigious height on either bank, almost shutting off the view of the surrounding country and forming a verdant screen against the rays of the sun.

But it is not the Berliners who make the Spreewald interesting to the stranger; it is the native folk of the country, the Slavs who have defied the changes of centuries, clinging to the dress, the customs and in part to the language of medieval ancestors. They form a living link connecting the dazzling present with the darkness of the past. These valient people have retained their primitiveness almost at the very doors of Berlin. In the nineteenth century progress has met sturdy resistance. The superstitious traditions of fourteenth-century ancestors are venerated and cherished. In some of the little towns, famous centers in the days of the Slavonic warriors, who dominated all of northern Prussia from Bohemia and Poland on the east to the Elbe on the west and the Baltic sea on the north, are little inns conducted in the same crude ways of the olden times, and in many cases by descendants of the same families. This is notably the case in the towns of Berg and Vetschau. Here superstition is as rife as among the Italians of Sicily or the peasantry of Ireland. Wonderful gods and goddesses and the spirits of departed warriors roam the country in astounding numbers, each and all implicitly believed in by young and old.

Like its people, the Spree is peculiar. Nearly every quarter of a mile of its entire length it shoots off a branch into the surrounding country, and at times it widens into an immense lake. To navigate it from end to end, even for a few miles in some sections, requires the services of a guide, otherwise the tourist will lose himself in the maze of branches or lakes. In the fall of the year the floods cover large tracts of the surrounding country, and, these freezing over, the ice is several miles wide in certain sections. Venturesome skaters who make extended trips find themselves in the eccentricities of the Spree, but the country folk come to the rescue of these wanderers. The produce, which is transported in summer in boats, is moved in winter on rude sleds, the man seated comfortably on top and speeding over the smooth surface by sticking a long, iron-pointed pole into the ice, just as his forefathers did centuries before him.

In all the villages can be heard tales of the last ruler of the Spree woods, the great Wendenkoenig. The native who tells of this monarch uses strange words now and then. They are the last remains of the Polabic-Slav language and are full of melody. Poets have likened them to Vineta, the lost city of the Slavs, and calling them Slav islands slowly sinking into the sea of the German tongue. In the Spree woods were the fortresses of the Wendenkoenig, from which he fought the hosts of invading Teutons. Centuries before the reign of the Wendenkoenig the Teutons had waged war in the woods, always with success. When the Wendenkoenig died without leaving a son to whom he could transmit the crown the Slavs lost their last great ruler and general. The invading host made quick headway, the gallant Count Gero putting the finishing blows to their independence.

But to this day the Spreewald folk are true to their last king. To them he is a kind of Messiah, capable of showering all blessings on the river country; filling the cribs with corn, curing the sick of ills and guarding them from all troubles. Then, too, there is a Psezpolnica, a maiden of gorgeous beauty who has often been seen in the hottest period of the summer moon floating about with a golden scythe and clad in garments of bewildering richness. She guards them from danger, but she also kills those who toil in the fields during the noon hour. There is her sister, the daring Dziewica, who is to be seen hunting in the dark woods, followed by a great train of dogs. A night comes the awful Murawa, who lies down upon the breast of the sleeping one, compelling him to utter the melancholy cry, the Boza, Lose. Who ever hears the dread Boza Lose knows that his death is only a question of a few days or weeks. Then there are innumerable water sprites, men and women who rise and dance with the peasant folk, and then pull them down into the deep.

Much that is ancient clings to the wedding customs, stealing the bride being a part of the ceremony. At the home of the bridegroom his attendants arm themselves with weapons of all kinds, and then in battle array descend upon the home of the bride. The chief attendant calls out the leading bridesmaid and says:

"How much is your bride worth?"

A fabulous sum is named, and then the dickering begins, the bridesmaid finally accepting the price named by the groomsman.

"Bring forth your bride," commands the bridegroom, and a veiled lady is led forth. He tears off the veil and finds some old hag who has been hired to make the deception. Then the attendants threaten to tear down the house unless the genuine bride is brought forth. This is finally done, and the whole party starts for the church in wagons garlanded with flowers. The bride wears a crown of myrtle, a long veil, a white cloth bound over her face like a nun and a black dress. She is somber looking, but the bridesmaids are brilliant in the great white headdress peculiar to the country, gorgeously-hued petticoats, shawls and kerchiefs. The newly-married couple start homeward by a way that is blocked by the village folk, who demand a peace tribute in the way of money. The bridegroom pays the sum and then pursues his way unmolested, while the people drink to the couple's everlasting happiness. Recently the government passed a law forbidding the exaction of the peace tribute, as the custom was sometimes abused. It is still carried on, nevertheless, but in moderation.

No More Professional Beauties.

London Letter.

Professional beauties have gone out of fashion; so says the photographer ruefully, as he packs away reminiscences of a bygone day in the shape of cabinet pictures of Mrs. Langtry in every attitude; view of Lady Warwick's back, her profile, and the top of her head; various-sized colored photographs of the once lovely Mrs. Cornwallis-West; and numberless posings of Georgina, Lady Dudley. There are few fashionable beauties nowadays who allow their portraits to be sold; perhaps one of the reasons being that there are so few beauties on view at present. The really lovely women are mostly of the past. The present generation are decidedly to be found fault with as far as plastic perfection goes. I think this seems to be essentially the period of the reign of the woman who fascinates by her charm rather than by her features. Fashion is responsible for this change of adoration of mere physical loveliness. In past days the woman was seldom aided by the coquetries of dress. She came first, her gowns were simply her covering. Therefore real beauty was necessary. Nowadays clothes means everything. An ugly woman who is clever can by application to the trickeries of the millinerial and modistic artist far outshine in fascination and attraction the dowdy yet exquisite creature who wears her clothes in Alma Tadema folds and dresses her hair after the Greek model. If another Mrs. Langtry were to come among us in London again in this year of grace, 1897, in all the perfect bloom of her young beauty, and wore, as did the original Mrs. Langtry, the now famous black silk gown at every party she went to throughout the season, nobody would look at her a second time. "Pretty" people would say, "but I would rather look at Augusta Retrousse for all her bad features. She knows how to dress." So it is that beauty unaccompanied by the perfection of modishness is at a discount in London to-day. "Give me beauty!" the girl of 1877 used to sigh. "Give me a good dressmaker!" is the prayer of 1897.

Will Not Convince the Laymen.

Washington Post.

Dr. Lyman Abbott is a very good authority on the Bible, but the laymen will continue to swallow the Jonah and the whale story, with the whale, Jonah, the swallow and all.

THE WM. H. BLOCK CO.

Announcement for To-Morrow

MUSLINS GIVEN AWAY FREE!—With every purchase of $3.00 and above in our winter stock of Cloaks, Capes or Suits for Ladies, Misses or Children we will give you the choice of Fruit of the Loom, Lonsdale or Masonville Bleached Muslin in the following quantities:

$3 garments will entitle the purchaser to three yards.
$5 garments will entitle the purchaser to five yards.
$7 garments will entitle the purchaser to seven yards.
Please bear in mind that we give you the pick of our Jackets and Capes for $7. None higher and some as low as $2.
At the rate we have been selling, or, figuratively speaking, giving our garments away of late they will not last but a few days. We would therefore advise prompt attendance.

Separate Skirts Specials

Skirts made of Shepherd Check Suiting, $2 value, for $1.50.
Skirts made of Black Brocaded Mohair, $3 value, for $2.
Skirts made of two-toned Novelty Suiting, $3 value, for $2.
Skirts made of all-Wool Fancy Novelty Checks, very effective, actual $5 value, for $3.98.

Muslin Underwear Bargains

Best materials, artistic designs, perfect fitting, honest made Muslin Underwear—the kind that does not have to be made over, and is just as good as money can get. That sort we are offering at exactly half price. See our window.

Infants' Wear

Every article must find a buyer. We have some swell things to offer for the little babies to wear. At the regular price they did not sell very rapid; at the present half-price sale they will surely move. See our window.

Dress Goods

Spring styles Shepherd Checks in all the leading shades; 50c value for 39c.
Fancy Mixtures, bright spring colorings, at 39c, 49c and 58c. Actual value, 50c, 55c and 80c.

Silks

Black Taffeta Brocades, figures and scroll patterns, 85c value, for 68c.

Linens

Belgian pure Linen Sheeting, 2½ yards wide, $1.50 kind for 98c.
Belgian pure Linen 45-inch pillow casing, 75c kind for 59c.
Belgian pure Linen 54-inch pillow casing, 90c kind for 74c.

Imperial Smyrna Rugs

Third Floor.

At about one-half the manufacturers prices.

Size.	Mnfrs' Price.	Our Price.
18x34 inches	$1.75	$ .98
21x45 inches	2.50	1.40
26x54 inches	3.50	1.95
30x60 inches	4.25	2.38
36x72 inches	6.25	3.48
4x7 feet	10.25	5.74
6x9 feet	23.00	12.95
7½x10½ feet	36.00	20.25
9x12 feet	50.00	27.95

Rockers, Etc.

Third Floor.

One lot of Rockers, solid oak, birch or imitation mahogany, cobbler, leather seat or upholstered in Silk Damask, $5.50 and $6 value, for $4.45.
Jardiniere Stands, oak or imitation mahogany, $1.75 value, for 88c.

Laces

New attractions continually being added to this department. New designs in French and English Valenciennes Laces; new Arabian and Biscuit-colored Laces, etc.
Special for this week:
New Champagne-color Net Top Laces; 6 inches wide, 10 different patterns. Values, up to 18c a yard; special price, 10c a yard.

Embroideries

We want to make this the most popular department in the city, if prices and styles can do it. Monday specials:
Hamburg Edgings, 2 to 3½ inches wide, 8c value, for, a yard 5c
Hamburg Flouncings, 4 to 6 inches wide, 15c value, for, a yard 10c
Hamburg Flouncings, 6 to 8 inches wide, 29c value, for, a yard 19c
Hamburg Flouncings, 8 to 10 inches wide, 39c value, for, a yard 25c

Ribbons

New Plaids, new Dresdens, new Taffetas, new Double-face Satins, etc.
Special for Monday only:
All Silk, Satin and Gros Grain, 2¼ inches wide, regular 15c value; Monday, at 10c a yard.

Basement Bargains

5 O'CLOCK TEA KETTLES:
We will offer the following reduced prices for Monday:
Our $2.50 quality, $1.48; our $5 quality, $2.48.
Our $3.75 quality, $2.48; our $6.75 quality, $4.48.

CHAFFING DISHES:
Monday, $3.47 quality, at $2.50.
Monday, $4.48 quality, at $3.25.

HAVILAND PLAIN WHITE CHINA:
At a discount—25 per cent. off regular price for Monday. Odd pieces, largely used for decorating purposes, consisting of Tureens, Bread Dishes, Tea Plates, Sugars, Creamers, Salads, Cups and Saucers, etc., 25 off regular prices.

SOUP TUREENS:
Odd pieces, handsomely decorated China, ranging in price from $1.25 to $2.50 each. Monday, half price.

BANQUET LAMPS:
About 25 choice Lamps, in Gilt and Onyx; various designs and shapes, ranging in prices from $4.50 to $10. Monday at 33 1-3 off.

THE WM. H. BLOCK CO.

THE CZARINA AT HOME.

Her Influence with the Czar Is All for Good.

St. Petersburg Letter in Washington Post.

A peep into the home life of the Empress of Russia throws a pleasing side light on the somewhat austere young woman whom fate has elevated to a position more powerful than that occupied by any of her sex in the world, not excepting her grandmother, the Queen of England. Victoria is the creature of her ministers. The Czarina dominates her empire and dominates it for good.

The young Czar has been criticised of late for acting independently of his ministers. Some have hinted that he would develop into a second edition of Emperor William of Germany. But it is not egotism that compels Nicholas to throw off the yoke of precedence; it is the wisdom of his wife. She has fixed upon a practical ideal for the government of Russia, and it includes many features offensive to the Czar's advisers. On many questions he has had to choose between the wishes of his wife and his ministers. The latter were based upon the iron-bound system of Russian policy; the former upon the simple rules of kindly Christianity, and these have been followed almost without exception.

To the outside world the Empress is a cold, haughty woman, with a stately repose as calm as a statue. She has made few real friends in the court circle because of the many changes she has enforced in the customs of long standing. But in private life she is another woman; coldness and stateliness vanish, giving way to good humor and genial pleasantries.

The Czarina is a very tall woman, perhaps five feet eight or nine inches in height, and her erect carriage makes her seem even taller. Her husband, is a good two or three inches shorter. Her complexion is of unusual fairness, her features regular, and her large eyes are of a dark grayish blue. She has one tiny imperfection, a small mole at the corner of the mouth. Her voice is low and deep, almost like that of a tragedy queen, but when she laughs it breaks into a musical falsetto.

When she was Princess Alix of Hesse her surroundings were comparatively poor for a personage of her blood, and many economies were necessarily practiced of which the outside world knew next to nothing. She has lived in an English lodging house, and, what is more, she sent the owner of that house a magnificent gift shortly after her marriage. The change from comparative poverty to Empress of the most splendid court in the world was indeed a change. To picture the magnificence of the Russian court would be a work of years. The wealth of centuries of nobles, the treasures of unnumbered rulers of Asiatic kingdoms, the riches torn from hundreds of millions of servile subjects for generation after generation, and all accumulated and accumulating from an aggregation of wealth that is immeasureable.

Much of the Oriental love of splendor formed a dominating trait in all the Czars of Russia up to the present Emperor and his father. The result is a colossal superfluity of magnificence which must have chilled the heart of the young woman who had perhaps felt the pinch of poverty. At any rate, she contrasted the tremendous waste of wealth with the terrible poverty of the moujik, the forlorn creature whose number is legion in the Russian empire; the man who lives in a thatched hut and tills a little scrap of barren land, his wife and children working at his side for the meanest living and for the ever-present tax-gatherer. It is this contrast which drove the Czarina to formulate changes in the internal government of the empire, and while it may be many years before these are realized some good is bound to be accomplished.

The palaces of the Czarina are numbered by the score, each teeming with its burden of glaring wealth. In and around this city the royal couple have a dozen palaces, the most prominent being the famous Winter Palace of St. Petersburg. In this place is the grandest picture gallery the world over, and the finest collection of Greek art and Greek vases in Europe.

The palace swarms with a functionary called the footman usher, a resplendent personage in a dress coat edged with thick, gold braid from tails to collar, knee breeches, fox cloth gaiters and silver-buckled shoes. There must be hundreds of these in the palace; they are to be seen at every turn. It would be idle to attempt to describe the magnificence of the immense state rooms, many of them as large as a great cathedral, and the walls almost covered with shields of gold and silver.

The lofty gilded chapel is of peculiar interest, because of its relics. One is a pictured image of immense age, representing the face of Jesus Christ and attributed to the hands of the painter, St. Luke, the apostle. It is so dark that the face is barely discernible. The gold metal service about the head is inlaid with a necklace of diamonds and a single sapphire of vast size. Beneath the ancient picture, and in the same glass case, are two embalmed, but crumbling human hands. One, in a masive box, set with twelve diamonds, is the hand of St. John the Baptist; the other is the hand of a woman, the slender bones of a finger encircled with an old jeweled ring. This latter is the hand of Mary Magdalene.

Near the center of the apartments of the Empress are a suite of rooms which fill that section of the palace with awe. They are the rooms of the assassinated Alexander II. Here he died on March 1, 1881, an hour after the dynamite bomb had shattered his body. The first room was his library. Passing into the inner room from this library and intimate council chamber, where the old Czar used to talk to his generals in confidence, one enters another bare study, which was also his bedroom.

Here all is left as at the moment of death. There is the shabby old leathern armchair and worn gray dressing gown lying over its back. On each table lies a loosely folded pocket handkerchief—for it was the fancy of the owner to find one ready on every table to which he might turn. On his writing table lay an old brass box of matches, near a half-smoked cigarette, laid down when the Czar went out for his last drive. Two or three little bronze vases and a small marble lion for a paper weight, some broken pens and stained blotting paper still litter the table; in the wash-hand stand the cracked oval piece of soap, half worn, the frayed towels and rough shaving brush