The DRAMA

THE WEEK'S BILLS.

Sutton's New Grand.

Neill stock company, opening Sunday night in "The Lottery of Love;" Monday night, "An Ideal Husband;" Tuesday night, "The District Attorney;" Wednesday night, "A Social Highwayman;" Thursday night, "The Royal Box;" Friday night, "Roseway."

Maguire's Grand.

Manager Maguire is preparing a surprise for the public, full details of which will be announced later.

Sutton's Family Theater.

"A Barrel of Money" will be presented four nights, commencing Sunday, with Sunday and Wednesday matinees.

THE coming week bids fair to be a lively one in theatrical circles. Manager Maguire of the Grand is preparing a surprise for his patrons, the exact nature of which he cannot yet make public. Certain it is, however, that a larger number of noted artists have been secured and that a treat will be given in the near future. With all three theaters of the city in full blast, there will be no lack of places for the amusement-loving public to spend its evenings.

Sutton's theater will open Sunday night with the Neill stock company. The attractions for the week will be as follows: Sunday night, "The Lottery of Love;" Monday night, "An Ideal Husband;" Tuesday, "The District Attorney;" Wednesday, "A Social Highwayman;" Thursday, "The Royal Box;" Friday, "Rosemary."

It is one of the policies of the Neill company management to never exhibit the same scenery or stage effects twice in the same city, and for that reason none of the elaborate stage equipment to be shown during the coming engagement of Mr. James Neill has never been seen here before. Some of the stage settings are said to be among the most elaborate ever shown in modern plays. The authors of Mr. Neill's present repertoire demand very high royalties for the rights to present their plays. Among them are "The Royal Box," "The Case of Rebellious Susan," Rosemary," "The Lottery of Love," "The District Attorney," "An Ideal Husband," a special version of "Under Two Flags," "A Gilded Fool," and others.

The members of the famous troop this season, aside from the distinguished star, Mr. Neill, are Miss Edythe Chapman, Frank MacVicars, Julia Dean, John W. Burton, Louise Brownell, Donald Bowles, Mary Elizabeth Forbes, George Bloomquest, Lillian Andrews, Scott Seaton, Robert Morris, Arthur Croswell, E. Gardner-Jones, W. B. Jarrett and others.

With the demand of the public for sensational scenes mingled with broad comedy there has come a corresponding supply, and "A Barrel of Money," which will be presented at the Family theater four nights, commencing Sunday, October 20, with Sunday and Wednesday matinees, which is one of the first and most successful efforts to mingle melodrama with mirth-provoking farce.

It mixes machinery with the matter of the play, and in one scene the lively young heroine is discovered fastened to a huge belt, with the villain just about ready to start the engine, which would carry her to a dreadful death amid whirling wheels. Of course she is rescued in the nick of time, and thereafter the existence of the villain, who is in wrongful possession of her property, is simply not worth living.

The first act opens with a country dance at Slackville tavern, introducing a number of odd and amusing characters. The principal character, Roxy, is overflowing with fun, and her escapades are productive of almost incessant laughter.

The serious interest never flags, the comedy is bright and lively, and with special scenery, thrilling mechanical effects, including a monster steam engine, sparkling music and specialties, "A Barrel of Money" has proven a popular and potent attraction.

The managers, Holden Brothers, are striving to eclipse the past excellence of their excellent attraction and promise a company of superior merit in their popular play.

Sydney Rosenfeld has put some of his brightest work into the comic romantic play, "A Modern Crusoe," in which Thomas Q. Seabrooke will open at Sutton's New theater Sunday, October 27. The facile flow of wit which scintillates through this author's work in "The Senator" and "At the White Horse Tavern" finds another outlet in this latest of his comic plays. The great charm about this playwright's works is that his characters are all genuine and that their utterings have the stamp of spontaneity. His chief ability as a humorist lies in the fact that he creates situations so ludicrous that the laugh comes long before the spoken line, and the deftness of his funny phrasing supplements the situation so perfectly that the incipient smile develops by a perfect crescendo into a roar of laughter.

Theatrical men of this town read with interest a dispatch from Paris recently saying that the reading committee of the Comedie Francaise, which is composed of actors who consider all plays offered to the theatre, had been ordered abolished. The minister of public instruction and worship signed the decree as the result of a newspaper agitation against actors being allowed to judge plays.

It was charged that dramatic authors suffered much at the hands of ignorant, conceited actor-readers, who often did not understand their native language, and were pitifully unacquainted with history. The French authors admit that the theatrical manager might be no better equipped with intelligence and knowledge, but at least he was not consumed with egotism, and trusted somewhat to the ability of the writer.

"It's about time they stopped this libel on our profession," commented a well known historian of Butte. "There are ignoramuses among actors just as there are a few in the ranks of preachers, lawyers and doctors. Some of us make slips in punctuations and spelling. Few could hope to apply to the chair of history by a large university. But the uneducated actor is in the minority, and at least he knows many more things than books will teach him. There have been geniuses in our trade, as well as others who were indifferently informal in scholastic matters.

"I believe actors are the very best judges in the world as to the merit of plays, and every sensible writer holds that opinion. Who judge a large proportion of the new plays brought out in America every year if not the star actors and actresses who introduce them to the public?

"We have here no state theater like the Comedie Francaise and no official reading committee of actors, but the persons of buskin and wig are the virtual judges of the public's play entertainment.

"Of course the manager often suggests dramas to his star, but it is the latter's clear, self-formed judgment that is final. Who selects plays for Mansfield, Sothern, Drew, Miss Marlowe and Miss Allen? They themselves. And I notice they do not make any more mistakes than other people in the managerial line.

"I suppose the newspapers in Paris didn't have anything else to occupy them, and so they started the foolish agitation which resulted in the abolishment of the reading committee.

"Whom do they expect to read plays for the Comedie Francaise now? A committee of the authors soon would come to blows, duels and mutual annihilation. Perhaps they will engage a committee of omnibus drivers, or even cast lots for the best play."

An author who was interviewed took the opposite stand, declaring that the French minister was right in doing away with the Thespian readers. He said:

"Every actor reads a play with a sole eye to its personal suitability. Unless it has a fine part for the exhibition of his own peculiar style of talent, he is not interested. Besides this, it is very true that the spheres of the actor and dramatist are separate. There should be some impartial person who occupies a position half way between as judge. But I do not know who this person can be nor how to find him."

S. Miller Kent, who will shortly be seen here in the Fitch-Goodwin play, "The Cowboy and the Lady," hails from Indiana. His father, the late P. M. Kent, was a prominent factor in politics and railroad circles, at one time occupying the president's chair of the Chicago & Indianapolis railway. He was also receiver of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois railway. The town of Kentland, Ind., was named after him.

JAMES NEILL, AT THE SUTTON THEATER NEXT WEEK.

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THE TEA TASTER'S WORK.

A Business in Which Women Have No Place.

Woman has stormed and conquered trade after trade, profession after profession, but, wonderful to relate, one of the very best paid lines of industry she has not yet turned her attention to at all, says the Philadelphia Record.

Down on Front street are the tea warehouses, where the brokers convey samples of the leaf, and where its quality is tested and its value appraised before it is passed on to the retailer. Each of these places employ an individual whose business it is to taste the teas and decide on them, and for this work all the capital needed is a trained palate.

It is an occupation fairly within a woman's capacity, yet not one is engaged in it. At least, so says a prominent dealer.

"I don't know why they shouldn't be," he said. "Of course, every tea taster has a standard to go by; otherwise, as every one's taste is different, no classification could be made. But it takes experience—familiarity with these standards. Come over here," leading the way to a corner where tea was scattered on the floor like sea sand. "You see these?" pointing to a row of four-ounce bags; "these are samples sent in by our broker. He collects them and puts a price on them, and his price does not always agree with ours. Here's some he thinks worth 15 cents; I should be surprised if it's worth 12. That is, speaking from examination and smell." Here he paused and inhaled vigorously. "I've not drawn any of it yet, and it may make a good infusion; you can't always tell by looking. That's where the tea taster comes in to determine positively what a tea is worth."

The tea taster's outfit is very simple; a number of porcelain cups, a pair of scales and a half-dime weight. For, whereas the housewife measures tea into her teapot by spoonfuls, or carelessly gauges the quantity with her eye, the professional maker of tea proceeds upon an exact method. He differs from the housewife in other particulars; scorning Schuylkill water and using only distilled or filtered, the purest and softest obtainable at that. Then, having set the kettle on to boil, he does not neglect it until part of the contents have boiled away, but pours the water on the tea leaves the instant it reaches the boiling point.

Water boiled for several minutes becomes insipid and will not make good tea. For this reason also, if there is water left in the kettle, he is careful to rinse it out before refilling. After making the tea he only allows it from three to five minutes to draw, this being just sufficient to develop its fullest flavor. To the correct palate the bitterness consequent on overdrawing tea is very disagreeable.

Given the perfect infusion, the taster notes its color; a rich, clear golden hue almost always denotes good tea. He also inhales its odor, a significant indication of quality, and then his trained palate decides on the whole matter. He does not swallow the tea taken into his mouth because to do so would temporarily destroy the acuteness of taste.

It has been asserted that those who make a business of tea tasting find it injurious to health, but this the dealer denied.

"You can take the oldest in the business," said he, "that were in it years before I began, and I've been in it twenty-five, and you'll find them as tough as ever."

All this is encouraging to the feminine mortal, anxious to distinguish herself on new lines; but there are perplexing technicalities. Who would think of "style" in tea? Joseph M. Walsh, an authority on the subject, gives five practical methods of testing. The first is to note the appearance or "style;" the next, feeling, applies most to the curled and twisted sorts of tea, which, he says, "will be found smooth, crisp, elastic in the hand, capable of resisting firm yet gentle pressure." Smelling comes next, and mastication is also indorsed.

"Teas of all kinds," says Mr. Walsh, "have two values—intrinsic or real, commercial or market value." So that in their selection for commercial purposes four leading features are to be considered, leaf, style, liquor and flavor. Choice of all kinds is handsomely made and stylish; if not artistically curled, twisted or rolled according to its make. Thus green tea, of the imperial gunpowder order, is hand rolled and shotty, regular in make and of a bright natural green. Hyson leaf is well and evenly curled and twisted. Black or Oolong leaf is firmly silky and creepy. Old and inferior teas are large, rough and loosely rolled, and, being partially or entirely devoid of sap or succulence, are correspondingly coarse and flavorless in the infused state.

Then there is a long array of technical phrases to master. The flavor of Amoy is spoken of as "nutty;" that of Foochow as "mellow;" Formosa as "fragrant;" green as "pungent;" Pekoe as "piquent;" Congou as "fruity;" Souchong, "tarry;" Japan "meally;" scented tea, "aromatic;" India, "malty;" Ceylon, "toasty," and Java, "sour."

Caffeine is contained in tea and is responsible for its sedative qualities. It also contains tannin, dextrine, glucose, gum and a volatile. Tannin is present to the degree of 25 per cent, and contributes bitterness to tea which has been allowed to stand for some time.

Some facts in connection with tea ought to be generally known, viz: That cases of arsenical and opium poisoning can be successfully treated by administering a strong infusion of tea. In some cases of heart disease tea is a useful sedative.

At present India furnishes 5 per cent. of the world's supply of tea, and China only the remaining 43 per cent. whereas, in 1864, says the authority, India supplied only 3 per cent., and China 97.

Scene in Second Act of "A Barrel of Money" at Sutton's Family Theater This Week.

TOKIO A CITY OF PLEASURE.

In Some Ways Japan's Capital Is More Fascinating Than Paris.

Of all the lands in the world, none exerts the peuliar fascination of Japan. Others have equal beauty of scenery, greater grandeur, more noble works of art, more interesting problems of society, writes David Starr Jordan in the Humanitarian. But none possesses an equal fascination. No one who has been in the real Japan which lies outside the treaty ports and the foreign hotels and railways, ever could or ever would forget his experience. No one, if he could, would ever fail to return.

The great secret of this charm lies with the people themselves. They have made a fine art of personal relations. Their acts are those of good taste and good humor. Two cities of about the same size and relative importance are Paris and Tokio. No two could show a greater contrast in spirit. Both are in a sense, cities of pleasure. Tokio is a city of continuous joyousness, little pleasures drawn from simple things, which leaves no sting and draws nothing from future happiness. Paris is feverish and feels the "difference in the morning" and the "hard, fierce lust and cruel deed" which go with the search for pleasure that draws on the future for the joys of the present.

No one who catches the spirit of Paris can fail to miss the underlying sadness, the pity of it all. The spirit of Tokio—not of all Tokio, but of its life as a whole—is as fresh as the song of birds, as "sweet as children's prattle is," and it is good to be under its spell.

HOW COAL IS MADE.

Wood Artificially Converted Into Carbon Within Six Months.

An interesting case of rapid transformation of pockwood, or "lignum vitae," into coal has been reported by Mr. G. Arth. The pockwood had been inserted in the bronze footstep of a twelve horse power Jonval tubine, which was making 112 revolutions. The revolving mass weighed about 900 pounds. The pockwood, on which the steel pivot of the shaft rested, was not under water but would always be wet. When the tubbine had been running for six months some repairs became necessary and it was observed that the pockwood had turned black in its upper portion; the wood was brittle, and the fracture strongly resembled that of coal; many fissures were noticed. The lower portion of the wood was not altered. The black wood contained 2.74 per cent of moisture. Dried in vacuo, it yielded on analysis 3.9 per cent of ashes, 4.86 of hydrogen, 69.76 per cent of carbon, and the heating value of the dry material was found to be 7,106 calories. The substance would thus occupy an intermediate position between lignite and coal. This transformation had been affected within the short period of six months, and the temperature could not have risen to any high degree. The change would, therefore, appear to be due essentially to continued friction of the wet wood. The author concludes that we need hardly believe in the long periods which geologists demand for the formation of our coal fields.—Moniteur Industrial.

Economy.

Mrs. Chugwater—What do you buy such cheap shirts for? They are the most expensive in the end. They're all worn out after you have had them washed half a dozen times.

Mr. Chugwater—Then they only cost me 60 cents for washing, and that's a big saving. You go on with fruit canning. You can't teach me anything about buying shirts.

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