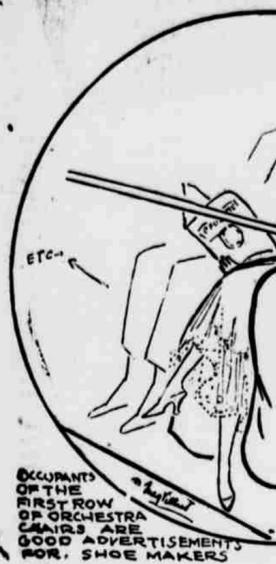


RIGHT HERE IN NEW YORK

THE EVENING WORLD, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1913.

Meg Villars's Impressions of the Smart Set at New York Opera; The Dowagers and Their Jewels as Compared With Those of Paris



Your Dowagers Appear—No Chickens!—But They Cover Up With Jewels—All the Jewellers of Fifth Avenue, of the Rue de la Paix, of Bond Street, Seem to Have Opened Shop Windows on the Grand Tier Boxes—Your "Gallery Gods" Are True Music Lovers—It Is the Same in London, Paris, Brussels and Munich.

By Meg Villars.

I have been to the opera. What gorgeousness I have seen, dear New York! It's certainly hiding your light under a bushel with a vengeance to have such a magnificent interior to such a barn-like exterior! I am sorry I waited so long to visit the Metropolitan Opera House, but you see, having heard so much about it, I was fearfully disappointed when I saw what a puritanical looking building it was as viewed from the sidewalk and it sort of discouraged me to "inquire within." However, having once summoned up courage and passed the severe portals, I was dazzled and enchanted! What taxi-cabs have begun the opera shall finish. I have calculated that I can afford taxis and opera three times a week for a month and then it's a visit to my consul and a passage home in the steamer.

I think it's really rather tricky of you to crowd so much luxury within such ugly walls; was the New York Opera House opened on the first of April as a huge joke? It comes as a real surprise to an unsuspecting stranger, you know. If only you had the outside of the Paris Grand Opera House and its wonderful marble stairs and balconies you would be perfect—just a small "if," isn't it? I'm not greedy, but I want a lot.

It's a real pity to have a nasty brick building for your home of music. Why, half the marble halls down town which turn out to be newspaper offices are grander than the exterior and entrances of the Metropolitan.

I wrinkled up my nose in fine disgust when I first set foot in the rather dingy looking lobby and saw that the boys who were selling the libretto of the opera were wearing ordinary street clothes and hadn't a single uniform between them! It's true that one amongst so many wouldn't have been much good anyway!

Once right inside, however, I settled down in my seat with a sigh of comfort and gazed—with all my eyes, as we say in French.

Don't laugh at me if I tell you that what pleased me most, at first, glances, were the red shaded lamps over the grand tier boxes! I have always loved red lamp shades—there's something so ludicrous and becoming about them!

I am sure they must be greatly appreciated by some of the elderly ladies who sit up there; in that sort of light a dowager looks like her married daughter, the married daughter looks like her debutante sister, and as for the debutants sister, she looks as if she ought to be in the nursery sloshing over her bread and milk before going to bed; as a matter of fact, she might almost be doing so, for your debutantes seem very youthful, some of them, dear New York!

If your debutantes appear young, your dowagers appear—well, no chickens.

But they cover age with jewels—what magnificent jewels! All the jewellers of



Fifth Avenue, of the Rue de la Paix, of Bond Street seem to have opened shop windows on the grand tier boxes, and in the orchestra stalls.

Even Gaby Deslys would have to take a back seat in the jewelry exhibition line, and I'm not sure if you don't knock Paris and London. In Paris ladies don't put on quite so much all at once. (I'm still talking about jewelry, let me remind you.) Here your Dollar Princesses and Queens seem to wear all their jewels together, just as Miss Sadie Poppon of Sixth Avenue wears her different rabbit and cat skins at one outing.

Why not do like the Turkish ladies? When one harem visits another each woman carries all her jewelry with her in a casket and from time to time her attendant changes her rings, bracelets, earrings and necklaces so that all her possessions are shown around and yet she is never overpowered by their splendor. It wouldn't be half a bad idea, only Mr. Gatti-Casazza would have to arrange for more intervals to give the ladies time to change and get their due of admiration.

Yes, you certainly put on all your prettiest frills, grandest diamonds and nicest manners at the opera, dear New York! You don't come bouncing into the place as you do in other theatres. Really, at some of the musical comedy plays you run in as if you were trying to catch the Pennsylvania express (that left the day before yesterday; you bump into your seat as if you had declared war on its springs, and altogether you give a stranger the impression of taking your pleasure very strenuously.

At the opera it's different. The well dressed ladies wrapped up in costly cloaks sweep to their seats in the leisurely manner that they positively owe to their clothes! Beautiful clothes ought to suggest leisure and repose, don't you think so? Perhaps it's rather a pity that you have the English custom of hugging your cloaks all the evening through. Certainly a woman's shoulders look well emerging from the soft furry collar of her coat, but all the French way is prettier. I think in Paris cloaks are left in the cloak room, and a dainty gown gets a better chance to be seen than it does here. Oh, the spick and span air of your white gloves! How virtuous they must feel! I couldn't look at a single one without wondering how many spilt and spotted pairs he had left strewn about the floor of his room before finding the last immaculate fit! I was surprised to see a few men come in with their overcoats and proceed to stow them away under their seats. I think that looks horrid! I suppose they were suburbanites fearful of missing the last train home if they waited to get their things from the cloakroom afterward.

The opera also seems to be the only place in New York where one can get away from the chewing-gum fad! Oh, what an objectionable ruminant he is, especially the one who prefers his



poison peppermint flavored! Wherever you go in this city you come across traces of the animal! I've found lumps of dried gum stuck on the furniture of my room at the hotel, on the under edge of the seats at the theatre—why, I've even seen the nasty stuff sticking to the iron railings that guard the visitors from the sea lions (or are they to guard the sea lions from the visitors?) at Bronx Park!

It was refreshing to find therefore that chewing gum is barred at the opera. Maybe they have it upstairs in the gallery, though I don't think true music lovers would tolerate such a nasty habit. They are true music lovers, those "gods" in the gallery here! I would rather rely on their judgment than on the disconcertingly misplaced applause that comes from the stalls and boxes!

Everywhere in London, Paris, Brussels and Munich, which are the only towns I can talk about, you will find leads off the applause at the wrong moment, dragging part of the audience, silly, sheepwise, after him, while the gallery and a few real critics impatiently murmur "Sh, sh!"

I have never noticed it as strongly as here, though. It seems as if people can only think about the tenor, who is giving return value for the fabulous salary he earns, for as soon as the last yelp leaves his highly insured throat, they burst in tumultuous applause with much to the indignation of the gallery, fine disregard for the wonderfully conducted orchestra that is still playing the beautiful music composed by some man who there is in the whole great body and swollen head of the large creature, male or female, on the stage!

No wonder singers are ready to declare New York the greatest musical centre of the world! When you think of the generous applause and salaries you give them they would be out of their minds to spite their face if they said different! I wonder what the opinion of certain great musicians would be, though, if they were asked: "I'm afraid Mozart must have been taking plenty of exercise in his grave the other evening when the audience, in order to pay tribute to singers, composers and scenery, applauded enthusiastically whenever a singer stepped to take breath!"

Of course I'm not saying that the scenery was not magnificent because it is. I have rarely seen such a care of detail, such luxurious profusion of costumes, such wonderful stage drilling and chorus work, and perhaps when the sense of sight is so pandered to you cannot be surprised that people almost forget to listen!

Would you be very much annoyed with me, dear New York, if I said that my private conviction is that your smart people who occupy stalls and boxes in gala costumes are not very musical, and that one has the impression that operatic productions are pills that have to be carefully girt for them to swallow?

If they were so fond of music would they arrive in the middle of the second act and leave before the end? In Paris the doors are closed when the curtain goes up, and if you are late you can just sit on the steps and wait outside till the next act or go home and think of the money you've wasted. But perhaps you do that here too for the Ring. Then, too, it's really rather vexatious the way women chatter to each other throughout the overture! I really felt like quoting the old joke to the ladies behind me: "I hope the music doesn't disturb you!"

From a spectacular point of view, however, I don't think one could possibly wish to see anything finer than the aspect of the house as I saw it on a Wednesday night. Perfect execution on the stage, a wonderful assembly in the house, New York women at their best and New York men pretending to forget that such things as telephones to stock exchanges exist!

Talking of the men, I was allowed to peep at a whole bunch of them together. It was a truly impressive sight! I was taken up to the club and smuggled into the little corner of the room where a screen is put up to protect an occasional lady visitor from the members (maybe it's to protect the members, too.) You all looked very nice and sprandy, dear New York men, and it seemed hard to believe that a few hours earlier you were no doubt going about in your office with mused up hair in the cool shade of shirt sleeves and the comforting atmosphere of half-chewed, half-burnt cigars!

As you conversed so amiably over your high balls at the club no one imagines that you can be guilty, at heated moments, of conversations over the phone with the Man-Who-Doesn't-Keep-His-Word, that send electric sparks flying and walk the central street if she tries to listen!

Dressed up in your evening clothes on opera nights you certainly look too good to be true and a real illustration of the saying that "music hath charms to soothe the"—er—well, I think I'd better leave it at that.

George Cohan Gives His Regards To Broadway Before Leaving It



people to listen to me, for after all I said and written it's a wonderful street! The Old White Streak is a liberal education in itself if absorbed temperately—or even intemperately if the parent who pursues it knows when to stop. All of us, at least those of us with red blood in our veins, are handed with oats to sow—and the richest soil of this footstool is Broadway. So why not sow 'em where the soil is warrantable to produce a good time, even if it does sprout a headache now and then?

Such a question is, of course, to be debated only on Broadway, where a number of clubs are formed for the particular purpose. My interest led me to ask the versatile oracle what play of his, and what song, he considers most typical of Broadway.

"I've never thought of that," he reflected, "but of my plays I should say 'Little Johnny Jones' expresses Broadway most convincingly because its characters include the toot, the jockey, the grafter, the politician and the sous, all of whom are to be seen on the street as for the song, it strikes me that 'Harnum Had the Bright Idea' hits the mark for the reason that everything along Broadway is a show. But in the popular mind, perhaps, 'Give My Regards' is most identified with Broadway."

In considering the further possibilities of Broadway for those who might follow him, George M. declared:

"It's a cinch for the fellow who knows what to do with his opportunism. He can still wave a flag and make a fortune if he goes at it in the right spirit."

If Your Smart Set Were Fond of Music, Would They Arrive in the Middle of the Second Act and Leave Before the End?

In Paris the Doors Are Closed When the Curtain Goes Up, and if You Are Late You Can Just Sit on the Steps and Wait Outside Till the Next Act or Go Home and Think of the Money You've Wasted.

New York Bows to Billy Nolan. Why?

BILLY NOLAN, manager of Willie Ritchie, the lightweight champion, started down the Subway stairs today carrying a big black lighted cigar.

A big husky son of Ireland in the uniform of the municipal police department hailed him.

"Here, don't ye know it's agin the law to smoke in the Subway?" and with that the copper began fumbling through the pocket in the tail of his coat.

Nolan stood dumfounded. Coming all

"What's yer name?" demanded His Highness the cop.

"Nolan, sir; William Nolan," respectfully answered Ritchie's manager.

The brass buttons dropped the hand holding the summons to his side. He pulled off his hat as if to mop his brow with the other, and he began to splutter apologetically. He looked searchingly into Nolan's blue eyes, and as he jammed the summons back into his coat pocket finally muttered:

"Well, he jabs me, it's a lucky thing for you're name is Nolan, I thought you were van of them freak ginks."

Ritchie stood by noting the discom-



"The Old White Streak" Has Taught Him Not to Waste His Time, as Well as Giving Him \$3,000,000, and He Will Continue to Be Its Advance Agent.

BY CHARLES DARNTON.

The long to Broadway. The street he has celebrated in song and stage-story will see him for the last time as an actor. While it is by no means improbable that the audience which bids him goodbye will, as he might say, make a fuss over him, he evidently has no thought of making a crawl exit. It will be just like him to stroll off twirling a light stick, and perhaps recalling that it's Washington's Birthday.

"To tell the truth in honor of the day," he said, "it's really goodbye to Broadway. There won't be any Pat's farewells unless they see more new theatres on me, and I don't think there's any danger of that, even though theatres are coming so thick and fast that it's hard to dodge 'em. I don't want to play any more—that's the whole story in a nutshell. I've had twenty-three years of it, and I've had enough. I don't care about the managerial end of it, either. I'd get out of it to-morrow if I could. But Sam Harris won't let me. That's the worst of having a good partner. I'll have another year of it on the road, and then plant myself on a farm near Providence. I'm really going through with that agricultural stunt. If you want to borrow any seed catalogues come around and help yourself. The author of a seed catalogue certainly knows how to write a scenario. He makes the whole thing grow right before your eyes."

"Turnips, cabbage, onions and other vegetable dear to the heart of the actor sprang up like magic in the dressing-room under the industrious hands of the rising young agriculturist."

"While I may raise a crop big enough to feed my family and the stock," he continued, as George Parsons bent over and patted on a snail to hide his smile, "the farm will be a retreat where I can

commune-get that—with nature and perhaps raise a crop of new ideas for plays. I want to write a play about people different from those that roam Broadway, but I can't do it while I'm falling over tables and keeping up a running conversation with my feet. Suppose I tackled a play of that kind and after getting it produced heard someone say, 'Oh, yes, I saw the author last night doing a headspin'—wouldn't that dry up my ink?"

Mr. Cohan's lucky father, dreaming of a comedy along different lines than those I've followed, I'll read and write and travel a bit. Now Broadway is the only thing I know, and I want to get away from it, not because I don't like it but because I want to learn something about the rest of the world. It's not that I'm going to forsake Broadway. The old street means too much to me for me to forget it. It has given me, among other things, about three million dollars, together with a foundation for as much more. What's more, Broadway has taught me not to waste my time. That's the great lesson it teaches those who know how to take it. The important thing to learn is when and where to stop. A little of Broadway goes a long way."

At thirty-five gray hairs do not at all ways tell a true story. George M. Cohan has the face of a boyish philosopher. He's really a very odd mixture. It's a waste of time to study him and enough to know that he has learned a great deal since he was Peck's Bad Boy prodigy. This is the only word that describes him. As for the rest of the secret of his extraordinary success it came out as he said:

"I've tried to play fair. I've done my best to repay Broadway for all it has done for me by writing more songs and plays about it than any one in the world, I believe, and I don't intend to stop there. I'm going to Broadway to advance about as long as I can and

it's a pipe! But the song-and-dance thing is a harder game than it was when I played it, because a lot of very clever kids are working it now. It's faster."

"And is Broadway faster?"

"I don't know," he laughed. "I go home nights now."

Good luck to him when he goes home to-night leaving Broadway behind!

Polite New York!

A"RED CAP" in the Pennsylvania station approached a woman with a suitcase in front of her in the waiting room this morning. He doffed his cap, bowed and said:

"Pardon me, Madam, but may I be permitted the honor of escorting you to your train?"

The woman almost collapsed to her surprise. She was a regular commuter, wise in the ways and manners of "red caps." With an effort she controlled herself and allowed the bowing and grinning dorky to take her bag.

"Pray be careful of that step is liable to catch your heel and you would surely have a bad fall," he remarked as they reached the stairway leading to the train level.

In the train he accepted the dime tip she gave him as if it had been a dollar.

"Oh, thank you, madam," he said. "Once on a time, he could have departed without a word at such a gratuity."

"I wish you a pleasant trip," was his parting remark.

But this is only one of the experiences which are enlivening the lives of Pennsylvania commuters these days. The other morning the brakeman on the 1.92 from Rahway held the silk flow while a young woman stonographer, who occupies her time coming into New York embroiling, made it into a proper shawl. And a conductor on a Perth Amboy train yesterday afternoon apologized when he accidentally left a door open.

So, there are not all Lord Chatterboxes, hurdling the tumbler in to obstruct Mayor Graynor lessons in politeness.

A general order has been issued that all Pennsylvania employees must be polite to passengers. Now commuters are wondering if a really polite engineer would hold the 3.17 at Metuchen some morning until a belated Montebello, hurdling the tumbler in to obstruct