POSTAGE STAMP PORTRAITS.

WHERE THE ARTISTS FOUND THEIR DESIGNS.

THE SOUTH AMERICAN STAMPS AND THEIR DECORATIONS—PAINTINGS COPIED IN THE COLUMBIAN SET.

"Although the designing of postage stamps is somewhat different from the designing of banknotes, the fact that the finest engraving process is necessary for the carrying out of both creates a good deal of similarity between them. That was a new departure of the United States Government recently when it intrusted to three American artists the work of designing the latest issue of silver certificates. Edwin H. Blashfield, who drew the design which appears upon the new two-dollar bill, said last week to a Tribune reporter:

"The designing of stamps differs from the work on banknotes chiefly in the size of the object. It must be constantly borne in mind by the artist that his drawing is to be reduced to very small proportions, and that, consequently, he must leave out much detail which could be put into larger work. In this country there has, so far, been almost no actual designing of stamps, in the sense of creating artistic subjects to be represented upon them. Most stamps bear the portraits of Presidents or other famous men, and these heads are, of course, taken from paintings, photographs or busts. In the case of the Columbian issue the different scenes were copies of paintings. Some of the French stamps show excellent artistic work and have been designed by well-known artists of that country. If our Government should decide to pursue the same course with its stamps which it has just begun with the banknotes there would naturally be much greater opportunity for varied and artistic work upon them."

MAKING ITS OWN STAMPS.

It is now about three years since the Government began making its own postage stamps at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing at Washington. Prior to that time they were all made by banknote companies, and the work was open to competition. The Government advertised for proposals for furnishing stamps, and bids were sent in by the several companies, just as for Government work in other Departments. For many years the American Bank Note Company, of this city, did the greater part of the work, and most of its plates are now being used in Washington, there having been no important changes or new issues since the work went into Government hands.

The artist who draws a design for a stamp is obliged to make his sketch much larger than it is to be when finished. It is customary to have the drawing about five times its intended size, and it is then reduced to the proper dimensions by photography. Many designers work entirely in water-colors, while others confine themselves to black and white at first, and arrange for the coloring afterward. With the portrait stamps, of which the United States issues chiefly consist, the artist's work is more of a task of copying than of designing. The beauty of the stamp depends upon his selection of the most artistic portrait for reproduction, and also, of course, upon whatever lettering and conventional scroll-work there may be upon it.

THE BEST-KNOWN PORTRAITS.

The profile bust of Washington upon the carmine two-cent stamp in common use is after the well-known statue by Houdon, a noted French sculptor. He came to this country in 1785 with Franklin for the purpose of modelling a statue of Washington for the State of Virginia. This statue is now in the Richmond Capitol, and is said to be the best likeness ever obtained of Washington. The bust has been used for many years on earlier issues of American stamps. The head of Franklin, on the blue one-cent stamp, is after Rubricht. The profile of Andrew Jackson, on the purple three-cent issue, not so commonly seen as the others, is a copy of the work of Hiram Powers, an American sculptor, who died in Italy several years ago. The brown four-cent stamp used at present bears a portrait of Lincoln. It is after one of his many existing photographs. The portrait of Garfield which, until recently, adorned the brown five-cent issue has now been moved along to the six-cent, and a portrait of General Grant, taken from a photograph, substituted in its stead. An interesting point in regard to the Garfield picture is that the stamp, issued shortly after the President's death, was to be printed in mourning. When the proofs were submitted to Mrs. Garfield she, it is said, chose brown instead of black, and her wishes in the matter were carried out. The six-cent stamp, on which the head now appears, is light maroon in color.

SHIFTING THE DESIGNS.

The changing of the different portraits from a stamp of one denomination to that of another is always done with the purpose of bringing the most prominent heads upon the stamps in commonest use. For instance, when the law, in 1883, reduced the ordinary postage rate from three to two cents, the head of Washington, until then on the three-cent stamp, was immediately transferred to the two-cent. It therefore displaced the portrait of Andrew Jackson, but that, as being less important, was put upon the four-cent issue. It has now, as was mentioned above, got upon the three-cent denomination. There are many portrait stamps of higher values, but they are so seldom seen that it is scarcely worth while to notice them. One of the latest stamps issued is an eight-cent, intended for use in payment of the reduced fee for registered matter. It is of a lilac tint, and bears a head of General Sherman, reproduced from a photograph by the late Napoleon Sarony.

While it is generally known that the Columbian stamps were designed chiefly from paintings, the works from which the several denominations were copied are not familiar to many. The one-cent variety is a reproduction of the painting by William H. Powell, "Columbus in Sight of Land." Vanderlyn's "Landing of Columbus," a picture now hanging in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, furnishes the design for the two-cent stamp. "The Flagship of Columbus," representing the Santa Maria in mid-ocean, and the "Fleet of Columbus," showing all three caravels, are both from old Spanish engravings, and are used upon the three and four cent stamps respectively. The picture on the five-cent stamp is from a painting by Brozik, "Columbus Soliciting Aid of Isabella," which is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in Central Park. "Columbus Welcomed at Barcelona" is the title of the scene which appears on the six-cent stamp. It is after a panel of the bronze doors of the Washington Capitol, by the sculptor, Randolph Rogers. A painting by Luigi Gregori, "Columbus Presenting Natives," supplies the design for the ten-cent denomination. The remaining stamps of the issue are not so familiar, but their denominations and the works from which they were copied are these: Fifteen-cent, "Columbus Announcing His Discovery," after a painting by R. Balcona, in Madrid. Thirty-cent, "Columbus at La Rabida," from a painting by R. Maso. Fifty-cent, "The Recall of Columbus," from a painting now in the Capitol, by A. G. Heaton. One-dollar, "Isabella Pledging Her Jewels," from a painting by Munoz Degrain, in Madrid. Two-dollar, "Columbus in Chains," from a painting by Lentze, in Providence, R. I. Three-dollar, "Columbus Describing His Third Voyage," from a painting by Francisco Jover. The four-dollar stamp has portraits of Isabella and Columbus in medallions, and the five-dollar a portrait of Columbus. The Columbus heads are taken from the well-known Lotto portrait, and that of Isabella from a likeness of her at Madrid.

WORK FOR SOUTH AMERICA.

Despite the fact that the banknote companies have lost the United States work, they still have plenty to do in designing and making stamps for foreign nations. Nearly all of the Central and South American countries have their postal printing done in this city. They usually send on a very rough sketch of the proposed design, which serves as a guide to the companies' artists. Sometimes even this suggestion is lacking, and the American makers do everything, from supplying the idea to finishing the minutest details. The most common decoration for the South American stamps consists of the arms of the nation, often accompanied with some motto expressive of liberty. On one of the Guatemalan issues appears the green quetzal, the characteristic bird of the country, perched upon a parchment roll which is inscribed with the date on which freedom was achieved. The condor is the symbol of Peru, and is prominent on the stamps of that country. Although some of these Spanish-American designs are slightly barbaric there are many among the newer issues which exhibit really artistic work, and reflect credit upon the New-York designers. The Hawaiian postal work is also done here, chiefly after suggestions from those in authority there.

It has become more and more customary all over the world for nations to celebrate great events in their current history by sending forth new issues of stamps bearing upon them. The frequent changes in the South American Governments afford admirable opportunities for this, and the many new issues, following fast upon one another, are so many sources of revenue for the banknote companies here.

Canadian stamps were formerly made in this country, but the British North American Bank Note Company, of Montreal, now does all the Dominion's work. The head of Victoria which appears upon the common denominations of Canadian stamps is one of the most beautiful specimens of that kind of work now extant. It has occupied its place for many years, having been copied from a famous bust of the Queen, made in the early years of her reign.

THE HUMMING BIRD'S UMBRELLA.

From The American Sportsman.

In front of a window where I worked last summer was a butternut tree. A humming bird built her nest on a limb that grew near the window, and we had an opportunity to watch her closely. In fact, we could look right into the nest. One day when there was a heavy shower coming up, we thought we would see if she covered her young during the rain. Well, when the first drops fell she came and took in her bill one of two or three large leaves growing close by, and laid this leaf over the nest so as completely to cover it; then she flew away. On examining the leaf, we found a hole in it, and in the side of the nest was a small stick that the leaf was fastened to or hooked upon. After the storm was over the old bird came back and unhooked the leaf and the nest was perfectly dry.

WOMEN AS PLAYWRIGHTS.

MISS MARTHA MORTON SPEAKS OF HER OWN AND OTHERS' EXPERIENCES.

DIFFICULTIES OF DETAIL WHICH DASH THE AMBITION OF MANY—SOME OF HER METHODS.

Miss Martha Morton, whose new play, "A Fool of Fortune," has just met with such flattering success at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, told a Tribune reporter many interesting things the other day about her work as a dramatist.

"The way in which I came to write 'A Fool of Fortune' was rather odd," she said in reply to a question regarding her idea in creating its chief character. "Mr. Crane, you know, had been the star in two previous plays of mine, 'Brother John' and 'His Wife's Father.' They were successful—yes, but I came to the conclusion that perhaps it would be better for both Mr. Crane and myself to have at least a temporary change. So I went to see him about it, and told him to get his next play from some other author. After the public had had one season of Mr. Crane in something not by Martha Morton I would write for him again if he wished it. He agreed to this idea of varying matters, and said he would look around for a new play at once. Some months passed—you know plays are not selected in a hurry—and then one day Mr. Crane came to see me.

"'Martha,' he said, 'there's no use talking. You've got to write me a play. I've read dozens and dozens of them in the last few weeks, and I'm so sick of the work that I won't read another one. I haven't found anything to suit me. Every one seems to think that the only thing necessary to please me is to copy the ideas and treatment of some previous success of mine. Too many imitation 'Henriettas,' 'Senators,' 'Brother Johns' and that sort of thing, you know. Now, don't you see, you'll have to write me one?'

"So I saw that my proposed change for the benefit of the public, Mr. Crane and myself was not likely to take place. In a few days I gave Mr. Crane an idea of the story I intended to treat in the new play. He had already suggested to me that he thought people would welcome a good 'Wall-st.' theme. He liked the points I was to emphasize, and told me to go ahead. That was the last conversation we had regarding the play for over a year. I told him at the time that I was going to give him a part entirely different from anything he had done before.

"When the manuscript was substantially finished—not, however, just as it is at present, for I have revised and quite torn it to pieces since then—I read it to Mr. Crane. When we came to the death scene, he exclaimed in a startled way: 'Why, Martha! I can't die. Dear me, no! You'll have to fix it some other way.' But I persuaded him that that was the only logical and legitimate ending which the story could have; that without it the play would be absolutely unconvincing. He finally yielded, but it took a good deal of urging on my part, for you know it is not easy for an actor of long experience in certain lines to take up something which has always lain quite outside them.

"I have worked harder on 'A Fool of Fortune' than I ever did before on any other play, I think," continued Miss Morton. "For that very reason, although of course I am greatly pleased with the way in which it has been received, I can't look upon it quite so cheerfully as I can some of my other plays. It represents to me such a vast and wearisome amount of labor. As in all plays dealing with American life, where audiences are quite able to draw exacting comparisons between the stage figures and those in real life which they are meant to portray, this one demanded the most faithful adherence to nature. That meant a minute and painstaking study of all the business details of the play, the Wall-st. scenes, etc. The character of Elisha Cunningham, which Mr. Crane takes, was really the work of two or three years with me. I had conceived the possibilities of such a central figure even before I thought of the present play. I wish people would understand and believe that every character in 'A Fool of Fortune' was drawn from life and is just the bare truth itself. I invented nothing. But the constant observation and subsequent fitting together of my separate impressions make the play to me a kind of mosaic.

"People have said," remarked Miss Morton, reflectively, "that I must be particularly fond of business, because I have introduced that element to a greater or less degree in all my plays. But it is not true; I am not a business woman. The reason for my bringing business upon the stage is that I have found it entirely inseparable from American life, and consequently from the American play. Dramatists must take conditions as they find them. If money and business occupy a conspicuous share of the American mind in real life, then they must do the same in the drama, if that is to be the desired mirror of nature.

"Why is it, do you think, Miss Morton, that we have not more successful women dramatists?" asked the reporter.

"Probably because most of them who attempt the work are appalled, when they have proceeded a little way, by the difficulties which it presents. I don't blame them, indeed. If I had even a faint idea, when I chose my profession, of the amount and variety of labor which it would entail, I hardly think I should have had courage enough to go on. It was my ignorance that helped me along in that respect. You understand, merely writing the manuscript of a play is not sufficient. No dramatist can succeed who does not understand all the technical points of stage setting, costuming, the most effective entrances and exits, and a thousand and one details which seem trifling, but which are vitally important in the mass. It is not so easy for a woman to acquire this practical knowledge as it is for a man, and I suppose many women have become discouraged at their failure to get hold of what is technically known as 'theatrical business.' Nevertheless, it is entirely possible for them to do so, if they will go about it patiently, persistently and with the right sort of spirit. As for their actual ability to write and create, I have no doubt of their success in that line. They are more emotional and more instinctive than men, and can better catch the force of many strong situations. In my opinion, their power in dramatic writing will make itself felt before many years go by, and I think the progress they have already made is remarkably rapid, considering the comparatively few years of literary education which they have behind them."

It may be interesting to those who do not know how such things are arranged to learn that Miss Morton finds the use of a chessboard and set of chessmen as great assistance in planning her stage scenes. She has before her a ground plan of the stage on which the play is to be produced, with the furniture, or other articles, set in the order in which they are to appear. The chessboard corresponds to this ground plan, and as Miss Morton decides upon a certain entrance for a character, she puts a piece upon the square which approximates the position of the door through which he comes. As he moves to the centre or front of the stage, as it may be, the chess piece is also moved in like manner. This method is especially useful when there is a large group on the stage, and great care has to be taken that the movements of the different actors do not conflict with each other. To the uninitiated play-goer, such a minute prearrangement as this seems almost incredible.

Miss Morton is an inveterate "first-nighter" at her own plays, but she hides herself away in an obscure corner of a stage box. From this retreat she watches, not the play, but the audience, through the opening in a curtain. She can tell very quickly, she says, whether the play is making a favorable impression. "Not by the applause," she says, "but by the faces of the people. In fact, the quieter they are the better I like it. If a situation from which I had expected a good deal does not produce sufficient effect, I know there is something wrong with it. The only way, after all, is to learn from one's own mistakes. There is no other training school for dramatists except that. It is a long and often a trying one, but the lessons are worth mastering in the end."

HIS SPECIALTY.

From The Kansas City Times.

The favorite game played on strangers is the "mock fight." Two of the local stockyard boys pretend to start a quarrel before a farmer. One word leads to another, and in the heat of the excitement both the contestants draw revolvers. This is about all the average man who is not "on" cares to see of the fracas, for by this time he is about four blocks away. Yesterday afternoon the chief clerk in one of the freight offices was down in the yards, when two fellows started a sham fight. This gentleman had heard of this joke before, but the fight was so sudden and so realistic that he lost no time in leaving the scene of action. He even took pains to get over the fence and crawl on his hands and knees behind a manger. When the guns were shown to him and found to have been corncobs wrapped with tinfoil for cylinders, he said he was ready to buy out a barroom. But like many others this game was worked once too often. Two fellows, both well known around the yards, started a sham fight before a stranger who happened to be from Texas. Of course, they didn't know this. When the part came where they drew guns the Texan pulled an enormous 45 that looked like a Gatling gun on the would-be jokers and said calmly:

"If thar is any shootin' going on I want a hand in it myself, and if either of youse turns yer weepin this way I'll let mine loose. I'm from Terantula Creek myself, and I don't get away from no place where there's shootin'."

It is needless to say it was the jokers who did the "hot foot" this time, and this joke hasn't been played since.

SIGNS HIS NAME WITH HIS TEETH.

From The Chicago Tribune.

Bernard J. Murphy, an armless man, made application yesterday to License Clerk Salmonson of the County Clerk's office for permission to wed Emma Ameling. When requested to sign his name he asked that a pen be put between his teeth. This done, he wrote in a perfectly legible script: "Bernard J. Murphy." To be sworn, the clerk had to ask some one to remove his hat for him. He is thirty years of age, and Miss Ameling is twenty years.

THE ACTOR-ORATOR.

SPEAKING BEFORE THE CURTAIN MADE EASY.

MODEL SPEECHES WHICH WILL BE OF VALUE TO THE ACTOR, THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC.

Among the audiences of New-York theatres the custom has been growing of late years of encouraging actors to make speeches. Sometimes the actor does not wait for much encouragement, being already bold of heart and dreading that he will not get it, and sometimes, when he feels that he can depend on the audience, he resists their entreaties till they amount to positive insistence. The sad thing about it is that a good many actors really cannot make speeches, and almost all of them think they can, while the audience thinks they ought to. There is really no more reason why an actor should be able to make a speech than why a plumber should be able to steer a ship.

On the other hand, some actors really can make very good speeches, just as some shoemakers can write books. Henry Irving is quite capable of making apposite remarks before the curtain, and Richard Mansfield has been known to charm his audience and to place the apathy of the remaining fraction of the population in staying away from the theatre in a very ridiculous light. Once, on the closing night of the season at the Metropolitan Opera House, the audience got to calling for speeches from the singers. If there is anybody who is less likely to be a good speechmaker than an actor it is a singer, and that audience found it out before it got through. Some of them made speeches in French and some of them tried it in English. Some utterly refused to try. After several specimens of numerous degrees of breakdown it came the turn of Lillian Nordica. She swept a glance over the house so comprehensive that in a second every man in it thought that she was looking right at him, and began "My countrymen"—in the purest accent that ever came from Bath, State of Maine. Nobody remembers, probably, what she said after that, but that was the one speech of the evening that nobody who heard it will ever forget. It was a stroke of genius.

An unfortunate thing about these speeches is that so few persons hear them. Often they would be of much greater value to those who are not in the theatre than to those who are, being, indeed, sometimes directed specially at them, and for this reason the newspaper reports of them are important. There is an actor who always makes a speech after a certain act of a certain play of his large repertory. The first time that he did it in New-York the papers reported the speech, which was really a good one, and made the hearers feel guilty at the thought of how seldom they came to see this actor and how often they went to see others.

The next time that this play was done, the manager told the newspaper men that the actor was going to make a new speech, and they all came to hear it, expecting something that would induce the night editor to leave out some of the editorials to get it in, if necessary; but to their dismay he made exactly the same speech that he had made before. After that, whenever that play was done, the manager used to reserve a box and then stand in front of the door and watch for newspaper men going past and try to surround them and drive them into the box to hear that speech. After a while, when he said to a newspaper man: "Mr. — is going to make a new speech to-night," the newspaper man would repeat the whole speech to him, then dodge under his arm and escape.

"THE ACTOR'S COMPLTE ORATOR."

This incident suggests a plan which would be for the benefit of all concerned. The theory is that, since the audience changes from night to night, one speech is enough for any number of audiences, till the progress of the stage and of the world makes a new one necessary. If, then, one speech is enough for any number of audiences, why should not one speech be enough for any number of actors, provided the occasion is the same. There used to be books—perhaps there are still—called "Complete Letter-Writers," which were intended to aid persons whose unaccustomed pens refused to express the eloquence of their thoughts, with models of pure English on the subjects of love, money-lending, applications for places as servants, etc. The proposition is, then, for an "Actor's Complete Orator." A few speeches are here given as samples of what such a book might contain. They are designated by letters, the full use of which will be explained a little later. When an actor is called before the curtain, at the end of his greatest scene or at the end of the play, and the audience will have a speech and will take no refusal, this is one of the best that can be made:

Speech A.—Ladies and gentlemen: I am not good at making speeches, but I am glad of this opportunity to say that I thank you, for myself and for my company, for your kindness to us to-night. All that I can say is—from my heart, I thank you.

In the course of the last few years this speech has been delivered a good many times, yet for the most part an actor cannot be induced to make his remarks so short. For those who will not listen to reason and who will talk longer, here is a form that is recommended. It will do for almost any occasion:

Speech B.—Ladies and Gentlemen: It is not well, as a rule, for an actor to say much that is not written in the play. In the words of the greatest poet of our language, one who did more to elevate the stage than all the modern writers of so-called "earnest drama" (great applause)—in the words of Shakespeare, "Let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them." (Laughter.) Yet I cannot refrain from taking this opportunity, on behalf of my company and of myself, of telling you how much I thank you for your kindness and your applause. I cannot find words to express to you my gratitude for your appreciation of our efforts. Believe me, I am never so happy as when I can come back and play in (name of city), which I always count as my home. (Applause.) Oh, yes, ladies and gentlemen, we have travelled a good deal and we have seen a good deal of life since we played in (name of city) last. We have stayed at the St. George Hotel, in Evansville, Ind. (Laughter.) Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to be in (name of city) again, and once again I thank you.

HELPS FOR THE FOREIGN ACTOR.

Some actors, in giving this speech, spin it out to a much greater length, and say that they thank you a great many times more, but when this point is reached there is nothing to be gained by going on. The quotation, "Let those that play your clowns," etc., is quite new. It has never been used in any speech of this sort. It is strange, too, considering how familiar it is and how appropriate. The actor who adopts it first will have an absolute novelty. It may seem unnecessary to the reader to go into such an elaborate explanation that it is from Shakespeare, but an actor would be sure to do that. He regards himself and his fellows as the custodians of Shakespeare, and rather resents the audience's knowing anything about him, except what he tells it. Nobody not connected with the stage has ever found out what it is that is supposed to be funny about the St. George Hotel, in Evansville, Ind., but the mention of it always causes a laugh and it should not be neglected. Here are a few words which are recommended for the use of an English actor on his first appearance in America:

Speech C.—Ladies and Gentlemen: I am an actor and not a speechmaker, but I cannot refrain from taking the present opportunity of saying to you how much I thank you, on behalf of myself and of my company, for your cordial—your enthusiastic greeting. It was with no small misgivings that I came before you to-night. I had been told by my countrymen who had played in America that the American audiences were critical in the highest degree, and that the highest artistic success in London was by no means a guarantee of a favorable reception in America. I need not tell you that I have no longer any apprehension on that point. The warmth of your greeting has overwhelmed me. It has shown me that you are ready to welcome everything good that we can bring to you. It has shown me that you are my friends, and, believe me, I shall count you as my friends from this hour. (Applause.) Such a welcome as you have given to me to-night brings our two countries nearer together and makes them more one people. Believe me, my friends, I intend, to please you will ever be my earnest effort, and your applause will ever be my dearest reward. Once again, from my heart I thank you, and good night!

This speech is recommended without hesitation. It is seldom indeed that an English actor, on his first night in America, makes one so good. The remark about the inability to refrain from taking the present opportunity, etc., should never be and never is omitted from any such speech. This speech and the next one are almost always made in New-York, which, through being the largest city and the principal seaport, usually sees the first and the last of foreign artists. The next effort is for the use of an English actor on the last night of his tour in America:

Speech D.—Ladies and Gentlemen: I am not good at making speeches, as some persons have told me who have heard me try. (Laughter.) But I cannot refrain from taking the present opportunity to thank you, and, through you, the whole American public, for your constant kindness to me since I first came to your hospitable shores. I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing to every one with whom I have come in contact in your great country my earnest and heartfelt thanks for the uniform courtesy, consideration and generosity with which I have been received. I wish especially to thank my friend, Mr. (name of manager of tour) for his constant, able and intelligent care in my behalf, and also Mr. (name of manager of theatre) for his courtesy and co-operation. Ladies and gentlemen, my task in saying farewell to you to-night would be a much harder and a much sadder one than it is, were it not that I am just now able to tell you that an arrangement has been made by which I shall return to you next season, to renew those friendships which will ever be so dear to me. I shall then have the pleasure of presenting to you some new plays. I am happy to say, also, that my next tour in the United States will be under the same able management as my present one. Once again, ladies and gentlemen, I give to you and to the whole American public my heartfelt thanks, and so I wish you good night and goodby.

THE MOST TOUCHING SPEECH OF ALL.

The last of the few specimen speeches here given is for the closing night of the American tour of an actor and his wife, who appear together as stars of approximately equal magnitude. The invitation to address the audience having been resisted as long as is thought to be judicious, the curtain should rise and disclose the stars standing in the middle of the stage, hand in hand. At this the audience should, and doubtless will, renew its applause. This attitude is significant and touching, because it gives the lie to the vulgar supposition that the life of the stage is inconsistent with domestic felicity. The husband, still holding his wife's hand, speaks as follows:

Speech E.—Ladies and Gentlemen: It was not my purpose to make a speech to you to-night, and I have none prepared, but I cannot refrain from taking this opportunity to thank you, on behalf of my wife, our company and myself, for your cordial greeting. Believe me, our thanks come from our hearts. It is with very different feelings that we stand here to-night from those with which we came before you on this same stage five months ago. We felt then that we were strangers among you, and we were doubtful of our ability to please you. It was with the deepest joy and gratitude that we found all our fears were groundless. You took us to your hearts and your homes, and made us feel that you were our friends. We could not have believed then with what sorrow we should take leave of you to-night. But in leaving you now we are saying farewell to many friends who have come to be no less dear to us than those whom we shall greet on our return to our own home. The reason for the kindliness of your greeting is, we believe, that we have done our best to present to you only what is most lofty and most pure in our beloved art. (Finish this speech with the closing part of Speech D, beginning with the words, "My task in saying farewell," and changing all pronouns in the first person singular to plural.)

Now these speeches should recommend themselves to actors for several reasons. First, they are considerably better than the average speech that an actor makes for himself. Secondly, they are not excessively long. Speech A, indeed, being a model of brevity and true feeling. Thirdly, they are easy to disseminate. Every actor and every manager appreciates the value to him of the right sort of newspaper notice. If they do not, why do they employ press agents? But it is often extremely hard to get an actor's speech into a morning paper. Even if a verbatim report of it can be had at all, it is sure to come late at night, when the whole force of the composing-room is busy with telegraphic matter, meetings, politics and the late news of the evening generally. Moreover, the night editor does not always have the same realization of the importance of the actor's speech that the actor has. Now, the plan is that all the papers of the country shall print these speeches several times, and that all the readers shall cut them out and keep them. Then all the actors shall learn and deliver such of them as they require. Then, on a busy night in the newspaper office, when the night editor does not feel like leaving out any part of the President's Message to put in the actor's speech, he may still be willing to put in three lines to say that Mr. —, being called before the curtain, responded to the demands of the audience by delivering Speech D. Then every reader will look in his scrapbook and read Speech D. It is believed that the plan has much to commend it, and will be found valuable if it is once tried.

"YOU TOOK US TO YOUR HEARTS."

"I CANNOT REFRAIN FROM TAKING THIS OPPORTUNITY."

CREMATION GETS MORE POPULAR.

THE PREJUDICE AGAINST INCINERATION DISAPPEARING—COST OF THIS METHOD.

Cremation, as a means of disposing of the bodies of the dead, when first tried in New-York State, on December 4, 1885, attracted a great deal of attention, and there was also considerable discussion as to the relative merits of the new method as compared to the usual custom of underground burial. Many people were superstitious regarding incineration. People were at first loath to give consent to this disposition of the bodies of their friends and relatives. Those who favored the new method urged its adoption, giving as their reason for the change that it was cleaner, cheaper, and did away with the necessity for elaborate funerals. It was also urged that the incineration of bodies of persons who had died from contagious diseases would lessen the dangers of contagion and would be the safest way in which to dispose of such bodies. On the other hand, the fear of burial alive caused some strongly to advocate incineration.

As an aid to the adoption of the new method, indorsements were secured from ministers and from others, in which they said there was nothing unscriptural in disposing of the dead by means of fire, and advocating the method as more cleanly than burial.

The first incineration in this State was at the New-York Fresh Pond Crematory, on Long Island, facing the Lutheran Cemetery, just north of Fresh Pond Station, on the Long Island Railroad. This was on December 4, 1885. Since that time, despite assertions by some to the contrary, incineration has grown in popularity, and it is said that there is an increase of fifty incinerations a year. The number of cremations at Fresh Pond up to the beginning of the present year is given as 1,881. Of this number 1,213 bodies were those of men, 98 of boys, 496 of women, and 73 were the bodies of girls. Thirty-five dollars is charged for the incineration of a body. This charge is only for the mere consuming of the body by means of heat, the body being placed in an air-tight compartment of an immense furnace. Enough ashes are left to fill a small-sized urn. It takes several hours to dispose of a body, after which the ashes are collected and placed in an urn which has previously been purchased. Often the ashes are taken away by friends, and at other times they are deposited in alcoves in the walls of the columbarium where the body has been incinerated. By the request of friends endeavoring to carry out the peculiar wishes of the departed, the ashes are often taken and thrown to the four winds.

There is a charge for the door which is placed in front of the niche. The urns may be bought for from $9 50 up to $45, while the niche in the wall costs from $15 to $25, according to its location in the wall. To the cost of the incineration, which is $35, must be added the cost of the urn for the ashes and the niche for the reception of the urn. When the body is borne to the columbarium in carriages there is extra charge, according to the number of carriages brought into service. With this method there is no necessity for the purchase of a burial lot, although many people bury the ashes. The maximum cost for incineration, including the purchase of an urn, the leasing of a niche to receive the urn, the door of the niche, and all expenses, not including the hire of carriages, need not exceed $125, or $150 at most.

TELLING TIME BY THE STARS.

London Letter in The New-Orleans Picayune.

The sidereal clock is considered the most wonderful instrument in the Greenwich Observatory. This marvellous instrument is in an underground room called the magnetic basement, where it stands like a sentinel, with its back against the wall, ticking its seconds as prescribed by the "clock" stars.

This reference to the "clock stars"—fixed stars, slightly over two hundred in number, which are used for determining sidereal time—brings us to the transit circle, the most important instrument in the observatory, and one of the most interesting.

It consists of a large telescope, the outside of which is not unlike a great cannon, as it is of solid iron. This instrument is supported by trunnions, which allow the telescope to be elevated or depressed, to point north or south, and, in fact, to make a complete revolution, but never to diverge from the north and south line. The magnifying power of this instrument is not very great, but its field of view is large, so that it admits plenty of light, for it is not intended as a searcher after or for gazing at celestial objects, but for noting the exact time at which stars and planets pass south and north of Greenwich.

Upon looking through this telescope the observer's eye is first arrested by a vertical row of what seem to be iron bars placed at equal distances from each other. They are, however, neither more nor less than spiders' webs, the centre one, passing through the focus of the object glass, being the meridian line.

By observing the time at which the "clock stars" pass over these web lines, or "wires," as they are called, is sidereal time regulated. The adjustment of the instrument has to be extremely exact in order to obviate error. The slightest thing will put it out, even so small a matter as too much sunshine.

On one occasion the correction for a level error in the instrument having become inconveniently large, owing, apparently, to a subsidence of the eastern support, about a ton weight of stone was placed on the western pier. But this having no effect, the stones were removed and a sheet of very thin paper was placed under the support on the eastern side, by which means the error was corrected. This will give some idea of the delicacy of adjustment necessary for the perfect working of this ponderous instrument.

THE INTERIOR TELEPHONE.

A DEVICE THAT MAKES SPEAKING TUBES SUPERFLUOUS.

THE TELEPHONE ON THE OCEAN STEAMER AND ITS COMMUNICATIONS AT THE WHARF.

One of the many new features of the modern large buildings, whether they are offices, hotels or warehouses, which was unknown until electricity became a factor in interior arrangements, is the wire conduit system. In all plans and specifications the architect must now make arrangements for means to lay wires for lighting and for telephoning. Business concerns have sprung up of late which make interior wiring a specialty. The bell hanger and the maker of speaking tubes still do business, but their work is confined to small houses and to districts away from the large cities where the spirit of progress has not yet displaced the architecture of the pre-electric era.

The country hotel may still be found which has a series of bells hung on large springs over the clerk's desk, each bell marked to show with which room it connects; but in the hotel which is equipped in that way the guest will find more antiquity and home-made rag carpet than comfort and elegance. If the man who had known no other means of communication between his tavern room and the office went to a hotel where the modern annunciator had taken the place of the old-time dangling bells, he would think the little disks behind the large glass which disclosed figures indicating the room in which the guest was pressing a button a great improvement, but he would not have seen the perfection of the system until he had gone to some hotel where the most improved methods of communication make it possible for the guest to order a laundry list or a cocktail, a physician or a New-York Tribune, a barber or theatre tickets, or almost anything he might need, by simply manipulating a mechanical contrivance which is placed in his room for that purpose.

NEW TELEPHONE SWITCH-BOARD.

Besides this method of communication, the interior telephone has been introduced in many hotels, and the most modern room fixture in a hotel apartment is a telephone by means of which one may communicate with people in the house as well as with distant points. All this has given much work and many calls for the services of the interior wireman, who has found in the interior electric plants a still more lucrative branch of business. All large buildings are arranged for electric lighting, and the conduits which run through every part of the great structures contain wires for lighting, for telephoning and for telegraphing. There are many buildings in New-York in which every desk is fitted with an electric light and a telephone, where clerks and heads of departments talk by means of a small central office, which occupies one of the rooms in the building.

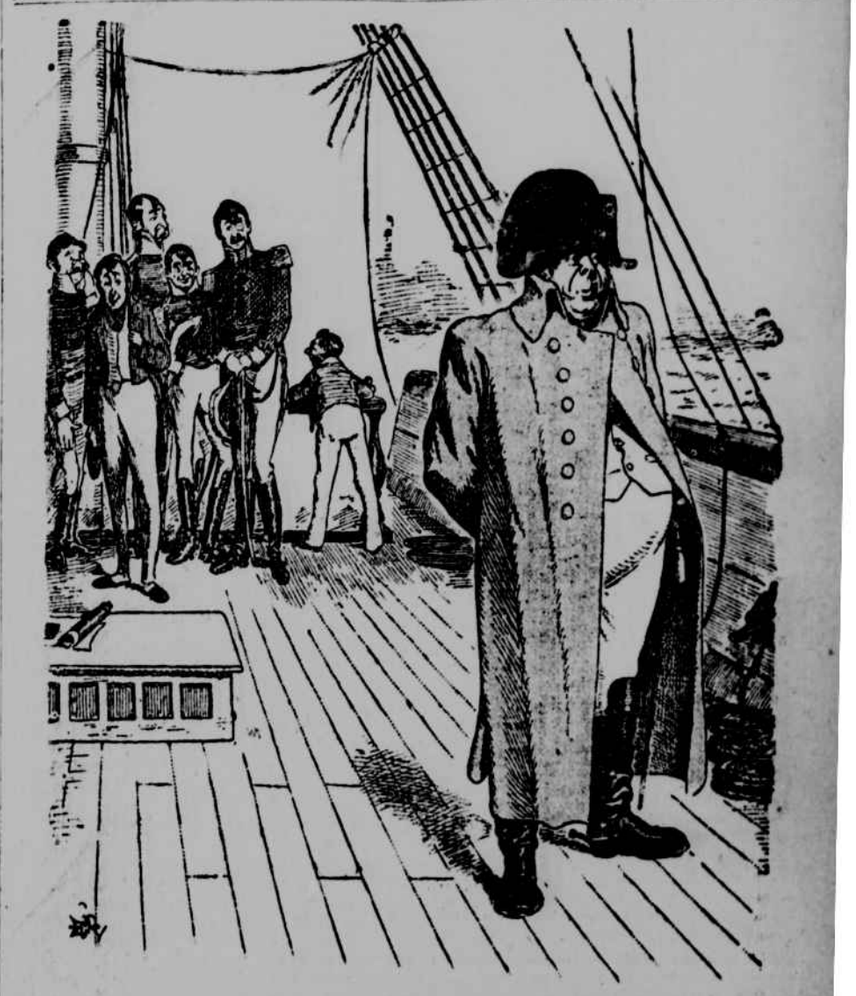
The head of a large concern in which the interior telephone system has been introduced said that it had opened a new field of industry. "Heretofore," he said, "a telephone girl was an employe of the telephone company and worked at a company switchboard. There were comparatively few of them, and they were unknown, except as to their voices, in all places except 'hello offices.' Nowadays," he continued, "there is a telephone girl in nearly every large office building. Where there are twenty or less telephones a switchboard is not needed, but where there are more than twenty stations it is essential to have a switchboard, and that gives employment to one telephone operator or more."

Some of these systems are independent, and others are connected with the long-distance service. "The time was," an interested manufacturer said, "when electric light and telephones were available only to people who lived in places where there were central offices or distributing points for these commodities. Nowadays one may have electric light and a telephone in every room, if the building is situated fifty miles from nowhere. The large public institutions, the prisons and asylums are all equipped with lighting and telephoning plants, and even the ocean steamers have their telephone plants, by means of which officers may communicate without leaving their posts of duty."

A new feature in telephoning will soon be introduced. The steamship land offices are being fitted with interior telephone systems and switchboards. The steamers are already furnished with telephoning paraphernalia, and in the near future a man may be able to telephone to his office or to his home while the steamer on which he came from Europe is being tied up and before the passenger could go ashore.

"The telephone wire is thrown over the side with the first hawser," was said in explanation, "and is made fast to the land wire with a snap splice. Then the passenger, who sits at the ship's telephone in the library or the smoking-room, calls up his home or his business office in New-York, or anywhere in the country, and talks as he would from his own telephone. I am sure that many people will take advantage of the privilege, because it is certainly more satisfactory to hear the voice of the newly arrived traveller, and from the ship at that, than to receive a telegram."

The large theatres and opera houses are also being fitted with interior telephones, and the speaking tubes leading to the orchestra and to various parts of the house and stage will soon be things of the past.



AMATEUR TABLEAUX VIVANTS.

MR. AND MRS. PUSSINGTON TOOTLES HAVE RECENTLY ORGANIZED AND ARRANGED A SERIES OF DOMESTIC TABLEAUX VIVANTS FOR THE DELECTATION OF THEIR MANY FRIENDS. "NAPOLEON ON BOARD THE BELLEROPHON," AFTER THE WELL-KNOWN PICTURE BY MR. ORCHARDSON, R. A., WITH MR. TOOTLES AS THE CHIEF PART, WAS VOTED A PERFECT TRIUMPH OF REALISM.—(Punch's Almanack.