HISTORY AND PLOT OF ROSSINI'S "IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA"

Also Something About Its Music—By H. E. Krehbiel.

OPERA VIGNETTES. NO. 1.

The history of what is popularly called Italian opera begins in the United States with a performance of Rossini's lyrical comedy "Il Barbiere di Siviglia"; it may, therefore, fittingly take the first place in these musical vignettes. The place was the Park Theatre, then situated in Chambers street, east of Broadway, and the date November 29, 1825. It was not the first performance of Italian opera music in America, however, nor yet of Rossini's merry work. In the early years of the nineteenth century New York was almost as fully abreast of the times in the matter of dramatic entertainments as London. New works produced in the English capital were heard in New York as soon as the ships of that day could bring over the books and the actors. Especially was this true of English ballad operas and English transcriptions, or adaptations, of French, German and Italian operas. New York was five months ahead of Paris in making the acquaintance of the operatic version of Beaumarchais's "Barbier de Séville." The first performance of Rossini's opera took place in Rome on February 5, 1816. London heard it in its original form at the King's Theatre on March 10, 1818, with Garcia, the first Count Almaviva, in that part. The opera "went off with unbounded applause" says Parke (an oboe player, who has left us two volumes of entertaining and instructive memoirs), but it did not win the degree of favor enjoyed by the other operas of Rossini then current on the English stage. It dropped out of the repertory of the King's Theatre and was not revived until 1822—a year in which the popularity of Rossini in the British metropolis may be measured by the fact that all but four of the operas brought forward that year were composed by him. The first Parisian representation of the opera took place on October 26, 1819. Garcia was again in the cast. By that time, in all likelihood, all of musical New York that could muster up a pucker was already whistling "Largo al factotum" and the beginning of "Una voce poco fà," for on May 17, 1819, Thomas Phillipps had brought an English "Barber of Seville" forward at a benefit performance for himself at the same Park Theatre at which more than six years later the Garcia company, the first Italian opera troupe to visit the New World, performed it in Italian on the date already mentioned. At Mr. Phillips's performance the beneficiary sang the part of Almaviva and Miss Leesugg, who afterward became the wife of the comedian Hackett, was the Rosina. On November 21, 1821, there was another performance for Mr. Phillips's benefit, and this time Mrs. Holman took the part of Rosina. Phillips and Holman—brave names these in the dramatic annals of New York and London a little less than a century ago! When will European writers on music begin to realize that musical culture in America is not just now in its beginnings?

It was Manuel Garcia's troupe that first performed "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" in New York, and four of the parts in the opera were played by members of his family. Manuel, the father, was the Count, as he had been at the premières in Rome, London and Paris; Manuel, son, was the Figaro (he lived to read about eighty-one years of operatic enterprise in New York and died at the age of 101 years in London in 1906); Signora Garcia, mere, was the Berta, and Rosina was sung and played by that "cunning pattern of excellent nature," as a writer of the day called her, Signorina Garcia, afterward the famous Malibran. The other performers at this representation of the Italian "Barber" were Signor Rosich (Dr. Bartolo), Signor Angrisani (Don Basilio), and Signor Crivelle, the younger (Fiorello). The opera was given twenty-

LUIGI LABLACHE AS FIGARO.
Caricatured by Dantan.

three times in a season of seventy-nine nights, and the receipts ranged from $1,843 on the opening night and $1,834 on the closing, down to $356 on the twenty-ninth night.

But neither Phillips nor Garcia was the first to present an operatic version of Beaumarchais's comedy to the American people. French operas by Rousseau, Monsigny, Dalayrac and Grétry, which may be said to have composed the staple of the opera houses of Europe in the last decades of the eighteenth century, were known also in the contemporaneous theatres of Charleston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. In 1794 the last three of these cities enjoyed "an opera in 3 acts," the text by Colman, entitled, "The Spanish Barber; or, The Futile Precaution." Nothing is said in the announcements of this opera touching the authorship of the music, but it seems to be an inevitable conclusion that it was Paisiello's, composed for St Petersburg about 1780. There were German "Barbers" in existence at the time composed by Benda (Friedrich Ludwig), Elsperger and Schulz, but they did not enjoy large popularity in their own country, and Isouard's "Barbier" was not yet written. Paisiello's opera, on the contrary, was extremely popular throughout Europe. True, he called it "The Barber of Seville," not "The Spanish Barber," but Colman's subtitle, "The Futile Precaution" came from the original French title. Rossini also adopted it and purposely avoided the chief title set by Beaumarchais and used by Paisiello; but he was not long permitted to have his way. Thereby hangs a tale of the composition and first failure of his opera which I must now relate.

On December 26, 1815, the first day of the carnival season, Rossini produced his opera, "Torvaldo e Dorliska," at the Teatro Argentina, in Rome, and at the same time signed a contract with Cesarini, the impresario of the theatre, to have the first act of a second opera ready on the 20th day of the following January. For this opera Rossini was to receive 400 Roman scudi (the equivalent of about $400) after the first three performances, which he was to conduct seated at the pianoforte in the orchestra, as was then the custom. He seems to have agreed to take any libretto submitted by the impresario and approved by the public censor; but there are indications that Sterbini, who was to write the libretto, had already suggested a remodelling of Paisiello's "Barber." In order to expedite the work of composition it was provided in the contract that Rossini was to take lodgings with a singer named Zamboni, to whom the honor fell of being the original of the town factotum in Rossini's opera. Some say that Rossini completed the score in thirteen days; some in fifteen. Castil-Blaze says it was a month, but the truth is that the work consumed less than half that period. Donizetti, asked if he believed that Rossini had really written the score in thirteen days, is reported to have replied, no doubt with a malicious twinkle in his eyes: "It is very possible; he is so lazy. Paisiello was still alive, and so was at least the memory of his opera, so Rossini, as a precautionary measure, thought it wise to spike, if possible, the guns of an apprehended opposition. So he addressed a letter to the venerable composer asking leave to make use of the subject. He got permission and then wrote a preface to his libretto (or had Serbini write it for him), in which, while flattering his predecessor, he nevertheless contrived to indicate that he considered the opera of that venerable musician old-fashioned, undramatic and outdated. "Beaumarchais's comedy, entitled 'The Barber of Seville, or the Useless Precaution,'" he wrote, "is presented at Rome in the form of a comic drama under the title of 'Almaviva, ossia l'inutile Precauzione,' in order that the public may be fully convinced of the sentiments of respect and veneration by which the author of the music of this drama is animated with regard to the celebrated Paisiello, who has

MANUEL DEL-POPOLO-VICENTE GARCIA
(1775-1832).
The original Figaro.

already treated the subject under its primitive title. Himself invited to undertake this difficult task, the maestro Gioachino Rossini, in order to avoid the reproach of entering rashly into rivalry with the immortal author who preceded him, expressly required that 'The Barber of Seville' should be entirely versified anew, and also that new situations should be added for the musical pieces which, moreover, are required by the modern theatrical taste, entirely changed since the

DE BEGNIS AS DON BASILIO.
In Paris, 1819.

time when the renowned Paisiello wrote his work."

I have told the story of the fiasco made by Rossini's opera on its first production at the Argentine Theatre on February 5, 1816, in an extended preface to the vocal score of "Il Barbiere," published in 1900 by G. Schirmer, and a quotation from that preface will serve here quite as well as a paraphrase; so I quote (with an avowal of gratitude for the privilege to the publishers):

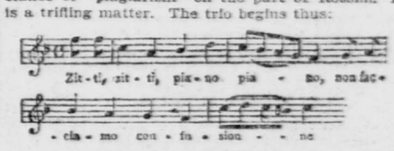
Paisiello gave his consent to the use of the subject, believing that the opera of his young rival would assuredly fail. At the same time he wrote to a friend in Rome, asking him to do all in his power to compass a fiasco for the opera. The young composer's enemies were not sluggish. All the whistlers of Italy, says Castil-Blaze, seemed to have made a rendezvous at the Teatro Argentina on the night set down for the first production. Their malicious intentions were helped along by accidents at the outset of the performance. Details of the story have been preserved for us in an account written by Signora Giorgi-Righetti, who sang the part of Rosina on the memorable occasion. Garcia had persuaded Rossini to permit him to sing a Spanish song to his own accompaniment on a guitar under Rosina's balcony in the first act. It would provide the needed local color, he urged. When about to start his song, Garcia found that he had forgotten to tune his guitar. He began to set the pegs in the face of the waiting public. A string broke, and a new one was drawn up amid the titters of the spectators. The song did not please the auditors, who mocked at the singer by humming Spanish fioriturі after him. Boisterous laughter broke out when Figaro came on the stage also with a guitar, and "Largo al factotum" was lost in the din. Another howl of delighted derision went up when Rosina's voice was heard singing within: "Seguì o caro, deh seguì così" ("Continue, my dear, continue thus"). The audience continued "thus." The representative of Rosina was popular but the fact that she was first heard in a trifling phrase instead of an aria caused disappointment. The duet between Almaviva and Figaro was sung amid hisses, shrieks and shouts. The cavatina "Una voce poco fà" got a triple round of applause, however, and Rossini, interpreting the fact as a compliment to the personality of the singer rather than to the music, after bowing to the public, exclaimed: "Oh natural!" "Thank her," retorted Giorgi-Righetti; "but for her you would not have had occasion to rise from your chair." The turmoil began again with the next duet, and the finale was mere dumb show. When the curtain fell Rossini faced the mob, shrugged his shoulders and clapped his hands to show his contempt. Only the musicians and singers heard the second act, the din being incessant from beginning to end. Rossini remained imperturbable, and when Giorgi-Righetti, Garcia and Zamboni hastened to his lodgings to offer their condolences as soon as they could don street attire they found him asleep. The next day he wrote the cavatina "Ecco ridente in cielo" to take the place of Garcia's unlucky Spanish song, borrowing the air from his own "Aureliano," composed two years before, into which it had been incorporated from "Ciro," a still earlier work. When night came he feigned illness so as to escape the task of conducting. By that time his enemies had worn themselves out. The music was heard amid loud plaudits, and in a week the opera had scored a tremendous success.

And now for the dramatic and musical contents of "Il Barbiere." At the very outset Rossini opens the door for us to take a glimpse at the changes in musical manner which were wrought by time. He had faulted Paisiello's opera because in parts it had become antiquated, for which reason he had had new situations introduced to meet the "modern theatrical taste"; but he lived fifty years after "Il Barbiere" had conquered the world, and never took the trouble to write an overture for it, though the one originally composed for the opera had been lost soon after the first production. The overture which leads us into the opera nowadays is all very well in its way and a striking example of how a piece of music may benefit from fortuitous circumstances. Persons with fantastic imaginations have rhapsodized on its appositeness, and professed to hear in it the whispered plottings of the lovers and the merry raillery of Rosina, contrasted with the futile ragings of her grouty guardian; but when Rossini composed this piece of music its mission was to introduce an adventure of the Emperor Aurelian in Palmyra in the third century of the Christian era. Having served that purpose, it became the prelude to another opera which dealt with Queen Elizabeth of England, a monarch who reigned some twelve hundred years after Aurelian. Again, before the melody now known as that of Almaviva's cavatina (which supplanted Garcia's unlucky Spanish song) had burst into the efflorescence which now distinguishes it, it came as a chorus from the mouths of Cyrus and his Persians in ancient Babylon. Truly, the verities of time and place sat lightly on the Italian opera composers of a hundred years ago. But the serenade which follows the rising of the curtain preserves a custom more general at the time of Beaumarchais than now, though it is not yet obsolete. Dr. Bartolo, who is guardian of the fascinating Rosina, is in love with her, or at least wishes for reasons not entirely dissociated from her money bags to make her his wife, and therefore keeps her most of the time behind bolts and bars. The Count Almaviva, however, has seen her on a visit from his estates to Seville, becomes enamoured of her, and she has felt her heart warmed toward him, though she is ignorant of his rank and knows him only under the name of Lindoro. Hoping that it may bring him an opportunity for a glance, mayhap a word with his inamorata, Almaviva follows the advice given by Sir Proteus to Thurio in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona": he visits his lady's chamber window, not at night, but at early dawn, with a "sweet concert," and to the instruments of Fiorello's musicians tunes "a deploring dump." It is the cavatina "Ecco ridente in cielo." The musicians, rewarded by Almaviva beyond expectations, are profuse and long winded in their expression of gratitude and are gotten rid of with difficulty. The Count has not yet had a glimpse of Rosina, who is in the habit of breathing the morning air from the balcony of her prison house, and is about to despair, when Figaro, barber and Seville's factotum, appears trolling a song in which he recites his accomplishments, the universality of his employments and the great demand for his services. ("Largo al factotum dello città.") The Count recognizes him, tells of his vain vigils in front of Rosina's balcony, and, so soon as he learns that Figaro is a sort of man of all work to Bartolo, employs him as his go-between. Rosina now appears on the balcony. Almaviva is about to engage her in conversation when Bartolo appears and discovers a billet-doux which Rosina had intended to drop into the hand of her Lindoro. He demands to see it, but she explains that it is but a copy of the words of an aria from an opera entitled "The Futile Precaution," and drops it from the balcony, as if by accident. She sends Bartolo to recover it, but Almaviva, who had observed the device, secures it, and Bartolo is told by his crafty ward that the wind must have carried it away. Growing suspicious, he commands her into the house and goes away to hasten the preparations for his wedding, after giving orders that no one is to be admitted to the house save Don Basilio, Rosina's singing master, and Bartolo's messenger and general mischief maker.

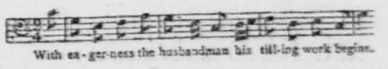
The letter which Rosina had thus slyly conveyed to her unknown lover begged him to contrive means to let her know his name, condition and intentions respecting herself. Figaro, taking the case in hand at once, suggests that Almaviva publish his answer in a ballad. This the Count does ("Se il mio nome saper"), protesting the honesty and ardor of his passion, but still concealing his name and station. He is delighted to hear his lady-love's voice bidding him to continue his song. (It is the phrase, "Seguì o caro, deh seguì così," which sounded so monstrously diverting at the first representation of the opera in Rome). After the second stanza Rosina essays a longer response, but is interrupted by some of the inmates of the house. Figaro now confides to the Count a scheme by which he is to meet his fair enslaver face to face: he is to assume the role of a drunken soldier who has been billeted upon Dr. Bartolo, a plan that is favored by the fact that a company of soldiers has come to Seville that very day which is under the command of the Count's cousin. The plan is promptly put into execution. Not long after Rosina enters Dr. Bartolo's library singing the famous cavatina, "Una voce poco fà," in which she tells of her love for Lindoro and proclaims her determination to have her own way in the matter of her heart, in spite of all that her tyrannical guardian or anybody else can do. This cavatina has been the showpiece of hundreds of singers ever since it was written. Signora Giorgi-Righetti, the first Rosina, was a contralto and sang the music in the key of E, in which it was written. When it became one of Jenny Lind's display airs it was transposed to F and tricked out with a great abundance of fioriturі. Adelina Patti in her youth used so to overburden its already florid measures with ornament that the story goes that once when she sang it for Rossini the old master dryly remarked: "A very pretty air; who composed it?" Figaro enters at the conclusion of Rosina's song, and the two are about to exchange confidences when Bartolo enters with Basilio who confides to the old doctor his suspicion that the unknown lover of Rosina is the Count Almaviva, and suggests that the latter's presence in Seville be made irksome by a few adroitly spread innuendoes against his character. How a calumny, ingeniously published, may grow from a whispered zephyr to a crashing, detonating tempest Basilio describes in the buffo air "La calunnia"—a marvellous example of the device of crescendo which in this form is one of Rossini's inventions. Bartolo prefers his own plan of compelling his ward to marry him at once. He goes with Basilio to draw up a marriage agreement, and Figaro, who has overheard their talk, acquaints Rosina with its purport. He also tells her that she shall soon see her lover face to face if she will but send him a line at his hands. Thus he secures a letter from her, but learns that the artful minx had written it before he entered. Her ink stained fingers, the disappearance of a sheet of paper from his writing desk and the condition of his quill pen convince Bartolo on his return that he is being deceived, and he resolves that henceforth his ward shall be more closely confined than ever. And so he informs her, while she mimics his angry gestures behind his back. In another moment there is a boisterous knocking and shouting at the door, and in comes Almaviva, disguised as a cavalry soldier most obviously in his cups. He manages to make himself known to Rosina and exchanges letters with her under the very nose of her jailer, affects a fury toward Dr. Bartolo when the latter claims exemption from the billet, and escapes arrest only by secretly making himself known to the officer commanding the soldiers who had been drawn into the house by the disturbance. The sudden and inexplicable change of conduct on the part of the soldiers petrifies Bartolo; he is literally "astonied," and Figaro makes him the victim of several laughable pranks before he recovers his wits.

Dr. Bartolo's suspicions have been aroused about the soldier, concerning whose identity he makes vain inquiries, but he does not hesitate to admit to his library a seeming music master who announces himself as Don Alonzo, who has come to act as substitute for Don Basilio, who, he says, is ill. Of course it is Almaviva. Soon the ill-natured guardian grows impatient of his garrulity, and Almaviva, to allay his suspicions and gain a sight of his inamorata, gives him a letter written by Rosina to Lindoro, which he says he had found in the Count's lodgings. If he can but see the lady he hopes by means of the letter to convince her of Lindoro's faithlessness. This device, though it disturbs its inventor, is successful, and Bartolo brings in his ward to receive her music lesson. Here, according to tradition, there stood in the original score a trio which was lost with the overture. Very welcome has this loss appeared to the Rosinas of a later day, for it has enabled them to introduce into the "lesson scene" music of their own choice, and, of course, such as showed their voices and art to the best advantage. Amusing have been the anachronisms which have resulted from these illustrations of artistic vanity, and diverting are the glimpses which they give of the tastes and sensibilities of great prime donne. Grisi and Alboni, stimulated by the example of Catalani (though not in this opera), could think of nothing nobler than to display their skill by singing Rode's Air and Variations, a violin piece. This grew hackneyed, but, nevertheless, survived till a comparatively late day. Bosio, feeling that variations were necessary, threw Rode's over in favor of those on "Gia della mente involarmi"—a polka tune from Alary's "A Tre Nozze." Then Mme. Gassier ushered in the day of the vocal waltz—Venzano's, of amiable memory. Her followers have not yet died out, though Patti substituted Arditi's "Il Bacio" for Venzano's; Mme. Sembrich, Strauss's "Voce di Primavera," and Mme. Melba, Arditi's "Se saran rose." Mme. Viardot, with a finer sense of the fitness of things, but either forgetful or not apprehensive of the fate which befell her father at the first performance of the opera in Rome, introduced a Spanish song. Mme. Patti always kept a ready repertory for the scene, with a song in the vernacular of the people for whom she was singing to bring the enthusiasm to a climax and a finish: "Home, Sweet Home" in New York and London, "Solovel" in St. Petersburg. Usually she began with the bolero from "Les Vêpres Siciliennes," or the shadow dance from "Dinorah." Mme. Sembrich, living in a period when the style of song of which she and Mme. Melba are still the brightest exemplars, is not as familiar as it used to be when they were children, also found it necessary to have an extended list of pieces ready at hand to satisfy the rapacious public. She was wont at first to sing Proch's Air and Variations, but that always led to a demand for more, and whether she supplemented it with "Ah! non giunge," from "La Sonnambula," the bolero from "The Sicilian Vespers," "O luce di quest anima," from "Linda," or the vocalized waltz by Strauss, the applause always was riotous and so remained until she sat down to the pianoforte and sang Chopin's "Maiden's Wish," in Polish, to her own accompaniment. As for Mme. Melba, not to be set in the shade simply because Mme. Sembrich is almost as good a pianist as she is a singer, she supplements Arditi's waltz or Massenet's "Sevillana" with Tosti's "Mattinata," to which she also plays an exquisite accompaniment.

But this is a long digression; I must back to my intriguing lovers, who have made good use of the lesson scene to repeat their protestations of affection and lay plots for attaining their happiness. In this they are helped by Figaro, who comes to shave Dr. Bartolo in spite of his protests, and, contriving to get hold of the latter's keys, "conveys" the one which opens the balcony lock and thus makes possible a plan for a midnight elopement. In the midst of the lesson the real Basilio comes to meet his appointment and there is a moment of confusion for the plotters, out of which Figaro extricates them by persuading Basilio that he is sick of a raging fever and must go instantly home, Almaviva adding a convincing argument in the shape of a generously lined purse. Nevertheless Basilio afterward betrays the Count to Bartolo, who commands him to bring a notary to the house that very night so that he may sign the marriage contract with Rosina. In the midst of a tempest Figaro and the Count let themselves into the house at midnight to carry off Rosina, but find her in a whimsy, her mind having been poisoned against her lover by Bartolo with the aid of the unfortunate letter. Out of this dilemma Almaviva extricates himself by confessing his identity, and the pair are about to steal away when the discovery is made that the ladder to the balcony has been carried away. As they are tiptoeing toward the window the three sing a trio in which there is such obvious use of a melodic phrase which belongs to Haydn that every writer on "Il Barbiere" seems to have thought it his duty to point out an instance of "plagiarism" on the part of Rossini. It is a trifling matter. The trio begins thus:



which is a slightly varied form of four measures from Simon's song in the first part of "The Seasons":



With these four measures the likeness begins and ends. A venial offence, if it be an offence at all. Composers were not held to so strict and scrupulous an accountability touching melodic meum and tuum a century ago as they are now; yet there was then a thousandfold more melodic inventiveness. Another case of "conveyance" by Rossini has also been pointed out: the air of the duenna in the third act beginning "Il vecchiotto cerca moglie" is said to be that of a song which Rossini heard a Russian lady sing in Rome. I have searched much in Russian song literature and failed to find the alleged original. To finish the story: the notary summoned by Bartolo arrives on the scene, but is persuaded by Figaro to draw up an attestation of a marriage agreement between Count Almaviva and Rosina, and Bartolo, finding at the last that all his precautions have been in vain, comforted not a little by the gift of his ward's dower, which the Count relinquishes, gives his blessing to the lovers.

I have told the story of "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" as it appears in the book. It has grown to be the custom to omit in performance several of the incidents which are essential to the development and understanding of the plot. Some day—soon, it is to be hoped—managers, singers and public will awake to a realization that, even in the old operas in which beautiful singing is supposed to be the be-all and end-all, the action ought to be kept coherent. In that happy day Rossini's effervescent lyrical arrangement of Beaumarchais's vivacious comedy will be restored to its rights.

H. E. K.

TAMMANY'S LOVE FOR THE POOR ILLUSTRATED

Many Free Drinking Fountains Dry in This Thirsty Summer Weather.

As one tramps thirstily along the sweltering stretch of streets which front the city's downtown wharves beneath the broiling rays of a July sun he is forcibly and uncomfortably reminded of the familiar "Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." The river is easy of access, but its salinity renders it unpalatable; horse troughs guarantee the horse from suffering, but the man hesitates to stoop to conquer his thirst in one of these; fine iron hydrants stand on every corner, but the lid is on each one and screwed down tight. Along this cobbled reach of dirt and heat and noise and bustle one can find free baths, free seats, free lunches and other free things, but to find a fountain for men to drink water from free of cost he must travel long with microscopic searching.

In the equatorial expanse of South street, where the streets get hot in May and stay so till September, a modern Dante might find inspiration for a new inferno. There all nature conspires against the individual. Save for the scrawny trees in a pocket edition park here and there, there is no shade, unless it be that supplied by the awnings in front of saloons. There, under a scorching sun, red faced men work and sweat and swear all the day through. There, too, it is as natural to thirst as to perspire, and while all kinds of traffic go to make this section as busy as Wall street at its busiest, there is no traffic so great as the traffic in thirsts. At every corner and in between are the venders of cerise colored, acetic acid lemonade; at every corner and in between are the licensed dealers in alcoholic beverages. Here and there on a corner is a drinking trough for horses, and infrequently dotting the arid stretch are iron shells, formerly drinking fountains for man. Now, however, the latter serve merely as convenient match scratchers or as leaning posts for the weary—monuments to departed thirsts elsewhere slaked.

It is a remarkable fact—coincidence, if you please—that all of the man fountains in front of or near saloons have been smashed. Within two years some of these vandalized fountains have been removed, and on file in the office of the Water Board are to-day several petitions from saloonkeepers along this avenue of thirsts asking that broken fountains in front of their places of business be removed. Says one petition which bears on its heading the name of a South street liquor firm, "We request the Water Department to remove the fountain at No. 151 South street. It is a nuisance." Doubtless, and an uncomfortable competitor as well, when it is in running order.

"OVERSIGHT" OF THE FOUNTAINS.

"Will it be removed?" was asked of a Water Board official.

"Certainly," replied he; "we have to pay attention to all complaints."

"But why not repair it?"

"When anybody asks for repairs we make them; if asked to remove the fountain on the grounds of its being a nuisance, we investigate, and if conditions warrant we do so."

"But what about these dismantled fountains to be found all along South street?"

"Where?"—this fiercely.

"At the foot of Wall street; near Old Slip; on Pike Slip, above South; just above Roosevelt street."

A search of the books proved that these fountains, which have been out of use for years, had never been "reported."

"And who is supposed to 'report'?"

"Oh, the policeman on whose beat the fountains are, or any pedestrian who wants to report them as needing to be fixed."

Thus conditions stand regarding these much needed and sadly neglected fountains. Investigation proved that $3,500 a year was provided by the Board of Aldermen for the maintenance, repair and putting in of new drinking fountains in the entire city of New York. And yet requests are continually being filed for new drinking fountains in the office of the Water Department—filed, but seldom filled, because the appropriation is so fardically small.

The horse, which never drinks beer or whiskey, is fairly well provided for. At Clinton street stands a

CORNER OF OLD SLIP AND SOUTH STREET, HAUNTED BY THE HOLLOW GHOST OF WHAT USED TO BE A DRINKING FOUNTAIN FOR MAN.

AT PIKE SLIP THE BEAST MAY FIND THE FLOWING BOWL, BUT FOR MAN THERE IS, ON THE OTHER SIDE, ONLY A SHATTERED SUGGESTION OF WHAT ONCE WAS.

AT THE FOOT OF THE STREET WHICH BEARS THE NAME OF ROOSEVELT, THE MIGHTY HUNTER HIMSELF WOULD HAVE A LONG TREK TO FIND A SINGLE DRINK OF COLD WATER FREE.

trough, into which water is continually flowing; at Rutgers Slip there are two of these. At Pike Slip, too, the beast may find the flowing bowl at one of the iron fountains of the city, but around on the other side, where once for man the stream flowed freely, is but a shattered suggestion of what existed earlier.

At the foot of the street which bears the name of Roosevelt the mighty hunter himself would have a long trek to find a single drinking fountain for man. By careful hunting he might stalk the iron lion on the fountain in the middle of the street beyond, but there, even as elsewhere, the stolid, metal king of the forest stands looking disconsolately at the saloon across the way, with not so much as a gurgle issuing from the parched depths of his rusted larnyx. Yet just behind the lion, beneath the grateful shadow of a wooden shed, the streetcar horses are hourly washed down and receive as much water as they please from wooden tubs filled to supply their needs.

At Peck Slip one finds the green barrel of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals awaiting the tired and thirsty beasts, and the avidity with which the driver descends from his seat, deluging face, hair and throat from the hose while the horse in drinking his fill from the tub, suggests to the mind of the pitying passerby that a society for the prevention of cruelty to human animals might not be altogether out of order.

A horse passing along Burling Slip can on the corner obtain a drink without going into a saloon for it, but not so his master. Formerly a drinking fountain for man stood on this site, but for nearly two years a slate in the sidewalk has marked the spot where the good of this fountain "has been interred with its bones." The evil that it did consisted in its leaking at the wrong time, getting frozen too early in the winter or interfering with the "legitimate" sale of other liquors in the vicinity.

The same sad tale is repeated at the end of Wall street. There, too, a purling stream used to ripple forth from the spout of the now unsightly fount which to-day serves as a resting place for the owner of the lemonade cart which perches by the curb. And, quite apropos, just across the way is a pair of swinging doors, behind which may be bought almost any ale but Adam's to wet the half-baked Adam's apple.

At Old Slip and South street is the ghost of a former drinking fountain, the horse side of which is still active, but the man end of which is merely a sad reminder of a usefulness long departed. Here, while his team stands diagonally across the crowded thoroughfare, a partial barrier to passing vehicles, the driver enters the nearby portals and tempers his thirst with something stronger than water.

After his panting tramp along the burning pavements of South street, if the searcher is not by this time literally "driven to drink," he saunters into the little public preserve of Jeannette Park. Here, where the sward is often strewn with prostrate victims of the numerous neighboring saloons, he feels sure that a merciful municipality must have placed a fountain, surely just a little, one-spigoted affair for the relief of the babes and mothers who come here to get a breath of the best air they can find in these precincts. But no, not even here is such a menace to the beer business of the sweltering belt to be found. As he saunters onward his eye suddenly glistens as it glances up Broad street, but investigation proves that the fountain he sees there is also for the horse alone. Whitehall street supports another hollow shell of a "has-been" fountain which now merely serves to support wearied policemen when the neighboring lamppost is occupied.

To him who has hunted in vain over this dry shelf, has watched teamsters, stevedores and carriers fighting for a piece of ice around the ice boats at the foot of Jefferson street, and has seen them glorying in a drink and a spray beneath one of the Protective Society's hoses, it is a grateful relief indeed when his eye is greeted by the tiny oasis placed in State street by the Woman's Auxiliary of the Church Temperance Society under the shadow of the Hungarian Immigrants' Home. The obscurity of the little fountain has doubtless assured its safety, and one notes that for the first block in a walk of several miles here is one on which there is no saloon. Coincidence again, maybe, but this is so. The fount, which has been there only a comparatively short time, would sell for an antique, so smooth worn is its brass and so battered has it become. Yet the teamsters and pedestrians who flock here prove how much cheer the shallow cup dispenses, how greatly such charity is appreciated and how much more such founts are needed than tulip borders or even park settees. "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," reads the legend in brass above the spigot, and surely in this section none of God's blessings could flow with greater benefit than drinkable cold water.

IN BATTERY PARK.

In Battery Park there are one or two ill-kept fountains that really run, but they are some distance away from the scene of the most active work along the waterfront, and one is led to conjecture whether or not the number of sleeping human derelicts scattered everywhere about might not in some degree be lessened if there were a chance for them to get water where now they can only get the cheap whiskey which is largely responsible for their condition. How much people desire a beneficial drink is evidenced at the pasteurized milk stand in this park, where twenty-five hundred thirsts a day are killed or allayed by the milk which is charitably sold at the rate of a cent a glass.

In the little park at Bowling Green there is a pretty ornamental fountain which delights the eye, but it has a tendency on a hot day to aggravate the thirst. As the writer watched, two urchins dropped into the bowl of this fountain to share the delights provided for the goldfish alone, and while a wary policeman chased the pair to their lair in a side street two others vaulted the low iron fence, and, with an eye after the fleeting "cop," they lay flat on their stomachs and drank deeply from the muddy pool.

Worse even than South street is West street, where, save for the welcome green tubs of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, there is not even a trough for the horse to drink from, to say nothing of a fountain for mere man. There he must take it for granted that, unless he patronizes either the lemonade cart or the saloon, he must go thirsty, and on a hot and dusty day the wage of the average teamster might easily be spent with the great thirst that he has acquired still unslaked.

Personal observation shows that the fountains in the city which receive the most care are where they are most seen rather than where they are most needed. "One is impressed with the fact," said an old New Yorker, "that instead of removing fountains that are eyesores to saloonkeepers in front of whose establishments they stand, these ought to be replaced by new ones, and that the $3,000 appropriation ought to be so increased as to admit of many much needed new fountains. In the mean time it would seem as though the churches might do good work for Christ and charity by turning some of their money into drinking fountains rather than for the maintenance of Chinese missions."

DULUTH'S AERIAL FERRY.

Minnesota Point is a narrow strip of land stretching across the entrance to the harbor of the city of Duluth. For many years the Point was a great obstruction to the shipping, necessitating a roundabout course and considerable delay in docking the boats, and finally the municipality cut a canal through this neck where it joined the mainland. But there were numerous residents on Minnesota Point who were now made islanders, and to obviate their difficulty the city maintained a score of rowboats to carry these people to and from the city. A steam ferry service was next employed, when the number of passengers had increased, but this proved to be too slow and too expensive to operate, so a novel scheme was suggested—an aerial ferry.

Duluth's aerial ferry was an immediate success, and since its completion has run without a hitch. It consists of a slender bridge 138 feet high, far above the tallest masts of any ship that may be passing through the canal, and from this bridge is suspended a car. The floor of the car is barely six feet above the ground and a little higher than that above the water level, and the whole is attached to metal rods which hang from wheels that run on a track upon the bridge overhead. This ferry is operated by electricity, and the trip across the canal is made in a little more than one minute. The car is 50 feet long by 34 feet wide, and can accommodate about two hundred passengers. Twelve trips are made every hour between 5 in the morning and midnight, and two trips each hour thereafter.—Harper's Weekly.