PROMOTION WON BY MERIT.

HOW ABILITY AND FIDELITY ARE REWARDED IN RAILROADING.

Presidents, Managers, and Superintendents Who Have Worked their Way Up from Office Boys, Clerks, Wipers, Firemen, Brakemen, and Laborers, Through Merit.

Nearly all the deservedly prominent railroad men in this country have risen from the ranks in their profession, and have the manhood and good sense to be proud of it. Their business, dealing as it does with great forces, enormous interests, and ever-present issues of life and death, is one that lifts them above belittling considerations of class and caste. The lesson of their lives is to value men "for what they have in them." Hence, in no other field of employment are ability and fidelity so sure of recognition and adequate reward as in railroading, and in none other is the line of promotion among employees so little liable to be broken by the adventitious aid of influence or money for advancement of the unworthy. The humblest brakeman or engine wiper may aspire to become a general manager or a President, and, if he develops the capacity and reliability to fit him for the duties of such positions, the realization of his aspirations will surprise neither him nor any one else in the business. That such is the case is an eminently good thing, not only for the railroad men themselves, but also for the general public. Among them it is an incentive to cultivation of intelligence, acquisition of special technical knowledge, formation of correct habits, devotion to the company's interests, and development consequently of the highest grade of efficiency. That the public gain by it needs no other demonstration than the superlatively excellent service afforded on the Pennsylvania Railroad system, where this law of promotion according to merit is rigidly enforced in all departments.

The President of the company, Mr. George B. Roberts, entered the service in 1851 as a rodman in the engineer corps, and won his present position by his recognized ability as a civil engineer as much as his marked administrative faculty. Second Vice-President Frank Thompson worked in the company's shops at Altoona before the war, was an assistant to Col. Thomas A. Scott in the United States military railway service, and has worked his way up through the positions of division superintendent, superintendent of motive power, and general manager east of Pittsburgh, to his present position. The block-signal system and interlocking switch are among the improvements invented by him. Third Vice-President Joseph N. Du Barry entered the company's service as a rodman and gained his advancement, grade by grade, through the engineers' department. Mr. A. J. Cassatt, First Vice-President from 1880 to 1882, and now a director, also began as a rodman. General Manager Charles E. Pugh started with the company as brakeman on a passenger train. General Passenger Agent James R. Wood was a division superintendent's secretary at Creston, Iowa, no longer ago than 1871. General Freight Agent John S. Wilson was a freight solicitor twenty-seven years ago, and all this time has stuck to that department, in which he has climbed to the head. The Eastern passenger agent, Samuel Carpenter, began his railroad life as a messenger boy in the Philadelphia office of the company as long ago as 1857. From that he got into the ticket department, and worked up to his present position, which he has now held for fourteen years. General Agent Oliver J. Geer was at first a receiving clerk in the freight department. The late Thomas A. Scott started as a station agent, and became, as head of the great Pennsylvania system, one of the chief railway magnates of the world.

The engineering department has turned out more men who have risen to the highest positions than any other. There seems to be almost a straight line from the place of rodman, chain carrier, or leveller, up to that of President. Commissioner Albert Fink worked his way up along that line. So did President T. B. Blackstone of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company; George H. Daniels, Vice-Chairman of the Central Traffic Association; G. M. Dodge, President of the St. Louis, Des Moines and Northern Railway; Adna Anderson, Second Vice-President and engineer-in-chief of the North Pacific Railway; W. Ashbridge Baldwin, manager of the Pennsylvania Company's lines west of Pittsburgh; Walter Katte, chief engineer of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company; T. B. Blackstone, President of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company; Samuel Spencer, President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company; John B. Carson, President of the Chicago and Western Indiana Railroad Company; William P. Shinn, Vice-President of the New York and New England Railroad Company; General Manager Whitman of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company, and many others who might be cited were not these illustrations sufficient. In some cases, as in that of Mr. Alva M. Tucker, now a division superintendent on the New York, Lake Erie and Western Railway, even the position of rodman was once a good deal of a rise in life. He began railroad work as a teamster, got to be a track laborer, and then a rodman.

Assistant President James Tillinghast of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company formerly shovelled coal into an engine on the Utica and Schenectady road. D. W. Caldwell, President of the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad Company, was freight clerk in 1852. Marvin Hughitt, President and general manager of the great Northwestern, was once a telegraph operator in the Western Union office in Chicago. Indeed, a great many of the most able managers and superintendents have graduated from the key and sounder. General Superintendent William J. Murphy of the New York, Lake Erie and Western was a telegraph messenger boy and afterward an operator. Superintendent William I. Allen of the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railway was formerly a telegraph operator, and so were General Superintendent John K. V. Agnew of the Chicago and Western Michigan and Charles E. Pugh, General Manager of the Pennsylvania, and many others now prominent.

Mr. Charles M. Bissell, superintendent of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad main line and branches south of Albany, climbed his way up by the successive stages of switchman, baggageman, brakeman, conductor, cashier, and freight agent. Another ex-brakeman is Richard Carroll, now general superintendent of the Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific. Superintendent William H. Geary of the Philadelphia, Newtown and New York, was formerly a yard brakeman. General Agent Dan W. Hitcock of the Union Pacific Railway used to twist a brake on a freight train, as did also William H. Holcomb, General Manager of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company; A. D. Smith, general passenger agent of the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie; Warren E. Locke, general freight agent of the Fitchburg road; President H. G. Davis of the West Virginia, Central and Pittsburgh Railway Company; General Manager Charles H. Chappell of the Chicago and Alton, who got his ears frozen while braking on a freight train, and a host of others now among "the big ones."

Nathan Guilford, now traffic manager of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad was long ago a clerk in the freight department of the Little Miami Railroad. Col. F. K. Hain, general manager of the New York Elevated Railways, was a machinist's apprentice in the Philadelphia and Reading shops, and is a first-class mechanic in locomotive building to-day. William N. Abbott, general eastern passenger agent of the New York, Ontario and Western Railway, commenced his railroad career as a clerk in the general ticket office, and has kept right on in the same line until he had reached the top of the ladder. John Adams, general superintendent of the Fitchburg Railroad, worked for ten years as a journeyman machinist in the company's shops. Milo Eastman started as a switchman in a gravel pit a little less than thirty years' ago, and is now general superintendent of the Detroit, Bay City, and Alpena Railroad. Geo. L. Carman, who has climbed up to be a Commissioner in two big railroad pools and three traffic associations, and is popularly supposed to be very well fixed financially, once upon a time used to vend wilted apples, noisome peanuts, and cheap literature as a train boy. Henry F. Royce, now general superintendent of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway, was, when a young man, a laborer in the Boston freight house of the Boston and Worcester Railroad, and General Manager E. St. John of the same company began his career as a ticket seller at Quincy. Justus B. Moll, a division superintendent on the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, when he came over from Germany went to work as a track laborer and at studying English, the latter rather the harder job. That was only twenty-six years ago. General Manager Stone of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy was a machinist, and learned well how to build locomotives long before he had anything to do with running them. James T. Clark, general superintendent of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, away back "in the fifties" was a teamster on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy road, and his first promotion was to be a section boss. General Freight Agent A. C. Bird of that same line was first a truck hand and then station baggageman at Pana, Ill. Benjamin Norton, assistant superintendent and traffic manager of the Long Island Railroad, was only seven years ago a doorman on the Manhattan Beach Railway, so that his climb may be considered an unusually rapid one. William E. Burroughs, superintendent of the New York and Rockaway Beach Railroad, was as late as 1872 only a waterboy on the trains. S. R. Ainslie, division superintendent on the Northern Pacific Railroad, commenced his railroad career in 1864 as an errand boy in the freight office of a little Ohio road. George Alexander, a division superintendent on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, was another of the brake twisters in old times. J. T. Harahan, general manager of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, was once a helper in the machine shops, and subsequently fireman on a locomotive. Gen. John W. Thomas, President of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad Company, rose from a station agency. Assistant General Manager A. A. Allen of the Wisconsin Central line began railroading in 1868 as a messenger boy in the telegraph office. George L. Bradbury, general manager of the Lake Erie and Western Railway, was once a conductor on the Housatonic Valley Railroad. John Muir, now general traffic manager of the Newport News and Mississippi Valley Railway Company, years ago served as a stenographer in the office of the superintendent of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, and Henry Villard, director and ex-President of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, used to be a pretty fair newspaper reporter. Robert A. Anderson, general superintendent of the Western and Atlantic, began his career as a freight clerk on an obscure Alabama road, and J. Lowrie Bell, general traffic manager of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, was for three years a freight clerk in the Philadelphia station before his current of promotion started. General Superintendent John M. Toucey of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad was long ago a station agent on the Naugatuck Valley Railroad, and Henry Monett, general passenger agent of the Central, began his railroad career as a messenger boy, and then was a clerk in the ticket office. J. H. Olhausen, general superintendent of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, used to work in the machine shops at Pottstown, Pa. President Clarke of the Illinois Central shoveled coal into an engine on the old Baltimore and Ohio nearly fifty years ago, and for five years had his hand on the throttle and eye "peeled" along the tortuous track ahead of him. General Manager Jeffrey served an apprenticeship in the shops, and received such a practical education that he could now build a locomotive, head an exploring and surveying party, make the designs for a new bridge, or test an old one. William K. Ackerman, former President of the Illinois Central and now general agent of the Baltimore and Ohio, was once glad to earn $10 a week as transfer clerk on the Central, while the rich H. H. Porter managed to get along on $400 a year from the pioneer Galena Union. H. S. Haines, general manager of the Savannah, Florida and Western, and now holding the highest honorary railway position in this country, President of the General Time Convention, was in his youth a wiper in a round house, and from that rose to the dignity of firing and running a locomotive.

Thos. W. Anderson has made his way up from being porter at a little Illinois station to a division superintendency on the Texas and Pacific Railroad. W. H. Barnes of the Boston and Albany line started as a delivery clerk in the Worcester freight house, and clambered up to be successively conductor, station agent, assistant freight agent, assistant superintendent, general superintendent, and finally general manager, the position he now holds. A. E. Touzalin, long connected with the Burlington, was once a freight clerk on the Lake Shore, and A. N. Towne, general manager of the great Souther Pacific system, started in railroading as a freight brakeman on the Burlington. F. D. Underwood, general manager of the new Sault Ste. Marie route, is a graduate of the St. Paul, where he was clerk, brakeman, baggageman, and conductor. W. H. Badger, general superintendent of the Lackawanna and Pittsburgh Railroad, began his career as a locomotive fireman. Rufus Blodgett, superintendent of the New York and Long Branch Railroad, was formerly a machinist in the shops at Lake Village, N. H. W. B. Strong, President of one of the world's greatest railways, the Santa Fé system, received his first lessons on the St. Paul, beginning more than thirty years ago as a freight brakeman, then becoming station agent and telegraph operator in the little town of Milton, Wis., and afterward serving in the same capacity at Whitewater, Monroe, and Janesville. When Strong was selling tickets and checking baggage at Milton, C. W. Smith, now the First Vice-President of the Santa Fé, was doing the same thing in a little 4 by 9 station on the Columbus, Piqua and Indiana. George L. Sands, general superintendent, was once a freight brakeman. Henry C. Barlow, as lately as 1866, was simply an office boy in the station at Warren, Ill., but now he is general freight agent of the Wisconsin Central Railroad. W. H. Bancroft, general superintendent of the Denver and Rio Grande, was a telegraph operator on the Lake Shore. C. W. Bradley, general superintendent of the West Shore, was a brakeman and conductor. D. W. Caldwell, President of the Nickel Plate, was a clerk on the Pennsylvania. Fred Broughton, general manager of the Chicago and Atlantic, began as ticket clerk on an English road. R. H. Chamberlain, division superintendent on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, was, twenty-five years ago, conductor on a New York street car; then became a freight brakeman, conductor, and so advanced to his present position.

Other division superintendents who might be named from among many who have worked their way up by their own energy and ability are A. G. Amsden of the Lake Shore, who formerly checked baggage at South Bend, Ind.; George Clinton of the St. Paul, who was a brakeman, as was also George Alexander of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy; T. R. Twombly of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, who was a machinist and afterward a locomotive engineer; W. A. Scott of the Northwestern, who rose from the position of a laborer in the shops, and every one of the division superintendents on the Pennsylvania system. The principal officers of the traffic associations have earned their positions just as the operating railroad men have, in most instances. George R. Blanchard of the Central Traffic Association now travels in a special car and draws a salary of $12,000 a year; thirty years ago he was earning $40 a month as clerk in a Lake Shore freight depot. George Carman, who represents a traffic arrangement between a number of Western roads, at a salary nearly as big as Blanchard's, used to be train-boy on the Cleveland and Toledo. George H. Daniels, Vice-Chairman of the Central Traffic Association, knows how to swing a red flag as well as to construct a differential rate sheet, for he was a day laborer on a Missouri road before the war. John W. Faithorn of the Western Freight Association manages to get along on $8,000 a year, which is much better than the $10 a week which he was earning as a clerk on the Alton ten years ago. John N. Abbott of the Western States Passenger Association was a junior clerk on the Erie.

The belief among railroad men is that "he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much," and there is no lack of encouragement for all to hope to rise.

CHINAMEN UP TO GREAT THINGS.

Forming a Nation Within a Nation and Going to Build a Ruler's House Here.

Some forty or more big red-covered blank subscription books were laid upon the counters of Mott street Chinese general supply stores yesterday. They appeal to the Chinese residents of New York State to open liberally their hearts and souls, and especially to pour out the loose change in their big blouse pockets toward "a grand and noble work" that is about to be undertaken in the golden States in the far West. These appeals, strange to say, were started not only with the names of leading Chinese merchants in San Francisco, but also the names of the Chinese Consul and Chairman of the Municipal Council of the Pacific coast metropolis.

Only $250,000 is wanted.

The object is to build a sort of a Chinese capital or Pekin in San Francisco, with a State hospital attached to it. The San Francisco Chinese papers which arrived here simultaneously with these strange subscription books all contain leading articles upon this proposed new Chinese State house, and also the names of those Chinamen who contributed the sums of $1,000 or more each. These are: Chung Wha Way Gwan, $2,500; Sam Yik Company, $3,000; Gon Chu Company, $1,500; Ning Yong Company, $3,000; You Wo Company, $2,000; Hah Wo Company, $1,500; Show Hing, $1,000; You Wah, $1,000; Kwong Hing Kee Company, $1,000; Chin Nau Shing, $1,000, and 600 others who contributed sums all the way from $25 to $500 each. None of the Chinese papers thought it worth while to mention the names of those contributors who gave less than $25 each.

The Consul's proclamation also mentioned the fact that all the contributors who give sums over a thousand dollars shall be duly decorated by imperial decrees direct from the throne at Pekin to the rank of "Koonfee," something similar to the "Queens," "Sir Knights," or the barons of Europe, and have their names engraved upon tablets of gold and placed in that hall of the proposed capital especially reserved for ancestral tablets. There these names may be worshipped as a joss by future generations, or by the descendants of the royal families which they propose to raise and reign in this new Chinese tributary in the West.

This may read like fiction, especially when you consider the present circumstances of this race in the United States. But if I have deciphered the firecracker hyeroglyphics correctly upon both the prefaces of the aforesaid subscription books and the newspapers, these care for none of your politics. Heathens actually propose to create a sort of young annex of the Chinese empire in America by obtaining a plot of ground from the Mormons. The plant which they propose to establish is to be called the "Nationless Man of the Moon" Government. The officers are to be elected, but the "Tiduc," or Governor-General, has to receive the sanction of the Emperor of China before he has a legal right to the new $250,000 throne that is to be erected soon in San Francisco. The flag of this new "Korea" or "Annam" of the Emperor Kwong Suey will probably be a red moon with a flatiron in the centre. Instead of the customary white elephants or Jenseng roots for tributary considerations, pure and unadulterated California wine will undoubtedly be acceptable to his royal Chinese Majesty at Pekin. The Chinese papers have not forgotten to mention the fact that in politics this new Government will be solid upon a single issue, and that is it will be anti-Kearney. And the first proceeds of this new project, after paying the bills for necessary building expenses, will be devoted to fighting the Anti-Chinese bill—for its repeal, of course.

The results of the New York Chinese donations remains to be seen, as the books are only just out and the work is carried on more or less in whispers.

WONG CHIN FOO.

CAPT. REILLY'S OFF HOURS.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ANY POLICE COMMANDER IN HIS RECREATION TIME.

He Can't Walk the Street Without Being Waylaid by Friends Who Want to Show Him All Sorts of Favors—Cranks After Him, Too—Some of the Requests He Gets.

It is odd, but nevertheless true, that the police Captains of this big town never more completely experience the mingled luxury, humor, annoyance, and disadvantage of being the protectors of the public than during these formal periods of rest and recreation when they are "off duty." It is at such leisure moments that the fellow citizens of the Captains, who would hesitate to bother them when police duties command their time, take occasion to give assurances of their distinguished consideration, to bother them with varied and extraordinary confidences or complaints, to approach them with appeals for favors, or to thrust favors upon them, and in every conceivable way present to their attention the contrasted phases of human nature that only men "with a pull in a community" are peculiarly blessed with the opportunity to observe. And at no time, on the other hand, is a police Captain himself so peculiarly interesting to the philosophic observer as when he throws aside his official uniform for the time being and mingles with the rest of his fellow men as a private citizen.

Perhaps not a Captain on the force has a more varied or interesting experience when he makes the experiment of walking about the town unofficially than popular Thomas Reilly, the sturdy, straight-out Democrat who commands the Nineteenth precinct, the wealthiest and most important section of police territory in the whole city. For this reason a SUN reporter, who was detailed to discover just what are a police Captain's experiences in a single "off duty" period, made the genial commander of the Thirtieth street squad a particular object of study for several hours the other day. The observation of the pleasant side of these moments of recreation began with the Captain's visit to Police Headquarters on a purely social errand. This social call at Headquarters incidentally is in Captain Reilly's case, as in the case of every other Captain who has a theatre in his precinct, an opportunity to oblige a great many friends in a variety of ways. On this particular day Capt. Reilly went to Headquarters for a little social chat with Superintendent Murray. Capt. Reilly always makes these calls decked in his blue uniform, with his weighty helmet on his head and a sunny smile lighting up his face. He invariably pays Superintendent Murray, his chief, the honor of appearing before him in resplendent uniform, and he always wears a sunny smile because it is as inseparably a part of him as the gold badge that was presented to him at a church fair as the most popular Captain in the town.

Everybody outside the Superintendent's office greeted the Captain with great cheeriness. Many of the policemen and detectives handed him written memoranda, which he accepted with a smile, and tucked in the inside band of his heavy helmet. When he got back from Headquarters, and went to his private room in the Thirtieth street station house to put on his civilian dress for an afternoon walk on Broadway and Fifth avenue, he shook the helmet over his office desk, and over a dozen of the written slips tumbled out upon the blotter. These were some of the sample requests that had been put in writing, so that the Captain couldn't possibly forget them.

DEAR TOM: Hartigan wants two (2) seats for Casino for Saturday.

CAPT. REILLY, Thirtieth Street: Old Cohen's friend Dick S—— has fallen down stairs and dislocated his hip awfully. Can't you get Com. Brennan to let him have a bed in Bellevue Hospital like a good fellow, and oblige

G. S. T——.

DEAR CAP: Here's a pointer. Don't lend D—— any money. Got stuck on him myself badly. He's N. G.

CAPT. W——.

CAPT. T. REILLY: If you can get tickets for four for Thursday at Daly's I will call around to station.

Capt. Reilly sat down and wrote a letter to the Bellevue Hospital warden right off and mailed it, so that "Old Cohen's" friend would get to the hospital and be well cared for, and then he came back and took off his uniform and put on a dark spring walking suit, a black overcoat, and a black Derby, and, lighting a cigar that gloried in a waistband wrapper, he sauntered up Thirtieth street to Broadway. His stockily built, well-dressed figure looked for all the world like that of a prosperous and good-tempered merchant when THE SUN reporter joined him just beyond Daly's Theatre. People bowed and smiled at the Captain every other minute as he walked along, and he bowed and smiled back genially.

The Captain and reporter had gone but a few blocks when a little man, rather shabbily dressed and with a somewhat dilapidated beaver stuck at an angle on his head, drew the Captain aside and held a whispered conversation with him in the doorway of a trunk store. The Captain shook his head positively at the stranger at length, and the little man's face clouded, his eyebrows knitted, and he skulked hurriedly around the corner.

"That's pretty good," the Captain said, with a hearty laugh, as he rejoined the reporter. "That fellow wanted to borrow two dollars, and what do you think he based the request for the loan on? He said that I passed him in to the 'Fashing Day in Venice' entertainment at the Metropolitan Opera House. The fact is that I passed nobody in there at all, and I don't know him from a side of sole leather. You'd be surprised, though, if you could see the number of people who bother me with requests of that kind, on the ground that they know me, or are friends of intimate friends of mine, or can put my detectives upon a good clue, or some such equally transparent and useless yarn."

The crowd of queer loungers around the Brower House melted away suddenly as the Captain sauntered past the Fifth Avenue Theatre. There are a good many "mashers" and sports who congregate there on bright afternoons, for whom the Captain doesn't have much of a liking, and who, for the best of reasons of their own, return the compliment, and dislike him. Their business hasn't thrived to any gratifying extent since he became a conspicuous figure of the big "tenderloin" police precinct. Finally the Captain reached the Hoffman House, and walked into the corridor. Everybody there knew him, and he was quickly surrounded by a little crowd. A score of invitations were poured into his ear at about the same instant. They were about the same thing that every other Captain hears at such times. They sounded something like this:

"Captain, won't you come to the Twenty-second Armory to-night? The boys are going to give a dance and reception there. They'd like you for their guest, and be indebted if you'd come."

"Come around to the G. A. R. Post camp fire to-night, Mr. Reilly. We're going to have a mighty pleasant time, and I'd like to have you join in."

"Come and have a cigar."

"Just going to break a bottle. You must have a glass. I won't take 'No' for an answer."

"Can't you oblige me by coming to dinner to-night, and we'll go to the theatre afterward, with a couple of your friends. What! you're on duty again at 6? Pshaw, you're always saying that."

"Oh, Captain, you are just the man I want to see. Come around to the New York Athletic Club next Saturday. Here are some tickets. There's going to be some fine sparring there. Don't you miss it. I'll count on your coming."

"We've got a new play at Dockstader's to-night. Drop in and see it. I think you'll find something that will make you laugh."

"Won't you do me the favor, Captain, of taking these six tickets for the —— Church fair? They're only $1 each. If I get your name down on my list, it will boom my canvass."

"Say, Cap., haven't you got a spare photograph? I want to frame it and hang it up in our club house in West Fortieth street. We've got Inspector Williams and Superintendent Murray on the walls now."

"Here's the latest thing out, Captain—a trick penknife. You can bet a dollar that nobody can open it and you'll win, because it's a fact that it isn't made to open at all. I'll make you a present of it."

"Say, Cap., what do you think ought to be done with that young Englishman over there who seems to have a monopoly of getting full on ice water?"

This sort of overwhelming outpouring of good fellowship is something that Capt. Reilly, and every other Captain for that matter, encounters whenever he ventures into a popular café. Men gathered there insist upon inviting him everywhere, offer him presents, which he doesn't take, try to get his photograph, capture him as an attraction for some social entertainment, and in a thousand and one ways endeavor to make him accept their hospitality, when in reality what he wants most to do is to get away as quickly as is consistent with good breeding. Finally the pressure of invitations seems too great, and the Captain approaches the bar. The little throng of friends and acquaintances are delighted.

"What'll you have?" they ask, sure that he is going to accept their invitation.

"No, gentlemen," the Captain said quickly, "you'll have something with me."

And then, when the others had ordered their drinks, and a variety of drinks they were, the Captain spoke slowly in a low voice. "I'll have a little seltzer," he said with a laugh, and in a tone that showed that his friends had been cleverly circumvented in their little scheme "to treat" the Captain. They drank, and then the Captain planked down a bill and took his change, still laughing, and, bowing on all sides and diplomatically saying "Good day," he strolled out. He had again accomplished his original feat of making his would-be hosts his own guests. It is something he likes better than being treated himself.

He had turned up the west side of Broadway toward Thirtieth street after he left the art gallery, when a well-known club man walked briskly across the street from Delmonico's and stopped and spoke to him. He wanted the Captain to assign Detective Brett, who was off duty that night, to take a party of strangers from the West through the precinct first, and through the rougher down-town districts afterward. The friends were on the English "lad" of seeing the "slums" of the great city by gaslight. The Captain laughed and said that he would try to accommodate the club man and his friends, and wanted the club man to bring them around to the station at 11 P. M.

Just as the Captain reached the steps of the station house to go "on duty" again, Detective Brett handed him a handful of strong cigars.

"They're loaded," the detective said, as Captain Reilly looked them over. "One of your friends left them here. He wanted you to have some fun with the fellows, you know, who like to play practical jokes on other people, but don't like the same medicine themselves."

"No, I don't approve of loaded cigars," the Captain replied quickly. "It isn't funny to give a man anything that is liable to blow his eyes out or burn his face or injure his feelings."

"But these cigars aren't dangerous," Detective Brett rejoined. "They don't blow up at all, and don't endanger a man's personal appearance either, and he can't get mad at them unless he's foolish."

"All right, I'll try one then, and see," said the Captain, as he bit off the end of one of the cigars, lit it and puffed it three or four times. Suddenly a hissing sound issued from the lighted end of the cigar, and then two inches of blue flame leaped out from the lighted end and burned brilliantly for just about a minute. It was a comical and extraordinary surprise. The Captain laughed heartily and flung the cigar away. A common blue light fuse, just like the blue lights made for the small boys on Fourth of July, had been cleverly fitted into the filler of the cigar so that when ignited it would burn brightly but harmlessly while the cigar was held in the smoker's mouth.

"You see," said the Captain to the reporter, "my off duty promenade ends with a display of fireworks; just like a summer night's entertainment at Coney Island. And to tell the truth I have had as much enjoyment as any one could have at Coney Island."

In just two minutes thereafter he had thrown aside his civilian garb, and was once more behind the desk in his uniform of blue cloth and brass buttons, and officially on duty again as the crack commander of the crack Nineteenth.

A STRANGE KIND OF GAMBLING.

The Bohemian Oats Game Breaks Up Social Confidence in Iowa.

DES MOINES, April 27.—The Bohemian oats swindle, not so much a swindle in fact as a rural method of gambling, has come under the hands of the law in Iowa as in Eastern States, the Legislature just adjourned having enacted the Michigan law, which has proved effective in suppressing the evil there. The companies operating in this State and the West are mostly from Ohio and organized under the loose corporation laws of that State, where the amount of alleged capital stock is no indication whatever of the actual capital of the company.

The first step with these bogus incorporated companies is to lithograph some bonds, file articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State in Iowa, or wherever they wish to operate, and get his permit to do business. The agent then selects some good township in a good country and begins his operations. His first move is to make the acquaintance of five farmers who have influence and who can make gilt-edged notes. He will sell each of them fifty bushels of Bohemian oats at $10 a bushel, payable by notes running a year, with from six to ten per cent. interest, and give the bond of the company to sell for the farmer to his neighbors 100 bushels of the product at $10 per bushel, payable in cash or notes, less $2.50 per bushel commission. He will further agree verbally that in case the farmer should sell the balance of his crop to his neighbors at $10 per bushel he will bond the oats thus sold at $1.25 per bushel; that is, he will give to the buyer the bond of the Ohio Company. Of course the oats are not worth $10 a bushel, but as long as the company guarantees to sell them for that, it is all right. If there are any doubts of the ability of the company to take up this bond the agent will probably ask them to select one of their number to go to Ohio and inquire into their standing and he will pay the expense. The committee of one will find the individual members of the company of good financial standing, but has no means of finding out the condition of the corporation. The oats are sown and produce ordinarily from 15 to 25 bushels per acre. The peculiarity about them is that the hull comes off them in threshing and hence they weigh heavier per bushel than ordinary oats.

The first year the company makes the sales promised, redeems its bonds, and sells next year to ten farmers in a township and the next to twenty, and pockets the commission of $2.50 or $1.25 per bushel, as the case may be. The first men make money, of course, and the gambling spirit becomes thoroughly aroused. The notes are sold to banks and note shavers at from 10 to 50 per cent., and the number of the men interested rapidly increases. After the first sales the companies are simply the agents of the farmer in getting his neighbor to purchase. No one imagines for a moment that the scheme can work forever, but each one is persuaded that it will last one year, and the final loss will come on the neighbors to whom he sells. It is as clear as daylight that the time must come when the buyers will be so numerous that the bonds cannot be redeemed, but each victims holds to the delusion that it will not be he that will suffer, but his victims.

The farmer who has bought and sold of course tells all his neighbors how he has profited; the note shaver is interested in fostering an industry that produces notes that he can shave heavily, and the county goes wild over a scheme that promises to make everybody rich without the expenditure of any money. The deluded victims are told that when the oats will not sell in one county they will in another, or in another State. They do not stop to think that if there was any legitimate value to the oats the company could afford to rent land and raise them themselves, nor that at the bottom it is merely a scheme to induce the farmers of a State or county to pay $2.50 to an utterly irresponsible company in Ohio for the privilege of raising oats that are of less value commercially than the most common oats. In fact, on the face of every bond there is a distinct statement that the oats are sold on a fictitious or speculative basis, and this for the purpose of avoiding the charge of swindling by warning them beforehand that it is a gambling contract.

It is now two years since this scheme began to be worked in this State. It was promptly exposed in the public press, which had the effect of suppressing the swindle in most of the counties in the State. The Crawford, Williams, and Henry county companies, however, obtained a footing in Madison, Union, and Adair counties, and flourished. They redeemed their bonds in 1886 and 1887, and made large sales in 1888, the notes given for oats to be sown in the spring of 1888 amounting to $38,000.

Richard Price, Senator for Madison and Adair, introduced a bill in the late Assembly which was an exact copy of the Ohio law, and which passed with but few dissenting votes. Foiled in an attempt to defeat the bill in the Legislature, the Bohemian crowd adopted the desperate measure of stealing the bill before it could receive the signature of the Governor, but in this they failed, and it was signed, and has gone into effect. This outlaws the business in Iowa, and the Bohemian agents are now shipping their oats from Madison county, Ia., to Merna and Broken Bow, Custer county, Neb., and other towns in that vicinity. One of the evils inflicted upon the people of Madison county by this swindle is the division and demoralization inflicted upon the local churches. Several deacons and elders who were gifted with a desire to lay up treasures on earth went into the scheme. The more spiritually minded and less earthly members saw through the fraud and uttered an indignant protest. Several rows have been precipitated in the churches, and some church trials are imminent.

BEAUTIFUL UNTIL SHE SPOKE.

A Hindoo Woman who Paralyzed Carter Harrison's Heartstrings.

From the Chicago Mail.

In two hours we reached Poonah, the old capital of the Mahrattas and still the principal English station of this quarter of the country. It is quite a fine town, and was to us a revelation. We have not often enjoyed exquisite female Hindoo beauty. Some ladies were having a picnic in the public garden. Ther bourkas (?) were thrown off, showing their faces in full. I think they fully appreciated our admiration, for they did not cover when we sat on a bench close by to read our guide book, but rather turned toward us, either to show us their jewels or their faces. It is not often one sees uncovered Hindoo ladies. These were evidently such and of opulent houses. Never had I seen a purer type of face or more aristocratic features. All were pretty, three very beautiful, and one of a perfection of style which began so make me unhappy.

A wonderfully beautiful woman always makes me feel thus. I do not know why. I see a beautiful horse; I do not wish to ride or drive it. I see a splendid house; I do not wish to possess it or live in it. I see sparkling gems; I never wish to wear them. I do sincerely enjoy a prosperous man's happiness. I do not envy a man his beautiful wife. But I cannot realize that any man is good enough to be the possessor of a perfectly beautiful woman. She is something which instinctively I feel should be beyond the reach of any man, and yet she is not; very probably she is not beyond the reach of a very poor stick of a man. She may be beautiful, but is always fool enough to give herself to a miserable piece of masculine clay; whereas she is something to me so perfect that she should be enshrined in her own individuality. I do not want her; but I do not want any one else to have her. Thus I was beginning to feel when looking on this piece of dusky perfection. There was growing about my heartstrings a sort of contraction, a sort of paralysis. One of the little girls with the party ran off. My beauty called to her. She did not at once obey. The call became an angry screech. Presto! The spell was broken.

Thank Heaven! There was always something to break such spells. What a beautiful thing would many such be if they would only be silent! The canary's throat is never given to the bird of paradise. One should generally stuff one's ears when he looks upon this kind of perfection, and should listen blindfolded to a divine singer.

A TRIP WITH THE POSTMAN.

BEING A HUMORIST, HE CALLS HIS DUTIES A "PUDDING."

Some Specimens of What a Letter Carrier Sees, Says, and Hears—Gruff Words and Kind Ones—His Girl—Not This Evening.

"It's the biggest puddin' in the Government service." That's what a mail carrier said the other day, as he strapped a bag over his shoulder containing just fifty-seven pounds.

"Fifty-seven pounds ain't much," said the mail carrier. "I carried out ninety-six pounds day before yesterday. This is only a medium delivery."

"In what respect is your work a pudding?" asked the reporter, who had to trot briskly to keep up with the carrier's long strides.

"Oh, its such nice, easy work, you know, on such elegant pay. Only four to seven trips a day of four miles a trip. Only seven thousand, more or less, porches to walk up each trip. Only a hundred or more people a day who can't be found. Only a Jim-Albert-six-day gait to get back in time to start next trip. Only a day's work of from 6 in the morning to 7 or 8 at night. And for this little bit of work a great, fat, healthy salary of a thousand whole dollars a year. Oh, yes, it's a puddin'."

The carrier's tone of voice suggested sarcasm, but he smiled brightly while he spoke. Then he looked glum as he picked up the first letter of the pile he held in his hand.

"A 'beat' to begin on," said he. "I've been on this route five years, and know very well no such person lives in that house."

The carrier opened the door of a flat house and sounded his whistle loudly. Then he yelled: "John Martinis Anderson!"

No one responded, so he yelled it again. He sounded his whistle, and a third time shouted the name, whereupon an old man called down: "Put it in Olsen's box."

The postman did so, and then noted in a book that John Martinis Anderson's letters were to go in Olsen's box.

"Got to keep a pretty strict account," said he, "so as to facilitate matters. I'm the only authority on this route, and have to know what's what. They give me the letters in a heap before I start out, and I arrange them the most convenient way for delivery, according to the peculiarities of the route. Now, this name here I shall enter in my notebook. I have to keep a 'removal book,' too, to note changes of address."

"Miss Mary O'Keefe!" shouted the postman in another flat house. Miss Mary O'Keefe didn't live there. The postman tried the houses on each side, but with no result.

"No. 214," he muttered; "it must mean 204 or 224." But it didn't; nor did it mean 414, or several other numbers.

"There's a certain method in the mistakes people make in writing numbers that when you fathom it saves a great many steps. But this letter plainly don't belong anywhere here. I shall have to mark it, take it back, and search the records in the office to see if Miss Mary O'Keefe's name is on them. That is part of my work too. I have to search the 'removals book,' and, if not there, look through the Directory. That business after each trip occupies every moment of the time I'm supposed to be resting in, and sometimes on an unlucky day keeps me at the office till 8 or 9 at night."

While the postman was talking he was rapidly running over the letters in his hand, hopping up flights of brown stone steps, ringing bells, tapping at basement windows, driving across streets, plunging into flats, and generally deporting himself in a way exceedingly confusing to the reporter.

"There's a great deal," continued the postman, in disjointed phrases, punctuated by rushes at front doors, "in knowing thoroughly your district. Now a greenhorn—(No, Mrs. Brown, nothing for you to-day)—would waste ten minutes at the basement door of that handsome house and never once dream—(Moved away, you say? What's his new address?)—that it was an apartment house, and that no one lived in the—(Here, little girl, give that to your ma)—basement."

"Advertiser!"

The word was shouted from the ground floor of a cheap flat house. Some one came to the head of the first pair of stairs, and, with three deft twists of the wrists, the postman shot as many envelopes to the very feet of the person.

"Useful accomplishment," said he, "this back-action twist. Saves time and steps. Ah, good morning, Mrs. Philips. Expected to be at your house in fifteen minutes. Got a letter for you, and one for that Mrs. Gray that's visiting you. Wait while I get them out of the bag."

This last was to a lady he met in the street. A large brown stone house was approached. The shades were down, and a young man with a discontented face was descending the steps.

"Queer people these," said the postman, "never open the door to anybody. That fellow's been ringing half an hour I s'pose. Now just watch me."

One sharp blast of the whistle had not died away before the door opened wide, and a white-faced girl in black suddenly appeared. She looked expectant as she siezed the letter the postman held out. As she hastily glanced at the writing her face fell, and the letter dropped from her hand. The door closed very slowly.

"Sad story there, I guess," said the postman in a low voice. "That's the way it always is. She always springs at the letter, looks at it eagerly, and then her face gets whiter, and she shuts the door kind o' slow."

"What oo dot fo' me to-day, Missur Pos'man?" The postman paused just one instant and patted the curly head of a pretty child on a doorstep.

"Dot nuffin for oo Toodles dis time. Have somethin' to-morrow, sure. Phaw!" said he, as he hurried into a saloon with a newspaper, forgot all about Toodles to-day. Usually write her a little letter, and hand it to her as I go by. I sign 'em Mrs. Cleveland, and Queen Victoria, and Santa Claus, and other folks. She's always waiting for me, the little midget."

There was a glad look upon the postman's face and a suspicious sparkle in his eye.

"Never drink, Hans," said he to the barkeeper. "Thanks all the same."

The postman pulled the third bell of a house, and a woman came to the door and took a letter.

"It takes years," said he, "to know just exactly what bells to pull in every such house in a route. There's no names on the door, you see. When you pull the wrong bell it makes the public mad, getting summoned for nothing, and you lose time besides."

A slim red-cheeked girl bounced round a corner one way as the postman swept round the other. The postman tried to skip to one side, but the collision was inevitable.

"Oh, you horrid ——," began the girl.

"Beg par——," began the postman. Then he added: "Well, I declare!"

"Is that you, John?" cried the girl, struggling between smiles and blushes and rubbing her elbow unduly hard. "What an awful bear you are to walk so fast! I——but what's the matter with you, John? You look cross."

For the postman's face was grim and determined, and he fumbled in his letter bag with averted eyes.

"I beg pardon for running into you, Miss Mary," said he in a dry tone. "There's nothing at all the matter with me. It is because—er—I mean I have a letter here for you—er—I don't recognize—eh—that is, the handwriting. It's a man's handwriting, I notice. Here, take it."

"What a dreadful thing it is to have a postman for a fellow!" exclaimed the girl gayly, but flushing deeply the while. "Now, John, you know——"

"I know it's a dreadful thing to have a flirt for a girl!" said the postman bitterly.

"John!" called the girl in scared tones as the postman wheeled about. The postman did not stop, but slowed a mere trifle.

"To-night I will show it to you, John," said she, running after him. "Won't you come?"

The postman didn't look at her, but he shook his head.

"John, please come." She caught him by the arm. "Please, John."

He shook off her grasp rather roughly, but he murmured a little huskily:

"Perhaps."

Then he said: "Yes, Mrs. Robbins, here are three letters. Does J. G. Simson live here any longer?"

The postman zig-zagged across several side blocks. He stopped at every house for some distance, ran back to the opposite side and delivered up that side. Then he crossed the street again. Then he came back. At the corner he turned and dashed up a block on one side and back the other and resumed his former course. Another block, a turn, and the East River glinted in the sunshine while a seven-story tenement threw a black shadow on the postman and the reporter. The postman blew his whistle loudly and a crowd of children were around him. Frowsy-headed women appeared at the doors and a man and some women clattered down stairs.

"It's from John," said a woman, excitedly.

"Who's it for?" asked the man, earnestly.

"Oh, it's here at last!" The woman who exclaimed this was holding a shawl across her bosom and hiding her trailing hair in its folds. The children clattered around, and a man and a woman stopped in the doorway.

"Does Mrs. Kate O'Leary live here?" asked the postman.

"Who?" asked the woman in a hard voice.

"Kate O'Leary!" repeated the postman.

The woman merely turned and went into her room. The man uttered a low curse, and disappeared out the door. The woman with the shawl about her bosom breathed bitterly:

"My God, and it's now four months."

A little boy said:

"Yissur, but she's out. Sh' lives two flights up, front, t'yer right."

"I'll keep it fur 'er," said a woman with a cunning look on her face.

"No, you won't," said the postman, glancing keenly at her. He went up to the room pointed out, stuck the letter under the door, and poked at it till not a corner remained by which it could be pulled out.

"Letters come rare in these parts," said he; "they are considered curiosities."

A whole block shot past without a delivery. In the spots where a dozen families live in a single house the postman does not have to stop so often as in districts where as many houses monopolize a block. As he passed along with rapid, swinging stride women peered out of the windows and withdrew their heads when he did not enter the house. The doors of the petty stores and saloons along the street level opened as if inviting his entrance. Two women were quarrelling in a doorway. One of them wished him good morning and, turning, resumed her quarrel. A man who was cuffing a mischievous boy as well with oaths as blows grinned at the postman as he passed, and bent again to the screaming boy. A crowd of children followed about the postman's heels, screaming shrilly. The crowd was augmented from every tenement.

"Got any letter for me?" they screamed.

"Mister, give us a letter."

"Ain't never had no letter in me life."

"Mister, your face 's dirty."

"Don't mind him, but give us a letter."

The postman entered another tenement, blew hard upon the whistle, and shouted: "Anton Skevitz!" Again he called, and again. Then a harsh voice from a top floor replied:

"Pring it hiar."

"Come down and get it," shouted he.

"By tam, I vill not," floated down in energetic tones. "Vat vor I pays mine taxes? You comes yourself up."

The postman sighed and mounted the four flights with quick but weary tread. A burly, able-bodied German seized the envelope, and, with a glance at the one-cent stamp and the unsealed flap, cried out scornfully:

"You pe tammd! Vy for you draw me mine room out to get vun tammd advertisement? An' you vanted for me to go the schteps down maybe. You be von fool. Get out!"

The man made a threatening gesture, and the postman hurried down without a word. Then he said calmly:

"Those are the things that help to make a postman's life miserable. A very large number of people force me to mount flights of steps rather than come down themselves. They seem to have no appreciation of the weariness of a postman's life. And in the brown-stone districts they are still more inconsiderate, only they don't have the opportunity to put me to so much trouble. That man's abuse is an example of many things I have to bear, too.

"People swear at me when I bring them bad news, swear when I bring another letter than the one they were looking for, swear when an extra large delivery delays my usual time of arrival. It is hard. But I have never the time to spare to take any notice of it."

"Why did you climb the stairs then? Why didn't you make him come down, as you saw it was only a circular?" asked the reporter.

"The law compels us to mount the stairs and deliver at the rooms if the people refuse to come down. As for the matter of circulars, they are a fearful nuisance, and I grudge the trouble oftentimes I have to take to deliver a thing that I know will be thrown into the waste basket without even a glance. But the law says so, and, indeed, it is only just, if the public pays for its stamp, that the public be honestly served. Now, one more delivery hereabouts, and we strike for brown stone again. See?"

It was a curious letter the postman held up. The envelope was ragged—almost separated at one end. The stamp was South American. Postmarks of various Southern cities, Paris, Philadelphia, and finally a thick, black "N. Y." covered its surface. It was so soiled as to almost obliterate the address.

"That's a wanderer," said the postman curiously, and then added: "It's been most over the world and no end delayed. I kind o' feel as if it brought somebody bad news."

It was a poor little room where the postman delivered the letter, and a pale, sick-looking woman took it. She tore the envelope off quickly, while the postman waited to see the result. The woman's face beamed. She grasped the postman's arm and said thickly:

"God bless you."

She turned quickly to a ragged child who was peering out and whispered:

"Papa's coming at last."

Then she turned to the postman with a warm gesture, but the postman was clattering down stairs at a great rate, pulling the back of his hand across his eyes as he went. The postman didn't speak for several blocks, but strode from door to door with a speed that would have distanced his companion did he not have to stop to make deliveries. Then he said:

"I don't have time for adventures; but, once in a while, something happens that kind o' makes the water come in spite o' myself. Then I think that this job isn't so bad, after all, in spite o' the hard knocks one gets here and there. It ain't much salary we get. We go in as subs for a year or two and earn what we can substituting for men laid off. The first year as regular postman is $600; the second year is $800; the third year $1,000 comes along, and there we stick for the rest of our lives. It is bitter, hard work from early to late with only fifteen days off for the year. It knocks a man out young, too. It ain't all that can stand it, and when we keel over the Government shakes us. There is no pension or no easy places to help us through old age. But with it all, now and then comes a ray of real human feeling that most men don't get a chance to see, or an act of genuine good will that ain't accorded to most men, that in a way pays up for a good many of the rough experiences. They kind o' make a man's heart feel warm, you know. All the way up one block you keep cheered by the thought of the sweet smile you're going to get at the house on the corner of it. Down another block you forget what old Grummy said in thinking how glad Widow So and So's going to be to get that letter when she ain't had one before for near a year. See?"

The postman kicked over an empty ash barrel in sheer good feeling, and looked so good-naturedly at a pretty servant to whom he gave a letter that she blushed, under the impression that she was the cause of his happy look.

"Say, postman," called a white-haired woman from a modest dwelling, "here's a piece of pie that Jane made herself. I knew you couldn't eat it now, so I've wrapped it up for your lunch. I've been watching for you half an hour."

The old lady smiled sweetly as the postman took off his hat, pocketed the package, and said:

"Thank you, Mrs. Brown. I'm sorry I haven't a letter for you to-day. You see" (to the reporter), "the beauty of this business is that, when any one does show you kindness, you're sure it comes from the heart. They know you'll serve 'em just as well, no matter how they treat you. Come round and see me some night, and I'll tell you some of my experiences."

The trip was ended. The postman had one hand on the doorknob of the station office.

"Shall I come to-night?" asked the reporter.

"Certainly. Oh—hold on—not to-night."

The postman's face flushed just a little. He smiled, and went inside whistling.

A NEW UNION SQUARE THEATRE.

Plans Finally Made which the Fire Department Approves.

Notwithstanding the many rumors that the Union Square Theatre could never be rebuilt under the new law on its old site, plans have been perfected for a new structure which have received the entire approval of the Fire Department. Superintendent Albert F. D'Oench of the Bureau of Buildings has given the Courtlandt Palmer estate permission to erect the new theatre, and on Wednesday work was begun. Mr. Charles P. Palmer and Manager J. M. Hill have been busy two months on the plans. The general arrangement of the theatre will be the same as before the fire. It will be in the system of exits and in fireproof building that the principal changes will be found.

The west wall is to be entirely rebuilt from the foundation, where it will be thirty inches thick. The present east wall will remain, but it will be heavily buttressed where the longitudinal girders rest. Running the entire length of the building in the east side will be a fireproof passageway independent of the theatre proper. This will have an entrance fifteen feet wide at Fourteenth street, and will be eight feet at the other end, where it terminates in an open air shaft.

Two exits six feet wide open directly upon this passageway from the orchestra, while doors will be cut in the wall at the level of the gallery and balcony, giving exit by an iron stairway down the shaft and into the passageway. On the west side of the building is an open alley six feet wide, into which exits from the orchestra will open. From the balcony and gallery bridges will be thrown to the roof of the building at 854 Broadway.

The theatre will have a frontage of sixty-eight feet, thirty-three feet having been gained by the absorption of the Morton House office on the west and a barber's shop on the east. This width admits of an excellent arrangement of exit. The walls, ceiling, and floor of the vestibule and the partition wall which separates it from the auditorium are all to be of solid fireproof material. From the orchestra three doors will open into the vestibule, giving thirty-two feet of exit. Two wide staircases on each side of the vestibule will lead to the balcony, meeting on a broad platform into which three doors will open. On the outer sides of these balcony staircases will be the direct gallery exits, two straight stairways leading immediately into Fourteenth street. They will be divided from the balcony stairs by a fireproof partition reaching to the roof. The roof is to be of iron, and the little wood used in construction will be painted with a fireproof compound. The iron curtain which the law now requires can be lowered in a minute, completely isolating the stage. The twenty exits, aggregating 147 feet in the clear, are calculated to empty the auditorium in short order.

The seating capacity of the house will be very nearly the same as before. In the orchestra will be 434 chairs, in the balcony 258, and the gallery will hold 350. The decorations and fittings are to be elaborate. The Palmer estate has given Mr. Hill a new lease for eight years, and has agreed to deliver him the property ready for occupancy by Aug. 15. The cost of rebuilding the theatre is put at $50,000. Mr. Hill intends to open the new theatre on Sept. 3, with Miss Helen Barry, the English actress, in a new drama. On Oct. 8 Sydney Rosenfeld's "A Possible Case" will follow. An American drama by Miss Mary Fiske will follow, and it is Mr. Hill's intention hereafter to give American playwrights a chance.

ODD NOTIONS OF BARBERS.

SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT DROPPING A RAZOR OR TRUSTING A PATRON.

They Work as Apprentices for Two Years and Then Get Fair Wages—Shaving as an Art—An Employment Agency.

The barber dropped his razor. The barber was white haired and time scarred. He sighed deeply as he picked the razor from the floor. He sighed again as he rubbed it caressingly with a chamois; and he pressed his lips together as he slid it into a case and stuck it gently in a dusty compartment near the top of the shelves before him. When he had stropped another razor he silently returned to his work. The half-shaved man in the chair, who had lazily watched the affair, said:

"Busted, eh?"

"No, not hurt in any way; fell on the handle," answered the barber, grimly. It's too bad. I've used that razor off and on now for ten years. I never had a razor like Dobbin. You could always depend on him for a quick strop, and he got tired less than most other razors. It's like losing an old friend."

"Why, he—eh, hum—that is, the razor ain't lost? Though you said it wasn't hurt."

"He ain't hurt. But then you see I dropped him. Just the same as burying him. Can't use him again, of course. But you won't understand that. You see if a razor drops while you're using it, it's bad luck to ever shave with it again. I've always followed this rule. My father told me that forty years ago. Says he, 'Jim, if your razor ever goes back on you, you must retaliate, boy, or it'll be the worse for you.' The boys mostly laugh at me for it. It's an old saying that ain't so much believed in by these young fry. I notice, though, there ain't many of them likely to keep their nerve to a ripe old age like the few of us that observe it, all the same. For shaving tells on the nerves, you know, and unless you're lucky you get the trembles young and are no good for handling a razor. Well, I'll give Dobbin away—or lay him up in my trunk. He's been a good friend."

The white-haired barber was silent for a moment and then broke out captiously:

"Fool! I oughtn't to have touched Dobbin to-day. Why, I hung up the first customer this morning. Fool!"

"What's that got to do with it?" asked the man in the chair.

"Do with it? It's got everything to do with it. If a barber has to hang up the first man that comes in the morning he might as well put on his hat and go home. The day's bound to be unlucky. He generally don't make any money, or else he slashes somebody, or something happens—like my losing Dobbin here, for instance. Oh, you needn't laugh. Every barber in the land knows that is gospel truth."

These are two superstitions yet found among barbers. Years ago barbers were among the most superstitious of workmen. If he cut a man on Monday, the barber was sure he would cut seven men before Sunday. If the first customer in the morning complimented him, he would get little but grumbles and curses for the rest of the day. If he didn't receive at least one tip above the regular fees on Monday, the week would be a bad one. These beliefs are rapidly disappearing. There are two curious facts about razors though, that still give rise to general superstitions, and probably always will. It is noticed that after long continuous use it is difficult to give a razor an edge. The knowing hand will quietly lay it away with the remark that the razor is "tired" and "needs rest." After letting it "sleep" a few days, that is, simply not using it, the razor is found to be in good condition. Few barbers attempt to explain this. But the explanation is simple. The edge of a razor consists of a series of microscopic teeth. Long continuous use wears these down, despite stroppings, and it needs the oxidation which time only can provide to bring out again the mycroscopic roughness. Another peculiarity of the razor is that, though in splendid condition when last used, it sometimes positively refuses to take an edge when put on the hone in the morning. A few hours later it will take an edge beautifully. This is due to the same principle of oxidation. Barbers will sometimes say a razor is "balky," by which they mean that it refuses to take an edge, although not made "tired" by long previous work. Some razors, because of peculiarities in the grades of steel, are more apt to be "balky" than others. Such are regarded as suspiciously as a balky horse, and are disliked in a sort of personal way, as though the razor "balked" of its own free will and desire.

"Do barbers allow superstitions to affect their method of shaving?" was asked of a Broadway veteran.

"There is only one method of shaving," said the barber; "there never has been but one, and there never will be more. The barber rubs the lather into your stub until it clings to the face itself. To accomplish this he has first sponged your face with water to remove skin secretions. When first put on the lather sticks on top of the stub and does not touch the skin much. Rubbing brings it into the skin. It also softens the beard, and a barber always lathers you before he strops his razor, so as to give the lather time to get in its work. Then when he shaves you it is always with the grain. That is, every distinct portion of your face is shaved in the direction the hair grows. If this rule were not followed the toughest skin would, an hour later, show abrasions and eruptions would come. After the face is once shaved, the barber shaves it again for closeness. This second shave may safely be against the grain. Most faces can stand the second shave against the grain, but there are some men with stiff beards, too, whose skin is so tender that they can only be shaved one way. The barbor can never know positively from the appearance or touch of a skin whether or not it can stand the second shave. That is something the owner of the face must discover by experience. So when he shaves a stranger, unless he is sure he has a tough skin, the barber asks, after the first shave, if the man desires it close. The razor is placed nearly flat with the face. The free hand draws every bit of skin tight before he shaves over it. Some barbers pick up the skin between their fingers, others merely press it tight. Practically, though, every barber the world over shaves in the same way.

"He has no room, therefore, to bring in superstitions, so bound is he by the recognized principles of the art, except in such little details as beginning the shave on the right or left side of the face, shaving the upper lip before or after the chin, and other things of that kind. Every barber has some little maxims of his own about these unimportant items, and some believe that bad luck attends the man who doesn't shave every face in precisely the same manner regarding these little details."

"How do men learn to be barbers?" was asked of Fred Ritz, who shaves lawyers and bankers in Wall street.

"You've got to pay for it," said the barber. "Here and there you'll find a barber who keeps a sort of school, and charges a round price to give lessons. They allow the learners to practise when they gain a little deftness on the chins of unsuspecting chance customers. Generally, though, a boy who wants to be a barber is bound out to a regular barber for two years. The barber exacts $25 or more a year and the boy's entire service. In return he boards and lodges him, and makes him a good barber. My own experience is a fair sample case. I was only 14 when I was bound to a barber not in this city. I paid $25 cash down, and got half a bed and poor board. They put me on lathering first. Lathering looks easy, and it is easy, too; but you've no idea how awkwardly a new man will go about it. So, when there were no customers around my boss would have one of the workmen lie down in a chair and set me to lathering his face. There is a knack in getting over a soapy face deftly and quickly. Sometimes you use your fingers, other times the palm. An even pressure is required that isn't easy to get. If you press too hard you make it uncomfortable for the man you're lathering. The boss stood over me in these lessons and taught me the points, one at a time. Then I lathered the face of a customer while the boss got ready to shave him. For several months I had to stand behind the boss's chair while he was shaving and watch every motion his hand and wrist; for a barber only uses the hand and wrist in shaving. Then, after shaving an imaginary face or two under the eyes of a barber to show me the way a razor is held and moved, I was put to practice on the faces of the employees. My boss stood over me and watched every motion. Then he made me shave him. I trembled so that I cut him. It was a long, long time before they let me touch a customer, and then only when some good-natured fellow who came often and knew me invited me to try my hand upon his chin. Once in the traces I got confidence and was a good barber. Then my boss had a good barber bound to him for over a year yet at no expense but board; and he was to get $25 to boot, too, which was what I had agreed to give him for the second year as well as the first."

In an east side street not far from the Bowery a pleasant brick house hangs out the sign, "Barbers' Agency." John Koerber, a bluff German, a veteran, keeps the place. "How much do barbers earn?" he repeated. "Well, all the way from $10 to $16 a week, if you count it in cash. The usual way, though, is to take it part out in board. A boss barber usually likes to board his men. Then he gives them $5 up to sometimes $11 and $12 besides. A dollar a day though, over, and above board, is very fair. Some barbers command much better pay. A successful barber must be a politician. He must have tact and know how to read men, and he must know what to do with customers so as to retain them. If he treats the patrons as they want to be treated he will get along. Otherwise he won't. I think I know every barber in this city. I know precisely what he wants when he sends me an order, and I sort out my applicants to suit."

A quiet man entered the agent's office while this conversation was going on, and said he wanted a place. Mr. Koerber whispered to the reporter that here was a man he thought was fitted for a good place. The man offered a long list of recommendations, which Mr. Koerber refused to look at. "Recommendations," said he, "don't mean anything. I know a barber when I see one. An applicant doesn't pay for getting a place. The boss barber does that."