WATCH DOGS IN CONGRESS.

THEY ALL MEAN WELL, BUT THE NEW ONES NEED BREAKING.

How Judge Holman Came Near Mopping the Floor With a Young Fellow—Sam Randall Is Chief of the Pack, But Blount of Georgia, Kilgore of Texas, and Bland of Missouri Have a Very Keen Scent—How Kilgore Was Outwitted by a Yankee

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9.—Alert and wary are the watchdogs in Congress. They increase in number each year. They give tongue on the slightest scent, and their low growl is heard in every hour devoted to legislation. Since the war they have saved the country more than $500,000,000. Holman alone ought to be credited with a third of this sum, and the corrupt schemes blocked by Randall are hard to enumerate. But these are not the only watchdogs. There are nearly a dozen in the Congressional pack, and when they all yelp there are lively scenes in the House. The more foxy the quarry, the surer it is run to earth.

A good legislative watchdog can ask more questions in twenty minutes than the shrewdest lobbyist can answer in a week.

Each dog stands upon his own merits. He barks without reference to his fellows, but his bark is pretty sure to bring out the whole pack. All bite at critical moments. The old dogs keep their noses to the ground and strike no false scents. They are thoroughly trained, and are never lost in parliamentary thickets. The new dogs, however, are apt to be over watchful. When too circumspect, they throttle the most deserving appropriations. At times they prevent the payment of just debts of the Government. Many a patient creditor of the United States is to-day in despair because one of these dogs has barred the way to a settlement of his claims. A careless growl has left many a soldier's widow in penury. An inconsiderate snarl has left many a helpless veteran unpensioned. The dogs all mean well, but the new ones do not always act in the true interests of the people.

The best known of the pack is the Hon. William Steele Holman of Indiana. He has all the characteristics of a blooded mastiff. His sense of intelligence is high, and he is as trusty as the best combination lock. He never bays at the moon. Loud and clear is his bark. Courageous as a lion, he is as sagacious as an elephant. He bolts no seductive dog-buttons, for he is totally beyond the reach of temptation. Uncle Sam's barnyard resounds with his defiant utterances. He is tireless and apparently sleepless. You will always find him at his post. He lies in wait for jobs of all kinds. The words "I object" have made him famous. No matter how great the din and confusion, his ears are ever cocked. No legislation can be done until he understands its object. If wrong, he kills it quietly, but effectually, and then lies down and licks his paws.

Judge Holman is Chairman of the Committee on Public Land. He has saved millions of acres from the clutches of railroad corporations. But for his efforts there would hardly be an acre of the public domain left for the actual settler to-day. The Judge is over 66 years old. He looks more youthful. He is a native Hoosier, and has been twenty-four years a member of the House. It has not, however, been a continuous term of service. At first he served six years, and dropped out for two terms. He next served ten years, and again fell off two terms. Since then he has been eight years a member. He was redicted last fall. The Judge has round shoulders and a spare frame, but is really more vigorous than he appears. He has bulging, perceptive faculties, thin hair, deep blue eyes, high cheek bones, and a smooth upper lip. He carries a tuft of Florida moss on his chin. He dresses in conventional black and wears a turn-over collar. He uses eyeglasses and utilizes them in gesticulation. Holman can neither be coaxed nor driven from what he conceives to be his duty. Not long ago a Southwestern member besought him not to object to the consideration of a bill for the relief of a well-known Federal official. Holman expressed some doubt as to the justness of the claim. This angered the other. He inquired whether Holman arrogated to himself all the integrity of the House. Every hair on the watchdog was up in a minute. "You insolent jackanapes," he replied, "how dare you talk to me in this way?" The man from the Southwest told him that his remarks were offensive, and insinuated that his gray hairs alone protected him from chastisement.

"I waive my age," the Judge answered, "and I invite you to do the same. Come out into the lobby, you conceited ass, and I'll mop the floor with you."

The invitation was not accepted. Few doubt the ability of the Judge to do as he promised, although his antagonist was twenty years younger than himself.

There is no fictitious dignity about Holman. He wears no jewelry and assumes no airs. Not even a silver tobacco box does he affect, preferring to draw his chews from an old leather pouch. He usually sits tipped back in his chair, either twirling his eyeglasses or toying with his jack knife. Mr. Holman is neither an easy nor a graceful speaker. His voice is piping, but not strong. The speeches, however, are meaty and full of flavor. He can probably say more in fewer words than any man in the House. Easy to approach and kindly in disposition, he takes great pleasure in giving the benefit of his experience to new members. The accuracy of his judgment is universally recognized. Members at a loss in voting frequently say, "Well, I'll vote with Holman. Then I'm dead sure to be right."

Another well-seasoned and magnificent watchdog on behalf of the public interest is James H. Blount of Georgia, and he is as blunt as the pronunciation of his name. He is both broad shouldered and broad headed. In looks and disposition there is much of the bulldog about him. He has an honest bark, one that attracts the attention of the House. Up to all the tricks and traps of legislation, he is never misleading in his cry. He winds a job as if by intuition. His suspicions once aroused, he promptly shows his teeth. When his fangs are fastened upon the corrupt measure, he never weakens his hold until he has shaken the life out of it. He fights without fear or favor. The warmest personal friends cannot swerve him from the line of duty. The Cavalier may coax and the Puritan threaten him, but the brave old dog will bid defiance to both. Mr. Blount has thick gray hair and a smooth-shaven face. His face indicates true Georgia grit. He is Georgia born, and has Georgia manners, a Georgia accent, and Georgia ideas. His eyes are blue, and his face full and inclined to sallowness. He speaks deliberately and with a somewhat thickened enunciation. He wears no cuffs, and never becomes thoroughly aroused until he pulls down his wristbands. There is no posing for effect. He never tries to adorn his sentences with eloquence, but his speeches are streaked with the pure metal. He deals directly with facts, and always has the facts to sustain them. An adept in parliamentary law, he is frequently called to the Chair. As a presiding officer he is preeminently conservative. You will never get a decision from him upon any abstract point of order until he has thoroughly examined the rules. He wears a soft-brimmed felt hat, and never wears them when addressing the House. Mr. Blount has been a Congressman sixteen consecutive years. He enjoys next to the shortest biography in the Congressional Directory. It does not inform the readers that its subject was a brave and efficient officer in the Confederate army. He seems to fill the ideal of his constituents. His claims to renomination and re-election are never contested. No one apparently dreams of voting against him. Not one in twenty turns out to vote when he is in the field, as everybody knows that his re-election is a foregone conclusion. He represents the Macon district. In 1887 he received 1,722 votes and 1,722 majority. He honors the people who honor him. Long may his bark echo in the lobbies of the Capitol!

Seated near the centre of the Democratic side of the House sits a member of the Committee on Enrolled Bills. He has a long body, a long face, a long head, and many members long for his absence. He is built like a star hound. He has still gray hair, a bleached complexion, and a white face. It will hardly pay latter him to say that he resembles pictures of old John Brown. This is Buck Kilgore, the watch dog from Texas. Of late he has been making more noise than all the other dogs in Congress. Buck is serving his first term. He has a full eye and expansive nostrils. His bark is incessant, and at times almost annoying. Many members curse him for his apparent freshness. He frequently bounces out of his kennel without provocation, and goes for everything within sight. The old dogs growl at him and then snap their own wind. At the slightest provocation Buck's ears fly up and he emits a doleful howl, in which the words "no quorum" are heard. He is full of tricks. At odd moments he shuts his eyes, like a dog sleeping in the sun. Then is the time to look out for him. He will wait until an interesting measure comes upon the verge of its passage, and bring it to the floor with a snap that may be heard in the Senate wing of the Capitol. It takes either a Yankee or a Missourian to outwit him. Bob Vance of Connecticut did it not long ago, and Abe Hewitt of New York caught him another afterward. Buck is exceedingly watchful when pension bills are before the House. Vance was forwarding a bill to increase the pension of a disabled veteran. He knew that Buck would bark the instant the bill came up. To distract his attention he sent one of the crack story-tellers of the House over to his kennel. The step proved effectual. Buck was so charmed with the raconteur's recondite that he lost track of immediate legislation. The bill was passed before he regained his watchfulness, and the disabled veteran is now enjoying a pension of $72 a month. Hewitt played a still sharper game. He usually presides in Committee of the Whole on nights devoted to pension legislation. Few members are present at such times, and the point of no quorum invariably kills a bill. Buck had delayed legislation several evenings. Hewitt invited him to the Chair one evening, and before the close of the session over forty pension bills were passed.

There are other watch dogs worth mention. Joseph B. Cheadle of Indiana is one, and Iowa boasts of two in Daniel Kerr and A. R. Anderson. A greater than either is Silver Dollar Bland of Missouri. Space forbids further particulars, but greatest of all is the Hon. Samuel J. Randall. The dogs all improve on acquaintance. A new member begins by disliking them; anon the dislike is turned into admiration, and ends in positive affection.

AMOS J. CUMMINGS.

NEWS OF THE THEATRES.

There will be city trials of comparatively new plays at four theatres to-morrow night. Maggie Mitchell will present "Ray" at the Fourteenth street, the Hallen and Hart company will make known "Later On" at the Star, Ramsay Morris will show Selina Fetter as the heroine of "The Tigress" at the People's, and Bolossy Kiraly will offer "The Water Queen," an old spectacle in a new dress, at Niblo's.

Maggie Mitchell's stay in town will be brief, for she will occupy the Fourteenth Street only a week. Her comedy is "Ray," written several years ago by C. Wallace Walters, a bright journalist of Philadelphia, who has furnished Gus Williams and other stars with pieces to fit. "Ray" was first placed in Miss Mitchell's repertory April 19, 1888, at Providence, and she has made almost constant use of it since, although she has not yet tried it in this city. She enacts the title character, a waif, with the usual mystery of birth and vicissitudes of fortune. Charles Abbott, who had his training for the stage in Boston, remains in Miss Mitchell's support as her leading actor. He has become valuable to her. The veteran Robert F. McClannin also continues to do good work in this star's company. Virginia Nelson, Marion Clifton, Annie Chase, George Deyo, Sheridan Tupper, and C. E. Boardman are in the minor rôles. After Miss Mitchell the Hanlons' "Voyage en Suisse" company will play a fortnight here. They are to put aside that serviceable piece after this season. A production of James A. Herne's "Drifting Apart," and a long engagement of J. K. Emmet in his new piece, "Uncle Joe," are spring futurities at the Fourteenth Street.

"Later On," which New York will judge to-morrow night at the Star, is in large part the work of Philadelphia's busy farceur, Henry Grattan Donnelly. Revision was helpfully made after it left his hands, however, and it can be surmised without much difficulty that John T. Kelly of the cast had something to do in the revision; but the credit of authorship is generally conceded to Donnelly. Fred Hallen and Joe Hart each of whom had been high-priced in the vaudevilles, combined their capital and their cleverness last fall to embark among the farce ventures. Hallen had previously made a small fortune in the management of a variety company headed by himself and wife, and Hart had been thrifty and careful. Their partnership resulted in the first performance of "Later On"—which had been written for them—on Aug. 25 last at Cumberland, Md. Since then they have travelled with the farce, and it seems to have been liked out of town. Hart and his associates are comedians of the airy and easy type. John T. Kelly, of their support, is an Irish wit, singer and dancer, and they have besides a good baritone in J. Bernard Dyllyn; a pretty and a jolly soubrette in Georgie Parker, who was a favorite of our vaudevilles three or four years ago; a charming singer in Hilda Thomas, late of the "Fashions" fiasco; and competent minor persons in Flora Zanfretta (Mrs. Kelly), Dodie Morton, W. P. Guiberson, Jennie Bageard, and others. Most of the music in the farce has been newly written, and there is the usual promise of a multiplicity of solos, dances, duets and part songs. Next week, "The Stowaway," with its realism of burglars and a movable yacht scene, will possess the Star's stage.

"The Tigress" will come to the People's for a Metropolitan endorsement, which, if gained with honesty and heartiness, would probably mean a more pretentious production here at a later date. This melodrama is based on the novel, "Crucify Her," whose author, Ramsay Morris, has also made the play primarily to fit the purposes of Selina Fetter. That lady is a Louisville girl with a stage experience that, since its start, in 1884, has afforded her frequent opportunities for good acting. She began as a star, playing *Mariana* in "The Wife," and has since travelled with a number of leading actors. Her labor with Robson and Crane for several seasons gave to her pleasant prominence, and her success as the *Widow* of "The Henrietta" probably led up to the resumption of her more ambitious career. "The Tigress" was originally acted at Louisville on Oct. 15 last. Its tour seems to have fulfilled most of the hopes of Author Morris, who, showing a versatility that is not common these days, is manager of the venture and actor of the villain, Blanche Weaver is a leading member of the cast. The story of the play is said to closely follow the version of the book. The plot is essentially French, the scenes being laid in Paris and Monte Carlo. There is a flower girl who has not been what she should; her lover, who loses his heart and money to an adventuress and her accomplice, who flit between Monte Carlo and Paris; a nobleman who employs the only time flower girl as a governess and falls in love with her and marries her despite the machinations of "The Tigress," who very properly commits suicide as preliminary to the nuptials of her rival. Some stress is laid on the novelty and richness of the costumes in "The Tigress." Among the garments is one made of tiger skin, and the effect is thought to be startling. Matinées will be given on Wednesday and Saturday.

The periodical Kiraly spectacle makes its visit to Niblo's this week. It is one of Brother Bolossy's enterprises this time, and it is likely to be acceptable in its ballet features and its scenes, for Francesina Paris, graceful and comely, heads the dancers, and the canvas has been painted by our own Voegtlin and by foreign brushes as well. "The Water Queen" is its title, but it will be easily recognized as a modern treatment of an old theme—"The Naiad Queen" and the "Undine" of forty odd years ago, when Burton was *Schnapps* and Josephine Shaw (now Mrs. Hoey) was in the first of her triumphs. But Bolossy has probably prepared the ancient legend of the Rhine with new embellishments of song and scene, and the revival will be apt to bring to Niblo's some of the splendor and the animation of bygone days. Ricca Allen, old in Kiraly spectacles, is in the dramatic cast, as are W. H. Wallis, pretty Hattie Grinnell, Fred De Vere, E. H. Sea, and Helen Sedgwick, who is Irene Perry's sister. The Alexandro and Herbert brothers provide the specialties.

Mrs. Langtry suddenly announced a change in her intentions yesterday morning. She decided then to play "Macbeth" in this city no longer than Wednesday night, replacing it with "As You Like It" Thursday, "Pygmalion and Galatea" will follow. Mrs. Langtry says that she has found herself physically unable to play *Lady Macbeth* without interruption. Her season at the Fifth Avenue will end on Saturday night, March 2, and on the following Monday Nathaniel C. Goodwin, Jr., will open an engagement of seven weeks, which he proposes to fill with only one play, a comedy new to this city, and called "A Gold Mine." After him will come Minnie Palmer for a month of "My Sweetheart" and "My Brother's Sister."

"To-night will be uncommonly active at some of the city theatres. The Cleveland-Haverly minstrels propose to give the first white face concert ever held, and it is likely that this announcement will draw to Niblo's a very large gathering. That the singing will be good is a foregone conclusion, for James Norris, Banks Winter, Ed de Tomasso, and R. E. Rogers of the troupe have proved themselves effective and well-trained soloists during the past week's performance at the Windsor. Besides the inevitable Frank Cushman, lively John Queen, and that peculiar comedian, R. G. Knowles, will do their share in making the entertainment agreeable. At the Bijou, Dockstader's minstrels are to give another of their concerts without burnt cork. Harry Pepper, Dick Jose, Harry Brandon, Sweatnam, Moreland, and Marion will be heard. Cromwell's man, lecture at the Grand is sure to bring together a good assemblage and it ought to be unusually interesting, for it will illustrate "Switzerland, the Land of Tell," a subject which is capable of highly picturesque treatment. There will be the customary mildly hilarious show at Koster & Bial's, and hourly entertainments all day at Doris's, the Grand, and Worth's dime museum.

"Sweet Lavender" will continue this week at the Lyceum, and that will bring it to its 100th consecutive performance, a triumph that is to be as much credited to the excellent acting of the Lyceum's company and to Manager Frohman's discreetly artistic direction as to the dramatic strength in the piece itself. It is hardly seems probable that Mrs. Burnett's new comedy will be needed this season. For "Sweet Lavender" ought reasonably run until it is time for E. H. Sothern to return to the house of his fame and chief successes. A Greek tragedy of Sophocles never before acted in this country, will be given in English at a special matinee by the American Academy of the Dramatic Arts, formerly the New York School of Acting.

"Little Lord Fauntleroy's" furor does not abate at the Broadway, and, although the courts may ultimately be called upon to arbitrate the differences between French and Canzer as to the profits of this remarkable mania, the litigation can hardly last any longer than the piece itself.

Prosperity still reigns at the Academy where "The Old Homestead" and Denman Thompson triumph to an extent that puts out of remembrance the greatest of the old time achievements of song or drama at this historical playhouse.

The last nights of "Antony and Cleopatra" are at hand at Palmer's. There has been no cause to depart from the earlier critical verdict that Mrs. James Brown Potter had failed to act *Cleopatra* as the poet idealized her. At the same time the spectacle has won a large and curious success with the public, and it has beyond all contradiction settled any doubts that Abbey may have entertained as to the future of his actress. She will pay the tragedy to the finish of her present tour, and will then go to Europe for a summer's rest. In the fall "Antony and Cleopatra" will again be presented. A week from to-morrow night Coquelin, Hading, and the French players will return for a season of fourteen farewell performances, during which "L'Etrangere," "Mlle. de la Seiglière," "Denise," "L'Aventurière," "Frou-Frou," "Le Maître de Forges," "Un Parisien," "Les Surprises du Divorce," "Le Joie Fait Peur," "Les Precieuses Ridicules," "Tartuffe," "Don Cesar de Bazan," and "Chamillac" will be given. The subscription sale of seats for the entire series will open at the box office on Tuesday morning, and close on Wednesday. Following the custom observed during the earlier French engagement the prices of seats will be advanced. After the French people, Henry Lee will take the house to test the remarkable play, "The Cavalier," and next we shall have the McCaull Opera Company with us for a long term.

Minnie Palmer comes to the Grand Opera House after a long tour abroad and a season in this country which has thus far surpassed most of her previous appearances. She will revive the always welcome "My Sweetheart," with new songs, new dances, and a company warmly commended elsewhere. The efforts of the winsome comedienne this season are noted by most of the critics as being greatly above anything she has thus far done in this country. Miss Palmer's leading comedian is R. A. Roberts, a handsome fellow and a good singer, who came here with her from England a season or two ago, and has since been something of a favorite in her company. Indeed, he has made friends enough to lead him on to seriously contemplate an independent tour by and by. Mantell in "Monbars," "The Still Alarm," and one of Gillette's plays are March underlinings at the Grand.

Annie Pixley will transfer herself to the Windsor's stage to-morrow night. She will temporarily stop the antics, perplexities, and melodies of "22, Second Floor," which last night finished a brief but profitable stay at the Fourteenth Street, and for her Bowery visit will revive "The Deacon's Daughter." Miss Pixley seems to have a faithful following in this town. Her performances are always well attended, and the heartiness with which her efforts are constantly received frequently puzzles thoughtful playgoers. On the Bowery she is sure to repeat with emphasis her Fourteenth Street success. Next week the Windsor will have Nellie McHenry, John J. Webster, and the others who, with them, have for several seasons constituted the "Salsbury Troubadours." That distinguishing and somewhat famous title, however, has been dropped of late, and Miss McHenry and her husband are now the principals of the company. They will make their city reappearance in "Three of a Kind," a farce by Edward E. Kidder, who is among the cleverest of our later writers of light pieces. William C. Dore is one of the volunteers for to-night's concert for the benefit of Miss Markham.

The new comedy at Daly's, "An International Match," has thus far been acted to large audiences. For the ninth subscription performance on Tuesday night, "A Night Off" will be revived with nearly the original cast.

"Pete" is retained at Harrigan's, and it is doing pretty well there. Nevertheless, Martin W. Hanley makes known that "The O'Reagans" has been rehearsed of late, and that its revival is only a matter of a few weeks' time. It is remembered as one of the most humorous of Harrigan's sketches of local life.

"Nadjy" runs without any interruption in its success at the Casino. Excellent judgment brought about its reproduction, and the attendance so far justifies the anticipation that no change of bill will be needed before warm weather. Pretty and plump Sylvia Gerrish retired from the cast last night to join the Casino's traveling "Yeomen of the Guard" troupe.

"Natural Gas" will go away from town after next Saturday night. Meanwhile the Bijou is sure to hold big audiences, for this absurd skit has made a success, even on its second visit. It will be followed at Manager Rosenquest's well-conducted house by a return of Tillotson's "Zig-Zag" company, the chief female singer in which is Anna Boyd, once a star of the vaudevilles.

"Captain Swift" nears its one hundredth performance at the Madison Square, and still there is no visible diminution in the profitable numbers of its witnesses.

John Doris's Eighth avenue dime museum has had an excellent fortnight with its novel convention of cowboys. This week a new programme of curios, singers, comedians, and dancers is offered. This house is well kept. A long list of new and interesting attractions will be presented at the Grand, 345 and 347 Grand street. The remarkable Leopold family continue to attract much surprise and attention. Hop o' My Thumb is always surrounded by a crowd of admiring spectators at his afternoon and evening receptions. Among the many other attractions to be seen are Schindler, magician; Barnello, fire king, and the D'Estes, long-haired sisters. Another consignment of wild animals was received yesterday for the menagerie. "Mazuma, the Night Owl," a spectacular pantomime, will be played during the week. At Worth's Museum the ossified man, John R. Bass, is a retained and powerful card. The customary stage entertainment will be given.

The Actors' Fund will be enriched considerably, and an audience entertained remarkably, next Thursday afternoon. The Madison Square Company will play an act of "Engaged," the Daly company will give "Rehearsing a Tragedy," Mrs. Langtry will appear as *Galatea*, and Mrs. Potter as *Mlle. de Brezzier*. This will occur at Daly's house, and seats are $2.50 each. The cause is good. But about all that the public thinks of, on these occasions, is what Fun is worth, will be given. There should be no doubt on that point this time.

"The Pearl of Pekin" may be heard at the Standard a fortnight longer. Then Louis Harrison, Belle Thorne, and the others of Rice & Dixey's merry company will go away, making way at Manager Duff's handsome house for Nellie Farren, Fred Leslie, and the London Gaiety burlesquers, who will come back to town considerably earlier than had been looked for. They will be none the less welcome, however. "Miss Esmeralda" will be revived, with the same picturesqueness of scenery and excellence of terpsichorean episodes that made it a huge success a few months ago. The troupe will remain at the Standard for a month, and perhaps longer if all the circumstances prove favorable.

The visiting companies at the Jacobs east side houses this week are old and pleasing acquaintances of Manager Jacobs's patrons. "The Kindergarten" at the Third Avenue will be revived by the same clever company that has for a season or two prolonged the life of this farce. Katie Hart, a bright young soubrette, a lively dancer, and a cleverish singer, leads in the cast, with Alfred McDowell, a droll and original comedian, as her best assistant. At the Thalia, Joseph J. Dowling and Sadie Hasson will come forth once more in the familiar melodrama, "Nobody's Claim," which has served them well on their tours of the country during the last two or three years. The following will appear at to-night's concerts at the Third and Fourth and Thalia: Press Eldridge, Walter Pelham, E. C. Edwards of Edwards & Walton, Milton G. Barlow, Laporte Sisters, Prof. Att. Caldwell Sisters, Mons. Bingo, Carrie S. Webber, Charles Lowe, and J. B. D. Wilson. Next week "The Streets of New York" and N. S. Wood will be the offerings.

The large portion of the playgoing community from which the vaudevilles derive their profits will find an entertainment of rare merit in its line at Tony Pastor's this week. The Harry Kernell company will occupy that house. It is strong, not alone in having Kernell at its head, but in bringing here several performers of foreign repute, notably the three Carnos, character acrobats, and the Darrows, a pair of comical musical clowns. The Brasats brothers, gymnasts; Maggie Coleman, a dancer who ranks with Ida Heath in grace and agility; pepper Frank Bush, the dialect comedian; Lilly Sebbins, revolving globe performer; Isabella Ward, musician, and Huber and Alpine, sketch actors, make up a programme that may be safely pronounced as bright, clean, and novel.

Kellar's astounding entertainments at Dockstader's have attracted all the commendation from all who have witnessed them. This illusionist has always been welcomed in New York, but he has never given a more satisfactory show than his present one. He hopes to remain several months longer, and it is substantial proof of his confidence that he has subleased the house from Dockstader until May 1, the expiration of the minstrel's lease. From time to time Kellar is to make changes in his programme. The matinees have already become popular among the children, for the benefit there are entertainments devised. He talks of a professional matinee, too. Frank Murray will assume the management of the theatre, beginning to-morrow. Kelar will present his latest and greatest wonder, "Astaria," on Monday week.

The vigorous and eccentric Russian dancers are a novelty at the Eden Musee. The matinees are daily attended by goodly crowds of ladies and children. An orchid show will commence on Feb. 19 and continue one week, under the patronage of ladies and gentlemen interested in those beautiful plants. This promises to excel all previous affairs of the kind in this city. Over 5,000 rare orchids will be on view, as well as many specimens of rare tropical plants which are on their way from the West Indies.

Emma Jutau, a comely and intrepid high trapeze performer, has won such a host of admirers during her stay at Koster & Bial's that her engagement has been extended. Among the others who will appear are Madeline Rosa, female ventriloquist of some note; the Weston brothers, musicians extraordinaire; Dan Hart, comedian; the Morions, character change performers; Mac Pelham and his acting dog; Marie Gilchrist, dancer and singer; Rexford brothers, gymnasts; Mabel Hudson, ballad; and others equally as well known.

Barnum & Bailey will open their circus season in Madison Square Garden on March 23. The whole show will be given at once, with the circus and hippodrome together, instead of exhibiting the circus part for a time and afterward adding the races. I stay in this city with the circus only two weeks, and the show will go East early in May.

About this time look out for the premonitions of next season's new actresses. One of them is to be Mrs. James G. Blaine, Jr., and she is in circumstances not unlike those of Mrs. Langtry and Mrs. Potter at the time of their debuts. That is to say, she has been of value to the newspapers, by reason of her connection with and disseverance from the Blaine family. Therefore, she is fairly announced to the public, and greatly to her material advantage, should her artistic worth prove to be of an order to warrant it. A similar case is that of Julia Marlowe, a girl whose promise to become a remarkably fine actress was commented upon in THE SUN when, last year, an engagement was made with her in several legitimate rôles. Her debut was very humble, but she is rising steadily. She is very likely to realize the fondest hopes of her friends and promoters, but some of them are doing her no good by such nonsensical assertions as her manager made the other day to a Sun reporter. He declared that she had rejected the proffered tenancy of several Broadway theatres, when, of course, she would be glad to get favorably into any one of them; that she had refused to meet clamorous press interviewers, the fact being that newspaper space had been urgently solicited for her in vain, and a lot more of assertions quite contradictory to the truth. Miss Marlowe will win her way, and she should not be hindered by false and unwise exploitation.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

The announcement that appeared exclusively in Friday's SUN as to the determination of the directors of the Metropolitan Opera House to give, as heretofore, grand opera in German during the season of 1889-90, caused more surprise on account of the early date of the decision than because of its character. The results of the current season have so far been quite satisfactory enough to warrant the directors' recommendation to the stockholders, who will certainly adopt it. Although Italian singers have had little encouragement to perform on this side of the Atlantic, their exactions are as great as ever. The few whom people in the United States would care to listen to still demand extravagant *honoraria*, and mediocre artists are not wanted. Besides, it is felt that the admirers of Italian music cannot complain, this winter at any rate, of a neglect of their favorite composers. Out of the seventeen operas that Director Edmund C. Stanton will have been energetic enough to produce between December and April, a large proportion are Italian in style, for Meyerbeer certainly inclines more toward Italy than toward Germany. No doubt the same policy will be adhered to next year. With singers such as Frau Hanfstaengl and Herr Perotti, for example, it will be an easy matter to vary the repertoire so as to meet the demands of all factions. The text of the operas has really very little to do with the case; if only the music is well sung, few auditors will grumble at the words wedded to the musicians' measures.

Verdi, Meyerbeer, and Wagner are to supply the operas during the current week at the Metropolitan. On Monday the "Trovatore" will have its third performance. On Wednesday "The Huguenots" is to be given, and Frau Hanfstaengl's appearance as the *Queen* will add dignity and brilliancy to the representation. Friday, "Die Walküre," the second link in the tetralogical chain, will be produced for the first time this winter, and on Saturday afternoon "Die Meistersinger" will be the attraction. It may be worth noting that "Aida" has been put into rehearsal; this melodious work will, for the first time in a long while, have a *Radames* of suitable vigor and endurance to renew the old-time impressiveness of Verdi's numbers.

Mr. Max Maretzek's jubilee representation, which comes off at the Metropolitan Opera House on Tuesday evening of this week, promises to be brilliantly successful. "Monster performances," as they are called, usually draw overflowing audiences, and as the approaching affair will enlist the services of about all the vocalists and virtuosi of importance in and about town its outcome can hardly fail to be satisfactory to the beneficiary and to the public. Not the least interesting feature of the entertainment will be the successive appearance of all the orchestral conductors within reach. The mere fact that Herren Thomas, Seidl, Neuendorf, Damrosch, et al. have consented to work in a common cause abounds in edifying suggestions.

The last concert but one to be given in this city by the Boston Symphony Orchestra this season occurs at Steinway Hall on Tuesday evening next. This will be the final appearance but one in New York of Mr. W. Gericke previous to that conductor's return to Vienna to make way for Herr Nikisch. Schumann's C major symphony is to be the most important number on Tuesday's programme, and the novelty of the evening will be a piano concerto by Mr. Maximilian Vogrich, a Hungarian pianist and composer, and the son of a once renowned prima donna known in art as Mme. Vogri. Fraulein Adele aus der Ohe is to be the pianist. On Thursday afternoon at Chickering Hall Mr. Thomas will give his fourth orchestral matinee. A most interesting programme has been arranged for this entertainment. The prominent numbers being a suite by Arthur Foote, a flute concerto by Quantz, to be played by Mr. Otto Oesterle, and Tschaikowsky's "Mozartiana."

The week's repertoire for the Metropolitan Opera House company's performances in Philadelphia includes "Die Meistersinger," which will be given on the opening night and at the Saturday matinée, and the tetralogy. Herr Kalisch has been engaged to share with Herr Alvary the perils and triumphs of the "provincial" tour, and a third tenor is to be gotten from abroad in case hoarseness or physical ailments of a more serious nature should overtake one or both of the remaining members of the trio.

The latest news concerning the preparations for the formal opening of the Chicago Auditorium is to the effect that the engagement of an Italian opera troupe has been confided to Mr. James C. Duff. Mr. Duff has had no experience, that is to say, in the snaring and caging of Italian song birds, but the directors of the Auditorium may have thought fit to leave the task of the birdcatcher in his hands on the same principle that the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein was asked to appoint Fritz a schoolmaster; not because the applicant could read, but because he desired to learn. It is understood that the directors of the Auditorium have made it a condition that Mme. Nordica shall be the contralto, but it is believed that in respect of the choice of other artists Mr. Duff has *carte blanche*.

Rumors are current that negotiations are in progress between Abbey, Schoeffel & Grau and Anton Rubinstein. The pianist is willing to revisit the United States for a nightly fee of $2,000 to $2,500, and it is believed that people are sufficiently anxious to hear him once more to make the venture a profitable one. Among first-rate pianists of lesser note who are desirous of coming, or willing to come hither, are D'Albert and Grunfeld. The chances of reaping a golden harvest with concerts of piano music, however, are not rosate.

The McCaull Opera Company return to the Brooklyn Academy of Music for a week on Feb. 18, presenting their charming production of Von Suppe's "Boccaccio," which proved such a success when presented here early in the season. The cast includes all the favorites.

Mr. E. B. Scovel has signed a four months' engagement with Manager W. N. Foster of the Boston Ideal Opera Company, and he is to appear thrice a week with that organization until June 1. The engagement of Mr. Scovel, who has sung all over Europe, in Italian and in English, with great success, completes Manager Foster's personnel, which was strong enough heretofore in respect of prima donnas—Miss Zolla de Lussan, Mlle. Pauline L'Allemand, and Mme. Janochowski—and in the tenors—but was somewhat weak in high male voices. Mr. Scovel is to sing in "Faust" in "Carmen," and probably in "Martha." The Boston Ideals, by the way, are on the point of adding to their repertoire good old opera comique, once dear above all things to the German heart. They are soon to bring forth Lortzing's "Wildschutz," which was composed in 1842. So there is still hope for "Monsieur."

IN THE BROOKLYN PLAYHOUSES.

The bills to be offered at the various theatres in Brooklyn for the forthcoming week are for the most part good ones, but nothing strictly new or original will be seen. The business at all the houses has been better during the past few weeks than formerly, and the managers are consequently in good humor all around.

Nat C. Goodwin and his excellent company will hold forth at Col. Sinn's Park Theatre during the week, opening to-morrow evening in "Turned Up," in which as *Caraway Bones* he has made his greatest success. The latter part of the week will be devoted to "Confusion," which has not been seen in Brooklyn for some time. During the entire week "Lend Me Five Shillings" will precede the play proper. Mr. Goodwin appearing as *Mr. Golightly*. Everything in connection with the production of the comedies will be first class. The company is second to none on the road, and Mr. Goodwin himself is a great favorite in Brooklyn.

The Grand Opera House will have a good attraction during the week. The Haverly Cleveland minstrels, recently seen in New York, will be seen there, and a programme of unusual excellence is promised. The company numbers about 75 people, comprising some of the best talent in the minstrel profession. Frank Cushman heads the list, and will doubtless get a most cordial reception. There is a troupe of Japanese with the company. Their act is said to be one of the best ever witnessed, and they will to by no means a small drawing card. Some absolutely new jokes are promised, but the public should not be led to expect impossibilities.

"Lord Chumley," which has never been produced in the Eastern District of the city, will be seen during the week at the Lyceum Avenue Theatre. Mr. E. H. Sothern and his company from the Lyceum Theatre, this city, will present the play in its entirety. The recent engagement of the company at the Park Theatre was one of the most successful both artistically and financially, of the season, and the patrons of the Lee Avenue Academy may depend upon seeing something really good. The scenery originally used in New York will be used in staging it. The company is first class.

Frank I. Frayne and his more or less extensive menagerie will occupy the Brooklyn Theatre during the week. The force part of the week will be devoted to presentations of "Hardo, the Hunter," with Mr. Frayne in the title role. The latter half of the week will witness a change of bill, and "Kentucky Bull" will be put on. The big lion "Colonel Bob Ingersoll" is a feature of the show. Besides the lion, Mr. Frayne has trained hyenas, trained dogs, a llama, and other animals.

The Madison Square Theatre company will produce "Partners" at the Amphion Academy during the week. The play is a very strong one and the cast excellent. The play was recently seen down town and made a great hit. It is the most popular attraction the Amphion has announced this season, thus far. The stage settings used in this production are worthy of note, being far in advance of scenery usually carried on the road. The company has done but good people in it.

A real live baby and a good dramatic company will produce Frank A. Hearne's successful play of home life at the Criterion Theatre. Particular stress seems to be laid upon the baby, and, in fact, it plays an important part, adding realism in some of the scenes that would otherwise be wanting in strength. The scenery and all appurtenances to the play will be the same as used in its first season's production.

At Proctor's Novelty Theatre, in the Eastern District, Ada Gray will be seen during the week in "Sal Kane," which she played in this city a few times heretofore. She places the number of performances at 4,000. The play is familiar to theatregoers and has been seen every few months for years. It still seems to have an attraction, and the star has been doing well this season. She appeared at the Criterion Theatre some weeks since in the same play. Her company is a capable one.

Thomas's San Francisco Minstrels will be at the Grand Theatre. They open a week's engagement there to-morrow night. The company numbers about forty people, and with them are the famous Manhattan Quartet of this city. The company has been playing during the past week at a down town house, to a large business.

"The Boy Tramp" will be offered to the patrons of the Lyceum Theatre during this week. Mme. Neuville starts her out with the same in leading roles. The stars and play have both been seen in the Eastern District this season. The play is well mounted and not uninteresting.

The popularity of Zipp's Casino increases every day. The patronage of the only concert hall in Brooklyn comes from the better classes, and certainly the Casino fills a want long felt in Brooklyn. The Sunday evening concerts are a special feature at this house. Many new faces and plenty of new music and specialties will be seen there during the week. Minnie Schult is making a great hit in her male impersonations.

The San Francisco Minstrels did very well during the past week at Holmes's Standard Museum. A good, strong attraction will be at this house during the week.

QUESTIONS BY SUN CORRESPONDENTS.

1. Is there a *free* public school system in England similar to ours, where the humblest laborer's son can be educated regardless of birth, influence, or wealth? 2. Are there any similar schools and colleges for the poor in Ireland, and have all classes equal privileges there in regard to education?" J. McC.

1. Practically there is. He won't get so many "fancy fixin's" as he gets here, but he will be grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic. 2. In Ireland there were 8,112 schools last year, not counting Roman Catholic parochial schools. There are in both countries training schools for teachers, better than our normal college, because in them the student is trained to teach. Altogether, the poorest child, if his parents allow him, has a chance to get as good an education in England and Ireland as he has here.

1. What is Lawrence Barrett's most famous character? 2. Did Booth ever play *Othello* to Barrett's *Iago* in New York city? 3. Is Alexander Dumas's son still living? C. A. J.

1. *Cassius*, in "Julius Cæsar." 2. Yes, on Monday, March 20, 1871. 3. Alexandre Dumas *fils* is still living. His home is in Paris.

Can you tell me where I will find the poem entitled "The Three Preachers," beginning:

"There are three preachers ever preaching,
Each of eminence and power;
One is old, with locks of white,
Skinny as an anchorite,
And he preaches every hour."

Also, where can I find a poem written by Francis S. Osgood entitled "A Letter to My Cousin Mabel in the Country," beginning:

"You bid me set my fancy free,
Oh, lovely and lovely Mabel,
To tell you all I hear and all I see
In this bewildering Babel." J. F. W.

We do not place the first poem; the second is by Frances Sargent (Lock) Osgood, who died in 1850. We do not know that her poems have been collected. The "Letter to Mabel in the Country" was published about 1846; you may find it in some of the magazines of that time or in some of the older anthologies.