"ANTIGONE" ACTED BY GIRLS.

BOSTON'S SATURDAY MORNING CLUB PRODUCES SOPHOCLES'S TRAGEDY.

Maidens and Young Matrons of the Bluest Blood of Beacon Street Make Money for Charity by their Portrayal of Creon's Cruelty and Antigone's Devotion.

One of the Boston papers tells a story, which, since it is of home manufacture, we may be allowed to quote without being accused of any unkind wish to gay our sister city. It is to the effect that a Boston woman entered a Washington street book store the other day and asked for a copy of "Antigone." The salesman replied that the demand had been so great of late that they hadn't a copy of any edition left in the store. Whereupon she retorted angrily, "Well, I do think, since I buy so many books here, you might send me the new stories which you know I shall want to read as fast as they come out!"

We suspect that this is too good to be true; but there is no doubt that more copies of Sophocles have been sold within a short time than ever before, and people now know all about "Antigone," who, not long ago, had never heard of him even in intellectual Boston.

The Saturday Morning Club did it. This club is an organization of about seventy young women, most of them unmarried, though a few matrons retain their membership from former years. In the veins of these young women runs some of the bluest blood in Boston, and they are accused by outsiders of being very conservative, not to say exclusive, in their tastes. Their President is Miss Marion Talbot, and the club meetings are held once a week as the name indicates, with lectures and discussions on alternate Saturdays. Although this popular club is now in the twentieth year of its existence, yet so quietly has it done its work—which is entirely literary, consisting of critical study and scholarly research—that very little is known of it to outsiders. It has long been the custom in the club to close the year's work with some sort of a social entertainment. At first it was only an informal reception, then music and charades were added, and three years ago Tennyson's "The Princess" was given. This was followed by Browning's "In a Balcony," and last year the daring plan of performing the "Antigone" of Sophocles was formed. It was found that more time was needed for its production, and so it was deferred to the present season, when for the first time the club came into public notice.

Even then it was in a modest and semi-private manner. The members sold tickets for the performance to their friends only; no amount of money could obtain them otherwise, and it was only women friends who could secure them at all.

Several months of very hard work lay between the announcement and the achievement of the design. The Committee of General Arrangements which carried through the undertaking consisted of Miss Ellen M. Toner, Miss Dennie, who was for several years the President of the club; Miss Page, and Mr. Sargent. No one would have guessed that the noble result was the work of untrained amateurs. The club evidently knew to what advisors to go. Prof. White of Harvard was consulted, the members of the cast were coached in their lines by Mr. Charles T. Copeland, and finally cast and chorus alike had two lessons or rehearsals with Mr. Franklin Sargent of the School of Dramatic Expression. But while giving due credit to these gentlemen, the largest share remains for the young women, for the "coaching" was of the nature of suggestion rather than of drill, and all the numerous rehearsals were under the superintendence of members.

As an example of the attention paid to details the tickets may be instanced. The old-time "reasers" were small disks of coins, oval pieces of clay, bronze, or bone, and those used by the club were exact imitations of the latter form, though it must be confessed that to the modern mind they were more strongly suggestive of broken chips. They were small ovals of celluloid, which bore on one side the head of Sophocles in outline, and on the other the place, Bumstead Hall, and the date of the performance.

Bumstead Hall is in the shape of a classic amphitheatre, with its tiers of seats surrounding a small orchestra, crossed by a row of massive pillars. This orchestra afforded just the space needed for the chorus, and in the centre was erected an altar to Bacchus. The stage was left open to the view of the spectators at all times. At the rear the King's palace at Thebes was shown, with the entrance in the centre, while a touch of color was added by beautiful draperies of yellow just back of the steps leading down to the orchestra.

Another nice touch was shown in the programmes, which were apparently scrolls of parchment, rolling up from both top and bottom, and tied with a bit of yellow linen tape, their nearest approach to our silken ribbon.

These programmes set forth a brief argument of the play and the cast of characters, which was as follows:

Creon, King of Thebes.....Mrs Robertson
Haimon, son of Creon.....Miss Nichols
Teiresias, a seer.....Miss Johnson
Guard.....Miss Coolidge
Messenger.....Mrs Hoben
Eurydice, wife of Creon.....Miss Page
Antigone, Daughters.....Mrs. Burlen
Ismene, of Œdipus.....Mrs. Wolcott
Attendants on the King—Miss Gregerson, Miss Ahlborn
Attendants on the Queen—Mrs. Monks, Miss Lowell, Mrs Gray, Miss Bradley.
Guards—Mrs Winsor, Miss Homans, Miss Pierce, Miss Steadman.
Coryphæus—Miss Quincy
Chorus of Theban Elders—Mrs. Wolcott, Miss Quincy, Miss Crowley, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Hooper, Miss French, Miss Forbush, Miss Parker, Miss Morrison, Miss Porter, Miss Weld, Miss Herford.
Chorus of Maidens—Miss Williams, Miss Ferriday, Mrs. Wilson, Miss Norris, Miss Cary, Mrs. Strong, Miss McKim, Miss Kinsley, Miss F. Quincy, Miss Richardson, Mrs Matthews, Mrs. Carr, Miss Harding, Miss Fisher, Mrs Means.
Priestess—Miss Fairchild.
Attendant Priestesses—Mrs. Whitney, Mrs. Sargent.
Flor—Miss King

As to the argument of the play it will be remembered that "Antigone" is the last in order of time of the three great plays founded on the misfortunes of Œdipus and his house. Upon the death of Œdipus, leaving two daughters, *Antigone* and *Ismene*, and two sons, Polynéikes and Eteocles, the sovereignty was claimed by both the sons, and Eteocles, the younger, seized the throne by force. Polynéikes fled, gathered an army, a battle follows, in which the two brothers fall by each other's hand. *Creon*, the brother of Œdipus, succeeds to the throne, and issues a decree permitting the burial of Eteocles, but forbidding a rite on penalty of death to bury Polynéikes, because he had attempted to burn the city of his fathers. The play of "Antigone" opens with the resolution of the heroine to resist the decree and bury her brother at any cost, and the drama turns upon the question of the righteousness of this decree of *King Creon*, and upon a second question, how far active resistance to an unrighteous law is to be justified. *Antigone* is discovered in her attempts to bury her brother, is condemned to death, and her betrothed *Hæmon*, the son of the King, after vainly trying to save her, takes his own life in her tomb.

In the "Antigone" the chorus forms a long and laborious part; and to give it force an accession of outsiders, principally from the Orchestral Club, had to be called upon to enlarge the group of Theban elders. When the chief person of a Greek tragedy is a woman the chorus usually consists of women whose attitude toward the heroine is more or less sympathetic. But in the "Antigone" Sophocles is said to have had a double reason for his chorus of men—he in defiance of the heroine would have been less striking had she been supported by sympathizers of her own sex, and also the majority of the Theban nobles that their duty was to uphold their king increased the effect of the softening of their hearts when they finally expressed their wish for the rescue of *Antigone*. In the time of Sophocles all the parts in the play were taken by men, while in this representation of the "Antigone" all the characters were given by women. A liberty was therefore taken with the old drama by the addition of a band of maidens, with the idea that since there were no male voices in the chorus the female voices might seem too thin for the Theban elders, and the singing might appear to come from the maidens alone. Severe critics regard this as an error in judgment on the part of the management; but if "beauty is its own excuse for being," the presence of that chorus of lovely maidens was fully justified.

Slowly and gracefully they entered, to soft strains of music, until the orchestra was filled with life and color and beauty. They were led by Miss Williams, and noticeable among them for loveliness and grace were the priestess, Miss Fairchild, who was in pure white with an Ivy wreath about her wavy brown hair, and her attendants, Mrs. Winthrop Sargent and Mrs. Henry M. Whitney, who also wore white chitons and himations bordered with a stencilling of ivy leaves in delicate greens, with white fillets about their hair. The other members of the chorus wore the long robes of pale shades of rose, lavender, green, or yellow, with delicately stencilled borders in harmonizing colors, copied from designs on old Greek vases. All wore fillets or wreaths of flowers on their hair, which was arranged in true Grecian style, and some had the veils worn by Theban maidens of that time. One maiden looked like an animated Tanagra figure, in a pale buff himation and chiton with a border of red.

Each bore offerings for the altar, one carrying the long bands of white wool tied tightly at intervals with colored ribbons, another a tambourine filled with roses, a third the cymbals, while others brought the golden libation pitcher, containing the oil to pour over the sacrifice, the golden plates and baskets with rich grapes and delicious pears to be laid as an offering on the altar, and violets, lilies of the valley, and roses, which filled the hall with their perfume. Nothing could be more beautiful than these maidens, as, with rhythmic, graceful movements they heaped the altar with their votive offerings and then circled about it, bowing lower and lower as their lovely priestess, with her attendants on either side, three times poured the libation from the golden pitcher and made the offering.

Then in the dim half-light which marks the early dawn *Antigone* and *Ismene* enter, and *Antigone* discloses the noble resolve she has formed, to bury her brother's body in despite of the King's decree, in order to save him from the woes he must suffer in Hades, according to her belief, if left unburied. *Antigone's* stately black-robed figure was in striking contrast to the slender form of her sister clad in bluish gray, as her brave spirit contrasted with the more shrinking and timid nature of *Ismene*.

Then came the chorus of Theban elders, and a burst of the full light, showing the rising of the sun, to which the chorus sings a hymn of praise. This chorus is a most difficult task to perform, for they were constantly upon the stage. Nothing could have been more complete than the disguise of this chorus in their long robes and mantles of soft wools in natural hues of browns or wood colors, their golden fillets, and gray hair and beard. As they advanced in slow and stately fashion, leaning on their long staves, the illusion was perfect, and it was only when they began to sing that one was convinced that they were not the venerable men their seemed. The striking lineaments of the Quincy family were first detected in the coryphæus, whose double part of actor and singer was well done; then Mrs. Roger Wolcott, Mrs. Henry Hooper, and Miss E. Morrison were discovered, leading in the chorus.

The music used was from Mendlessohn's setting of the play, composed when William IV. of Prussia conceived the idea of reproducing some of the old Greek masterpieces. The original music was transposed and arranged for women's voices by Mr. B. C. Lang, and was given in its completeness, save for the omission of one ode. The task of training the chorus was put into the hands of Mrs. E. M. Marsh, who acted as accompanist also. The chorus numbered about thirty, and they were taught to sing the great odes with delightful ease and accuracy. One might go far, too, to hear so much made of a piano and a cabinet organ as Mrs. Marsh and her assistant, Miss Holmes, made of those instruments.

Meanwhile *Creon* has entered in royal robes of purple bordered with gold and announces to the elders the decree he has made concerning the sepulture of the two brothers. From this instant the interest never flags. The guard enters to announce the attempt made to bury *Polynéikes*, and the chorus are still soliloquizing over this event when *Antigone* is brought in and declared to be the guilty one. *Ismene* rises to a moment of heroism when she offers to die with her sister, but *Antigone* acts with such dignity that it is evident heroism is a constant quality with her.

The entrance of *Hæmon*, son of *Creon*, is followed by a very spirited scene, but his expostulations and grief are of no avail. *Antigone* bewails her untimely fate, and a depth of tragic intensity is reached in the warnings and curses of *Teiresias*, the blind seer. Yielding to fear, *Creon* hastens to release *Antigone* from her prison, but it is too late. When a messenger announces to the Queen that *Hæmon* has killed himself over the dead body of *Antigone* she, too, dies, and *Creon* is left to the sorrow and remorse of his closing words.

Lead me then forth, vain shadow that I am,
Who slew thee, O my son, unwittingly.
And thee too (O my sorrow!) and I know not
Which way to look or turn. All near at hand
Is turned to evil, and upon my head
There falls a doom far worse than I can bear.

In the way of general criticism of the representation of this play two points are especially noticeable. The first is the correct delivery of the lines, the clearness and melody of the voices, the intelligent inflexion, the distinctness of enunciation of each letter and syllable, and that too without undue formality or affectation. The second point is the completeness with which the characters were sustained throughout the whole course of the play, not alone by the principal characters, but by the chorus as well. There was no suggestion of drill in the graceful movements of the chorus of maidens or in the expression of rapt sympathy on their faces during the dialogue. The attitude of motionless woe assumed by them while *Antigone* bewails her fate is an instance of this fine acting.

The great skill of Mrs. Alice Kent Robertson as an amateur actress is well known. Her wonderful personation of the jealous old queen in Browning's "In a Balcony" is not forgotten, and by her presentation of the character of *Creon* she has won new laurels. Strong, virile, without being mannish, Mrs. Robertson accomplished very successfully indeed her difficult task of assuming a masculine part. In the last scenes the agony of remorse was particularly well done.

Mrs. Burlen's *Antigone* was a fine performance, well expressing devotion to duty, resolution, and tender pathos. It was graceful in action, with the solemn repose of one who knew her fate and did not dread it. She looked the part and acted it equally well, and one would not soon forget the spirit in which she declared her determination to obey

The unwritten laws of God that know not change
They are not of to-day nor yesterday,
But live forever, nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being. Not through fear
Of any man's rescive was I prepared
Before the gods to bear the penalty
Of sinning against these.

Nor the tenderness of the lines which follow:

That I should die
I know (how should I not?) though thy decree
Had never spoken. And before my time.
If I shall die, I reckon this a gain.

Nor her tone of anguish as she breathed rather than moaned:

Unwept, without a friend,
Unwed, and whelmed in woe,
I journey on this road that open lies.

The lesser parts were no less well taken. The greatest enthusiasm was aroused by the play, and at the end there were loud and continuous cries for "King! king!" and "Antigone, Antigone," until the actors were forced to come forward to bow their acknowledgements.

The proceeds were given to various charities for the benefit of children—the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the West End Day Nursery, and the Playgrounds, an organization for providing amusements in suitable places for the children of the very poor.

SPECULATORS IN PETTICOATS.

Ladies Watching with Deep Interest the Mining Stock Fluctuations.

From the Kansas City Star.

Ladies are taking a great deal of interest in the Mining Exchange, and their interest is not wholly an unselfish one. Every day they throng the gallery reserved for them in the great hall of the Exchange, and look down upon the crowd of struggling brokers in the pit with a curiosity that is not altogether idle. In Denver now, as in San Francisco in the palmy days of its famous Exchange, women are noted for their "plunging" proclivities, and some of those who in the beginning were merely spectators of the business done on the Kansas City Exchange are now active participants through the medium of their brokers.

"Women never have any conception of bearing a stock," said a prominent mining stock broker as he mopped his brow after the call this morning; "they always buy for an advance, and they never hedge. When they do go in on a gamble of this kind they play for a clean winning or a dead loss. No half-way, half-hearted ventures for them. When a woman goes in for a speculation she plays her hand clear through, and does it with more nerve than many a man is able to scratch up."

Locally interest was first excited among the ladies by Charles Taylor's purchase of the whole offering of the treasury stock of the Little Nugget, owned by a company of ladies near Joplin. It was a stroke that captivated the feminine fancy by reason of the gallantry they ascribed it to and not one of the ladies who watched the course of the stock grudged Taylor a nickel of the big profits he made when the crowd sold Little Nugget short, while he had all the stock in his pocket. But apparently that deal was the suggestive inspiration that has led to investments by some of the ladies who at first came only as curious spectators.

E. W. Humphrey, who is the broker for the Argonaut mine, this morning said to a reporter of the *Star*: "It won't be long before the ladies of Kansas City deal in mining stocks as freely as do the ladies in Denver. Within the last six days I have had six orders for Argonaut stock on their account. There was one lady who bought at 16, 1c. above the opening price of the stock on this Board, and sold the other day at 29, clearing $80 on the 2,000 shares she picked up. None of the others have done as well, but they have all made something, though the stock has dropped off a point or two. I know several of the other brokers have had orders from ladies, and I don't think one of the feminine investors has met with a loss, because nearly all the stocks have gone up a few notches. Tell you their names? Not much, but you'd be astonished were I to tell you one or two of them," and the accomplished broker dashed into the centre of the crowd of brokers that were struggling and shouting in the pit. When he emerged from the fray he said: "I won't tell you any name, but I'll show you a funny letter I received yesterday." The letter read:

"Paola, Kan.—Dear Sir: Please so kind & sent me 1 share Argnot to my address. Yours,——

"I inclose 10 stamps (2 cents stamps.)"

The letter was evidently written by a woman, and when asked whether he had sent the one share, Mr. Humphrey evasively laughed and said: "She got back her money's worth."

Dead Boys.

From the Globe-Democrat.

A strange fad of the young men of the present day is darkening the eyebrows and eyelashes. They imagine this process gives an expression of strength to the face which is otherwise lacking. The stuff used for the purpose comes in a tiny box and is a black powder. In the box is a little kid pencil, similar in form to the stump of a blender used by a crayon or pastelle artist. This tiny kid implement is dipped in the black powder and applied in a dexterous manner, first to trace the eyebrows darker and into the desired shape. After this the eyelashes are touched, and then a slight line is drawn under the eyes on the lower lid, and each corner is put the final touch, a little dash of the dark powder, which gives a look presumed to be captivating.

NEWS OF THE THEATRES.

An annual visit to town by Rosina Vokes has come to be accepted as one of the best events of the season's happenings in comedy. Miss Vokes may be certain, therefore, that to-morrow night's audience at Daly's will greet her with sincere cordiality and follow her delightfully droll acting with lively concern. She is to retain her capital plan of a three-play entertainment and two of the short pieces with which she will start her engagement will have the attractiveness of novelty They are "Wig and Gown," by Fred W. Sidney, and "Percy Pendragon," a new version of Byron's "Married in Haste." Sidney is an English actor and stage manager, and the son of a good actor, too. Miss Vokes has used both plays elsewhere, and the performance of them at Daly's should have no dull moments. The third piece is "A Double Lesson," which has already been admired here. Miss Vokes's company still contains Felix Morris, one of the best character actors of this day; Ferdinand Gottschalk, a good comedian and an excellent pianist, and Courtenay Thorpe, an acceptable player within certain limits. Eleanor Lane, Emily Hancker, Essie Lombard, and Charles J. Bell are the new members. They are Americans, it is well to note, and the ladies are pretty. It is likely that Miss Vokes will stay five or six weeks at Daly's.

The original of "Clover," entitled "Die Jagd nach dem Glück," with Streitmann, Zimmermann, Englander, and the two Friesen in the cast, will occupy the Amberg on the first three nights of this week. On the last three nights the entertainment will consist of "Neighbors," a novelty, and "In the Doll Store." Thursday's performance will be a benefit to Herr Walter, one of the most capable and the most popular of Mr. Amberg's company.

Rider Haggard is for once to be pitied on account of a dramatized version of his "Jess" on the London stage. A correspondent of The Sun writes that in the process of preparing it for the artificialities of the footlights all its beauty and most of its power have been eliminated. In his book Mr. Haggard puts us in touch with very human men and women. There was a distinct vein of genuine humor, and if his fond partiality for the Homeric found vent in his picture of the supernaturally wicked Boer chief, the exaggeration was consistently maintained with due regard to artistic proportion, and *Frunt Muller* never became ridiculous or even ineffective. Dramatic situations abounded; many of the characters were richly colored, as though the author intended them to make their way to the stage; subtlety, as in most of Mr. Haggard's work, was scrupulously avoided; the story and its heroine were preeminently sympathetic, and, finally, the catastrophe was thrilling and tragical. From such materials as these a handy playmaker could have formed a workmanlike structure. It is, however, the misfortune of Mr. Haggard's adapters that they are clumsy contrivers. It is a frequent experience at sea that a Captain has to face the loss of a goodly portion of his cargo in order to bring his ship safely into port, and ton after ton is flung overboard to lighten the vessel. It was just this kind of sacrifice that these adapters could not bring themselves to make. In the correspondent's judgment, if the play is to succeed it must either be entirely reconstructed or the sensational effects must be made a feature.

The London theatrical contention is about to begin. Charles Wyndham and Thomas Thorne are both arranging revivals of "She Stoops to Conquer." This is likely to prove awkward, and it is said that Thorne asked his rival to kindly postpone his production for a while. But this suggestion was not seen in the same light, and the artistic duel is to be fought out to the bitter end. It is not unlike Drury Lane and Her Majesty's at pantomime time on a Lilliputian scale. Which will be the victor? The companies are not ill-matched. Miss Emery, whom New York did not like at all in Wyndham's support, is in London favorite, and has lately played *Miss Hayden*, a role enacted here by Ada Rehan. Londoners will probably admire her as *Miss Hardcastle*, in spite of her insipidity.

Of timely interest is the wax group at the Eden Musée representing "Execution by Electricity." The chief figure is a good duplicate of Kemmler, the Buffalo man, who is to be the first to suffer the death penalty under the new law. In pleasing contrast to the great winter garden up stairs where the Viennese fencers and Hungarian dancing girls amuse and interest visitors every afternoon and evening Erdelyi Nacsi's orchestra is still an enjoyable feature.

Like any other good comedy well acted, "The Burglar" wears well in town. It is boxing the theatrical compass just now, and, after a greeting from Bowery audiences, it goes on to Broadway this week. The Park will hold its admirers for a brief term. Sydney Armstrong, Sydney Drew, Gladys Rankin Drew, J. S. Maitit, and A. S. Lipman remain in a cast that is evenly good and wholly equal to the play's requirements. Next week the Park will offer a new drama in "The Millionaire," by H. Grattan Donnelly. Daniel Sully produced it last night in Brooklyn, with himself as the Irish titular character, and F. F. Mackay in an equally important part. If it pleases the fancy of the Park's audiences it will remain a month or longer.

"The Great Metropolis," one of this season's earliest productions will this week at the Grand Opera House, close its present tour, which has been extensive and generally profitable. All the realistic mechanical and scenic effects that helped to make this melodrama's run at Proctor's notable will be duplicated on the Grand's ample stage, while the shipwreck episode—one of the most graphic scenes invented in modern stagecraft—will probably be improved upon. Changes in the cast and in the play itself have proved of value and must aid in the success of this revival.

Jefferson and Taylor's production of "Hands Across the Sea" seems certain to gain plaudits at the People's all this week. The drama is in the class of ultra-sensational works, redeemed somewhat by clever stage effects and a competent cast. Rejected in Broadway, though accepted at the conservative Boston Museum, it has since traveled over all the circuits, and everywhere has met with approval. New York's verdict in this case has not been justified. The play has already had one Bowery presentation. Next week the People's will have Dore Davidson and his wife, Jamie Austen, in "Guilty Without Crime," a dramatization, by Val De Nois, of Mrs. Braddon's "Aurora Floyd."

Harlem may enjoy J. K. Emmet this week at Hammerstein's in "Uncle Joe," a capital vehicle for the well liked comedian's use, and one that has been as profitable to him as any play in his repertory. Emmet is not an overworked actor. His tours open late and close early. This week at Harlem will be his last New York appearance this season. In his company are a dozen players capable and well known.

There are no more welcome stars in Jacobs's Third Avenue firmament than William T. Stephens and Minnie Oscar Gray, who visit that east side house twice a year regularly, and always to the delight of large audiences. Their efforts are no longer limited to one play, for they can alternate in heroics like "The Old Oaken Bucket," "Saved from the Storm," and "Without a Home," all three crude in language, but not lacking in episodes of excitement. A pair of trained dogs assist in the movement of the plot, and are as important to its development as any other actors in it. Gray and Stephens will probably fill the Third Avenue all the week. When they go away Jacobs will have a revival of "Passion's Slave," which is in some respects a marvel in latter day emotional drama.

"Master and Man" is another materialistic play which has rebuked Broadway audiences by making money and winning applause in less critical sections. John H. Gilmour, who has taken it on a tour by arrangement with French, has proved his shrewdness. The piece has done well out of town. This week Gilmour brings it to the Windsor, where it is peculiarly apt to get a cordial hearing. The company still contains Ayling, Tighe, Fisher, Kelly, and Gilmour himself, and they are all good actors. Both "My Jack" and "Master and Man" have more than repaid French for his original investment in them. The Broadway performances, it is now easy to see, were clever bafts. Next week the Windsor has "My Aunt Bridget," with Monroe, Rice, and their jolly assistants.

Versatile as has already been made of the Lenox Lyceum, the city's newest amusement home, Just now it is being utilized as an exhibition hall for the wonders of electricity, and the proceeds are to be handed over to the Exchange for Woman's Work. As extra attractions, the Royal Hungarian Orchestra, the Florentine Serenaders, and Marie McNeill, a pretty girl who plays the cornet very well, are put forth. There is generally a good-sized crowd in attendance, and surely the entertainment is worth the modest sum asked for its enjoyment. Besides, the object is a charitable one.

A curtailment of this year's circus reign in town from a month to three weeks does not mean that Barnum & Bailey have less confidence than usual in the verdict of the city, or that the big show is less praiseworthy than heretofore. It only signifies that the proprietors are bound not to keep other cities waiting too long when New York can just as well see the circus inside of three weeks as in four. The change to the Polo grounds under real canvas will not disturb anybody, and it will add to the show's genuineness as a circus; moreover, if the methods of transportation to and from the grounds prove to be expeditious and generous, there can be no possible bar to a repetition of the usual Barnum success. The English triumph of the circus and spectacular outfit has not failed to impress our own people.

There will be no more of "A Long Lane" at the Fourteenth Street after this week. Bedley Brown's delightful if conventional play has benefited by a generous and artistic mount, a capable cast, and a careful production generally. It should have put to its credit a much longer stay here. A week's visit from "A Brass Monkey," in which George F. Marion, once a minstrel, will be the new Jonah; a feminist of "My Aunt Bridget," which did not wear its welcome out during its recent engagement, and stars like Joseph Murphy and Joseph S. Folk will bring the Fourteenth Street's season nearly to its close late in May.

Just a month remains to "The Senator" at the Star. In all that time there will assuredly be very few unoccupied seats, and when the end comes William H. Crane and his long-headed manager, Joseph Brooks, will have put to their bank credits very handsome sums. But even then it is not likely that their days of profit this season will be at an end. Nearly everybody interested in theatrical ventures agrees that Crane's trip to San Francisco is bound to result in an artistic and a financial victory. The Star's time for the remainder of the year is as comfortably disposed of as that of any theatre in town. After Crane there is to be a production of M. B. Curtis's newest comedy, the oddly named "Schatchen." Then there will be two or three summer visitors for brief terms, and that will lead up to Crane's return, early in September, for another long engagement. The Star's latter-day career has been notable, and Theodore Moss and Charles Burnham ought to be proud of it.

At two of the city's stock theatres, the Lyceum and the Madison Square, the excellent companies are finishing a season remarkable for uninterrupted and worthily won success. "The Charity Ball" has about a month longer to stay at the Lyceum, but the Madison Square can have only a fortnight more of "Aunt Jack" and "A Man of the World."

The number of Sunday night theatre offerings grows less as the spring wears on. This evening only three houses will seek auditors. Chief of these, and most likely to be filled, is the Casino, which has a strong inducement for music lovers in a programme by Miles. Pettigiani, Bauermeister, and Fabbri, and signors Vicini, Carbone, Novaro, Lardo, and Gillie, all of the Patti troupe. Arditi will lead the Casino's orchestra, and all the good music may be enjoyed at a good deal less than grand opera prices. It is an economical concert, and it cannot help being delightful. At the Fifth Avenue a miscellaneous programme will be carried out by De Belleville, Lackaye, Kelcey, Sophie Eyre, Minnie Seligman, Pete Mack, Ed Morris, Mark Sullivan, some of "The Gondoliers" people, vaudevillers from Pastor's and Miner's, and others. It is intended that the proceeds shall go to Henry Lee, an actor who has been a star and a manager, and as neither has been so fortunate as when he has hired out at from $100 to $150 a week There is no explanation of Lee's presumable poverty, but nobody who goes to his benefit will mind that. A testimonial with a better excuse is that to be given at Miner's Eighth Avenue to Lou's Robie, who has helped to direct that respectable variety mint for Harry Miner, and is worthy of public recognition. He will have a long bill of vaudeville performers, most of them well known and clever. A week from to-night the Theatrical Treasurers' Club will give a concert at the Broadway. Among the treasurers represented are Max Hirsch, Clarence E. Hall, Henry D. Schaad, D. S. Thompson, Edward Fletcher, John K. Pollack, E. S. King, Jos. McKeever, W. E. Campbell, E. C. Neilson, G. E. Audie, E. J. Rice, W. W. Walters, Jas. H. Bucken, John N. Cox, A. C. Philippe, J. T. Maguire, Jas. Smith, E. A. Bull, J. A. Nichols, and F. C. Graham.

Novelty is the essence and life of latter-day farce. "The City Directory," triumphant still at the Bijou, owes a big degree of its public favor to the constant and well-timed brightening up in its music, its dancing, and its wit. Fresh faces among its merry actors are also helpful to its course, and there will be another test of this in to-morrow night's appearance of Alice Harrison. She was the original *Nanon* in the piece, and she returns to it for a limited engagement. There is no soubrette of this day who possesses a greater fund of natural humor than this bright sister of a clever comedian. Her presence in "The City Directory" will add to its general fund of jollity, and will draw more people than ever to the Bijou, for she has been making friends in New York nearly twenty years. Josie Sadler, who has been ill, has rejoined the cast. Russell, who owns Paul Potter's absurdity and manages the company, has cancelled all contracts to present the piece in other cities this season. That means an indefinite continuance at the Bijou.

A success like "The Grand Duchess" at the Casino is strong enough to hold its own against all opposition. Rudolph Aronson sees a crowded audience under the roof of his picturesque theatre six nights a week, and hears Lillian Russell singing the best music of her life to the most enthusiastic listeners she ever had. Sixty members of the Æolian Bowling Club will attend the performance on next Wednesday evening, and forty members of the Eliott Literary and Musical Union, besides 100 of the Juntors Club, will be present on Saturday. When Lillian Russell goes away for her long summer vacation the Casino will keep up its reputation for high-priced prima donnas by bringing forth Pauline L'Allemand as its chief singer.

"Shenand'ah" will go away from town after this week at Proctor's Twenty-third Street Theatre, and thus will end the splendid city career of one of the best American plays of the last decade. Its close will be brilliant. Not only will Sherman, George Sheridan, members of their old staffs, and other veterans go to Proctor's that night, but there will also be an enlargement of the stage groups and a military pageant, with a new tableau at the close of the third act. For the ensuing month at Proctor's there are already careful preparations seeming to promise a handsome revival of "The Henrietta." That Stuart Robson will be welcomed on his first city appearance as a lone star is not to be doubted. His present company contains Frank Mordaunt, in Crane's old role; James E. Wilson, May Waldron of the old "Henrietta" cast, Katherine Florence, a daughter of Katharine Rogers, Helen Mar, Edward Ratcliffe, Ernest Tarleton, and others.

As the time of *Uncle Joshua Whitcomb's* departure for his rural home in Swanzey draws nigh the number of visitors at the Academy largely increases, and public interest in "The Old Homestead" is revived proportionately. Early next month Denman Thompson will terminate his city season, and he surely has every reason to feel gratified for the substantial result his long stay here has afforded. He is coming back to the Academy in the fall for another long visit.

Niblo's "Knights of Tyburn" possesses the confidence of its owners, who will keep it before the public three weeks longer at the Broadway house. Smoothness in the working of the heavier scenes has been gained since the first night, and the actors, too, have improved their work upon better acquaintance with their lines. Two scenes at least are bound to carry the melodrama into the affections of the average spectator—the dispersing of the old Mint rabble and the London Bridge climax. These were effective in Paris, and they will do their part at Niblo's with people who like striking tableaux. The star of this new "Jack Sheppard," Clara Louise Thompson, has previously been seen in this city with Margaret Mather's company. In her venture at Niblo's she is said to have the financial support of her father. Ollie Akerstrom, who was forced by illness to rest several weeks, is well enough now to fill her engagement at Niblo's next month.

"Natural Gas" will finish April and the Tompkins tenancy of the Fifth Avenue in such a manner as to leave no doubt of the farce's popularity here. Harry Miner, who becomes the theatre's manager on May 1, is still undecided whether to offer anything before fall. But he is negotiating with several companies, and perhaps two or three of them may help to dedicate his new property. Next Thursday afternoon a play dealing with Russian intrigue, by Frank Rothschild, will be acted, in order to ascertain its worth. The author is unfamiliar as a dramatist.

"Money Mad" retains an interesting place on the Standard's stage. Nobody can venture to predict the length of its city life. It may last a fortnight, and it may extend through a month. If the public can become interested in its really excellent scenic features it may profit Manager Hill. But not all the actors in the cast are at ease or contented.

The farewell of D'Oyly Carte's "Gondoliers" at Palmer's will be sung next Saturday night. Not many hours later the English troupe, and a few Americans who went into the cast, will sail for London. On Thursday afternoon Francis Wilson's company will perform the opera. D'Oyly Carte's cabled sanction of the Wilson performance will set aside all doubts as to its occurrence. Wilson and his troupe will come from Philadelphia early Thursday morning, and the matinée will begin at 1 o'clock, so that the players may get back to Philadelphia in time for the evening performance.

The brothers Wems and the sisters Coyne, a quartet of English comedians and singers who do a very amusing sketch representing the love-making tribulations of a set of twins on the Dromio order, head the list of performers at Tony Pastor's this week. Sturdy and sonorous Maggie Cline is retained from last week, and she will have a batch of new Celtic songs to offer. Myra Goodwin, an ex-star and a clever dancer and singer; the popular Midgleys and Andy and Annie Hughes hold prominent places on the bill, which also includes the Webster Brothers, Eldora, Neiman, and Pickert and Mayon.

The new burlesque, "Our Belle Helene," and that agile Spanish dancer, Carmencita, have struck a winning gait at Koster & Bial's, and are running a neck and neck race for favor with the concert saloon assemblages. Both will be retained a month or two longer. Carmencita's dance movements are lively, graceful, and tireless, and the score of the burlesque is unusually good and varied.

The Long Island Farmers Are Prosperous.

From the Brooklyn Times.

Farming on Long Island is not less profitable but more profitable, than it used to be. The general advance in the value of island property is by some naturally attributed to the increased demand for suburban homes, but our farmers are shrewd enough to see that this gradual extension of the city in their direction makes their crops more valuable. If these are confined in the main to the perishable crops that are liable to deteriorate in quality by long transportation. The profits of the Long Island farmer are to be found mainly in future in the culture of fruits and vegetables and poultry and eggs for the local market. For these the demand is inexhaustible, and the produce of the Long Island farmer will always be the favorite source of supply.

A New Diogenes.

"Well, who are you?"
"I'm an Office."
"What are you after?"
"I am seeking a man."
"What man?"
"The man who would refuse me."

Brooklyn's Population.

Dr. John S. Young, the Registrar of Vital Statistics in Brooklyn, estimates the population of that city at 808,812.

QUESTIONS BY SUN CORRESPONDENTS.

"The Indian lament was written by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, and is in my little collection of 'Famous Single and Fugitive Poems.'" So writes Mr. Rossiter Johnson in reference to the lines for which F. G. T. asked on March 23, which W. H. Page placed on March 24. Mr. Page, however, did not know the name of the author; Mr. Johnson and two other correspondents give us that, and we thank them.

Referring to a correspondent's questions about Ben Hur and about the names of the three wise men, let me quote the last sentence of Gen. Wallace's story:

"If any of my readers visiting Rome will make the short journey to the Catacomb of San Calixto, which is more ancient than that of San Sebastiano, he will see what became of the fortune of Ben Hur and give him thanks. Out of that vast tomb Christianity issued to supersede the Cæsars." As to the names of the wise men, there is an unbroken continuity of historic and patriotic authority for the names and all other substantial facts relating to the persons and the pilgrimage of the three kings, from Justin Martyr to Bede and thence to Baronius, the foremost writers of Christianity record the magian journey in minute detail. Baronius points out, as evidence that civil history was in accord with tradition, that persons eminent politically and as enemies of Christianity, such as Celsus, Porphyr, the Emperor Julian, never impeached the historic accuracy of the magian mission. H. T.

As to Ben Hur, Gen. Wallace's insinuation is interesting and dramatic, and he wrongs no one by making it, but the latest article on the catacombs (Brockhaus's Konversations-Lexikon) gives the date of the catacomb of St. Calixtus as about the third century of our era. As to the wise men: Leo the Great (Pope, 440-461), in his sermon on the Epiphany, declared that they were three in number; then Bede gave currency to the names that are now so familiar to us. The wise men were certainly magians (the Greek of the New Testament is *magoi*), and we never said anything to discredit the idea of a magian mission; we said, and repeat, that there is nothing in history to show how many there were, or what their names were. The wise men have become a nucleus of tradition all interesting, and some of it so arranged that the events described therein might indeed have happened. Bede, to whom you refer, finds names for the two thieves; but there is nothing in history to show what the names of those thieves were.

1. The Latin word *sic* means "thus;" but when we see it in a newspaper article it is not always indicative of derision. 2. I have never thoroughly understood the nature of the trouble between this country and Chili in 1891; was Mr. Arthur justified in making Mr. Blaine recede? A. L. B.

1. It also means "so," and it does not always indicate derision; it means that what precedes it has been quoted exactly, or that what is described occurred as described. Thus: "'The marketman say that the tax is the last straw; that if it is imposed they will go to the wall, for they can no longer keep their heads above water' (sic)." 2. Our Minister to Peru, Mr. Stephen A. Hurlbut, used language which the Peruvians interpreted to mean that the United States would interfere to prevent the aggrandizement of Chili at the expense of Peru. Mr. Blaine even then had in mind the "Pan-American Congress" that has had such enjoyable trips around this country, and wished to make the United States the "big brother" to all the other Governments in this hemisphere. His meddling between Chili and Peru was uncalled for and injudicious. Mr. Arthur's action in the matter was not a question of justification; his policy was opposed to that which Mr. Blaine had laid down for Mr. Garfield, and he had no more right to it as Mr. Blaine had to his. ("Annual Cyclopædia, 1881, "Peru, Chili, and the United States.")

To decide a bet please say if there ever was in Europe, at any time, a castle of the dimensions and cost of the Dakota flats, that was the property of any one noble? S. J. McG.

As we don't know the dimensions and cost of the Dakota flats, and as we are not intimately acquainted with the personal histories of all the nobles who have ever lived in all the countries of Europe, we are unable to decide your bet with absolute definiteness. But as such of the castles as we have seen are small in comparison with the buildings of our day—the churches were the big buildings of the middle ages—we consider that we are safe in saying that the Dakota is larger than any mediæval European castle.

I read recently in a newspaper article that, according to the best authorities, St. Thom