LAST NIGHT'S NEW PLAYS.

THE EMPIRE STOCK COMPANY IN "A WOMAN'S REASON."

It Was the Story of "Frou Frou" Told Again with New Illustrations—"Criss-Cross," a McNally Sketch—"Down on the Suwanee River," a Negro Show.

The story of "Frou Frou" was told again in "A Woman's Reason," at the Empire Theatre last evening, and with fresh illustrations calculated to render it newly interesting and entertaining. The young wife in this play, as in the other, is too frivolous to appreciate the true worth of her husband; she grows jealous of a sister's dominance in the household; she elopes inconsiderately with a former suitor; she becomes miserable in her sin; she returns repentantly to her finally forgiving spouse, and a reconciliation is wrought through their love of their child. These are the similarities between Meilhac and Halevy's old French piece and the new English one of Brookfield and Phillips. The differences cannot be summarized quite so briefly. In the first place, "A Woman's Reason" has an element of caste. The husband is a Hebrew and in business. The wife is the daughter of a lord. The marriage is brought about by the fact that the man is very rich and the woman impoverished. That he is an eminently worthy character and honestly in love with her, while she is at first a shallow creature, who weds unlovingly at the dictation of her father, is quite enough to balance them in the social scale may be obvious to most American minds, but the feeling in England on such subjects is not the same. This element in the theme is treated in the first act, where the disdain of the poor aristocrats is bestowed on the Hebrew banker and his sister until it is overcome by a desire to sell the daughter in the matrimonial market. In the second act, after seven years are supposed to have passed, we find the three mentioned persons luxuriously housed in fashionable Mayfair, and the causes and conditions of the elopement are like those of the wife who went astray in "Frou Frou." A third act, however, finishes "A Woman's Reason" in a way original with its authors. The woman is divorced from her husband and separated from her guilty companion. She is trying to expiate her sin. Too late she knows that she loves her deserted child and its father. According to agreement she is permitted to see her boy twice a year, and the time is near when she may hold him in her arms. As she is musing on her ruined life the partner of her crime comes to ask her to live again with him out of wedlock. She spurns him, but before she can drive him from her house they see her husband coming with the child. The lover hides in an adjoining room. The husband and wife in an affecting interview are all but reconciled, when he sees a pair of gloves which the secreted scoundrel has left on a piano. The shamed, broken-hearted, and desperate woman thereupon places the two men face to face. The Hebrew, with unreasonable magnanimity, insists that the betrayer shall marry his victim. She refuses. Then the wrong man explains that she is innocent of any recent evil conduct, and the right man soon takes her into his arms for a second and more promising trial of married life.

The actors at the Empire played their parts carefully and with generally good results. They found their rôles much too fully worded, with everything plainly explicit and nothing subtle, but they endeavored, with considerable success, to mend the harshness. Henry Miller, as the husband and Viola Allen as the wife were applauded at appropriate points, and so was Edgar Davenport, who had been brought in for the beguiler. May Robson was droll as a turf woman, and Elsie de Wolfe was praiseworthy as the sister. The best individual success was achieved by J. E. Dodson in the guise of a Church of England clergyman. The personage embodied a satire of hypocrisy in religious pretence. The language of it was all to the purpose, the points were sharp, and it made every one of them tell. Mr. Dodson's performance was admirable. It was free from the slowness into which he too often drops, and yet it was elaborated in a most artistic manner in the action. Much merriment in the audience followed every interference of his wife, Mrs. Cosmo Prettyjohn throughout the play, which in its entirety was interesting in matter and highly commendable in the representation.

A musical comedietta that gives to John Mason and Marion Manola-Mason excellent chances to be entertaining was included in yesterday's all-day bill at Keith's Union Square. It was "Criss-Cross," by John J. McNally, and its two characters were assumed by the Masons. It had the two as the most conspicuous actor and actress in a stock company, and introduced them while in an actors' boarding house of which their manager was the landlord. The actor was heard first, and he told a story of personal jealousy between himself and the company's chief actress, and on the appearance of the latter it showed that she, too, was dissatisfied because of his being made too conspicuous. After considerable bickering, they rehearsed a duet for their next play, one that will delight variety show audiences so long as it is sung as they sing it. But more quarrelling ensued, the dialogue being characterized by the biting repartee that was abundant in Mr. McNally's farces of full length, and then each of the wranglers left for the manager a sarcastic letter of resignation from his company. Following this, Mr. Mason sang "She wanted something to play with," which affected his hearers to noisiness and himself to contrition. In that frame of mind he destroyed the actress's letter, so that he alone should be the sufferer in business from their quarrel. Then Mrs. Mason, in the costume of a newsboy, had a song of gloom with a refrain, beginning "Life is a frost," and then she turned penitent. After another brightly written episode of quarrelsome exchanges, the misunderstandings of the pair began to clear up, and at the falling of the curtain they were cleverly reconciled to each other.

The whole filled less than thirty minutes, and, considering that it carried three vocal numbers, there was but scant room for a writer to turn in, but it took reckoning of the minutes to determine this, for there was no evidence of it in the progress of the tiny comedy. Its incidents were necessarily few, but they were completed, and there was no trace of sketchiness in the finish of them. That there was so great a difference between "Criss-Cross" and the usual vaudeville sketch made it all the more enjoyable to the first hearers. As applied to shows, "variety" is not a misnomer, for the more varied the entertainment is made the more it proves to be liked, and the method of Mr. McNally and his capable interpreters were taken to a good market.

"Down on the Suwanee River" was styled in last night's playbills at the People's as "a new Afro-American spectacular, fantastical, farcical, and musical comedy." A view of its performance hardly makes clear whether it is quite all that it claims to be, whether a hyphen or two and as many sections of its classification might not be spared; but wholly aside from how near this entertainment comes to being just what it pretends, it certainly has very few resemblances to current forms of stage entertainments. Its plot should be credited to R. N. Stevens, whom the programme put as the author, but what he wrote was certainly little, for the entertainers seemed to say what they liked in the way they liked, and at the moment of their choice, care being generally taken to avoid interruption of those already speaking. The first act was in an African village, where a savage king ruled his tribe with two iron hands, one of them wielding a red wooden sword, and the other a bladder tied to a stick. The delights of his realm were displayed, an acrobatic specialty by a man dressed to resemble an ape being seemingly the favorite one. Officers included a dance by the entire tribe, which the veracious playbill stated was "taught the company by a native African who visited Matabeleland as an attache of exploring expeditions." A climax was secured for this act and a shift of scenery allowed for the next by the arrival of a band of slave hunters, who captured the savages and bore them away in bondage to the Suwanee River, arriving there the day before news of the emancipation proclamation had reached the same spot. Then when the slave drivers sought to retain their mastery, they found it had captured the savages in the African wilds, appeared in blue blouses and joined the freed men. The next act, by stage count, was at Rafferty Hall, Thompson Street, New York city. Here poker playing, fortune telling, and walking for a cake were exemplified. Much about all this a specialty was put forward by the average every five minutes, and there included some very unusual offerings. One woman sang the "Suwanee River" so slowly that the violinists drew their bows a few times three times to her every syllable, and finally the musicians gave up and left her to the tender mercies of a hidden chorus, that followed her as she pleased them. A man who was twenty feet by men whose hands were in boxing gloves and who stood in barrels was another item. There was a band that for noise cannot be equalled, and a big variety of jig and shuffle steps were exhibited by the dancers. The entertainers were negroes, a missionary and a slave driver or two being white faced. The scenery included two new settings, one of them especially handsome, but in the matter of costumes there were no signs of considerable expenditure, except in the matter of horsehair wigs. It was a strange show, but it entertained generally.

THE OPERA.

An Excellent Performance of Massenet's "Manon."

Massenet's opera, "Manon," was reproduced last evening in the Metropolitan with a cast including Melba, Jean de Reszke, Plançon, and Maurel. The list of those operas which are available for proving real attractions to the public are, after all, not very numerous, perfection in this department of the world's work being as rare and difficult to find as in any other. This creation of the talented French musician holds, therefore, an important place, and it undoubtedly is growing in favor with our public, partly because familiarity with its piquant music must necessarily increase a liking for it, and partly because each production of the opera that has been made here has been on a higher plane of merit than the previous one. Last year it was given, about this time in January, with a generous equipment of scenery, costumes, and singers that as far outshone the presentation at the old Academy in 1885 as the manner of its performance now exceeds in merit the one of last season. The advance in excellence of this one opera is a fitting illustration of a change in the standard of all operatic work within the last ten years—a change that has been continually onward and upward, until at last New York can, without fear of challenge, boast the finest and most complete opera performances in the world, and our public is so knowing and exacting that what would have contented it a decade since would now be neglected and derided.

An erroneous impression exists in many quarters that a book, an opera, or a play which mentions immorality or treats of it, even so far as to recognize its existence, must of necessity be immoral. In "Manon Lescaut" the principal characters are certainly moving under conditions that are far from respectable, but it must be admitted that the natural consequences of their evil courses are shown to be such that no man or woman could desire a similar fate. Indeed, the tragedy of this story is an intensely moving one, because it reflects human nature in all its weakness so faithfully and with such deep pathos. No trace of immorality can exist in it, therefore, for those who are endowed with the sympathetic insight which can see and understand beneath the bare surface of things. It must be admitted, therefore, that Massenet has not been unfortunate in his choice of a libretto, while the more one becomes familiarized with the music which refines and adorns his story the greater is the admiration it inspires until at last the conviction prevails that it is music of indisputable greatness that is bound both to win the affectionate regard of the public and a lasting place in art. Massenet's melodies are full of a spontaneity and an originality that are refreshing and not usual in these cumbered calculating fin de siècle days.

The music of "Manon" must eventually delight both lovers of purely formal melodic composition and those whose first care and thought is for dramatic consistency, for it unites the ideas in a most skilful and delightful manner. "Manon" is almost too fine, too delicate in its earlier scenes for production in so vast a building as the Metropolitan. As the tragedy develops, however, the music broadens out and sweeps on with unerring fidelity to the situations from one powerful climax to another. Graceful and gay in the first act, pathetic in the second, it is light and dashing again in the first scene of the third act, and then it rises to a strain of passionate eloquence until the mournful end, the casual relapse into feverish gayety during the gambling episode only serving to throw into higher relief the fatal passion that is hurrying the lawless lovers to a logical catastrophe.

The performance last evening was one of the most brilliant and successful on record. It was made so by the hearty and fortunate coöperation of all concerned, but chiefly by Melba's superb impersonation. Manon is by far the most important personage in the drama, absorbing much more of time and attention than is usually allotted even to the most favored heroines. She is on the stage every moment during the five long acts, and though to a thoughtful mind the contemplation of the detestable character of this fickle heartless woman is almost repugnant, yet Melba contrived to hold rigid and admiring attention by every means possible. She sang the music to perfection, she dressed the part gorgeously, with a different gown for each act, and she played with a grace and fascination that were quite irresistible. In short, the part suits her quite as well as any she has ever attempted, and after the feeble portrayals of former prima donnas it is a great refreshment to see one who is sufficiently conscious of her greatness to forget her own personality and throw herself heartily into the delineation of the rôle. Melba was especially charming in the first act; in the second she was fascinating enough to create plenty of illusions and to make *Des Grieux's* infatuation plausible. After action in "Manon" was really touching in its simple naïveté and may be rated as an extremely finished bit of acting. De Reszke's beautiful song immediately following was equally clever as ripe vocal endeavor. Both this and that perfect piece of writing, than which nothing finer exists in ballads, "Ah! Fuyez" were loudly redemanded. The tenor, however, seemed to feel the need of husbanding his resources, and sternly refused to oblige the audience. In the case of "Ah! Fuyez," this seemed rather hard, especially when he scores certain two couplets, the public thus being in a way entitled to a repetition of one of the most divine and tender melodies in the entire range of music.

Maurel was *Lescaut*, exquisitely dressed, and evidently with a clear and proper conception of the dashing young soldier. He overdid the acting, however, making his style too much that of opera bouffe. His singing was not calculated to illustrate handsomely the musical phrases allotted to the rôle of *Lescaut*, but he always gives life to every scene in which he assists, and he is always picturesque, though sometimes more graceful than last night.

Castelmary makes a notable character sketch of *Guillot*, which gives a distinct flavor and meaning to the play. De Vries does not seem suited to the part of *De Bretigny*, nor does Plançon appear to great advantage in the part of *Le Comte Des Grieux*. A great artist always adorns a small rôle, however, so that the opera gains in weight, and the singer at least reaps the laurels which unselfishness should win.

"Manon" is replete in exquisite effects of light, costumes, and color, and may justly be ranked among the most actually successful and deservedly popular of all Abbey & Grau's productions. This is in itself very high praise.

THE KAISER'S BIRTHDAY.

He Is Thirty-seven Years Old—Celebration of the Event.

BERLIN, Jan. 27.—The Emperor's birthday was celebrated to-day with great ceremony. Divine service was held in the morning in the Castle chapel, and later a grand reception was held in the White Hall of the Schloss, which was attended by a large number of guests, including the foreign diplomats, a number of the royal and reigning Princes, the Ministers of State, and many others of the high Government officials.

The Emperor decorated Prince von Hohenlohe, the Imperial Chancellor, with the cross of Grand Commander of the Order of the House of Hohenzollern, the order of the Prussian royal family, and also decorated Baron von Hammerstein-Loxten, Prussian Minister of Husbandry, with the Order of the Red Eagle. The Imperial family and the Prussian royalties partook of a birthday banquet together at the palace this afternoon.

Prince Bismarck telegraphed his congratulations to the Emperor.

LIBELLED THE POSTMISTRESS.

John Walker Ordered by a Court to Pay Miss Bennett $4,000 Damages.

JACKSONVILLE, Jan. 27.—In the United States Circuit Court Miss Mary J. Bennett to-day secured a verdict of $4,000 for libel against John T. Walker, an Englishman, who has large property interests at De Leon Springs, where Miss Bennett was Postmistress. Walker passed much of his time at De Leon Springs, and while there suspected that Miss Bennett was opening letters directed to him.

He went to Washington and complained to the Postmaster-General about Miss Bennett. When he returned Walker asserted that the Postmaster-General said: "I believe that woman is opening your letters." Walker frequently repeated this statement, crediting it to the Postmaster-General, and, it is said, emphasized it by adding: "And I believe so, too." On this Miss Bennett sued him for $10,000 for libel.

Last of the Tailors' Lockout.

A conference took place yesterday between the Executive Committee of the Coat Contractors' Association and the United Garment Workers to arrange the remaining details of the settlement of the tailors' lockout. The settlement was reached so quickly that both sides were taken by surprise. The representatives of the contractors said that it would encourage them to disclarge the non-union men whom they had employed during the lockout at once, it was agreed, therefore, that a reasonable time be allowed in which to discharge them.

LOUISA HORNUNG'S DEATH.

IT CAUSES A QUARREL BETWEEN HOEBER AND HIS DEPUTY.

Dr. Huber Told the Police That the Little Girl Had Perhaps Been Assaulted, After Telling the Coroner That the Girl Had Died of Exposure, Which Was the Fact.

Wong Wah Kee of 1,522 Park avenue, the Chinese laundryman who was arrested on Sunday on suspicion of being concerned in the death of nine-year-old Louise Hornung, was arraigned in the Harlem Police Court yesterday morning. Detective Perkins of the East 104th street station, who made the arrest, explained the charge against the Chinaman. He said that the suspicions of the police had been partly verified, and that they expected to get still further evidence against the accused man. Accordingly the prisoner was remanded in order to give the police time for further investigation. Wah Kee was taken back to the 104th street station and locked up.

The principal reasons the police have for suspecting Wong Wah Kee are, apparently, the fact that the girl's body was found near his laundry and the sworn statement of Adolph Sanger, a clerk in the District Attorney's office, who says that on Thursday night he saw a girl answering the description of Louisa Hornung in the laundry at 1,522 Park avenue. After looking at the body of the girl and the clothing she had worn, Mr. Sanger said, yesterday, that he believed that the girl he had seen in the laundry was Louisa Hornung.

Dr. Hoeber said last night that he had not suppressed the facts in the case of Louisa Hornung, as had been represented. His deputy, Dr. Huber, who made the autopsy, it was said, had told the police that the child had been assaulted, after the Coroner had declared that the autopsy confirmed his first cursory examination, upon which he had concluded that there had not been an assault.

The Coroner was greatly perturbed as to how such statements could have been made, as his deputy had reported to him that the post mortem examination had shown that the child had not been assaulted, but had died of exposure. He tried to telephone to Dr. Huber many times during the day, but could not reach him. Finally, late in the afternoon, he and his deputy met at the Park Avenue Hotel on a suicide case.

"I tried to talk to Dr. Huber," said Dr. Hoeber last night, "when there was another man with us, but he avoided conversation on the subject at the time, and said to wait until later. When we rode away, I asked him what these stories meant, and whether he had told the police that the autopsy revealed an assault. He seemed flustered, and I could not at first get a satisfactory statement from him, but, finally, he told me that he had told the Captain so. I asked him why, if the autopsy did not show it, and he said that the Police Captain had worried and badgered him so that he finally told him he thought he had found evidences of an assault. This had been his impression, he said, but he had doubts, however, and he got Dr. L. Putzel of 13 East Fifty-seventh street, one of the ablest pathologists of Bellevue, a man whom he met through me, and they made an examination and found that there had been no assault.

"He had come to my house last night, and in the presence of the reporters told me that there had been no assault. That is what he told the reporters, and I asked him what he told them, and so I was nonplussed when I read in the papers to-day that I knew there had been an assault; that my deputy's examination had shown it, and that I had concealed the facts. My first thought was to enter a libel suit, yet how can I very well bring the papers for printing what he told the police? He said that he was not in condition to make an examination, there had been so much work, and that he was in doubt. He thought what he found indicated an assault, and the Police Captain so pestered him that he told him he thought so. I told him he must make affidavit to what he told the police that and reported differently to me, or I should say that he was trying to cast discredit upon me. He said he would leave the carriage if I talked that way, and he got out and I haven't seen him since.

"I shall investigate this matter, I shall. Why should I have a deputy who does so? There are many who want the place. I appointed him because he was not a politician, and because where he was they were not reating him right, and because I thought him a capable and conscientious man. He was doing fine work when he got the $3,000 place. There were plenty after it with pulls, but they were politicians. I could have had $1,000 for it—one man came to me, and, speaking of that, said: 'I suppose you'll be foolenough not to take it.' Of course I would not take it. I gave the place to Dr. Huber. There are plenty who want the place now, but a Coroner does not want every physician for his deputy. It is exasperating to be so abused and misrepresented when one does his duty conscientiously and as carefully as he knows how to do it, trying to guard against any mistake."

Dr. Hoeber's cup of tribulation was full yesterday, but this case seemed to go hardest with him, and he wished to be set right this morning before the public he serves. Later in the evening Dr. Huber came to his house and explained his deeds and words. The chief, who appeared somewhat mollified, said Dr. Huber made the statement which appears below.

"After making an autopsy on the body of Louisa Hornung at the Twenty-eighth precinct station I expressed to the officer in command the suspicion that a criminal assault had been committed. Later I was called upon to state my reports concerning the occurrence of a criminal assault grew stronger, and I determined to consult a colleague of extensive pathological experience in whose judgment I had the utmost confidence. After a careful reëxamination of the organs at the police station we came to the conclusion that there no evidences of a criminal assault. I then went to Coroner Hoeber's office and told him that the autopsy showed that death was due to exposure. I did not tell the Coroner that I had informed the officer in command of my first impression, that I was first impressed that criminal assault had been committed. I did not inform the Coroner that I had told the police officer of my suspicions until I met him at the Park Avenue Hotel this (Monday) afternoon, about 5 o'clock.

"JOHN B. HUBER, M. D."

HOEBER ACCUSES DR. HAYWARD.

He Says that the Bellevue Hospital Surgeon Insulted Him.

Coroner Hoeber called at the Department of Charities yesterday to make complaint against Dr. E. P. Hayward of the Bellevue staff, whom he charged with insulting him when he went to the hospital on Sunday to take the ante-mortem statement of John McMahon, who was assaulted by his nephew Patrick when his sister, Mrs. Bridget Sexton, was fatally injured by the younger McMahon.

The Coroner was told to formulate his charges in writing. Later he wrote a letter to the Commissioners of Charities, in which he embodied his charges and said that he was prepared to sustain them. This is the account Coroner Hoeber gave to the reporters of what took place at the hospital:

"I was in the ward where John McMahon was confined. In stalked a young chap who held his head high. An attendant told him I was Coroner Hoeber, and I subsequently learned that he was Dr. Hayward. Dr. Hayward paid no attention to me. I asked him about Mrs. Sexton, and if he knew any particulars of the case, telling him that I had as yet learned nothing.

"'I see you know nothing about it,' said Dr. Haywood, laughing sneeringly as he walked away from me.

"I then went in to see Mrs. Sexton, and in stalked this young man. He told me that I should not examine her. 'Are you a medical man?' he asked. I told him I had practised medicine before he was born. I told him further that he had insulted me and I did not want to talk to him longer, but would make charges against him. He kept insisting that he had not insulted me, and I called him a liar. He walked all the way down stairs trying to get me to accept an apology, but I told him I would not do so."

Dr. Hayward denies treating Coroner Hoeber impolitely.

Strike at the New Manhattan Hotel.

The general strike which had been threatening for two weeks went into effect yesterday at the new Manhattan Hotel, Forty-second street and Madison avenue, against the employment of members of Local No. 5 of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. It was ordered because this union is not represented in the Board of Walking Delegates. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made by the delegates to get the contractors to discharge the electrical workers and employ only members of Electrical Workers' Union No. 3, which is represented in the Board. The men in the trades represented in the Board quit work yesterday and gathered in and around the building, until Acting Captain Stankamp of the East Fifty-first street police station sent several policemen there and drove the strikers away.

The electrical workers, against whom the strike was directed, remained at work, along with some members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, which is not represented in the Board.

Indigestion

Is due to inactivity of the stomach, liver and bowels. It leads to chronic dyspepsia and causes great suffering. It is cured by

Hood's Pills

For sale by all druggists, 25 cents.

Gladness Comes

With a better understanding of the transient nature of the many physical ills which vanish before proper efforts—gentle efforts—pleasant efforts—rightly directed. There is comfort in the knowledge that so many forms of sickness are not due to any actual disease, but simply to a constipated condition of the system, which the pleasant family laxative, Syrup of Figs, promptly removes. That is why it is the only remedy with millions of families, and is everywhere esteemed so highly by all who value good health. Its beneficial effects are due to the fact, that it is the one remedy which promotes internal cleanliness, without debilitating the organs on which it acts. It is therefore all important, in order to get its beneficial effects, to note when you purchase, that you have the genuine article, which is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only, and sold by all reputable druggists.

If in the enjoyment of good health, and the system is regular, then laxatives or other remedies are not needed. If afflicted with any actual disease, one may be commended to the most skillful physicians, but if in need of a laxative, then one should have the best, and with the well-informed everywhere, Syrup of Figs stands highest and is most largely used and gives most general satisfaction.

LIGHTSHIP OFF FIRE ISLAND.

The Accident to the St. Paul Proves the Necessity of Such a Guide to Mariners.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27.—The grounding of the American liner St. Paul and the close shave the Campania had with the Jersey coast have been the subject of much interest here among officers of the Lighthouse Board and the Hydrographic Office, who are familiar with the treacherous currents that sweep down from the Long Island shore after stiff northeasters such as prevailed the week preceding the accident.

Neither of the vessels, these experts say, would have been in the least danger of striking below Sandy Hook had a lightship been located off Fire Island, as the services have recommended for years. In a few days some member of the New York Congress delegation will present a bill authorizing the Treasury Department to locate temporarily a first-class lightship seven miles off Fire Island, and within a few hundred yards of the buoy that is now stationed at that point. The service has a vessel available for the duty, fitted with a powerful steam siren, and carrying two mast lights capable of being seen, under favorable conditions, twelve nautical miles. The siren, in the thickest weather, should be heard at least eight or ten miles. Congress, in view of the urgent necessity of protecting shipping entering New York Harbor from the east from just such accidents as befell the St. Paul, is expected to approve the bill without delay, and the ship will be placed there as soon as authority is given.

Commercial leaders of New York city have been petitioning the Lighthouse Board and Congress for a first-class vessel off Fire Island, and the estimates submitted by the Treasury in December contain an item of $80,000 for this purpose. The new vessel, if authorized, will have two mast lights displaying the rays eighteen feet above the deck and throwing them a distance of twelve miles.

The most penetrating and powerful steam siren mounted on a lightship, with a diameter of twelve inches and capable of a blast that should be heard twelve miles, will also form a part of its equipment. This lightship is to be located seven miles practically due south of Fire Island, in about fifteen fathoms of water.

Vessels coming from the east toward New York will then be able to approach the lightship close enough to "strike their sight" by the blasts of her siren in the thickest weather.

The great difficulty now experienced by ship Captains when nearing Fire Island in such fogs as struck the St. Paul and Campania, according to Capt. Wilde of the lighthouse service, is the impossibility of approaching the shore station or hearing any siren that may be blowing there. Neither can they find the buoy which marks a shoal extending out five or six miles, and by reason of the similarity of the soundings they cannot tell how far they are from the Long Island shore or Sandy Hook. The charts of this locality show but little variation of water, so that when a steamer gets between the light and Sandy Hook in foggy weather it is practically impossible to determine whether she is twenty miles from Fire Island or five.

It is not proposed by the Lighthouse Board to discontinue the Fire Island light. That light would still be visible seven miles further than that on the light boat, and, as now, would be the first seen after leaving South Shoal.

A number of officers who have had experience in getting ships off shore are surprised that the St. Paul should not have been moved to-day, or even Sunday. One of these says that ten years ago the Morgan liner Alamo grounded on one of the Florida reefs, whence she was floated an hour, and went up high and dry. Her stem was clear of the water at low tide, and apparently she was doomed.

Three days later, however, she was off, uninjured, and proceeding to New York. The means that should have been adopted, these officers say, would have been to girdle the St. Paul two or three times with a big hawser just about her main deck, where there would be no danger of her crushing in like an egg, the cable to be secured to the ship by stirrups at distances sufficient to hold it up. To this hawser there should lead two equally strong ones fastened to steamers of the size of the St. Louis and Campania. These two ships, they say, would have pulled her off, no matter how deep she may be embedded in the sand, and without injury to her bottom. The trouble with tugs is that they have no power, these officers say.

Capt. Wilde of the Lighthouse Board is one who advocates this method of moving the St. Paul. Another officer asserted that she could be pulled off in half an hour by the St. Louis and another vessel of her size with the hawsers fastened around the wrecked vessel as described.

JOTTINGS ABOUT TOWN.

The Gordon arson case in the General Sessions will go to the jury to-day, the forty-fourth day of the trial.

Gottlieb Heineman, 28 years old, of 120 East Fourth street, died yesterday at Bellevue Hospital of poisoning by Paris green, which he took with suicidal intent on Sunday.

George Brown, the call boy who stole Virginia Earle's $500 diamond brooch from the actress's room in the Hotel Bartholdi, was sentenced yesterday to nine months in the penitentiary by Recorder Goff.

Frank Gleason of 39 Willis avenue pleaded guilty before Judge Cowing in the General Sessions yesterday to a violation of the Sunday law and was fined $100. George Muller of 2,994 Third avenue also pleaded guilty to a similar offence and escaped with a fine of $50.

Charles O. Bassett, opera singer, recovered a judgment in the Supreme Court yesterday for $4,452.53 against Gustav Hinrichs for balance of salary due under a contract to sing the first leading tenor rôles with the New American Opera Company for the season of 1888-1889 at a salary of $200 a week.

Nathan Hirschberg, who was arrested on suspicion of having assaulted and robbed Mrs. Mildred A. Phipps, in the hall of her home at 535 East Seventy-second street, on Jan. 18, was held in $2,000 bail in the Yorkville Police Court yesterday to await the action of the Grand Jury.

Mayor Strong signed yesterday the resolution passed by the Board of Aldermen last Tuesday asking the Metropolitan Street Railway Company to issue transfers between north bound Lexington avenue cars and north bound Broadway and Columbus avenue cars at Twenty-third street.

Referee Lewis L. Delafield has reported in the Supreme Court in favor of giving Charles W. Blackburne an absolute divorce from his wife, Fannie B. Delafield. Her husband's address is 170 Lexington avenue, Brooklyn, and he is an importing broker. In his evidence it was shown that Mrs. Blackburne had visited Joseph Moors, who has a saloon at 1822 Bay street. Moors weighs 250 pounds and is called "the Brooklyn Giant."

At the annual meeting yesterday of the stockholders of the Consolidated Gas Company, the following trustees were elected: Thomas S. Lees, Harrison E. Gawtry, Samuel Sloan, John F. Higgins, William Rockefeller, Hamilton W. Robinson, Mortimer Fyne, George F. Baker, James Stillman, Henry H. Anderson, Stephen S. Palmer, Alexander T. Van Nest, Hugh D. Auchincloss. Mr. Samuel Sloan voted proxies for 226,000 shares of stock.

In a general order issued by the Post Office Department yesterday, it was announced that R. C. Jackson, superintendent of the railway mail service of the second division, comprising the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and peninsula of Maryland and Virginia, had been succeeded by Victor J. Bradley, superintendent of the station B in the Grand Central Palace building at Forty-third street and Lexington avenue. Mr. Jackson retires from the superintendency to accept another assignment, in which the department intends to allow a number of special and important duties.

A PET THAT MADE TROUBLE

WILBUR ARCHER'S ANNOYANCES FROM A RABBIT CAT.

It Kept Him Busy Hunting Because It Would Eat Only Rabbits, and Finally Landed Him in a Bear Pit with a Bear on Top of Him—Now He Is Going About on Crutches and the Cat Is Feeding Him.

AMHERST, Mo., Jan. 25.—A malformed, stubtailed kitten of the variety known as rabbit cat put Wilbur Archer of Clifton to a heap of trouble last fall, and finally landed him in a bear trap with a small but decidedly ugly bear on top of him.

In order to understand the situation thoroughly the nature of the cat must be considered. Archer runs a sawmill for a living, and keeps a cat because the women like to have one about the house. Last spring Archer's cat—it was of the Maria sex—surprised the household by leaving six white kittens in the best chamber bed. As there were six too many for the family's need, all of them were put to soak in the mill pond while the mother was out foraging in the woods. The parent returned an hour later, bearing a half-grown rabbit that was still alive and kicking. She went to the box where she had left her offspring, and, failing to find them, hunted through the house, uttering plaintive and motherly cries. Meanwhile the rabbit, left to himself, was rapidly recovering from the shock of capture. He had limped as far as the shed door on his way back to freedom when the mother cat picked him up and carried him to her box, where it is presumed articles of adoption were signed, for the rabbit made no further attempt to escape, and afterward looked to his new mother for sustenance. This was a novel idea to the Archers, though it is claimed to be aged among cat families.

It was said that the cat was simply fattening her prey and would eat it with greater gusto as soon as it grew palatable, and the Archers even went so far as to bet on the date when the rabbit would be safely stowed away inside the cat. Luther Mann, an old bear hunter, who knew the ways of rabbits and cats, when they met under certain conditions, accepted the wager and won it. The young rabbit not only lived and thrived, but also was soon able to go out in the fields, where he joyfully cropped clover while his foster mother was slaying his kindred. Night after night they came home together, he filled with tender leaves and she corpulent with choice portions of his near relations. Though she preferred rabbit to all other meat, she would rather starve than taste that of her own growing.

After having, when the spiders set their nests in the stubble, and the fall dandelions danced like golden meteors on the gray fields, the cat found the best room door ajar, and new-born kittens were again crying on the white counterpane. There were four in this batch instead of six, and one of these was a weak, deformed thing, with long hind legs, a stub tail, and great paddle-like ears that hung down over its head like wet ribbons.

Reversing Darwin's plan of nature, the stronger went to the wall—which was a stone one and very hard and the weakling was saved. As it waxed more powerful its resemblance to a cat grew less and less, while its rabbit natures came out plainly. It sat upon its hind legs, balancing itself on its short tail, and held food to its mouth, like any rodent of good pedigree. Much to the surprise of everybody, it refused clover, but as it also repudiated mice, squirrels, birds, and other food beloved by cats, the taste, or lack of taste, was thought to be a passing whim. So it pined from hunger until one day Archer shot and brought in a rabbit. Then every doubt about the chosen food of this anomalous creature was set at rest forever. The rabbit cat pounced upon the game with a growl, and did not cease to growl and eat until a bare skull, four hairy paws, and a bunch of brown fur were all that was left of a five-pound rabbit. After this it would look at nothing else. Beefsteak, oysters, fresh smelts, and every delicacy beloved by cats were spurned, and even catnip was shunned with disgust. It must have rabbit or starve. Archer could not see it perish when the woods were full of rabbits waiting to be shot, so he went gunning nearly every day, and his ultimate overthrow is directly due to a charitable desire to feed a rabbit cat.

For a time fate favored him. Big rabbits came to the cedars back of his house and posed gracefully while he blazed away. After he had killed a dozen or so no more came, and he wandered away to the hills, often hunting hours before he could snap a cap. Cold nights came and he shivered in his cabin, eating the beechnut burrs and the triangular kernels were everywhere. Among them, putting in their winter's supply, were hundreds of plump squirrels that he could knock over with a stick. As Archer gazed at the sleek misers, he doubted the wisdom of a law that would not permit a cat which would eat nothing but rabbits. One day after vowing he would kill the cat if he failed to find game inside of an hour, he climbed Beech Hill with his mind full of bitter thoughts. Above him in the narrow road was a grayish brown object that resembled a rabbit. It was a rather light one, he thought, but the season, though mild, was getting late, and it was time for rabbits to put on their winter ulsters.

He was nearsighted, and thought he would go closer. Now he was sure; it was a rabbit, and he cocked his gun and leaned the stock against his shoulder and fire was the work of a moment, and to reach forward and grab his prey was keen delight. No sooner had he picked it up than he regretted the act. Evidently there was a mistake somewhere, for the next instant he dropped gun and everything, and was off down the hill like deer followed by a pointed and uncountable wasps. It was so late in the season that he found them all at home and prepared for visitors. For the next two weeks Archer could not see the face of the clock across his own kitchen.

Meanwhile, Luther Mann was out making bear pits. These are constructed with a great tree for the back and tall poles set up endwise for two sides, the front remaining open. A piece of fresh meat smeared in honey is hung against the tree and over the pit some six or eight feet in front of the ground. Under the bait and at the foot of the tree a large steel trap is set and carefully concealed. When a bear finds the beef and honey combination he reaches for it, and as his paws go aloft his hind feet draw near the tree, until one of them is caught in the trap. After this he changes his mind about dining, and goes off through the woods dragging the trap with a big stick attached, and leaving a trail that a blind man can follow.

By the time Archer was able to go looking for rabbits again, Mann had set and baited a dozen bear pits. Thinking of mad wasps and hearing their angry buzz in every rattling leaf, Archer picked his way through the woods looking for rabbits and winking out for dangerous insects. Down by the bog he heard the brush crack and leaned over for a shot. The noise grew nearer so he could plainly hear the rustle of feet. It was surely a rabbit and coming right in his direction. His gun was at his shoulder when a spruce thicket opened and out stepped a bear, the first he had seen for years. At the same time Mann, who was close behind and saw Archer, cried out:

"Shoot him, Wilbur," at which Archer turned and ran up the hill faster than he came down when the wasps were after him.

Near the top of the rise was a large hemlock that was hollow and had been blown over against other trees, so that it stood at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Toward this Archer hurried as fast as his legs would carry him, intending to climb it and escape the bear. When within a rod of safety he crashed through the underbrush, and, slipping, went feet foremost into a bear pit. There was a sharp click of steel, followed by a wild yell of pain, and Archer was caught by the leg in one of Mann's traps. All thoughts were now concentrated on getting free. Using his leather belt and a stout stick for a twister to press down one spring, and putting his free foot on the other, he was groaning and swearing away to himself, unmindful of the rest of the world, when something hairy and heavy lighted on his back. It was Mann's bear, dragging a trap behind him and doing the best he could to reach his enemy with his teeth.

Archer, now in peril of his life, kicked the bear with his free foot, and the bear reciprocated by ripping Archer's coat open from shoulder to hip. Archer yelled, the bear growled, and then both turned and fled in opposite directions as fast as the traps would allow. Archer, blind with terror, ran headlong against Mann, whose rifle was discharged by the fall. Before Mann could free Archer from the trap the bear crawled into the hemlock out of sight. Mann helped Archer home, found an axe to cut the tree open, and late in the evening returned with a small bear, meeting the doctor who came to attend Archer.

This happened late in December. At present Archer is able to go out on crutches. His rabbit cat, left to starve, showed new life, and conceived the idea of hunting for itself, and during Archer's confinement brought in two or three rabbits every day, which, by the doctor's advice, were made into savory stews for the invalid. The cat's big ears, long hind legs, and leaping mode of travel make it a dangerous foe to rabbits. They think it is one of their own species until it is among them and a dismembered victim pays the penalty of his mistake with his life.

"I set out to kill the darned thing twenty times," says Archer, "but now b'gosh it just feeds me and keeps me alive."

Equally Skilful Surgery Would Have Saved Garfield.

William McCarthy, who was shot by Charles McEvoy in a saloon at 420 East sixteenth street on Dec. 21, was discharged as cured from Bellevue Hospital yesterday. His cure is considered a great triumph of surgery, as there were seventeen distinct perforations in the intestinal coil, which had to be closed by the most delicate of operations.

It is said that had surgery been at its present stage of perfection at the time Garfield was shot, the President's life would undoubtedly have been saved.

Proof of the Pudding.

Talk, talk, talk! All the talking until doomsday would fail to induce some people