TOPICS FROM STAGELAND.

A TEMPEST THAT IS RAGING IN A THEATRICAL TEAPOT.

Business and Art in the Enterprises of Dramatic Shows—Literature for the Use of the Actors—Photographic and Phonographic Efforts Combined—Features of the Stage.

A tempest is raging fiercely in a theatrical teapot. The general public doesn't know it, and upon now reading of it won't care a rap about it. So much of a row as there is relates wholly to the business of amusements, and cannot affect the art of the stage at all. The people who support the theatres by paying money for admissions are concerned with the plays and the acting of them, but hardly any with the management of the pieces that they go to see. Therefore the outcry against the "theatrical trust," when heard at all, reaches few interested listeners. The facts in the matter are very simple. The first American manager to make a marked advance in the production of plays was the late Lester Wallack. After him came Augustin Daly, who gave a strong impetus to worthy dramatic interests in this country. The ensuing operations of Albert M. Palmer were epoch-making in their beneficial effect. Next in the valuable development of real art and literature on the stage was Daniel Frohman, and the latest of the managers to make commendable progress with a stock company was Charles Frohman, the most energetic and daring of them all. This younger Mr. Frohman went into comprehensive business undertakings, too, and there were soon associated with him Al Hayman and Isaac B. Rich, wealthy owners of theatres. Meanwhile the firm of Klaw & Erlanger developed from what are called booking agents—that is, arrangers of routes for travelling companies—into controllers of many theatres, and original producers of numerous plays. At the same time the Philadelphia firm of Nixon & Zimmerman built up an extensive and lucrative business in owning and managing theatres. A year or so ago some of these men, Al Hayman, Charles Frohman, Klaw & Erlanger, Nixon & Zimmerman, and Rich & Harris, entered into an arrangement for the purpose of avoiding needless rivalries, and operating to a certain extent in unison. Their combination of interests is dubbed by some folk "a trust."

The methods of this "trust" seem to produce a degree of harmony, solidity and prosperity hitherto unknown in the business of theatricals. It does not seem inclined to confine itself to the promotion of plays and companies controlled by its members. The local managers of most of the first-class theatres throughout the country, and all the "star" actors of importance save two—Minnie Maddern Fiske and Francis Wilson—are included in the "trust," through which the routes are planned and carried out. Presumably, mutual interests are served. Nothing hinders any one of the hundreds of participants in the "syndicate" from withdrawing at will. No doubt they will do so as soon and as fast as they find that it does not serve their purposes. Mrs. Fiske and Mr. Wilson assert that it does not, and they are conducting their tours independently. It is Mrs. Fiske who has set the theatrical teapot boiling tempestuously with accusations, recriminations, and lawsuits. But the tempest is still confined to the teapot, and the great public of theatre supporters will know little about it and care less. Mrs. Fiske will still be admirable and prosperous as an actress with genius, and the men composing the "trust" will continue their art and trade of manufacturing and dealing in a large and generally excellent line of theatrical entertainments.

Good literature has never been more plentiful on the stage than it is to-day, and some of it just now is coming from authors of popular novels. Two of the extremely prosperous plays with us at present are Mr. Barrie's "The Little Minister" and Mrs. Burnett's "A Lady of Quality." Anthony Hope is about to have a piece called "The Adventure of Lady Ursula" produced by Edward H. Sothern. Ian McLaren's "The Bonnie Briar Bush" is being dramatized by Dr. McArthur, and will have J. H. Stoddart in its chief rôle. Archibald Gunter, whose first work was a play, "Two Nights in Rome," and who planned "Mr. Barnes of New York" for the stage before issuing it as a novel, is said to be making a stage version of one of his recent books. Dr. Thomas Dunn English was a dramatist as long ago as when he wrote "Ben Bolt," and perhaps the renewed popularity of that ballad in "Trilby" has incited him to do some more work for the theatre. He is collaborating with a Newark journalist in a comedy meant to contain true stuff of Irish life and character. R. N. Stephens's latest play, which treats of colonial times in this neighborhood, is to be issued in the form of a novel before it is used on the stage.

Bronson Howard has been at work two years, in his slow fashion, on a comedy of American life. He brought it back from his summer journeyings completed, and now he has placed it for production with Herbert Kelcey and Effie Shannon. It is said to deal with themes of fashionable society. A rôle of a young man in it is to be acted by Bruce MacRae, a nephew of the author.

Joseph Arthur, who has had equally violent successes and failures, and who achieved one of the former with "Blue Jeans," a seriocomic depiction of Indiana folks, appears to have done the same kind of work in "The Salt of the Earth," which is having its trial in Washington this week.

Sudermann's "Johannes," which was forbidden by the censor in Berlin and then referred to the Emperor for final judgment, will be acted here at the Irving Place in January.

Charles H. Hoyt's new play, "A Day and a Night," will not be produced so soon as he intended. He will wait until next fall, and in the meantime Otis Harlan will be seen in "A Stranger in New York" at the head of one of the three companies.

The Edison projectoscope, the Lumiere cinematographe, and the Edison talking machine combine in one inning at Pastor's. And there should not be forgotten a large man who makes a dozen trips between wings and footlights to announce the glories of "A Trip Around the World." From long habit at talking into phonographs for the sake of making records, his tones are such as might be heard in Fourteenth street were the trip to start from there and be half completed. He declares that the views and sounds of his apparatus will be changed with each performance, affixes a huge megaphone to his phonograph and withdraws. As the inning has been promised to be a combination of moving photographs with the sounds that in nature would accompany the pictured scenes something new and startlingly distinct is reasonably expected. But phonograph and cinematographe alternate without the slightest attempt to blend one into the other. The man with-the-voice, or "his lungless," as the gods at Pastor's have already nicknamed him, announces a scene from Berlin, and the antics of the Marco twins are pictured exactly as done at Koster & Bial's last winter. Next the phonograph squeaks out a banjo solo, in tones remarkably like its copies of later piano accompaniments, and the cinematographe pictures the saving of a life at Atlantic City. This incident consists in casting a life preserver from a rowboat to a remarkably strong swimmer, pulling him toward the boat, and hauling him over its side. Possibly it is to make a deeper impression for this unusual heroism that it is repeated, but more likely the cause lies in the use of short kinetoscope films. A dozen other numbers are given; there are duets, songs, and instrumental solos for the phonograph, a cavalry charge, a section of President McKinley's inauguration parade, and an express train going fully twelve miles an hour for the cinematographe. Then at the very end there is the reproduction of a woman's voice, the only one that was ever reproduced successfully on the phonograph, as the voice-man declares, so there's one reason for satisfaction in the exhibit.

Myrtle Martin is an actress in a way. That is to say, she is a snake charmer in dime museums. She is at least enough of an actress to get stranded in Pittsburg through desertion by her father, who is also her manager. She could do very well without him, but he took away her whole outfit of seven snakes.

An invalid woman was taken to a Boston theatre in a wheel chair to see a play, and two days afterward she died, but there was not necessarily any connection between the two incidents.

A stolen watch exploited an actor in Newark in a way that was beyond any suspicion of a fake. He was arrested for stealing it and stayed a night in jail before he could prove his innocence.

James Hunnecker writes: "It gives me pain to reject any greatness thrust upon me, but I must deny all connection, past, present, or future, with any such scheme as the Criterion Independent Theatre. My name was used absolutely without my knowledge or consent."

It is curious how far some men will let themselves be utilized to boom an actress. Ten grown-up and not ordinarily ridiculous citizens of Lewiston, Me., sat in a row during a performance by Fanny Rice, each with a big red letter on his breast, the line of them reading, "Hello, Fanny."

But there's joy unalloyed in other items of Pastor's bill. There's no doubting that the world is better for the remark of the joker who gazes abstractedly at a stove and remarks with the air of a philosopher: "How could the fire go out with the door shut!" A prop for evolution comes, too, in the statement of a man who, taking the cue "in a measure" from his companion, states that that was the way he stopped drinking—in a measure—and that it's saved him a peck of trouble. Then all humanity should bless the chap who recites verses describing a woman's heroic resistance, apparently of a burglar, and ending in her throwing a man downstairs, the whole explained by the feeling line, "For her revolver was not loaded, but her husband was." Though the promised realism of phonograph and moving pictures fizzled, there's still the real thing in variety show at Pastor's.

Three hundred children of the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum will go to the Doris Circus this afternoon as guests of the management.

Adolf Link, who used to be the comedian at the Irving Place, is acting at the Theatre an der Wien in Vienna. Max Bira is playing with success in Berlin.

Fanny Davenport has abandoned the effort to make a success out of the Joan of Arc play, "The Saint and the Fool," and it will not be acted after next week. She may return later to the Sardou heroines. Her popularity in some of these rôles is remarkable. "Fedora," which she played first nearly fifteen years ago, was brought to the American last winter, and, contrary to expectation, the theatre was crowded.

Sarah Bernhardt, having reached the age of 55, is about to produce a play in which she will appear as a young girl, in order to let the public see how little the mere question of years affects true dramatic genius. If she continues to look as young as she did here two years ago, the illusion will not be difficult to maintain.

In "The Princess and the Butterfly" there is a *Mrs. St. Roche*. Julie Opp calls her *Mrs. Sin-Roch* in the London manner. But Mr. Hackett, in the proud freedom of Americanism, refuses to take any tips from the St. James Theatre, and boldly refers to the lady in question as *Mrs. Saint Roche*. He looks defiantly at Miss Opp, moreover, whenever he says it.

An old phrase, long out of use, has cropped up in the reorganization of the Olympia's management. This once familiar expression is "as good as the Empire in London." The stage performances at Koster & Bial's, barring the richness and beauty of the elaborate ballets, is as good as or better than the specialty programme at the Empire or at any other music hall in London. The interior of the Olympia music hall is far more attractive than that of the Empire, and lacks only its spacious promenades and lounging places. These have never been considered in the building of any New York music hall, as they are intended for the use of a class which is not so openly recognized here. But "as good as the Empire in London" is a meaningless phrase in so far as it refers to the performances at Koster & Bial's or the decoration of the Olympia.

TERROR CAUSED BY A BAT.

A Big Black Fellow Invades the Quarters of the Board of Health.

At noon yesterday a man with a feather duster climbed out of a window on the top floor of the Criminal Court building, where the Health Board's Secretary has his office. He pulled down one of the canvas awnings to shake the dust from it, and when the canvas was unfolded a big black bat flew from the folds and entered the building. It fluttered blindly against the head of one of the Health Office clerks, and fell upon the clerk's desk.

"Ow-w-w!" yelled the clerk. "Ow-w-w! A rat. A rat!"

The seven young women who were pounding typewriting machines in an adjoining room, where Dr. Blauvelt has an office, stopped suddenly on exclamation points and question marks. Each of the seven made a leap for life, landing on the top of office desks.

"Help! Help!" yelled one of them as she saw the bat fly into Dr. Blauvelt's office, followed by four white-haired clerks, Secretary Golderman, three dictionaries, and a bunch of window mops.

"Mamma! Mamma!" yelled the youngest of the typewriting army, clapping her hands and crying. Then came a tumbling of furniture, angry shouts of men, and dashes here and there by the bacteria chasers from the other offices.

"Git him in the corner and hit him with that iron bar," shouted one of the clerks.

"Kill him! Kill him!" yelled the typewriters in chorus.

"For Gawd's sake don't kill him," pleaded a young student who had hurried from his laboratory. "For Gawd's sake don't kill him—he is blind!"

"No, kill him! Kill him!" shouted the death certificate man. "We must kill him!"

Again the air was full of office furniture, mingled with screams of "Save him from the doctors!" and "Ouch, ow, mamma, kill him!" from the typewriting army.

Policeman Palmer, who had been sitting at the door of the District Attorney's office on the floor below, heard the screams and ran upstairs, three steps at a time. He saw visions of an insane asylum, with a new order at large, and heard the bang! bang! bang! of heavy clubs on the floor. The policeman grabbed up a chair in the hall, and, holding it above his head with one hand, boldly opened the door leading to the health offices. He was about to reach for his revolver when he heard the student's piteous pleadings:

"Don't kill—he is blind."

"I'll just knock him down with a chair and put the nippers on him," shouted Palmer as he entered the door. "Where is he! Where is he?"

"In Dr. Blauvelt's office," answered Dominick Rottkamp, the Health Board's messenger. "But don't use your pistol or you'll bring down that blonde on top of the bookcase."

"What did he do?" asked the policeman.

"Run up against one of the clerks and struck the clerk in the face," answered the messenger.

"Is the clerk dead?" asked Palmer.

"No," said the messenger, "but the——"

"Ow-w-w! Ouch-ch-ch!" interrupted the typewriter girl on the bookcase, "he's coming at me—help! help!"

Palmer by this time had gotten into Dr. Blauvelt's office and discovered the crowd of bacteria chasers throwing mucilage bottles and dictionaries at the bat. In a minute he sized up the situation and said in disgust: "I thought there were about nine dead and ten injured."

Then he went downstairs and chased six suspender peddlers into Coroner Hoeber's office.

In the meantime Messenger Rottkamp captured the bat with the aid of a waste paper basket on the end of a window pole. The seven girls came down on stepladders to their type writing machines, and drank seven glasses of icewater. Then they used their erasers in scratching exclamation marks from the letters they had been at work on, while the doctors went back to juggle germs in their laboratories, and the clerks returned to their books.

$10,000 FOR PROVING HIM SANE.

Dr. F. G. Winter's Counsel Alleged to Have Asked an Excessive Fee.

Edward M. Grout, on behalf of Dr. Frederick G. Winter, yesterday obtained from Justice Smith in the Supreme Court in Brooklyn an injunction restraining the law firm of Dow, Murray & Hartridge from transferring certain notes, amounting to $10,000, made by Dr. Winter in favor of the firm. The firm was counsel for Dr. Winter in the proceedings last week brought to have him declared insane. Dr. Winter was declared sane and competent to manage his own affairs. It is now alleged that after the trial Dr. Winter's lawyers prevailed upon him to go to their office, and explained to him the hard work that was necessary to save him from going to an asylum and that he then gave them a note for $2,000, payable in one month; another note for the same sum, payable in six months, and two notes for $3,000 each, payable in twelve months, all in payment for their services in his behalf. Subsequently Dr. Winter took counsel in the matter and was informed that the amount charged by the firm was excessive.

TO BOARDING A BIRD, $3.

A New Industry in Brooklyn of Which Justice Kramer Denies Expert Knowledge.

A trained parrot belonging to Mrs. Fannie Graff of 777 Bedford avenue, Brooklyn, escaped from its cage in the kitchen about three months ago. It was trapped by John Cavanagh, who lives at 44 Hopkins street, and of this Mrs. Graff learned last week. Cavanagh refused to surrender the bird until $3 for three months' board for it was paid. In the Lee Avenue Police Court yesterday Justice Kramer, to whom Mrs. Graff had appealed, said: "As I am not a judge of a bird's board, I will adjourn this case until Dec. 10, when each of you may have experts in that line here to testify as to the proper compensation Cavanagh should receive for boarding the parrot."

Richard Hoffman Testimonial Concert.

An occasion of much interest occurred yesterday in the celebration by a testimonial concert, in Chickering Hall, of the fiftieth anniversary of Mr. Richard Hoffman's first public appearance in New York. Ever since that date, in 1847, Mr. Hoffman has held not only the respect and esteem of many warm friends, but the sincere admiration of our city's public. His work has been entirely confined to this community, no illusions of travel or of distant places seeming to tempt him to leave home and display his accomplishments in other cities. Yesterday afternoon an exceedingly charming programme was played, consisting of Mozart's quartet in G minor, concerto in C major by Bach for two pianos, with string quintet, and Hummel's ever-fascinating septet. Mr. Hoffman was assisted by the Dannreuther quartet and by Mr. Charles B. Foote, his stanch friend and best pupil, whose abilities trench very closely upon professional limits. Mrs. Foote took the second piano in Bach's concerto. She was cordially received by the audience, and the concerto was commended by hearty applause at its close. The affair made a delightful little ovation to a most deserving artist and an old favorite.

WOMAN'S RIGHT TO BE UGLY

MRS. WHITEHEAD DEFENDS IT BEFORE THE RAINY DAY CLUB.

Her Costume Should Be Serviceable and Beauty Will Come in Due Time—Her Paper Preceded by a General Discussion of Rustling Paper Shirts and Pretty Club Badges.

The Rainy Day Club held a rousing meeting in the New York Industrial building, at Forty-third street and Lexington avenue, yesterday afternoon. Mrs. Emma Beckwith was in the chair and there was a large turn-out of members and visitors. Everybody was in high good humor because at last the club has a permanent home, and best of all, it doesn't cost a cent.

Mrs. Balcam read a letter from Mrs. Bertha Welby, Corresponding Secretary, telling of a meeting of the Rainy Day Club she attended in Syracuse last week. The letter stated that over fifty members were present, that most of them wore their rainy day suits, though the weather was fine, and that the club was in a most flourishing condition.

Mrs. Andrews, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in making her report, said: "I have been absent from New York for several months, but we've had one executive meeting since my return. The matter of a place of meeting came up and we were glad to accept Mr. Charles F. Wingate's offer to meet here—for nothing."

"I'd hoped to have a paper petticoat here today to show you all," irrelevantly remarked the presiding officer at this point, "but it didn't come. They are lovely. Come in four colors and rustle like silk."

"Do you wear 'em?" asked somebody in a corner.

"Yes," answered some one who knew all about it, "you wear 'em anywhere, rain or shine. They are made of paper, and have a lovely rustle, and they only cost 50 cents each."

"I would like some one to suggest that we send one of our badges to the President of the Syracuse Club," said Mrs. Beckwith.

Mrs. May Banks Stacy made the motion.

"I object," put in Mrs. A. M. Palmer. "We have our pin. Let them have theirs."

"It would make us the mother club to let them use our pin, and there is always power in that," persisted Mrs. Stacy

"I still differ," said Mrs. Palmer.

"I think the idea of getting other clubs to adopt our pin is to secure a source of revenue to us," said Mrs. Andrews. "Our dues are so low, and if we could sell these pins wholesale"——

"The adoption of the same pin by all Rainy Day Clubs would be a bond of fellowship," interrupted Mrs. Celia B. Whitehead.

"Am I to understand that we are to give the Syracuse Club our pin!" asked Mrs. Knowles. I agree with Mrs. Palmer. This pin belongs distinctly to us. We originated it, and I belong to nine clubs, and this is the prettiest pin I have except the Press Club badge."

"This seems to me," said Mrs. Fowler, "to be a matter serious enough to be put in the hands of the Executive Committee, and I move that it be referred to that body."

The motion was carried like a flash.

"We are just a year old next month," said Mrs. Beckwith, "and according to our constitution to-day is the day to name our nominating officers, for our annual election is to be held at our next meeting. The committee is named from the floor."

Mrs. Parker Morrison, Mrs. Paul H. Colell, Mrs. Minnie L. Fowler, Mrs. A. Hays Smith, and Dr. Jessie T. Bogle were selected.

"When our Secretary sends out the postal cards notifying the members of the next meeting," said Mrs Palmer, "I would suggest that she put the New York Industrial Building instead of the Grand Central Palace, as she did this time. The Household Economic Association puts that on its postals. Grand Central Palace is so horribly common. That is too much! Ugh! Grand Central Palace! Common!"

Everybody agreed that it was just too common for anything, and reporters were cautioned never to say that the Rainy Day Club met in the Grand Central Palace. Mrs. Beckwith introduced Mrs. Celia B. Whitehead of Westfield, N. J., the first speaker on the day. Her subject was "Beauty and the Beast, or Woman's Right to Be Ugly." She said: 'It seems to be an indisputable fact that women, almost universally, are dissatisfied with the clothing imposed on them by fashion in civilized countries. In making this statement I leave out the small and insignificant number, if there be any such, who devote themselves entirely to dress parades of various sorts; horse shows, for instance. When I speak of woman I speak of the majority who are doing some useful work in the world. These are more and more crying out against the restriction, the unhealthfulness, the expense and inconvenience of their clothing. I think also that there is a general agreement that woman's dress is not beautiful. Years ago a gentleman in this city said to me: 'Woman's dress is as inartistic as it is abominable in other ways.' Probably there would be but little if any dissent from the statement that beauty is a desirable quality in woman's clothing.

"While all agree that beauty is desirable, one class emphasizes this desirability very strongly, while another insists that beauty may be left to care for itself; that if the dress be true to its uses first it will blossom into beauty. This is the position I stand for.

"To bring out clearly the points she wished to make Mrs. Whitehead read a few extracts from the well-known story, "Beauty and the Beast," and then she continued: "The beast would never have known how beautiful had he not been first accepted because of his goodness. So it is my firm belief that woman's dress will never become beautiful until it is loved and accepted for its intrinsic merit. Although the Beast was hideous, he treated Beauty so well did so much for her, that she overlooked his ugliness and then he became beautiful.

"Shall we not learn a lesson from this fable, find a dress adapted to our needs, and let the question of beauty remain unanswered until the more important and fundamental ones have been attended to? Our ideas of beauty have been so distorted by our customary dress that I doubt if we know very much about it, anyway. I am not sure that we should know a beautiful dress if we should see one. So let us consent even to be ugly if need be till we find a dress that is good to us.

"But has woman a right to be ugly? Is beauty her transcendent duty? And is beauty a matter of dress? When I was a girl I read from J. G. Holland that 'No wife should ever allow another woman to appear better dressed in her husband's eyes than herself.' I do not know the impression it made on me then, but I have thought many times since what an ignoble sermon Mr. Holland would set the women at. He did not state by what means a wife should prevent another woman from appearing better dressed than herself in her husband's eyes. The inference did not seem to be that she should drive all other women out of her husband's sight, but that she herself should devote her energies to the task of dressing so well that no other woman could dress better. Think of the awful strain on each woman. Evidently Mr. Holland would not admit a woman's right to be ugly three days.

"Judge Albion Tourgee, in an address delivered many years ago to the girls in Mount Holyoke Seminary, said: 'Great stress should be laid upon the necessity of greater care in the personal adornment of women. The influence of woman depends first of all upon the charm of presence of which grace of manner and personal adornment are the chief ingredients.'

"Evidently Judge Tourgee does not think a woman has a right to be ugly. They emphasize the duty of a woman to be beautiful, or, rather, beautifully dressed. Much in the same strain have I heard in the Rainy Day Club; and yet I am a firm believer in a woman's right to be ugly, at certain times and places under certain conditions and for certain purposes. Can I prove it? No; not exactly; nor can I prove that woman has a soul, yet I believe it.

"Before closing I want to call your attention again to Judge Tourgee's utterance, for he seems to me a fair exponent of those who emphasize personal ornamentation. Do you hear any hint of a soul there? This thought of woman as just a body without reference to her heart or mind is, I believe, at the root of this insistence that she be adorned. Suppose Abraham Lincoln's influence had been first of all grace of manner and personal adornment. Suppose it of any great man or woman. Do you not see what a belittling effect it must have on a man or woman either? Grace of manner should be but the outward sign of inward grace. Let woman devise a dress that will not hinder her from becoming strong, wise, grand and good, and let it be ever so much of a Beast at first. Beauty will finally marry it and they will live happily ever after."

Miss K. Marguerite Lindley followed Mrs. Whitehead, her subject being "Sanitation of the Human House." Miss Lindley made some excellent points regarding exercise and rest. Mrs. McDonald, a member of the Women's Literary Club of Arlington, N. J., invited the Rainy Day Club to a meeting of that organization on Dec. 7. The Rutherford Club has also been invited to be present, and the three clubs expect to have a big reunion. The next regular meeting of the Rainy Day Club will be held on the first Wednesday in January, when officers will be elected.

$12,000 for His Lost Arm.

Joseph Ricca, 15 years old, obtained a verdict of $12,000 against the Third Avenue Railroad Company in the Supreme Court in Brooklyn yesterday for the loss of his right arm. While crossing the Bowery at Hester street in 1892 the boy was run over by a car and his right arm was cut off at the shoulder. On a former trial the jury disagreed. On motion of counsel for the company a stay was granted by Justice Van Wyck until Dec. 15, when a motion for a new trial will be heard.

LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

A valuable library was left recently to the care of a certain class of professional men in New York under conditions so unusual that its existence is scarcely known. When Richard M. Hunt, the famous architect, died two years ago last summer he left his architectural library, which is said to be of exceptional value and interest, to his son, with the proviso that it should always be accessible to the architects of New York. Anybody who has that claim to the use of the library need only present himself, explain who he is, and avail himself of the unusual advantages of the books which Mr. Hunt collected with great care during his long career. This library is to-day in his son's office with a librarian in charge of it, and it can be consulted by anybody who desires to do so and is entitled to the privilege. But the conditions under which it is open to the use of members of Mr. Hunt's profession are so little known that the opportunity to visit the library has not been taken advantage of to any great extent.

Mrs. Emma Eames Story has settled down in Paris for the winter and is now at the home which she built there about two years ago and which combines in her opinion all the American comforts of life with the advantages possible in a French house. According to the latest account of her plans, Mrs. Story will remain all winter in Paris, and it is said that she will not appear professionally until the opening of the opera season in London. It was her intention last summer to make a tour of the German cities, but that idea has evidently been abandoned, and after some negotiations, during which it was said that she would sing in St. Petersburg with the De Reszkes, her name has not been included in the final cast of the prima donnas to appear there. It may be said that there is not in this list a single singer so gifted or so seemingly certain of success as Mrs. Story. It was with that company that she was to have appeared as *Senta* and *Sieglinde* for the first time, and her beauty ought to have made her distinguished among such women as Malten and Moran-Olden. Rumor supplies one reason for the abandonment of Mrs. Story's German tour, and if it be correct the closing of the Metropolitan Opera House for one year was really a more tragic occurrence than anybody would have supposed. Mrs. Story's agent, after she had accepted Frau Wagner's invitation to sing in the next festival at Bayreuth, is said to have tried to arrange visits to the German cities on the basis of $1,000 a night. Such a sum is paid to few singers in Germany—Sembrich and Patti being among those who get it—and Mrs. Story's reputation is said to have been so little known that $100 was the most advantageous offer received. Mrs. Story wisely declined to reveal her beauty and her art to a public that was willing to pay so little for the privilege. So she will remain for the winter at her home in Paris and continue her study of the Wagner heroines.

Some of the older hotels make sturdy efforts to keep pace with their newer rivals, and the efficacy of the palmroom in this direction has already been noticed. The newly invented artificial palms have helped out many an old house; but other steps have also been necessary. One of these was apparent at an uptown hotel the other day when the entire staff of servants suddenly appeared in blue uniforms with brass buttons. This hotel, long famous throughout the country, had persistently withstood all foreign notions and positively refused to be anything except out-and-out American. So the new uniforms were a surprise when they replaced the shiny cutaway coats which constitute the livery of the American hotel servants in are not in uniform. On some of the old employees of the house, who had got beyond the age for sudden and unusual decoration, the new uniforms were a little incongruous. In order that the improvement might not be merely spectacular, this hotel, like the others, included a valet service among its attractions. But that valet service took no more un-American form than the presence of two good tailors in the building. Anything so foreign as a real valet was kept at the proper distance.

Prof. Drisler was known probably to a larger number of Columbia graduates than any other member of the faculty who has ever been there, as his term of office extended over a great many years. He was liked among the students, for his manner to them was always affable and agreeable, and as a taskmaster he was never unduly severe. He had come to be nearly as familiar a figure about New York as he was on the college grounds, and many people who did not know his name knew by sight the large, vigorous old man with the white beard and the sturdy appearance. He was one of the last of the conspicuous professors of the older order of things at Columbia and of that time, which is to-day represented most conspicuously by Prof. Dwight Ambrose Ambrose. Prof. Drisler always limited his participation in university affairs to his lecture rooms, but Prof. Van Amringe extended his interests further. He was one of the men in the faculty who was always supposed to be most interested in college athletics.

The demand for Sunday baseball, if, indeed, there be such a demand, is a further indication of New York's desire to be amused on Sundays. There were three concerts last Sunday night, and next Sunday there will be four. They appealed to entirely different sections of the public, but they all attracted good audiences, and it was clear that there was a demand for them. In addition to these public performances there were the usual number of private concerts, plays in foreign languages, balls, and fairs, that are a part of every Sunday night in the city. The most notable increase is in the number of uptown entertainments. It is not without an element of strangeness that while New York should continue to increase the opportunities for Sunday amusements, some of the Western cities should have begun to limit the possibilities of amusement. The first-class theatres of the West are no longer opened on Sundays except for the performances of companies that are not likely to lose their reputations by appearing. But the best of the actors have lately begun to refuse to act on Sunday nights in any city, and most of them have been powerful enough to make the Sunday night amusements rather second-class in character.

After keeping out of public view for two years "Count" Eugene Mitkiewicz again figures as the subject of a complaint, a bench warrant for his arrest having been issued by a Washington Judge. Mitkiewicz's career has been varied and interesting. During the year or more that he lived in a New York boarding house he was interesting the late Elliott F. Shepard in a scheme that was big and plausible. A man who knew the "Count" at that time said that the secret of his success in beguiling wealthy men into considering his schemes seriously was undoubtedly the fact that his imagination was such that he believed in them himself while he was talking. He belongs to the long-finger-nail class of knights of fortune, and when he wants to be entertaining he has few equals. He is an expert billiard and pool player, and he is not averse to a quiet game of poker. During his career of twelve or fifteen years in this country he has been on terms of intimacy with some of the shrewdest men of the time. His latest escapade involved $125, and this seems like pretty small business for a man who has aimed at millions and almost secured them.

TALKING AGAINST FOUR TRACKS.

The Amsterdam Matter Has Another Public Hearing—Labor Orators Abusive.

The Aldermen's Railroad Committee gave another public hearing yesterday to the property owners along Amsterdam avenue who are protesting against the laying of four tracks for underground trolley roads in that thoroughfare. The roads there are leased by the Metropolitan Street Railway Company and the Third avenue company, and the underground system for the former has already been laid. Permission has also been granted to the Third avenue company to install the system, but the work was stopped by an order of the Court.

The object of the property owners is to compel the two companies to use the same set of tracks. Among the speakers were several professional labor orators, who indulged in the regular stock abuse of corporations. One of them, Martin by name, grew so abusive of everybody and everything, including the Board of Aldermen, that Alderman Goodman of the Railroad Committee, was obliged to reprove him for his unseemly language.

The hearing was indefinitely adjourned.

IN BEHALF OF F. M'H. KITCHING.

His Counsel Asks for a Certificate of Reasonable Doubt, but Doesn't Get It.

Benjamin F. Chadsey appeared before Justice Smith in the Supreme Court in Brooklyn yesterday and applied for a certificate of reasonable doubt in behalf of his client, Frederick McHenry Kitching, who on Monday was sentenced to five years in Sing Sing prison. Mr. Chadsey said that he wanted to appeal from the sentence, and wanted to carry the matter to the Appellate Division.

"How can you go to the Appellate Division?" Justice Smith asked. "There appears to be nothing here to warrant an appeal," he added.

Mr. Chadsey then asked for time to draw up his papers and prepare his evidence. Justice Smith, after having again expressed his inability to see how counsel could appeal the case, granted Mr. Chadsey until to-morrow afternoon to make his argument.

BEANSHOOTERS MUST GO.

DARN 'EM, SAYS DR. DANNE, AND AGAIN DARN 'EM.

S'pose Some Boy Hit Ye in the Head with a Rock, Then Where'd Ye Be?—Not to Speak of Women and Children, and Boys Playing Shinny in the Street—It's Got to Stop.

The City Improvement Society is determined to do away with the "so-called beanshooter," "the instrument of torture" with regard to which it addressed a communication to John Jeroloman, President of the Board of Aldermen, on Tuesday. Secretary J. C. Pumpelly, upon whom fell the duty of composing the admonition to Mr. Jeroloman, was indisposed yesterday. Dr. Fred Danne, the President and Treasurer of the society, who said that he ordered the letter to be written by Mr. Pumpelly, was at the society's office, 12 East Twenty-third street, at the usual hour.

"Sit down," said he as the reporter began to state his errand. "Sit down. Sit down. Make yourself at home. Sit down. Beanshooters, eh? Good! I'm glad the newspapers are interested. Awful nuisance, beanshooters are. How did we happen to get after them? Complaints, sir. We have a hundred or more associate members. They contribute to the support of the society and act as inspectors for their own neighborhoods. They make complaints. Then we have paid inspectors. They go around the city on horse cars, transferring here, there, everywhere, and looking around with their eyes open. They make complaints. Then there are hundreds of people who make complaints on their own account. We refer the complaints to the city officials. They look out for us.

"Lately we've been having trouble about these darn beanshooters. The streets are full of stones fired by beanshooters. These things go by epidemics. Sometimes they are using a bat and ball, sometimes it is a football—bang! you know, right in a woman's face—sometimes it is shinny, or some such darn game as that. Then we go to the police and the police stop 'em. Can't arrest 'em, you know. No law, the City Magistrates say, to justify it. They just take the beanshooters away from 'em and bat 'em with a club. Not to hurt 'em, you know, but to scare 'em up a bit."

The President of the City Improvement Society laughed in merry glee

"Beanshooters, I was talking about, wasn't I?" he resumed. "Good. Well, we heard of 'em. I heard of one myself." The doctor rubbed the back of his ear ruefully. "I took it away from the boy and broke it. It isn't decent, that sort of thing isn't. So I ordered this letter written. Mr. Perkins, bring me the letter book, please. Now. That's it. Now listen:

CITY IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY,
12 EAST TWENTY-THIRD STREET,
NEW YORK, Nov. 29.

Hon. John Jeroloman, President Board of Aldermen, City Hall.

HONORABLE SIR: We respectfully request that you will introduce into the Board of Aldermen—

"We all know Mr. Jeroloman and admire him, and he knows us, so, of course, we go to him. Fine man, he is. Excellent man. Well:

—an ordinance forbidding ball playing—

"Now, we haven't any objection in the world to any one playing ball in front of his own tenement; but he mustn't come out on the residence streets, where decent people live. City Magistrates talk about poor little boys, who have no place to play. Humph! Can't they play in front of their own houses? Streets too crowded? Well, that ain't my fault, is it? Anyway—

—and the use of the so-called "beanshooter" in the streets of the city. The latter instrument of torture—we are credibly informed—being largely manufactured in the city—

"Now that's a fact. Seems incredible. Actually manufacture them, wire, wood, rubber, anything; all sorts of things. Who makes 'em? That's what I wish we knew. We go into a store and ask and they won't tell us. No they won't. Sometimes they lie. Yes they do. Lemme tell you. I've seen a boy take a shot with one of those blamed beanshooters at a quiet, respectable citizen. Then when the citizen took the thing away from him and broke it, what does the boy do but run into a store and buy another and shoot at the same again. What do you think of that? And then when anybody asks the storekeeper about it, what does he say? Why, he don't know what you mean. That's what he says. I tell you, those things are dangerous to life and limb and property. They shoot stones as big as that!—the doctor pictured a stone as big as an English walnut. "One of 'em hit you in the head, and then where'd ye be? To say nothing of women and children. Stones, bullets, beans, flying all around; just as I say here:

—in the city and its use is dangerous to life, limb, and property, stones being frequently employed as missiles.

"Football playing by gangs of boys, who invariably invade districts where they do not reside, is greatly on the increase, and Magistrates, when arrests are made by the police, cannot act with sufficient severity in the absence of a sufficient ordinance covering these offences.

"We shall be greatly pleased if you will communicate to us at your earliest convenience your views in regard to this matter. Very respectfully,

J. C. PUMPELLY, Secretary.

"There! That's all you want to know, isn't it? And here's one of our little booklets. Better take it. May prove useful."

The little handbook contained requests that the reader would close the doors of his society in any one of a great number of contingencies, such as:

Whenever horses or vehicles are in the habit of standing in or along the roadway so as to obstruct the crosswalk of any street.

Whenever carpets, rugs, clothing or material of any description are shaken or beaten where particles thereof, or set in motion thereby, may pass into any occupied premises.

Whenever a dead animal is exposed or allowed to remain in a street or other public place.

This last may explain to many a poor copper who has been fined five days' pay "for failing to report a dead cat on post" just how the news of his awful dereliction reached the Commissioners so quickly.

The last page of the little hand book is filled with the names of the subscribing members. The last name on the list is the "Hon. Seth Low."

VAN VLECK DIVORCE SUIT.

The Wife's Story of Her Life with the Millionaire Oil Operator.

BUFFALO, Dec. 1.—After fourteen months' legal fighting the divorce suit of Mrs. Maria Louise Van Vleck against George H. Van Vleck, the oil operator, came to trial in open court to-day. Mr. and Mrs. Van Vleck quarrelled fifteen years ago and have had only formal communication with each other since that time. Mr. Van Vleck is 62 years old, his wife ten years younger. They were married in 1863. Van Vleck was poor. He went into the oil fields and two years later made $100,000 one day on a sale of oil lands. He played the market and was soon known as one of the most daring and successful operators in the Pennsylvania region. He made several million dollars. Some of this was lost in speculation, but he is said to have $2,000,000 of it yet. He owns 250 oil wells in Ohio which bring him $50,000 to $75,000 a year, and is the principal stockholder in the Paragon Refinery at Toledo.

Mrs. Van Vleck testified to-day that they lived happily until he came back to Buffalo rich, bought a fine house in Delaware avenue, joined the clubs, and began to stay out nights. At first, she said, it was cards that kept him away; later it was women. She told of the reports that had reached her at various stages of his life concerning his relations with other women. One day she received a letter from a woman asking her intercession to prevent Van Vleck ruining her daughter. She showed the letter to Van Vleck. He struck her with an umbrella and slapped her face. She complained to him one day that he was running a gambling shop in the house where their second child was born, and he again assaulted her, she said. About fifteen years ago he began to absent himself from home for a week at a time, getting his meals at the clubs and sleeping she did not know where. Sometimes he came home for Sunday dinner and went away again without speaking to her. He paid little attention to the children, she said, and none to her. This life they led for twelve years. For a long time he caused her to be followed by detectives and accused her with improprieties with other men. About two years ago he stopped providing for her, she alleges, and shut off her source of supplies. She was ill, but he told the pharmacy not to trust her. She could not get clothes or shoes. Whatever money he paid toward the maintenance of the Delaware avenue mansion he paid to his daughter. Mrs. Van Vleck did not like the starving out policy and brought suit for divorce, seeking financial remedy.

Mrs. Van Vleck went on the stand to-day fortified with letters twenty years old to prove her case. She told how Van Vleck sued her