DRAMATIC MATTER TRIED.

ODELL WILLIAMS AND "THE JUDGE" NEW IN VAUDEVILLE.

Elmer Grandin and Eva Mountford Bring to New York "The Secret Enemy," a Melodrama from Paris—The Casted Company Introduces "The Only One" in German.

Odell Williams entered the ranks of continuous vaudeville yesterday at Keith's in a twenty-five minute fragment of a play called "The Judge." With him were three persons, a pair of youthful sweethearts and an elderly spinster, the last named a conventional caricature. Suggestion of the South came in the speech of the characters, but in no other way. *The Judge*, who was Odell Williams, first appeared with a bundle of firecrackers in his hands. He was preparing a Fourth of July oration, which he offered to recite to each of the other persons concerned, though in each case he was checked before he was well along in his introduction. Next to his fondness for reciting his own composition, his most marked characteristic was his enjoyment of whiskey, a decanter of which held a table in the centre of the stage. To this the actor stepped between speeches, clearing his throat, apostrophizing the liquor, and then fairly barking with satisfaction after he had swallowed it. His best praise for another person was because she could brew a fine milk punch, and accompanying one drink he told a story of a Southern gentleman who raised himself from his deathbed to take a drink of whiskey, to smack his lips feebly and fall back dead. Then *The Judge* had one on his memory.

Besides tippling the dramatist had lovemaking for him. His conquest was easy—the spinster, who first came upon her wide-waisted, red-nosed hero as he lay snoring on a couch. Her girlish ecstasy found such noisy expression that she awoke him, and the awakening was an interesting process, for the actor's features were comically busy in passing through various degrees of insensibility and in getting sight through his spectacles at several different angles. In announcing to the woman his pleasure over the proposed union of her nephew and his niece she mistook his words for a proposal, and his explanation left her angry. Next his niece, whom a play of full length might make a reasonable dictator to her uncle, but who in this short farce appeared like a young person of extraordinary bounce, bade him surrender his hat and coat. These she put on while she cross-examined him concerning the state of his affections, telling him that the spinster had come into some property. At this the old chap started out to find her, and the niece in her uncle's coat and hat stayed to be taken by her sweetheart for her uncle, and to be talked to about her love affairs as though she were her own guardian. *The Judge* won the spinster, only to be told that the legacy was hers only so long as she remained single. This was a shock to his own hopes, but he found a way out of the difficulty by compelling the young folks, who were complaining against a two years' engagement, to marry on the morrow.

As a medium for putting the actor where the mannerisms and character copying for which he is best known might appear natural the sketch was successful. It was entertaining in good degree, too, though it began in the middle of the story and ended in a rush. The firecrackers were carried to a logical finish, however, for as the curtain fell and *The Judge* was for the last time rehearsing his speech a cannon cracker burst beside him and shut off the oratory.

There were war and gore a-plenty in last night's play at the Grand, and by these qualities the melodrama won its way out of a strangely unpromising beginning. This was no less a dampener than a perfectly still entrance for both the hero and heroine. They were Elmer Grandin and Eva Mountford, two well-established "stars" of melodrama, yet not a hand pat was heard as they first showed themselves. It could not have been that all the Grand's regular upholders of stage virtue were taking a night off; indeed, the gallery rail, as usual, bulged with them, so the fault must be laid to the evening's authors. These were, according to the playbill, the evening's conspicuous actor and actress; so, if they, by introducing only two minor characters before coming forward themselves, made their entrances pass unnoticed, the fact was all the more remarkable.

There was another singular feature to their play, too, in that it was all laid in foreign lands, Italy being described as the scene of the first act and France being strongly suggested for the remaining three acts. The first act somehow suggested that it might have been a prologue in some former state of existence, and in the second act there was so strong a flavor of two characters having been turned into one that a woman almost seemed to don a fine crown and pay a formal call on the occupant of her own apartments. But these singular marks of an original drama didn't interfere with the enjoyment of those dark lines above the gallery rail, nor did they long delay the customary evidence of such enjoyment. By the time the heroine reached the point where she told her servant to show a villain out of her apartments, pointing in statuesque pose to the door, it was too virtuous a spurning, too complete a t'row down, to pass without a noisy rap-clap, and that it got. So, too, in the third act, in a damp and gloomy cellar, when the misled one of three villains stood with arms outstretched, a shining revolver in each hand, the gods got in more licks.

The plot was extremely involved, beginning with the murder of a sick woman and the theft of her will. Accusations of both crimes lay against the innocent until the very end, and something—guilty fears, perhaps—kept the real culprits armed to the teeth. The man who drew two pistols was suspected, after he had been induced to lay aside his weapons, of having a third revolver, and the two suspectors carried their full weight of shooting iron. Here was a spirited duel with pistols, and in the middle of an act. For a curtain climax to this was a single man, armed with pistols, opposed to a squad of riflemen. They promptly shot all the life out of him but just enough to enable him to make a much-needed confession. In the last act the duel was with swords, and the disarmed contestant was spared by his opponent, only to be delivered over to that volleying squad of infantry. At the end virtue came in for its full reward, and of the three villians, one was known to have been riddled, one was well toward the guillotine, and in store for the remaining one was the fate that usually awaits informers. "The Secret Enemy" was the title, and it fitted well, though the plotting was not more than ordinarily opaque. But the duels, the gunnery, and the heroine's woes were unmistakably of the attractive sort.

The attention of dramatists who desire to write "problem" plays is called to the drama which Herr Conried offered last night at the Irving Place Theatre. "The Only One" is the name of the piece and the author was Herr von Petzold. The piece was in three acts and occupied in representation less than one hour and a half. The purpose of the writer was perfectly clear. He made no attempt to obscure by the ordinary methods which writers for the stage have grown to look upon as the marks of a skilful workman as well as the necessary qualifications for effective stage composition. The theatre must have some rules. The drama must consist of something more than speeches delivered by various persons, who may stand in view of the spectators to the number of two, seven or ten. If there were no standards of stage writing, the difference between fiction and the drama would not exist. Any one might transfer dialogue to the stage and call it a play. That happens occasionally, and sometimes a penetrating appreciation of character, the perception of various relations in life, originality in the point of view, or three or four more excellencies may compensate for the lack of what entitles a literary work to be placed on the stage. But such cases are rare. Generally the writer who deals with life, character, or social relations must follow what are the inflexible rules of the theatre if any quality in his work is to be of avail.

But the ingenuous author of "The Only One" bothered himself with no such conventionalities. He had a "slice of life" in mind, and he was going to put it on the stage. He called it a play, and it did even reach a theatre so remote from its native land as the one in Irving place. The piece aimed to show the struggles of an unselfish girl who sacrificed her life for a totally selfish and unworthy family. In the end, by her devotion to her father, she was robbed of what seemed her only reward in life—the love of her betrothed. In the piece there were a selfish mother, sacrificing everything to an ungrateful spoiled son; a sister, reckless of what followed her years of poverty and struggling, and a father not only weak, but foolish. To the exposition of those characters the author brought no theatric skill and no especial literary ability. The suffering self-sacrificing girl is as old as literature. To put her on the stage, surrounded by sordid figures and commonplace events, could be only the work of a man who, unable to see anything in life beyond its most obvious realities, strives to put them forward as a revelation. If the elements used in "The Only One" had been used with dramatic ingenuity nobody could have objected to them. But the play was a formless, bald, and commonplace succession of dialogues. It was admirably acted. Possibly it was chosen because Fräulein Braga was so well suited to the rôle of the daughter. Camilla Marbach had her first opportunity to show what a skilful actress she is in plays of contemporary life. But if anything could excuse "The Only One" it would be the sympathetic and natural acting of Anna Braga. She has played quite as well for two years past. But as several investigators in the German theatre have lately "discovered" her, it has become customary to regard her talents as something quite unsuspected hitherto.

LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

Sir Squire Bancroft, who is to come to New York in February, has long been one of the best known actors in England, although since his retirement from the stage five years ago he has been rarely seen in public, and then only as a reader for charity. He has devoted himself chiefly to Dickens's works, and when he comes to the United States he will make his public appearance as a reader of scenes from this author. Whether or not he is to read for profit or pleasure has not been announced. It scarcely seems probable that even with his reputation, American audiences would be very much attracted by his work. The vogue of the elocutionist has come to an end here, and it is only the popular author—and the very popular author at that—reading from his own works, who is able to draw the public in very large numbers to-day. It is furthermore only the authors who write books liked by women that ever succeed in making their appearances here very profitable. Conan Doyle, who has probably been read much more by men than by women, read chapters from his stories, and delivered his lectures to pitifully small audiences. Dr. Watson, on the other hand, made a small fortune here, and Anthony Hope is reading the "Dolly Dialogues" over the country to audiences that are usually of good size and enthusiastic, but nearly entirely feminine. Next year I. Zangwill, who is not a spectacular figure, whatever else he may be, to judge from his photographs, will come over to read from his Ghetto stories. Sir Squire Bancroft and Sir Henry Irving are the only English actors with titles, and they were knighted at the same time. Bancroft was one of the first of the English actors to go in for society, to the extent that Beerbhom Tree, George Alexander, and the rest of the English celebrities do to-day. His wife, who was for many years a popular actress, will accompany him to this country. Bancroft Billingham, Esquire, of Northumberland avenue and the Garden Theatre, is not related to the English actor, in spite of the similarity in their names.

A young woman in a red dress and one of the most popular of the foreign musicians now in New York were seated in a box at the Sunday night concert at the Metropolitan, and they were naturally enough the objects of considerable attention from that part of the audience that sweeps the theatre with its opera glasses. This contingent is numerous even on Sunday nights, and some of the most experienced say that the reward of its efforts at the last concert was greater than the most hopeful expected. The young woman, who attends the concerts frequently enough to be known by sight, is pretty, and the musician has been on the Metropolitan's stage several times this winter. But it was when they retired to the back of the box that the fortunate observers with opera glasses enjoyed the view most. The intermission was to them the liveliest part of the evening, and since *Siegfried* last awakened *Brunnhilde* with a kiss, nothing so intense has been witnessed in the theatre. It was only the shyness of the two, which led them to retire to the back of the box, that robbed the public of the entire theatre of the amusement which this absorbed pair offered the 300 or 400 who were able to see them. Pol Plançon, who sang on Sunday night, received during the week a very earnest letter from one of his admirers, begging him, as the most regular of the concert favorites, not to respond to enough encores to drag the programme out to its recent lengths. The basso was about to respond to this request when another friend, who has not missed a single concert at which M. Plançon has sung for the past four years, wrote him that she had bought a new stock of fans with which to make him the favorite of the evening. He knows those fans, which are sold at a downtown shop for $1 a dozen. They can make more noise than the hardest-handed nuisance that ever raised an uproar. They are beaten violently together, on the orchestra chairs or on any old thing that happens to be handy. M. Plançon stood between love and duty. He gave one encore, which looked like a compromise.

The victory won by the Chicago bootblacks in getting the shoe dealers to stop giving free shines isn't likely to furnish a precedent for New York bootblacks, because the average man in this town values his time too much to waste it in making a trip to a certain shoe store that he may save the price of a shine. The picture dealers in this town, though, think that they have a more serious grievance against the shoe shops than the bootblacks. Several years ago a big shoe shop placed a valuable oil painting in its window to attract attention. The painting had been lent by the artist, and three days later it had been sold. Another picture took its place and before the window of this shoe shop there was always a little group of spectators. Other shoe dealers saw the advantage of such an exhibition, and the result has been that many of them sell pictures as well as shoes now. Several clothing stores have followed their example, and the artists who are willing to expose their work in this fashion have found that it brings quick sales.

A man who recently spent a day in Long Island City says that it has the oldest lot of policemen to be found in any city in this country, not even excepting Boston. "I found a dozen men," he said, "who would have been retired for age years ago had they been on the New York force. Some of the policemen are cripples. One old man who for many years tended a trolley switch in Long Island City is now a policeman. Then there is a man named Owen Woods. Woods is a friend of his Honor the Mayor. He joined the police force, and at the end of his first week he found himself a roundsman. At the end of his second week he was a Sergeant, and before he had been on the force a month he was a Captain. One of the present Police Commissioners is a cabman. The next time you go over to Long Island City take a look at the policemen and see if they are not an interesting crowd of old men.

MRS. YESSEN WILL PAY.

She Gives an Order for William Rockefeller's Bill and Stops His Suit.

GREENWICH, Conn., Dec. 20.—The case of William Rockefeller vs. Mrs. Mary Yessen came up before Justice Brush in the Borough Court this morning, and, as Mrs. Yessen was absent, the case was adjourned for a week. It was a suit for $17.50 brought in the millionaire's name by his agent, Mr. Luxon, for pasturage of a cow. Mrs. Yessen appeared later and conferred with Judge McNall, Mr. Rockefeller's lawyer, and as a result she promised to pay the amount, with $6 costs added. The officers made a reduction in the fees. Mrs. Yessen will receive $15,000 from the Cassidy estate in a few days, and an order for the amount of the bill, with costs, has been executed on the administrator of the Cassidy estate, Jeremiah Tierney.

SHE PLAYED THE RACES.

Miss Wall, a Cashier, Is Missing and Some Money Has Also Disappeared.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 20.—The old tea importing firm of Macondray & Co. has a case of embezzlement by a woman, who was acting as bookkeeper and cashier. She is a Miss Maggie Wall, and she played the races and was a thorough sport.

She disappeared suddenly on last Saturday, and investigation has already shown several amounts paid in which she appropriated. It is thought her peculations will reach several thousand dollars. Like hundreds of women here, she sent her money to the race track daily, and frequently wagered several hundred dollars when she got what she regarded as a good tip.

BABY MURDERED BY A BOY.

Fourteen-Year-Old Jack McIntosh Shoots Five-Year-Old Willie Jackson.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Dec. 20.—At Cheraw to-day Jack McIntosh, 14 years old, made a threat of shooting Willie Jackson, a little boy under 5. McIntosh had an old pistol which he flourished. Bystanders made him put it back in his pocket. Later, when there was no one to interfere, he shot the Jackson boy through the head, killing him instantly. On the verdict of a Coroner's jury McIntosh was committed to jail.

Beers—Whittemore.

The wedding of Miss Maud Whittemore and Dr. George W. Beers was celebrated at noon yesterday in the chantry of Grace Church. The Rev. William R. Huntington, the rector of the church, performed the ceremony. The bride was given away by her father, Richard B. Whittemore. She was attended by Miss Nellie Whittemore, her sister, and by Miss Pearl N. Beers, sister of the bridegroom. Dr. Nelson H. Henry attended Dr. Beers as best man.

Fighting the Anti-Gambling Amendment.

Former Senator William D. Edwards of Jersey City received word from Supreme Court Justice Dixon yesterday that a writ of certiorari had been granted to remove to the Supreme Court for review the contention that the anti-gambling amendment to the Constitution was not adopted at the special election last September. The writ is returnable at the February term.

DEFENCE OF RATCLIFFE.

WITNESSES SAY THE ACTOR'S WIFE'S FACE WAS NOT BRUISED.

She Dropped in It at the First Two Days After the Alleged Assault and Was Full of Fun—Found a Dinner Party Consuming the Ratcliffe Ducklings—Previous Alleged Assaults.

Edward J. Ratcliffe, the actor who is on trial in the General Sessions for beating his wife, Peter De Lacy's daughter, told last Thursday how they had quarrelled over a Sunday dinner. He returned to the stand yesterday and testified that after the quarrel he went to Chicago to fill an engagement. Then he told the story of his arrest in Chicago, which was made on a telegram signed by Capt. O'Brien. The telegram read:

"Arrest E. J. Ratcliffe, actor, for felonious assault, kicking his wife. She is dying."

"Who bailed you out?" asked Mr. Towns, Ratcliffe's counsel.

"Alderman John J. Powers, President of the Council," answered the witness. "He furnished the bail bond for $10,000."

"The statement, then, that you were bailed out by a notorious woman is untrue," paid Mr. Towns.

"It is," answered the witness. "I was brought back to this city and remanded to the Tombs, and on the following day Mr. Brent Good bailed me out here and I went away on the road with Mr. Coghlan's company."

Assistant District Attorney Lloyd (cross-examining)—Were you ever naturalized as a citizen of the United States? A.—No.

Q.—When you were playing in Mary Anderson's company in London were you married to one of the members of that company? (Ruled out.)

Q.—Have you ever lived with a woman in London? A.—I have never lived with any woman excepting my wife.

Q.—Why did you go to Hoboken to get married? A.—I remembered that Lillian Russell had gone there the week before for the same purpose.

Q.—You were not calculating on the legal chances of a subsequent separation when you went to the same minister that married Miss Russell? A.—No, sir.

Q.—Was the doctor's bill, when your first child was born, ever paid? A.—I don't know; I gave Mrs. Ratcliffe the money to pay the bill.

Q.—When your first child died did you pay the undertaker? A.—Yes.

Q.—He says that you did not pay him. Now, is it not a fact that the body of your first child is in a receiving vault, the undertaker refusing to bury it because you have not paid his bill? A.—That's a lie.

Q.—When you were living at Larchmont, do you remember, after an assault upon your wife, that when the doctor was called to attend her you said: "What do you think of her royal highness falling down stairs and injuring herself?" A.—I do not remember anything of the sort.

Q.—You wrote a letter asking your wife to stop the proceedings against you, and saying that you were likely to go to prison for two years or more if you returned to New York, and then you add these words: "Do you want our children to grow up knowing that their father was in prison?" Now, Mr. Ratcliffe, tell me how you happened to know the exact penalty for wife beating? A.—I was under arrest on that charge and I had counsel.

Q.—You wrote to your wife these words: "Alice, my darling, I think I know your heart and your not unforgiving nature. Relent and think. Haven't you punished me enough already?" What did you mean by that? A.—I meant by allowing me to be arrested.

Q.—Continuing you say: "Do not let the sins of the father be visited upon the innocent children." What do you mean by the sins of the father? A.—A mere quotation, sir. This letter was but one in a continuity of letters and telegrams.

Q.—Is it not an admission of guilt? A.—Certainly not.

Q.—Do you know an actress named Mary Hampton? [Ruled out.]

Q.—Did you ever own a pistol? A.—Yes, two.

Q.—Did you ever threaten your wife with one? A.—Never.

Benjamin J. Farley, assistant janitor of the flat at 169 West Eightieth street, where the Ratcliffes lived in June last, at the time of the alleged assault, testified that he saw Mrs. Ratcliffe on the day of the alleged assault and that her face bore no marks or bruises. He also saw her two days later, on Monday, June 14. Her face was not bruised then. She came to the house while he had a dinner party there, eating up the ducklings, lamb, and other things of the spoiled Ratcliffe Sunday dinner.

Cross-examined—Did you not try to persuade Mrs. Ratcliffe afterward not to proceed against her husband? A.—Yes.

Q.—Why did you do that? A.—Mr. Ratcliffe asked me to. He telegraphed me from Chicago asking me to get his wife to withdraw the complaint.

Q.—Didn't you tell her that lots of men beat their wives, and that she ought not to send her husband to prison for that? A.—No.

Q.—Did you not tell her that it would be a disgrace upon her children to have her husband arrested? A.—She said that she would not disgrace her children, but that she would like to have her husband somewhere where she could get him up against the wall with his hands tied behind his back so that she could soak him.

Sarah Shaw, Farley's sister-in-law, was at the duckling dinner and saw Mrs. Ratcliffe. Mrs. Ratcliffe had no marks of violence on her face. Mrs. Phœbe Blake was there, too, and saw no marks on Mrs. Ratcliffe's face. Mrs. Ratcliffe drank beer with the party and joked with the janitor's father-in-law, telling him that he was a nice old man. Mrs. Hannah Rice was at the dinner and noticed that Mrs. Ratcliffe had no bruises on her face.

Q.—Did you hear the joke she got off on the old man? A.—Yes. She said what a fine-looking old gentleman he was, and that if the old woman was not careful she would run away with him.

William Murfitt, referred to as "the old man," was the next witness called. He said Mrs. Ratcliffe's face was not bruised.

Q.—Was she very lively that night? A.—Yes, very lively and full of fun.

Q.—What did she say to you? A.—She said that I was a very nice-looking old man, and that if my wife was not careful she [Mrs. Ratcliffe] would run away with me or take me away.

Susan Darragh, the nurse employed by the Ratcliffes when Virginia, the second child, was born, was asked if she ever saw Mrs. Ratcliffe abuse her husband. The question was excluded. Then Mr. Towns asked if Mrs. Ratcliffe was a woman who was easily excited. The witness said yes.

Q.—Did you notice that she had a high temper? A.—Once in a while.

Q.—You recall when the child Virginia was ill. What did Mrs. Ratcliffe do and say? A.—On one occasion she said that I had given the child wrong medicine, and she said to me: "You ——, you might have poisoned the child by giving her the wrong medicine."

Q.—Was she in the habit of using that same vile name in referring to her husband? A.—Now and then she was.

Q.—Have you ever bought any intoxicating drinks for Mrs. Ratcliffe with money that Mr. Ratcliffe had given for the household expenses? [Excluded.]

In rebuttal George Davis, undertaker, testified that Actor Ratcliffe still owes him $87, the bill for the funeral of the child that died in 1895, and that the body is in a receiving vault.

Dr. William H. Neilson of New Rochelle testified that on Dec. 28, 1894, when the Ratcliffes were living at Larchmont, he had been called to attend Mrs. Ratcliffe, whom he found with several bruises on her face and body. At that time Mrs. Ratcliffe said that her husband had struck her, and that she had got tired telling stories about her injuries—stories to the effect that she had been injured by falling down stairs. These stories she had told for the purpose of shielding her husband. On one occasion Dr. Neilson found Mrs. Ratcliffe with a contusion over one eye and one of her lips swelled. Ratcliffe told him that Mrs. Ratcliffe had received these injuries by falling down stairs, while Mrs. Ratcliffe, on the other hand, said they were the result of a beating which her husband had given her.

To-day the prosecution will call additional witnesses in rebuttal. After court adjourned yesterday afternoon Lawyer Towns went into the jury room to have a consultation with one of his witnesses. He shut the door and it locked itself. He appealed over the transom to be released. It took forty-five minutes to find a man with a key.

LETTER FOR RECORDER GOFF.

In Care of the Lexow Committee, Tammany Hall, and the United States.

A letter, postmarked "London" and bearing the stamp of the *Review of Reviews*, was received at the Criminal Court building yesterday, although it was addressed as follows:

> *John W. Goff,*
> *Recorder of the Lexow Committee,*
> *Tammany Hall,*
> *N. Y.*
> *United States.*

Recorder Goff was not in town, but he will get the letter.

Mrs. Mietsch to Be Divorced from Her Insane Husband.

Vice-Chancellor Pitney, sitting in Chambers, Jersey City, yesterday recommended a decree of divorce for Mrs. Annie Mietsch from her husband, Joseph Mietsch, who is confined in the insane asylum at Morris Plains. The couple were married in Paterson, N. J., in 1881, and have five children.

ART NOTES.

Sales at the Alpha Delta Phi Exhibition—Mr. Fosdick's Burnt Wood Decorations—Pictures at the Lotos Club—Vararies in Paint by an Italian Artist, and Dutch Water Colors.

Practical results have followed the exhibition which closed last week at the Alpha Delta Phi Club, and the Art Committee announces sales of pictures amounting in the aggregate to about $1,600. William H. Howe's excellent cattle piece, "October Morning, West Chester," was purchased by the club with money subscribed by the members. It will be hung in the clubhouse along with Carroll Beckwith's portrait of Clarence A. Seward and some other pictures acquired by the club in previous years. The other pictures purchased from the exhibition this year were "Prince's Bay, Staten Island," by Frederick W. Kost; "December Grey," by W. Merritt Post; "The Edge of the Woods," by W. L. Lathrop, and "Green and Gold," by Irving R. Wiles. The exhibition of "Portrait No. 44," by Charles F. Naegele, brought the artist a commission to paint another portrait of a lady, and two or three possible purchasers are reported to be considering other pictures which figured in the collection. This is the sort of a record which makes a club exhibition popular with the artists.

At the annual meeting of the club last week an amendment to the constitution was adopted by which members of the fraternity who are professional artists may become life members of the club by presenting it with one or more original works of a total value of $500 in lieu of a cash payment. The list of New York painters who are eligible under this provision includes Daniel Huntington, ex-President of the National Academy of Design; Edgar M. Ward, Reginald Cleveland Coxe, Chester Loomis, and Stephen Van Schaick.

Ten burnt wood panels have been finished by the artist, J. W. Fosdick, and taken to Lakewood to be placed in George Gould's new house, where they will form a frieze over the bookcases in the library. The top of the bookcases is about five and a half feet from the floor, and the panels, with two exceptions, are about three feet square. One of the series placed over the fireplace, forming the central point in the decoration, is five feet square, and shows an ideal portrait of a lady of Queen Elizabeth's time, and another containing the coat of arms commonly credited to Shakespeare is 3x5 feet. Two other panels bear heads of women with Elizabethan ruffs, and the remaining six are ornamented with the crests and bookplates of famous men, such as Washington, Lord Tennyson, Holmes, Dickens, John Adams, and Daniel Webster. The library is finished in brown ebony, a product of Africa, close grained and of a greenish-brown tint, which makes a fitting contrast to the tints of the burnt wood panels. These are executed in basswood, which is naturally white, close grained, and soft, all necessary qualities in the material used by the "poker etcher," and their general tone is brown. The tints range from cream ivory where the wood is but slightly singed to dark brown where it is deeply burnt. This form of wall decoration is in considerable favor in England, and was introduced here some years ago by Mr. Fosdick. It is exceedingly pleasing in effect when well executed, and it is durable. Mr. Fosdick has pushed his art to a high state of perfection, and obtains in these latest works some novel and attractive results. The drawing in the figure panels is competent, and the decorative quality is well sustained throughout the series.

The exhibition of pictures by American artists now open in the gallery of the Lotos Club to visitors who have cards of admission is interesting in the new works lent for the occasion, and good in the average of those which have been seen before. The selections have been made with a gratifying catholicity of taste, and the list of painters represented includes men who differ widely in artistic point of view and method. It is a far cry, for instance, from Mr. Chase with his "Spanish Women in White," No. 5, to Mr. Ryder with his "Christ Appearing Unto Mary," No. 31. Equally great is the difference between Mr. Guy's closely observed and truthfully rendered lamp-light effect, "Preparing for To-morrow," No. 19, and the late George Fuller's loosely constructed and uninspiring "Hannah," No. 18. Mr. Weir's delicately colored "The Open Book," Mr. Dewing's "Evening," with its three female figures in blue, rose and gray; Mr. Church's "St. Cecilia," Mr. Mowbray's "The Calenders," Mr. Denman's "Psyche," and Mr. Dolph's page and dogs, "The Reprimand," are among the familiar but welcome works in the collection. Other notable canvases are signed by Walter Shirlaw, Wyatt Eaton, whose "La Cigale" is of sterling quality and recalls the beauty that belongs to the small nude figures of Jean François Millet in his earlier period; Charles C. Curran, J. G. Brown, Francis C. Jones, Louis Moeller, Henry O. Walker, Will H. Low, Douglas Volk and Irving R. Wiles. "Leda and the Swan," No. 11, by Elliott Daingerfield, is charming in color and complete in ensemble, and shows more subtlety in picture making than does the more commonplace effect of concentrated light and hot color in "My Lady Rhododendron," No. 10, by the same artist. "Two Step," No. 12, by Arthur Davies, attracts attention by reason of its consistently tempered tone, like that of an old picture, and a certain grace of movement in the figures of two children in white. The pictures were brought together by the Chairman of the Art Committee, Mr. William T. Evans, who lends a number of the thirty-eight works in the collection.

At the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries there is a free exhibition of seventeen pictures by Antonio Mancini, an Italian artist, and of water colors of the modern Dutch school, which will be open until Jan. 4. The Mancini catalogue is prefaced with a fulsome notice of the painter, signed by the agent, from whom "information" about the works may be obtained, and complimentary extracts from opinions of Mancini's paintings by the Dutch painters, Mesdag and Israëls. They have looked with very friendly eyes if they refer to any of the works in the present exhibition. We have seen in New York a good many eccentricities of art, both in subject and in method, but few "originals" have surpassed Mr. Mancini. The work shown here is only comparatively sane in one or two instances, such as a pastel, "Woman with Flowers," No. 17, and "Girl with Green Vase," No. 11. The others are astonishing productions looked at either close to or at a distance. They abound in huge lumps of paint, bits of glass, sticks, and strings, and what seem to be pieces of wire. In some of the compositions a curious process is employed which seems to consist in marking ridges of paint in cross-barred pattern, with square spaces between of several inches. There is some sense of color, but it is coarse. There is very little drawing, as may be seen in the extremely unattractive "Nude Model," No. 14. It is a relief to run into the adjoining gallery, where the Dutch water colors are hung. These are thirty-seven in number and are shown in unframed white mats. Some of them are very good, such as "Forest in Gelderland," No. 5, by Mme. Bilders van Bosse; Willy Martens's peasant pictures, "Mother and Child," No. 26, and "In the Garden," No. 27; Kever's "Autumn in Laren," No. 31; Van der Weele's "Behind the Plow," No. 19, and Bauffe's "Dutch Landscape," No. 33. But none is in any way extraordinary and most of them are mediocre.

MRS. ASTOR'S DINNER PARTY.

The Carriages of the Guests Take to the Sidewalk Owing to the State of the Street.

Mrs. Astor gave a dinner party last night at her residence, 842 Fifth avenue. On either side of Mrs. Astor were Sir Edward Colebrooke and John Munroe. Other guests were Mr. and Mrs. William C. Whitney, Mr. and Mrs. Calvin S. Brice, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sloane, Percy Tiffany, Mr. and Mrs. H. Cass Canfield, Mr. and Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund L. Baylies, Mr. and Mrs. Frank K. Pendleton, Commodore and Mrs. Elbridge T. Gerry, Mrs. Burke Roche, Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Wilson, Col. and Mrs. S. Van Rensselaer Cruger, and Mr. Roosevelt.

Mrs. Astor is still withholding the invitations to the ball she has arranged to give on the night of Jan. 17 because the approaches to her house are barricaded by the work going on in the street. The carriages of the dinner guests last evening were driven up on the sidewalk.

THE CITY'S SCHOOL CENSUS.

It Shows That There Are 805,000 Children in the City Between the Ages of 4 and 18.

ALBANY, Dec. 20.—The second biennial school census of the city of New York has just been completed by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Charles R. Skinner. This census includes all children between the ages of 4 and 18, and is taken in all the cities of the State every second year. Work was begun on the census in New York city on Oct. 28, and was completed this week. The work has been done with the greatest care, and no pains spared to make a correct census. The total number of children between the ages of 4 and 18 reaches 805,000. This is very close to the estimate of the number of children of school age made by the Board of Education at the beginning of the school year, and justifies their calculations. The total expense of the enumeration is $27,000, or $8,000 less than it was estimated would be necessary by the City Superintendent of Schools.

MISS DAY PROSECUTES.

Testifies Against the Jeweller Who Bought the Diamonds Stolen from Her Yacht.

Leon Roussell, the Seventh avenue jeweller who was arrested in September last on a charge of buying stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, was on trial yesterday in the General Sessions. Miss Susan Deforest Day took the witness stand and told how her diamonds, valued at $6,000, had been stolen from the cabin of her yacht, Scythian, while the yacht was lying off Whitestone. She said that Etienne Castellon, the boy employed in the mess room, had stolen the diamonds, and had since confessed to the theft and been sentenced to the penitentiary. She added that young Castellon had told her that he had sold the $6,000 worth of diamonds to Jeweller Roussell for $200.

The trial will be continued to-day.

MURRAY HILL'S BABY SHOW.

It Will Be Held on Jan. 5, and the Invitation List Will Be Limited.

There is to be a baby show on Jan. 5. It isn't to be a public exhibition to which everybody who can afford to pay 50 cents for a ticket will be admitted. Only those who receive invitations may go to the show. The invitation list is to be limited to the intimate friends of the mothers of the contesting exhibits. It is to be held in a private house. The whole matter is being arranged for the amusement of the young married women of Murray Hill.

Business Notices.

Waltham Watches,

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Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children teething; softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, diarrhœa. 25c. a bottle.

DIED.

COUDERT.—On Sunday, Dec. 19, after a long and painful illness, Nora Edmond Coudert, widow of Louis Leonce Coudert.

Funeral from the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Boulevard and West 71st st., Tuesday, Dec. 21, at 10 A. M. sharp. Interment private.

DEAN.—Alexander M. Dean, aged 75 years.

Funeral services at his late residence, 103 Rodney st., Brooklyn, on Tuesday, at 8 P. M.

FELT.—On the 20th inst., Louisa A. Felt, only daughter of the late Willard L. and Maria L. Felt.

Funeral private. Interment in Greenwood.

GRIFFIN.—At his residence, 340 East 123d st., New York city, John J. Griffin, youngest son of the late Daniel and Catharine Griffin of Boston, Mass.

Funeral from the Church of the Holy Rosary on Wednesday, Dec. 22, 1897, at 10 A. M. Boston, Manchester, and Washington papers please copy.

LELAND.—On Monday, Dec. 20, 1897, Lewis Leland, in his 64th year.

Funeral services at Church of Heavenly Rest, 5th av., between 45th and 46th sts., on Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 11:45 A. M.

McDONNELL.—On Monday, Dec. 20, Charles Lomax, youngest child of Peter and Charlotte McDonnell, aged 4 years and 4 months.

Interment will be private from the residence of his parents, 310 West 72d st.

MILLIGAN.—On Saturday, Dec. 18, Edward W. Mulligan, in the 59th year of his age.

Funeral from First Reformed Church, 7th av. and Carroll st., Brooklyn, Tuesday, Dec. 21, at 2 P. M.

MORISON.—On Saturday, the 18th inst., John Archibald Morison, son of the late Daniel and Catharine Morison, in the 72d year of his age.

Relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral services at his late residence, 19 West 69th st., on Tuesday, 21st inst., at 11 A. M.

SMITHERS.—In Brooklyn, on Dec. 20, at 1:30 A. M., Martha B., widow of C. T. Smithers, in her 72d year.

Funeral on Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 2 P. M., from her late residence, 1143 Dean st. Montreal papers please copy.

STANLEY.—James W. Stanley will be buried on Tuesday, Dec. 21, at 2 P. M., from the Second M. E. Church, between Avs. C and D. Members of Putnam Lodge, No. 348, F. and A. M.; Gramercy Rose Croix Chapter No. 1, A. and P. R., Forest Guards, Engine Company No. 3, Scarfield Guards of 1850, Adolph Club, are invited to attend.

TELFER.—The funeral services of George Telfer will be held at the Reformed Church, Piermont, N. Y., at 2:30 P. M. on Wednesday, Dec. 22. Members of St. Andrew's Curling, N. Y. Caledonian, and Excelsior Quoiting clubs are invited. Train leaves Chambers st. ferry at 1:20 P. M.

Special Notices.

FRENCH CONFECTIONERY.
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T. HUMBERT.
No. 9 Wooster st. (four doors from Canal st.), manufacturer of superfine Confectionery and Chocolates; all candies of his own manufacture are warranted pure sugar; only Breton's vegetable colors used; also importer of Fruits and Marrons Glaces, Fancy Boxes, Bonbonnieres, Costumes, Mottoes, Christmas Tree Ornaments, etc. N. B.—Sunday schools supplied at the lowest prices, quality considered; wholesale and retail. Original manufacturer of Old Fashioned Chocolate Cream Drops.

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Dress Shields, $1.50 to $2.50.
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Pajamas, $1.50 to $12.
Dress Suit Cases, $5.50 and up.
Jewelry, Plated and Solid.
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Suspenders, 50c. to $3.
Handkerchiefs, Linen, 25c. and up.
Handkerchiefs, Silk, 50c. and up.

We're doing you a service when we remind you of a sale of $25, $28 and $30 black, blue and brown Kersey Overcoats for $20, and $18, $20, $22 and $25 Business Suits for $15.

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