AMERICAN ART AT PARIS.

NEW YORK ARTISTS WELL REPRESENTED IN GALLERIES V. AND VI.

Successes at the Home Exhibitions Shown There—Mr. John W. Alexander's Portrait of Rodin Attracts Attention in Gallery III. —Other Pictures and Where They Are.

PARIS, June 8.—The third gallery in the United States section in the Grand Palais des Beaux-Arts has no wall centre panels because it has four doorways, one opening into the Japanese section, one by which our suite of rooms is entered from the balcony gallery and two communicating with galleries II. and IV. The positions in Gallery III. are very good, however, as most visitors enter it first, and the room has something of the character of a grand vestibule. Mr. John W. Alexander's portrait of Rodin, the great sculptor, is one of the pictures here that first attract attention. It shows the celebrated artist in three-quarters length in his shadowy studio looking at a small bronze which he holds in his hands. It bears all the marks of Mr. Alexander's individual methods of painting. He invariably uses a very rough canvas, now generally called here "Toile Alexander," and rubs his paint into it in the first painting so that the body of the canvas is literally filled with the pigment. He then goes as much farther as he chooses in more careful modelling and in the attempt to secure truth of values on top of this preliminary painting, putting his lights on thickly generally and leaving the shadows rather thin. His style of painting is much appreciated here and he has commissions given to him to paint portraits by French as well as American amateurs. His Rodin seems to be an excellent character study and possesses a personal aspect that is attractive. Two other works, "The Mother" and "Autumn," hung in this room on the second row exhibit the same technical processes as are employed in the Rodin and are notable for their clever, graceful composition. Like the work of Carrière, however, Mr. Alexander's pictures are almost without what we call color quality, and are in unobtrusive schemes of gray tints with very sober notes of red or green or yellow as variations and accents.

Next to the portrait of Rodin, on the line, hangs a landscape by Henry G. Dearth, an artist whose work previous to his taking up residence in France four years ago was very favorably received at the Society of American Artists and other New York exhibitions. He has always been a colorist, and in this, one of his recent works presenting a view in Normandy with a river at the left with steep clay or chalk banks, apparently, a row of houses on a road traversing the middle distance, hills beyond and a sky filled with great masses of red clouds, he has obtained some very rich effects. But the key in which the landscape is painted is extremely low and atmospheric effect seems to have been sacrificed to the desire to obtain some other qualities held to be of greater importance by the artist. In composition and general arrangement, it should be said, the picture shows notable artistic feeling.

In the corner is Mr. Sargent's portrait of the President of Bryn Mawr College, a good picture and, of course, skillfully painted, but not coming within the list of his best works, and near by is an interesting little snow picture, "The Flower Market in Winter," by Van D. Perrine. Mr. Brush's fine small picture with five figures, "The Artist," so highly valued for its masterly drawing and subtle envelope, is not far away and attests, as do his other two pictures, his preëminent artistic ability.

Another corner position here is occupied by Mr. Sargent's wonderful portrait of Werthelmer. It was fully described and praised without stint, as it deserved, in the columns of THE SUN when it was exhibited at the New York portrait show in the old Academy Building in 1898. It is in much need of cleaning and a light coat of varnish, for in the dark portions of the costume and the background the surface has "bloomed," to use a technical term, due to the action of the damp air on the first coat of varnish. There are three pictures by Alexander Harrison, A. N. A. in our exhibition, two marines in these galleries and a large landscape study downstairs. The two marines are hung on the line in Gallery III. One, "Twilight," is in every way excellent and charming. The sky is filled with pink clouds and the surface of the ocean and the waves rolling in on the beach reflect this tint, the whole forming a most agreeable color arrangement. The picture bears the look of truth to nature in every part and is delightful in general aspect. The other, "The Mystery of Night," is a moonlight effect with a general tone of blue and violet. The full moon is high up in a clear sky and sheds its radiance over the wide expanse of sea. In the foreground the waves are flattening out on the sandy shore as they roll inward, their curving, graceful lines bordered with foam. This canvas, larger than the other, and perhaps more simply painted if anything, has even more poetic charm. It is delicious in color, properly grave in general aspect, but full of sentiment, and one of the best of Mr. Harrison's works. Both are so sane and frankly natural in conception and in execution and both are so beautiful that they deserve special mention.

"The Canal," by the late Theodore Robinson, the picture, I am not mistaken, which was offered to the Metropolitan Museum by the members of the Society of American Artists, and declined by the museum's Art Committee, hangs next to Mr. Harrison's "Moonlight." It looks almost like a water color, so papery and thin it is in execution, and is not a work of such importance that it should have been made the subject of a general row in art circles when the museum authorities announced that they had no place for it. Another work by Theodore Robinson in Gallery IV., lent by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, is far more representative of the artist's unquestionable talent. "La Rieuse," by Jules Stewart, a nude female figure, seated on the grass, with a background of green foliage and spots of sunlight, realistically and very cleverly painted, excellent in color and in general aspect; "Magnificat," a female figure in purple, with accompaniment of white lilies, by George Hitchcock, and "Pharach," by Frederick A. Bridgman, N.A., a somewhat complicated composition, in which the pursuing army of the Egyptian ruler is seen as it is being overwhelmed and engulfed in the Red Sea, full of very skilful execution (for Mr. Bridgman's academic equipment is of the completest, and his hand and eye are admirably trained, while his imagination is fertile and always subordinated to the dictation of sound principles in art), are three other notable canvases on the line. In other places hang the beautiful marine, "Sea and Fog," by the late Robert A. Eichelberger, a justly celebrated picture; a fine landscape, "Winter," by Charles A. Platt, A. N. A., and "Motherhood," a rather perfunctorily executed life-size picture of a mother with her child, by Walter Gay, which falls within the category of typical salon pictures and scarcely comes within that which includes works of genuine artistic charm. A corner position is occupied by Mr. Walter McEwen's "Portrait," which shows a lady with two children, one of the little girls being the most prominent figure in the group and possessing most of the attractive quality of the picture, while in painting and drawing it exhibits the best Morceaux.

GALLERY IV.

Gallery IV has two wall centres. One is used by Mr. Brush's "Mother and Child," a round canvas with the mother holding her infant in her arms. In a previous letter it was erroneously stated that Mr. Brush had two centre positions and his "Mother and Child" in Gallery II., the picture with the little boy at his mother's knee, was described as hanging in the centre of the wall with "A Sunny Autumn Day," by Inness, and "Evening in Brittany," by Eugene Vail, on either side of it. This is not the case, as the Inness landscape occupies the centre, and the pictures by Mr. Brush and Mr. Vail hold the side positions. Mr. Brush's "Mother and Child" in Gallery IV. is, like his other two compositions here, worthy of all praise for its many admirable qualities. This picture is somewhat larger than the other "Mother and Child" and includes an accessory figure of a boy. The modelling is particularly solid, the relief of the figures is especially well defined and the general effect, in spite of careful detail painting, is very broad and impressive. The other centre is given to a large composition by Edwin Lord Weeks, Oriental in subject and with numerous figures, "The Indian Barber," the scene being laid in one of the animated quarters of a large city in British India. On one side of Mr. Brush's picture on the line hangs Mr. Millet's "The Expansionist," one of the best of all his recent works, painted with the careful touch characteristic of his methods, excellent in color and effect, and the story, that of a closet explorer, or traveller of the last century, immersed in his maps and books of history and building grand castles in Spain for his native country, very well told. On the other side is Mr. Gay's "Les Tisserands," a large canvas with several female figures, possessing in its presentation rather more human interest than is found in his picture in Gallery III.

In one of the corners is Mr. Melcher's good out-of-doors effects, with pleasing color, "The Sisters," a picture of two Dutch peasant children; and in another is Mr. Benson's "The Sisters," who are two little American girls in bright frocks playing in the sunlight. Mr. Melcher's group is painted in gray weather. On the line next a door is "The Senator's Birthplace," by Walter L. Palmer, N. A., a very strongly painted landscape with deep snow surrounding a square built humble brick house, which leaves nothing to be desired in realistic effect. In the neighborhood of these pictures are "Cattle," by H. S. Bisping, on the line, with cows well drawn but shadowy in substance in the shimmering effect of early morning sunlight, and on the second row "Sunrise," by William A. Coffin, A. N. A., a winter landscape with a sky of red clouds in ridges, similar in effect to his "Sunrise in January," sold in 1899 in the Thomas B. Clarke collection, and a fine snow effect, "Mount Mansfield in Winter," by the late Edward M. Taber, which attracted much notice at the Society of American Artists' exhibition a few years ago when it was hung in the central gallery pendent to Winslow Homer's "Maine Coast." In other places on the second row of pictures are the excellent "Portrait," by W. H. Hyde, A. N. A., and a nude figure in back view, "Woman Drying Her Hair," by Joseph R. De Camp. Winslow Homer's "The Fox Chase," a celebrated picture with a fox making his weary way through deep snow while harassed by great threatening crows overhead, is hung above Mr. Weeks's "Indian Barber." "Portrait of Miss F." by B. C. Porter, N. A., is hung in one of the corners over Mr. Humphreys Johnston's "Mystery of the Night," a low-toned work with a nude or partly nude female figure which occupies the place on the line. On the line in other places are a large canvas by Mrs. Mary F. MacMonnies with figures in sunlight, "Lilies and Roses," which was exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893; "Voices of the Sea," by Eugene Vail, another very low-toned canvas; "Summer Twilight," a landscape in cool tints of green, white and gray, by Willard L. Metcalf; "Sunday in Holland," by Walter McEwen, and "At the Piano," the small figure composition by Theodore Robinson, already referred to when speaking of his landscape, "The Canal."

GALLERY V.

The middle room of the inside row of the suite has two wall centres. In one is "A July Morning," by Ridgway Knight, a large canvas with a figure of a peasant girl in the foreground amid a wealth of poppies and a landscape prospect beyond, all painted in the capable manner characteristic of this well-known artist whose works, large and small, similar in subject to this one, are familiar to many amateurs on both sides of the Atlantic. The other centre is worthily held by Mr. Millet's "The Convert," one of his very likable compositions with subjects belonging to the period of the Commonwealth in England, and, like his other picture, "The Expansionist," telling its story clearly, and showing the same marks of thoughtful, skilful execution. "A Snowy Day on Fifth Avenue," by Childe Hassam, one of the best street scenes ever painted by an artist who excels in the rendering of this attractive class of subjects; "Signs of Spring," a Webb prize landscape by Bruce Crane, A. N. A.; "Landscape," a large canvas with a Shinnecock Hills motive, by William M. Chase, N. A.; "Street Boys at Play," by J. G. Brown, N. A., one of the most important of his works by reason of the large number of figures in the composition; "Saint Yves, Priez Pour Nous," a former Salon success, by Sergeant Kendall; "Brother and Sister," the sympathetic portrait group, by Abbott H. Thayer, A. N. A.; "L'Ameya" and "The Flower Market at Tokio," two very cleverly painted pictures with present-day Japanese subjects by Robert Blum, N. A.; "Little Louise" and "Portrait of Miss Mildred Blair," by Robert W. Vonnoh; "The Brooklyn Bridge," by Henry W. Ranger; "Portrait of a Young Girl in Gray," by J. Alden Weir, N. A.; "Winter Morning," by Leonard Ochtman, A. N. A., and "The Green Mill," a landscape by Charles H. Woodbury, are other notable pictures on the line most of which will be remembered in reading their titles by visitors to New York, Boston and Philadelphia exhibitions. On the second row among other works are the small nude figure "The Spring," by Will H. Low, N. A.; "Azalea," by Robert Reid; "In Foreign Seas," by George W. Maynard, N. A., one of the best of this artist's series of pictures wherein he has depicted mermaids gamboling in the waves of midocean; "Portraits," by Irving R. Wiles, N. A., showing the artist's father and mother in profile view, a well-known and excellent picture; "Fishing in the Harbor," by Lionel Walden, an unfamiliar name, representing on a large canvas fishermen at work in their boats under an effect of evening light; "Vaineu," by George Hitchcock, a beaten warrior with his horse plodding through a bed of tulips, a variation of a familiar subject with this artist, and "Clouds Over the Sea," by Charles H. Davis. Almost all of the pictures in gallery V. are from the United States, and most of them, naturally, are by New York painters.

GALLERY VI.

One of the centres in Gallery VI. is "Hamlet," by Edwin A. Abbey, N. A., a composition containing besides the figures of Hamlet and Ophelia, prominent in the foregrounds, numerous others of the King, the Queen and the courtiers, which has been seen in New York and is therefore known to many people interested in art matters. It is decidedly rich in color and as a whole sufficiently striking in aspect. A serious, well-considered and very capable work, it, however, hardly ranks with the best of this distinguished artist's pictures. The other centre is held by "Woman with a White Shawl," Mr. Chase's full-length figure that has had prominent places in numerous home exhibitions and is generally considered one of the most complete of his works. That it is rather sorrowful in expression and in attitude and that it is black and white, but very good black and white, in color, are no doubt reasons for its lack of popularity, but its merit as a piece of painting is generally conceded. "Moonlight," by Robert C. Minor, N. A., and Wyant's "Moonlight and Frost" are hung on either side of the Abbey, while other pictures on the line in the immediate vicinity are "Rest," by Seymour J. Guy, N. A., one of his latest candlelight interiors, showing an old man dozing in an armchair with his dog asleep at his feet, one of the best of this artist's remarkably well-studied and truthfully rendered genre pictures; "The Blind," by Edmund C. Tarbell, a recumbent nude female figure, strongly, almost brutally painted, but possessing fine qualities of color; "Marine," by Howard Russell Butler, A. N. A., a characteristic example of good size, and Homer Martin's "Newport Neck." In one of the corners is Miss Beaux's "Mother and Son," a well-known portrait group, and near it on the line are "The Sky Scraper," by Homer Lee; "Getting Ready for To-morrow," a half-length figure of a girl, by Mr. Guy; and "The Prisoner of State," a single figure of genre size by Eastman Johnson, N. A. Beside one of the doorways hangs one of the best canvases in the American Section, "Portrait of the Hon. A. W. Beard," by Frederic P. Vinton, N. A. It is fine and impressive in aspect, well illuminated, soundly constructed, virilely painted and altogether excellent. It has for a neighbor a good and on the whole representative picture by J. Carroll Beckwith, N. A., "Portrait of Mrs. Beckwith," and near by are Wyant's celebrated landscape, "In the Adirondacks," which looks rather sombre in the light here, and "The Peris" by Charles C. Curran, A. N. A., one of this artist's fanciful subjects, which was sold in the William T. Evans sale last February. On the second row some of the most notable pictures are "The Pursuit of the Ideal," by Kenyon Cox; "The Violinist," by Wilton Lockwood; "The Sorceress," by Frederick S. Church, N. A.; "An Arab With His Horse," by F. A. Bridgman, N. A., and "The 'Cello Player," by Thomas Eakins. In this room as in Gallery V. nearly all the pictures are from the home artists.

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY.

The first floor gallery has a side light and is not so easily found as the galleries upstairs, but it is spacious and most of the pictures hung on its walls may be seen to advantage. Prominent among them is a very large landscape study by Alexander Harrison, A. N. A., "Feux au Soleil," wherein the late afternoon sunlight casts a warm glow on the slender twisted trunks of a grove of trees. It has no centre of interest in composition, properly speaking, but it is a very truthful, well-painted study of an effect in nature. Almost as large a canvas as this one by Mr. Harrison is a portrait of the Pope by Madame Cecile de Wentworth, which with its pomp of costume and accessories is quite imposing. Other pictures here are "Landscape," by Robert W. Van Boskerck, A. N. A.; "Portrait," by Julius Rolshoven; "Columbine," by Julian Story; "In the Garden," by Lydia Field Emmet; "Portrait," a full-length figure of a lady with a costume suggesting the fashions of Spain, by F. D. Marsh; "Cloud Shadows," a landscape by Sergeant Kendall, and "Egypt Lane," a strong moonlight effect by Ruger Donoho.

While the names have not yet been officially announced, the best information obtainable gives the following as the members from the United States on the jury of awards in the Fine Arts: Group II., classes 7, 8, 9 and 10: Francis D. Millet, N. A., and Alexander Harrison, A. N. A., painters; Thomas Hastings, architect, and John B. Cauldwell, Commissioner for Fine Arts. Another juror is to be appointed, a sculptor, and the place was offered to Mr. St. Gaudens, but he declined to serve. Probably the fifth juror will be Paul Wayland Bartlett, who lives here and was chosen as the sculptor of the Lafayette equestrian statue, which is to be unveiled in the Place du Carrousel on the Fourth of July. W. A. COFFIN.

ANTARCTIC EXPLORERS.

Two Leaders of the Latest British Expedition Selected.

LONDON, June 2.—The joint committee of the Royal and Royal Geographical Societies, to which have been intrusted the arrangements for the National Antarctic Expedition, have appointed Lieut. Q. F. Scott as commander. He possesses one absolutely essential qualification for polar work—youth. Lieut. Scott is only 30 years of age, he has been fifteen years in the navy and has seen service of many kinds. He knows how to handle a sailing vessel as well as a steamer, a most important qualification where coal has to be husbanded. From all the officers under whom he has served he has obtained the highest certificates of competency and character.

Although he is not in the naval survey service, he has had practical experience in survey work and in the use of survey instruments. He is full of the "go" absolutely necessary for the leader of such an expedition as that on which he is about to enter, and at the same time he seems to possess the intelligence and self-discipline which will prevent that "go" from degenerating into rashness. This is what is to be learned from the testimony of the various officers under whom Lieut. Scott has served, and from others who have had opportunities of knowing him.

While Lieut. Scott will be commander of the expedition, the head of the scientific staff will be Dr. J. W. Gregory, formerly of the Natural History Museum, who since last autumn has been professor of geology in Melbourne University. Dr. Gregory has made a name for himself as an explorer in Spitzbergen as well as in Africa and North America. He is a geological specialist and has an all-round practical knowledge of other departments of science; he is, moreover, a man of imagination, enthusiasm and scientific insight, who is sure to make the most of his exceptional opportunity.

The selection of the two chiefs has not been made too soon. The expedition must be ready to leave England in about twelve months. During that time there is a vast amount of work to be done—stores for two or three years to be selected and tested, the scientific programme to be elaborated, the instruments to be obtained, and some of them probably to be devised for the purpose, the other officers and the crew to be secured, and some of them trained for their special work, and many other things to be thought of. The main desideratum now is more money, if the expedition is to remain out as long as it should and carry out all the work that is wanted; for it is to be feared that the ship, which has been specially designed, and is now building at Dundee, will absorb one-half of the available funds.

MAN AND MOUSE TRAP.

The Wreckage Made by an Exciting Encounter in a Dark Room.

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

"Talk about your peculiar mishaps," said a young man employed in one of the railroad offices in St. Charles, "something happened at our boarding house the other night that I think is entitled to first money. One of our lodgers is a very fat man, who has a job as bookkeeper in a wholesale house near the river. He is almost as tall lying down as he is standing up, and, with such a paunch, is rather slow in getting around; but for all that he is a perfect bundle of nerves and the most excitable man I ever knew in my life. Well, he has a room directly under mine, and lately we have all been bothered more or less by mice. The landlady declared war on them, and for light artillery she bought a lot of small wire traps—those dome-shaped affairs with holes around the top for the beasts to stick their heads into.

"The servant put one in each room, and a few evenings ago, when she was going around baiting the lot, was careless enough to leave the fat man's standing on top of his dresser. He happened to be out attending a singing society that night and didn't get home until about 1 A. M. His room was pitch dark, but he knew there were some matches on the dresser, and moving cautiously across the floor, he began pawing around for the box. At about the first plunge he made he stuck his fat forefinger into one of the apertures of the mousetrap, and the thing snapped down on him like the jaws of a bulldog.

"Now, imagine, if you can," continued the railroad clerk, "how you would feel yourself if you were prowling around in a dark room and some unknown monster suddenly nailed you by the finger and hung on. I am free to say I would probably have howled just as loudly as the fat man did. He supposed, of course, that the thing that had hold of him was alive, and when he tried to knock it off his hand encountered the corpses of two mice that had been caught in the other holes before he came in. The touch of their soft, furry bodies confirmed the idea that it was a living creature, and it Was then, as he explained afterward, that he tried to escape to the hall, and got tangled up with the furniture.

"How he came to demolish so many different things in such a short time is a mystery, but you know how easy it is to bump into all the articles in a dark room under the most ordinary circumstances, and a fat man with a mousetrap hanging to his finger would naturally be a great deal more destructive. Anyhow, it was that first bellow of mortal terror that awakened me, and the next thing I heard was a succession of frightful crashes mixed with the noise of breaking glass, shuffling feet, torn cloth, falling furniture and ten-ply profanity. I could have sworn that my neighbor was having a fight with at least eight burglars, and, needless to say, the whole house was up in a moment. Of course nobody was anxious to go in and get murdered while that awful row was in progress, but presently it died down, and when we pushed open the door we found the bookkeeper sitting in the middle of the room, totally collapsed, with the mousetrap still hanging to his finger and the floor littered with the wreck of all his belongings.

"A 50-pound lyddite shell couldn't have produced a more picturesque ruin. Ever since then a desperate argument has been in progress as to who is responsible for the damages. The landlady declares the fat man will have to pay for the smashed furniture, and he swears by the nine gods he won't give up a cent. On the contrary, he wants remuneration for his lacerated finger, the shock of his nerves and the suit of clothes ruined in the battle. I wouldn't be surprised if the case got into the courts with the mousetrap as 'Exhibit A.'"

PASSION PLAY TOURISTS.

MORE THAN 11,000 AMERICANS WILL GO TO OBERAMMERGAU THIS YEAR.

That Many Booked by One Tourist Company —An Impressive Opening Performance —Lasted From 8 A. M. to Noon and From 1:30 to 5 P. M.—History of the Decennial Performances of the Play.

OBERAMMERGAU, May 21.—It is naturally supposed that the World's Exposition at Paris is the mecca of all travelling Americans this summer. It is to this little village in the Bavarian Alps that the name more truly belongs. The agent of one of the great tourist companies has booked places for more than eleven thousand Americans for the summer's performances of the "Passion Play." These figures, compared with the total of only 2,000 English people upon the company's books, is a striking indication of the extraordinary attraction which the great religious spectacle has upon the American mind and imagination. And it is not to be wondered at. After witnessing yesterday's first performance of the great Biblical tragedy one can easily understand that audiences for such a drama may be drawn from the uttermost ends of the earth. The religious instinct and the force of education and tradition are quite unnecessary to make the event impressive beyond anything anywhere else to be seen in mimic portrayal. This was in 1634.

There is no need to do more than mention the history of this decennial event which marks the landmarks in the lives of these simple Bavarian peasants. As far back as the twelfth century a Passion play had been performed here, but the wars of the sixteenth century put an end to the performances. Following the wars came a great pestilence, village after village fell a prey to its ravages. Oberammergau remained untouched. A vigorous quarantine against the outer world kept it safe until one Casper Schuchler, who had been working in a plague-stricken village nearby, returned to see his wife and little ones. In two days he was dead; before a month was over 84 of the villagers had perished. In their despair the inhabitants turned to God, and vowed that if the plague would cease they would every ten years perform the "Passion Play." From that hour, says the local historian, the plague was checked.

In 1870 the war with France interrupted the performance; forty-five of the villagers went to the front, seven of them doomed not to return. Joseph Mayer, who then played *Christus* for the first time, started with them, but the King of Bavaria ordered him to remain in Munich and did not even let him cut his flowing locks. The play was repeated in 1871.

The author of the present version was the parish priest Daisenberger, who died about twenty years ago at the age of 83. He stripped the play of everything ignoble or farcical, cutting out entirely the part of the *Devil*, who, up till then, as in all miracle plays, played the comedy rôle, exciting much hilarity as he tore open the bowels of the suicide *Judas* and produced therefrom strings of sausages.

The play contains a well worked-out plot, showing how Christ's entrance into Jerusalem in triumph offended the priests, how His cleansing of the temple incensed the merchants. The priests make use of the merchants through the chief, *Dathan*, to destroy *Christus*. *Dathan* approaches *Judas* and bribes him with priests' money to betray where *Christus* will pass the night. This leads up to the arrest, trial and crucifixion.

Until the last moment it seemed that the first performance in this year's series would be given amid cold rain and sleet and most wintry surroundings. Ten years ago these would have been almost impossible conditions, for both performers and audience then assembled in a roofless theatre. The new partly covered theatre, built with the proceeds of the 1890 performances, does not look so much like an engine shed as one would suppose from the photographs. It holds nearly 4,000 spectators; there are 1,598 seats at $2.50; 496 at $2, 544 at $1.50, 668 at $1 and 658 at 50 cents. This gives a total of $175,000 for the twenty-seven regular performances, while extra ones are to be given when too many visitors reach the village for the theatre to hold in one day. In 1890 the 700 performers received $30,000; Mayer, the *Christus*, received $500; the conductor of the orchestra $250. Everything else was spent on the theatre and the village. Drains were built, a new hospital founded, drawing and carving schools established, waterworks built and the poor provided for. The stage is 130 feet broad and 86 feet deep. In the centre, twenty feet from the front, is a wide-curtained proscenium, on each side of which is a balconied house, that of *Annas* on the left and that of *Pilate* on the right. These are separated from the proscenium by ports or roads which lead to Jerusalem. The stage (except the pro-cenium) is uncovered, the mountains, yesterday covered with snow, forming a background on one side.

The most impressive thing of all was the Schultz-Geister or chorus of twenty women and sixteen men. They file on with solemn step and line the front of the stage. Their long robes form a brilliant and harmonious chord of color. The choragus or leader recites the prologue to each act, pointing out the lessons it enforces, the chorus sings and then withdraws for the scene or retires to each side for a tableau.

The play commenced yesterday with Christ's entry into Jerusalem. From the back of the stage the "volk" came slowly, waving branches, chanting a march chorale, one of the most successful pieces in the Passion-music. On, on they came, all looking backward toward Christ, till it seems as though an innumerable multitude of men, women and children were streaming on to the stage. Then the *Christus* appeared, "meek and sitting upon a colt, the foal of an ass." The proscenium represented the Temple filled with traders, sellers of doves and lambs, &c. Christ—for all thought of Anton Lang the actor has disappeared from the mind—turns them out with blows, overthrowing their tables, the doves released from their wicker cages fly away into the blue air, and the scene closes with Nathanael, a leader of the priests, promising the traders their revenge.

It would take too long to tell of every one of the eighteen scenes, in addition to which there are twenty-three tableaux taken from the Old Testament. These are used to illustrate the scenes. For example, a marvellous scene representing the falling of the manna in the wilderness, in which there must be over a hundred figures, precedes the Last Supper, a representation of the despair of Cain ushers in the act in which Judas returns the thirty pieces of silver and hangs himself.

The representation lasted from 8 A. M. till 12, and from 1:30 to 5 P. M. and the absorbing interest with which it was followed was shown by the fact that every one was surprised when 12 came. There was no applause at the end of a scene, though people stamped their feet to restore the circulation, for there was a little chill in the air.

Two questions most generally asked are "Does not the representation of Christ on the stage jar on the feelings?" and "Is not the Crucifixion scene too trying to look on?" To both queries the answer is no—to the first, unhesitatingly. This is because of the fact that the Christ takes little part in the action of the play except in cleansing the temple; for the rest the action takes place about him while he suffers in silence. The divinity of Christ plays a very small part, in fact only appears in the healing of Malchus's ear and in the Resurrection, which is more a tableau than an act.

As regards the Crucifixion, it was one of the few scenes in which the spectator thinks of the actor rather than the act. The physical pain endured during the time the *Christus* is on the cross, about nineteen minutes, must be very great. The excellence of representation of the Crucifixion in sculpture and painting to which we are so accustomed tends to rob the scene of its effect. The means by which the body is fastened to the cross are invisible, but a strong glass showed marks round the wrist, and doubtless some form of corset is used, but it is all hidden, even during the taking down of the body, in which Rubens's well-known picture is reproduced.

Anton Lang is the *Christus*, and one cannot think it possible that the part could be represented better. The divine tenderness of expression and demeanor, the resonant yet sympathetic voice, the tender smile occasionally lighting up the sorrowful countenance fulfilled all one's ideal of Christ as man on earth.

The part of *Judas* as played by Zwink was most convincing. It explains how there could be a Judas among the twelve, a man whose love of money was enough to drive him to betray his master's whereabouts, confident in that master's power to release himself by a miracle if necessary. When he realizes that his betrayal means his master's death his repentance is immediate and complete.

The *Peter* of Thomas Rendl was most effective. His repentance scene, so different from *Judas's*, was most moving. *Caiaphas* has one of the most dramatic parts, and Sebastian Lang filled it so as to deserve the highest praise.

If anything proves the great dramatic power of Daisenberger, the author, it is the way his characters are differentiated and the fulness with which they are worked out. The *Pilate* of Sebastian Bauer was not up to the level of those mentioned, but so well is the part written that no actor could fail in making a mark in it to a certain extent.

The women's parts are short and offer little scope for acting. The *Virgin* of Anna Hunger was sympathetic, and the scene of her parting with her son at Bethany visibly affected the vast audience.

The handling of the crowds was marvellous. Of course the huge stage assists in this. One thing was ineffective. When the crowd shouts and plays the part of a mob they do it in unison, all speaking the same words, giving the effect of an American college yell. Of course this enables the peasants to understand the words, which is a more important thing in the Oberammergau mind than mere artistic effect.

THE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY.

The Spirit in Which It Is Now Rendered Deplored by the Rev. Dr. Collyer.

It is a sad commentary on the times that with the universal popularizing of a profound and sacred observance, the worldly spirit should thrust itself in and vulgarize it. I can regard the present production of the Passion Play at Oberammergau as nothing short of a perversion.

Time was when this simple and beautiful rendering of the profoundest tragedy known to man was in the nature of a noble religious observance—something to be seen, revered and remembered, and to the simple peasantry of Bavaria a mighty instrument for moral and spiritual betterment. But with each repetition the ancient spirit that characterized it faded "into the light of common day." Now, like everything else we treasure more or less, it is slowly but surely becoming subservient to commercial uses.

This is deplorable, but is beyond gainsaying. A touching and inspiring rite has been vulgarized by the extraneous and the commercial; it has been made a sightseers' spectacle like Vesuvius and the World's Fair, a catch-penny vantage to the innkeeper and the purveyor of souvenirs.

People removed from the scenes and local spirit can hardly realize how insular and concrete the quaint peasant folk of Oberammergau are, and how necessary is the symbol to their devout lives. For the most part the practical talents of the players are displayed in wood carvings of exquisite workmanship, particularly crucifixes and other religious tokens in which they are peculiarly expert, as if the trying work had sharpened their wits. Morally and spiritually they are fitted for their great undertaking, and to be thought worthy of a place even in the chorus of the Passion Play is to them a mark of the highest merit.

In years and years of toil over their religious symbols, laboring to bring out more clearly the divine features familiarized by the old masters, these simple folk become imbued with deep reverence. From the time that one Schuchler brought the plague into the valley, and divine intervention prevented its utter depopulation in gratitude for which the peasants vowed to play the Passion Play tragedy once every ten years the play has occupied the thoughts of Oberammergauers.

It contained their very souls, and the decennial rendition of the beautiful ceremony was an honest and sincere outpouring of spirit, a glorious religious rite. It became a part of their very life, uniting them in common bonds of Christian brotherhood. It made peasant integrity stronger, the hardy Bavarian stock fuller in life and purpose.

For the applause of the world they cared little; for the respect of their brethren in the faith and the consciousness of a duty well performed they cared much. It was as much an observance of patience and praise as prayer and thank offering.

While they were performing their humble rites these peasant folk became transformed. They became dedicated spirits. The flesh was lost in the glory of the soul. They were no longer Mayer and Lechner and the other humble townspeople, but Christ and Judas and the apostles. For the time being they are living, moving and having their being in the reflected light of the sublime prototypes. I have seen a few great actors thus embodied in their parts—Forrest in *Macbeth*, for instance—and the effect was electric.

In the play the Oberammergauers forgot that they are human and that there is a very human audience composed of one-tenth reverential Bavarian folk and nine-tenths tourists watching them. But the mood is changing. More and more the box-office consideration enters the equation. Such and such photographers have the exclusive right to make pictures, and kodakers are arrested at sight.

Such and such translators are allowed to put the words of the text into many tongues, such and such publishers have exclusive rights to publish the same, and the stenographer caught pencil in hand suffers arrest and his notes are confiscated. Ever the peephole in the curtain, ever the material gain.

It requires only the presence of a few illustrious critics of the drama, with trenchant next-morning reviews of play and players to bring something almost divine down to the level of the marionette. It has not yet come to this, but the end is inevitable. The commercial spirit which encompasses our most cherished institutions and the love of money which is the "root of all evil," as much and more to-day than ever in the elder time, will eventually bring the Passion Play of Oberammergau and its many imitators to the level of successful spectacular enterprises.

When it becomes a matter of trading upon things sacred and holy for private ends, I see the end at hand.

This will be a successful year in the little valley of the Ammer. The new *Christus* will build himself a more comfortable chalet, *St. John* will increase his herd, *Judas* and *Herod* will open another inn for the dispensing of Bavarian bock, and plans will be laid for the ensnaring of the white-helmeted and red-Baedekered tourist, particularly the American one, in 1910.

But the ancient spirit will have passed away, and what was once a devout religious affair will have descended to the merely histrionic. Such is the disintegrating influence of gold for the gold's sake. Such are the corrosions of mere commercialism.

Personally were I within a mile of the theatre I should not take the trouble to pay it a visit. For sublime and yet human and living, as the Oberammergauers make the scenes of the Divine Passion, I prefer the blessed picture which has lived in my heart these many years, an inspiring presence in youth and an abiding comfort in age, conjured by the Holy Spirit of the fulness of the solace of the ages—the Divine Word. ROBERT COLLYER.

THE END OF A KENTUCKY FEUD.

How a Judge Made Peace Between Negroes Who Were Imitating White Folks.

From the Lexington Herald.

The final step in a unique case was taken Wednesday. Emma and Mary Mason, charged with failure to keep the peace and using insulting language, appeared before Judge Bullock for trial. In that certain conditions imposed when the cases were called a week ago had been complied with, they were dismissed.

These negro families, the Masons on one side and the Rodgers and Todds on the other, who lived on Ellerslie avenue, had been at war for a number of months. They were continually swearing out warrants for their enemies, and their appearance in court was not made less frequent by fines and jail sentences. When the trouble was again brought to the notice of Judge Bullock ten days ago he called representatives of the factions before him and told them that the Court intended that they should drop the feud. He suggested that to save the county expense and themselves punishment one or the other move. The Rodgers said that they had lived there for many years and that their family had given the name of "Rodgersville" to the community. The Masons objected to moving, also.

"Then to save any of you the pain of moving," said the Judge, "I will adopt this plan: I will send the Masons to jail for one month; release them and put the Rodgers and Todds in for the next month. By alternating in this manner you will be separated and may live happily and peacefully."

The Masons underwent a sudden change of heart, and told the Judge if he would give them two days they would quit Rodgersville forever and not give him any further trouble. He continued the cases a week, and true to their promises the Masons moved next day.

ENGLAND IN AFGHAN EYES.

The Ameer's Judgment of British and Russians as Told by His Woman Doctor.

From the London Daily Mail.

Abdur Rahman of Afghanistan is again expressing his anxiety as to the movements of the Russians in central Asia.

No English man or woman could have half a dozen interviews with the Ameer without hearing him express himself in the strongest terms as to his certainty that not only will Afghanistan and Persia, but also India and a large part of China be eventually incorporated in the Empire which he believes to be the mightiest in the world.

Somehow England, her power, her diplomacy, her military tactics, and especially, perhaps, her methods of dealing with Easterns, has failed to impress him. He would like to be able to believe in England. There is nothing that would suit him better. There is nothing that would give him greater peace of mind and freedom from care than to feel convinced that not only is England powerful enough to withstand Russia, but that she has the constancy of purpose to do so.

He looks upon "Britannia's Government," as he calls it, as a house divided against itself, which, therefore, cannot stand.

He sees no desirable system of inquiry into every detail (no matter how painfully trivial) in the debates that take place day by day at Westminster. No healthy rivalry preserving a fairly even balance in the two parties which for the time being form the Government and the Opposition. He sees only two factions at perpetual war with one another. The one constantly endeavoring to undo what the other, at the cost of endless valuable time and treasure, has just accomplished. Nor will he even see any consistency in the policy of each party. His idea is that the main, almost the only, object of each is to overthrow the other, regardless of consequences to the Empire and its allies.

Although he has lived in a remote part of Russia, he knows less of her in many ways than he does of England, which he has, unfortunately, never visited. He has no Russian servants in his employ. He sees comparatively few Russian newspaper reports, and he has not the vaguest idea of her methods of government, except as regards the secret police, which he considers invaluable. But he has a knowledge of the vast extent of her territory, of the millions of souls she calls her subjects, and he admires, while he dreads, the octopus-like method in which she has from time to time quietly toyed with, then seized and held within her grasp against all opposition, first one and then another of the small States that formerly separated the Afghan from the Russian frontier. Nor has he any faith that any demarcation, any boundary limit, will debar her progress.

As he believes in her secret police and her spies, so also does he believe not only in the quiet insidious way in which she advances her border, but in her method of treating the new subjects she has brought under her control.

He understands, or thinks he understands, Russia. He cannot understand England.

He has not the faintest objection to expressing the most decided opinions regarding Russia in open Durbar, and is apparently always willing to answer questions on the subject.

One day when he was deploring his own position as ruler of a country full of strife within and surrounded by greedy enemies without, I asked him openly whether he did not on the whole prefer the Russians, whom he knew, and among whom he passed many years, which he declares were the happiest of his life, to the English, of whom he really knows but very few, and those not always the best specimens. He put his head on one side, as he has a way of doing when he is thinking of something as to which he wishes to give an accurate reply, and said:

"Even if I preferred them, and I am not admitting that I do, but even if I preferred them, personal preference would have nothing to do with my political relations with them. If I said to you, who are an English woman, 'I love Britannia's Government, although it owns huge tracts of country where formerly Afghan sovereigns ruled,' you might very justly go away and say, 'This man is a humbug; he is only saying this because he is afraid of us. He hates us, and will be faithless to us as soon as the opportunity occurs.'

"But if I say this is no case for likes and dislikes, it is a case of self-interest, then perhaps you will believe me. What every country wants nowadays is the sea—but a navigable sea, not one that