THEMES FROM STAGELAND.

MORE AMAZEMENT THAN AMUSEMENT IN FEMALE MINSTRELSY.

A Bowery Show Goes to Broadway Without Indecency or Much Else That Is Diverting—Mrs. Gilbert's Ideas About the Temptations of the Stage—The White Rats.

If, in the summer scarcity of theatrical performances, or through a desire to find something unusual on the Broadway stage, you go to see the Casino Beauty Minstrels, you will be more amazed than amused. If you have never before known of such a thing, you will marvel that it could be regarded as diversion anywhere. If you are familiar with it at the cheap concert halls of the Bowery and Eighth avenue, you will wonder at the transfer of it to upper Broadway. In the latter case, you will be astounded by the fact that the audacities and indecencies of it as observed in those resorts are eliminated here. The Casino is no temple of modesty. Why, then, do the summer women on the roof wear more clothes than the winter women downstairs? Why is the concluding extravaganza disappointingly respectable in word and deed? "The Casino Boy," which was produced last week, had none of the doffing of raiment or the nude tableaux which are the usual exploits of female minstrelsy. Nor did it contain any of the salacious elements which characterize most of the Casino entertainments in imitation of which it seemed to have been written by Robert B. Smith and Harry T. MacConnell. The resemblance lay chiefly in its subject, which was that of personal gayty among chorus girls and the youths who follow them. Last winter's fake incident of a box of poisoned candy being sent to Virginia Earle was taken up for burlesque, and there was some travestizing of "Sherlock Holmes" and "Sapho." But none of the women threw her skirts off or up, and those who didn't wear any had their legs in trousers. Nor did anybody say anything wicked in prose or song. The play had some good humor and music, and its femininity had at least an agreeable frontage with Annie McLaughlin and the Countess von Batzfeldt. Under altogether favorable conditions it would have been an acceptable burlesque. But as the afterpiece in a wretched female minstrel show it was neither fine enough nor coarse enough to make much of a mark.

The contents of the Casino Beauty Minstrels, when opened by the first lift of the curtain, are not what the label says. It is like buying a box of Havana cigars and getting Pittsburg stogies. In the whole row there is not a pretty face. The women have a half-scared, half-defiant manner, as though they felt that by migrating from the Bowery to Broadway they have ventured into an enemy's country. They throw their songs and bits of dialogue across the footlights with an air of boldness, and at the same time seem ready to dodge things that may be flung back. What the bill declares is a "carnival of minstrelsy" is utterly devoid of pith and point. The interlocutor is an affable woman, and her feminization of the old-time pompous middleman would be tolerable if the four end men responded with other than unlaughable jokes and doggerel ditties. Those four blackened comedians are embodiments of depression. The audience breathes a sigh of relief when the first part is over. But a still worse "carnival of variety" follows on. A young couple, plainly a blokie and his goil from the sidewalks of the Bowery by the way of Coney Island, give "imitations of street urchins" that are obviously genuine in crudity, but not the less worthless for that. Three women roll and tumble about the stage as "acrobatic singing comediennes." Too clumsy to be admired and not grotesque enough to be laughed at, their intention cannot be divined. Two aged negro minstrels give in sad reminiscence that almost forgotten sketch, in which one plays a banjo, the other wants it, and it changes hands under the duress of a pistol. Four "world's comedians" impersonate an Irishman, a German, a Yankee and a tramp so crudely that the characters are barely identifiable. Two portly women sing songs with harsh voices and a ponderous effort to be volatile. This section of the show ends in a "grand ensemble song and dance," in which the female minstrels sling with all their might, but do not dance at all, though they march vigorously in the familiar Amazonian movements. But their leader is no new Pauline Markham in stately beauty and armored splendor. He is a plain man in a conventional evening suit. However, he is an interesting exhibit for ethical study. What must be the mentality of a man willing to lead a march of female minstrels? What does he think of himself while doing it?

That the personal character of actresses ranges from bad to good would hardly need reiteration were it not that the brazen vices of the one kind are more in the public eye than the modest virtues of the other. Mrs. G. H. Gilbert says in the *Metropolitan Magazine* that the temptations of the stage are greatly exaggerated. "A young actress truly interested in her work," the old lady adds, "is subject to no more temptations than any other young woman in any other career. Her ultimate future depends upon her principles as well as upon her strength of character, her womanhood, and, I may add, her intentions. If I had a young daughter and was convinced of her dramatic ability, I should have no more hesitation in placing her upon the stage than I should hesitate in placing her in a newspaper office or in a business house as bookkeeper or stenographer. But I should see that my young daughter, until her character and principles were fixed, should have the protection of her mother, and as far as possible the restraining influences of a home, however humble." The exigencies of theatrical life are against the feasibility of domesticity, and Annie Russell, writing also in the *Metropolitan*, says it is pathetic to note how an actress, remaining only a few weeks in a strange city, will struggle to set up the altar of her household gods in the room of her hotel, and will surround herself with the little comforts that suggest a home. Miss Russell calls attention to the fact that in summer time the majority of stage people are wont to retire to country houses of their own, from the pretentious villas of the affluent to the inexpensive cottages of the less prosperous. "Familiarity breeds contempt," she remarks, "and perchance the blessings of home life lose something of their value for those to whom they have become a habit, but we who are deprived of the sweet consolations hold them as the highest gifts of life and are ready to struggle for their possession." Those are sentiments which do not prevail in the Tenderloin, where the word actress is commonly construed to mean a degenerate, and where the outcast lives of a few actresses are in the glare, while the decent behavior of the majority does not come into publicity. "There is a view of the theatre," says Mrs. Gilbert in the article already quoted from, "which I shall not ignore, for it presents opportunities for young and frivolous girls whose foolish minds are craving excitement and notoriety. The stage serves their purpose and gives them an opening to publicity offered neither by studio nor office. It is not a question of temptation, but of opportunity. Spectacular productions have now become the fashion, where there is a great demand for pretty, graceful women. No special stage knowledge is necessary, but an attractive face is of paramount importance. Many of these positions are filled by worthy, self-respecting women, nevertheless it would be useless to deny that these so-called productions cater to the morbid craving of hundreds of foolish girls. I refuse to lay any special stress upon the temptations of the stage, while I frankly confess that the world presents evil in plenty in any career, only to be resisted by strong principles and character, without which life, even in the seclusion of one's own home, will be a wreckage as well as in the glare of the footlights." The point which Mrs. Gilbert makes delicately that a craving for notoriety actuates some of the actresses, is susceptible of much more positive assertion. Certain New York theatres devoted to extravaganzas are houses of flagrant and shameless ill fame, where young women put themselves on stage view for personal and not professional exploitation, and where audiences cannot accord any of that respectful consideration now given generally to the people of stageland. In these exceptional theatres no effort is made by the managements to hide their scandals from publicity. On the contrary, every foolish escapade of a chorus girl or reckless exploit of a soubrette, every outbreak of social evil associated with those stages, is worked into print to the utmost possible extent, and when the supply of real indecencies is scant the services of fanciful liars are employed to keep the places in prosperous disrepute.

There are 124 White Rats of America, according to the names signed to a circular received by THE SUN. They are performers in vaudeville, and include a score or so of those actors who shift frequently between the regular dramatic stage and the variety shows, along with many noted specialists. They call themselves Rats because that word spells star backward, and White on account of the purity of their avowed purposes. The understanding is that they are organized primarily to fight against a reduction of salaries by the Association of Vaudeville Managers, and that the other objects promulgated are regarded by them as of smaller importance. Indeed, these latter are expressed in terms easily construed by cynics as facetious, but which true friends of the stage will prefer to regard sincere. "The White Rats believe their vocation is a noble one," say they, "and should be recognized as such by the world at large. We anticipate that there will be sacrifices to make which nothing but loyal hearts can stand. We will be ready for the test, and, though we profit not ourselves, we will leave behind us for those who choose to follow up the hill of evolution in our wake a legacy rich with sincerity and sweet with brotherly love, and in this, our enterprise, we ask the blessing, the help, of the Father Almighty, whose heart is love, whose light we will follow, who is God of All." Perhaps the circular is the work of a writer of circus posters, or maybe by a man with experience as a Salvation Army exhorter. But he gets down to practical sober sense when he says: "We shall endeavor, (and we hope without the risk of being called prudes) to infuse a more wholesome spirit of refinement and culture in our stage performances and in our demeanor in public than has heretofore characterized our sphere of the theatrical profession." That is the kind of talk which should mean something worth while. A great deal more of refinement and culture can be put into vaudeville without hurting its potency with any grade of audiences. The racy humor essential to these entertainments should not be subdued. In most of the vaudeville theatres it is now wholesome in the main. Nothing shameful is being done in the continuous houses of Proctor, Keith and Pastor, nor at present in the roof gardens of Hammerstein, Lederer and the Sires. In all these places the principles avowed by the White Rats are pretty well adhered to. But there is a deplorable amount of illiterature, which offends some people and is of no value with the others. The first signature on the White Rats' circular is that of George Fuller Golden, and the last is that of Ezra Kendall, and those two men illustrate the point here sought to be made. They are monologue humorists, each originating the jokes and anecdotes which he uses, and both introduce the slang of the day as spoken in polite and impolite society, from drawing rooms to barrooms. But it is pertinent, it is ascribed to suitable characters, and it is not accompanied by bad grammar and worse taste in the language of the actor when speaking as himself. These men are on familiar terms with good English, and their oddities of idiom are as careful as the dialect in a clever novel. Their merit in that respect renders their fun agreeable to discriminating people and at the same time does not spoil it in the least for the rabble. In deplorable contrast are those equally comic fellows who by their offences of bad grammar and uncouth manner deprive themselves of about half the favor done to their talent. Mr. Golden and Mr. Kendall are not lonesome examples of their kind. But they are outnumbered by rank offenders, and these, voluntarily or by managers' compulsion, should surely amend their language by means of special tuition and rehearsal, even though they don't know a single rule of grammar. So much of artistic and literary worth is being put into vaudeville that the crude ignorance of the rest should be put out. This is not a plea for dilettanteism in the variety shows, but rather for such a broadening of its racy humor as will please people of culture and not displease any one. Let the White Rats look to that.

Beerbohm Tree has accepted a new play by Stephen Phillips called "The King of the Jews," and it may be acted before the same author's "Paola and Francesca" is produced by George Alexander. The newer drama is, of course, in verse, for Mr. Phillips is first a poet and then a dramatist. The hero is Herod and its scenes are laid in Jerusalem, while its intrigue deals with the love of Herod and Mariamne.

"Sweet Nell of Drury Lane" is the title selected for Paul Kester's play called here "Nell Gwynne." Evelyn Millard is not to retire from the stage because of her recent marriage. She is to rent a theatre next season to produce "The Merchant of Venice." "Much Ado About Nothing," and other Shakespearean plays. Sir Henry Irving is said to have abandoned the production of the drama dealing with the Massacre of St. Bartholmew on account of the difficulty of protecting his rights to it. One English version is already in existence and anybody is at liberty to translate and produce the German piece. Mr. Irving's next character may be *Gustavus Adolphus* in a historical tragedy based on the life of that King. Edmund Edmunds, who died in Edinburgh the other day, was an intimate friend of Edmund Kean and Thomas Moore and a particular favorite with George IV. After several years on the dramatic stage he became an opera singer. Again he became an actor when his voice deserted him after he had sung a few seasons. In later life he taught music.

In "Isla the Chosen," by Alicia Ramsay, which Janette Steer acted the other day in London, the period of the play was vaguely described as "the dawn of history." The scene was more exactly described as "a ruined temple on a city wall." George Grossmith's new operetta, in which he is to appear *as Perkin of Warbeck* and for which he wrote the libretto, which will be sung in London during October. Sir Arthur Sullivan's incidental music to "The Tempest," composed thirty-eight years ago, and the first work of the composer, is played still in England at occasional revivals of the play.

Eugenie Doche, who was the first woman to act the rôle of *Marguerite Gauthier* in Alexandre Dumas's "La Dame aux Camelias," known here as "Camille," died in Paris the other day at the age of 77 years. She was born in Belgium, but came of Irish descent. She studied in Paris and began to act at the Vaudeville Theatre when a child. Her husband, whose name she bore throughout her career, was a musician and the couple lived together only a short time. In 1852 she appeared first in Dumas's play and delighted the dramatists as few actresses do. Her Irish origin was shown by her maiden name "de Plunkett." She retired more than twenty years ago, but was frequently seen at the Paris theatres with her sister, who was her constant companion. She played in most of the Paris theatres after winning fame in "La Dame aux Camelias," but was never a member of the Comédie Française in spite of the success she made in Dumas's play. At the time of the first performance she was at the height of her popularity in Paris and her great beauty had already made her conspicuous. She is said to have resembled the Dumas heroine in many particulars, and her life after she left the stage was passed in luxurious refinement. She rarely missed a performance of "La Dame aux Camelias." Jeanne Bernhardt, younger sister of Sarah, and who was seen rarely on the stage during recent years, died the other day. She is said to have been an actress of talent, although obscured by the greater reputation of her sister.

Constant Coquelin has arranged a lottery for the benefit of the actors of the French stage and it is expected that they will profit greatly by it. More than a million chances, at a franc each, are to be sold throughout France.

It has been discovered by accident in Paris that the great Talma once wrote a tragedy that has just come to light. In 1826 a tragedy called "Gunide," written in Talma's hand, was intrusted to a French publishing house by an army officer who has since died. The publisher guaranteed that it should be read to the committee of the Comédie Française, and in the correspondence between the publisher and the General, which has just come to light, it is claimed that the work had been accepted for the French national theatre. Nothing is known of it at the theatre, however, and the widow of the army officer has just brought suit to recover possession of the manuscript by Talma, which has been in the publisher's hands for fourteen years.

Gabriel d'Annunzio is writing a new tragedy in verse for Eleonora Duse in spite of the reports of their quarrel. Adele Sandrock is soon to act in Berlin d'Annunzio's tragedy "Gloria" in a German translation. The poet's real name is said to be Gnetano Rapognetta, and his father is a poor farmer.

Gustav Salvini, one of the sons of the greater Tommaso, is still trying to arouse in Italian audiences an interest in the classical drama. He is travelling through Italy with a company that gives performances of the works of Sophocles and Alfieri. He lately acted in the almost forgotten "Paul of Tarsus," by Antonio Gazzoletti at Bologna. He acted there in the great arena and a memorial stone was placed there in memory of his visit.

The National Greek Theatre, which is now completed, was made possible through the liberality of the King, who will have control of its administration in return for his liberality. The most modern appliances have been used in the new building, and the stage, illuminated by electric light, was designed by the stage engineer of the Hofburg in Vienna. The theatre is ready to be opened, but the necessary actors have not yet been found. For various reasons the well-known actors of the day in Greece are not considered desirable for the new state theatre, so as few as possible of them will be engaged. A royal college of acting has been opened under the direction of the King and twenty-four pupils are to be prepared for the stage under the direction of a teacher who has received his education in London and Paris. Fencing, declamation, pantomime and other branches of their art are to be taught to these young persons by Greeks who have studied in France and Germany. Every year twenty-five pupils will be taken, and the new national theatre expects to be supplied with a lot of new national actors within a very short time.

SCENE PAINTER'S TASK.

IMPORTANCE OF HIS WORK IN THE THEATRES OF TO-DAY.

The Old Methods of Scenic Production and the New—The Way Effects Are Gained Nowadays—Profits of the Profession Are Large—Tendencies of the Work for the Future.

Probably the average spectator seated in a theatre thinks that the scenery is of more importance in creating an illusion than any other feature of the stage performance that he may observe. Undoubtedly badly painted scenery may sometimes mar the pleasure of the least exacting audience, but on the other hand so much illusion is created by even the humblest shreds of canvas that nothing seems to create a great effect with such small means as the scenery used to form the background for a play. This may be the simplest painted canvas or the finest specimen of the scene painter's art. In either case it is the one element of a stage performance that seems absolutely indispensable. Skilful use of lights may add greatly to the effectiveness of scenes and enhance their beauty, increase their efficiency to create the illusion for which they were designed and throw into relief the results of the painter's work. All these requirements are made possible by the judicious use of lights which are so highly prized by stage managers. But it is the scenery itself which is the more important material aid to creating the illusion demanded by a drama.

The scenery used in the American theatres to-day has improved in quality as much as any feature of our stage. Persons who remember the old backgrounds that used to dash out from each side of the stage and meet in the middle whenever a change in scene was necessary will not be likely to dwell on the palmy days of the drama from a scenic point of view. It is not, however, from this standpoint that the glory of those imaginary old days is ever extolled. These old "flats" that represented a castle, or a waterfall or an interior scene cut down the middle were invariably smudged disgracefully at the edges of union by the soiled fingers of the stage hands and if the scenes were at all light in color this imperfection was plainly visible to the whole audience. But in those days such details were not regarded as severely as they would be to-day. These scenes that shot into view from the wings were on castors and dusty scene shifters leaning their shoulders against them propelled them more or less violently into their places.

The "wings" at the sides projected in a way that made it impossible to give a very convincing illusion of an interior. It always appeared as if the room had no walls or else that through violent collision of some kind they had all been knocked sideways. For in those days the canvas wings intended to represent the walls of rooms stood sidewise just as the wings that represent a forest or any exterior do to-day. Under such circumstances it was of course impossible to have a door or a window that bore any possible resemblance to the genuine article. If it was there, nobody could look or walk through it. Persons who came on the stage or left it used to walk through the wall which was in reality merely indicated by the three "wings" of painted canvas which faced the audience and were separated by stretches of emptiness.

The correction of this absurd old habit was one of the first advances of modern scene painting, and began about a quarter of a century ago. Then for the first time a so-called "box" scene, which represented in canvas the three walls of a room, was introduced. The doors and windows in these side walls opened and shut like those in the background, and to this day the "boxed" interior survives. It marked of course a great advance in scenic decoration. The old rooms with their open walls were like no apartments that had ever existed since the world began. What are called in the profession "practical" doors and windows, that is, doors and windows that can be opened and shut, were already known, and were regarded as one of the marked advances of the time. They were confined, however, to the backgrounds, and when they were seen in the walls of a room that really had three solid-looking walls like any real room, it seemed as if the last round in realism had been reached.

Since that time improvement in the scenic effects of the theatres has gone on continually. The betterment here has not been merely in the skill of the painters, although that part of the business has also been carefully looked after. The men who paint scenery for the New York theatres to-day are all skilled artists who have served long terms of preparation for their work. They began themselves as assistants to well-known scene painters, and gradually learned for themselves the secrets of the profession. Most of them are better than their New York predecessors were, and few of them were the pupils of New York scene painters. The majority of them served their apprenticeship abroad. Some of them came from Europe, and their object in becoming Americans was to get some share of the large sums of money paid out every year by New York managers. As the services of most of them are in demand, they seem to be enjoying the results of their long term of preparation.

The rewards of the successful scene painter are large. There is scarcely any time during the year in which there is not a demand for his work. The summer is passed in executing orders for the forthcoming winter productions, and as managers continue to make new productions during the winter months, there is always work to be done during that time. The scenic artist, unlike the actor, does not find himself with a long vacation on his hands without pay, and whether he wants it or not, at the close of every theatrical year.

Every New York theatre has a regular scene painter connected with the house and he may have several men to help him in the work of that theatre or the theatres under the control of the manager who engaged him. This is not likely to be one of the best-known scene painters, however, and his work will usually be in the nature of touching up. One scenic artist, who for a long time had everything his own way in the New York theatres, was under engagement to two managers who held him on a sort of retainer and had the first call on his services. But he was able to take work from other theatres when neither of these managers required him. Ordinarily managers engage the scenic artists they consider best adapted for certain classes of work if they have specialties. Some are famed for their interiors, while others are distinguished for their landscapes. Others who stand high in their profession have devoted themselves to no particular phase of their work. This class, however, grows smaller every day and specialization is more and more demanded in the business. After a manager has accepted a play, it is usually put into the hands of some of the stage managers who like what are called "producers." The man thought best adapted to painting the scenery is engaged. After consultations between him, the stage manager and the author, the scene painter is supposed to understand what is required, and after reading the parts of the play that would be of assistance to him in his designs, he prepares the models of the different scenes and they are submitted to the manager, stage manager and author. All of the designs for hills, platforms, balconies or any peculiar structure that may be needed by the exigencies of the part are designed by the artist, although the execution of them is handed over to the stage carpenter. If the models are satisfactory the scene painter sets to work.

The method of painting scenery in this country is different from that prevailing in France. There the canvas is stretched on the floor. Here the canvas is on frames and these are hung in the theatres above the stage. The painters stand on bridges high in the air and paint the pictures under the directions of their head. All of the theatres are supplied with these bridges. The finest bridge in New York is said to be that built by Charles Fletcher in the Fourteenth Street Theatre. It is situated in the high building at the rear of the theatre. The next best paint lofts are in the Metropolitan and the Grand Opera houses. Paint lofts in theatres are very rarely in constant use and artists are accustomed to rent them for their own work unless they are fortunate enough to have lofts of their own. As they are occasionally at work on several orders simultaneously, it is not possible to do everything in one loft. All the painting of a scene is done under the supervision of the artist who designs it, although the details are frequently worked out by his assistants, who begin by doing the priming and other elementary features of the work. Sometimes they become particularly capable in certain lines. One man, for instance, may paint the trunks of trees especially well, another draperies and a third stones, so they apply parts of the whole. Scenic artists of reputation receive as much as $1,000 for a single background, wings and borders, as the different parts are called. If elaborate "carpenter work" is included in a scene, their compensation is much greater.

It is easy to get from these figures an idea of the expense that a manager has to undertake in producing an elaborate melodrama with many changes of scenes, involving mechanical devices and intricately built structures. The scene painter comes in for his share of profit on all of these as they must be covered with canvas and painted before the public sees them.

One of the complaints made by the scene painters here is the short time managers give them in which to prepare their work. They say that the orders are given to them at the last moment when it takes a rush to get the scenery finished in time. There is a record of one production announced several months in advance, although the scenery for the last act was finished during the first performance of the play. But delay is caused wholly by the manager's ownignorance of the time it may be necessary to present a new drama. The scenery for "The Magic Flute," on the other hand, was ready at the Metropolitan Opera House six months before the work was sung. One more complaint heard frequently is against the inability of the several painters to see their work at a rehearsal under the lights that are to be used. Scene painters say that they frequently have no opportunity to judge of the effect of their work at a performance until a play is produced and that they are for that reason unable to judge of what it will look like. Allowance is made, of course, for the illumination.

The mellowness and softness of scenery painted in England is sometimes said to be due to the methods of the foreign painters, who make no allowance for the stage lights, but use their colors as if they were to be viewed in the daylight. It is certain that English scenery shown here exhibits certain excellencies that our own painters have not shown. But that has been attributed generally to the inferior lighting arrangements in use at the best of our theatres. The failures in this important feature of stage management here are commonly attributed not so much to the lack of apparatus as to the insufficient care taken by the usually inexpert persons in charge of this feature of most New York productions. It is rarely thought worth while for some undiscovered reason to pay much attention to this branch of stage management here.

One of the present tendencies in scene painting is to do away with the borders or "flies" that now hang from the top of the stage. They have already disappeared from interior scenes and a regular canvas ceiling is now used in them. Several years ago a street scene with the tops of the houses invisible above the proscenium arch, but without the customary borders was shown and it proved to be a remarkable gain in its sense of space and in the realism of the effect it created. The same plan has been as successfully tried with forest scenes. Scene painters are at present trying further experiments in this direction and that will doubtless be the tendency of their future labors. Interiors have been much improved during recent years in their increased resemblance to real homes in which persons might live. But the stage manager frequently spoils all the efforts that the scene painters may make in this direction.

The scene painter has to possess a certain scientific knowledge of the laws of perspective and it is said that this has enabled many of them to become inventors. Daguerre, inventor of the form of photography which bears his name, was a French scene painter. He also exhibited with Bouton the diorama. Welby Pugin, who did so much toward reviving taste in Gothic ecclesiastical architecture, was also a scene painter in his early days and Prof. Morse knew something of the art before he invented his system of telegraphy. J. G. Low was a scene painter and so was Joseph Turner who used to design mechanical stage effects before he invented his propeller. Philip de Loutherburg, who is considered the father of English scene painting, introduced the practice of placing a scene obliquely in Garrick's time and his talents won him recognition from the Royal Academy. It was in Italy in the eighteenth century that the old convention of representing a scene in its entirety was first abolished. Before the time of Galli, a noted Italian scene painter, not a part of a forest was shown if that was the scene demanded, but the whole of it with the sky above and every feature that could be introduced to give the effect of the entire scene. Since that time the development of scenic art has been in the way that has led to its present completeness.

USES FOR DEERSKIN.

Guides Who Understand Thoroughly How to Turn It to Good Service.

Guides and the native hunters of the Adirondacks region have a variety of uses for the deer they kill. There are still a good many hunters who know how to tan the deer's hide and a few who use as one of the tanning agents liquid extracted from the brain of the deer. From the tanned skin many articles of use are made. The thick hide from the neck of an old buck is excellent for moccasins, and the art of moccasin making still lingers here among those whose ancestors learned it from the Indians. The men and women of French-Canadian extraction are especially apt in household arts of this sort, learned from the savages. Cheap as factory-made gloves are, a few women of the region still cut and stitch buckskin gloves.

Whole suits of buckskin are made by expert women of these parts. Such suits were once much used by the thrashers, who travelled from one mountain farm to another to thrash the small oats crop of the region. A buckskin suit is good for a dozen years of hard usage, and with care will last a lifetime. It is remarkably warm and impervious to water.

One rarely sees nowadays such a suit with the hair on. A garment with the hair on to be serviceable must be made from the skins of deer just coming into the "blue," as the hunters express it, for then the hair is short, smooth and tough. Later it is long and brittle. It is necessary, too, if such a suit is to be of uniform color, that it be made from corresponding parts of skins from deer of about the same age and shot about the same time. Even if the law did not stand in the way, it would be difficult in these times to shoot in a single week enough deer of the same age to yield the desired quantity of hide of uniform color, so a deerskin suit with the hair on is rarely seen. One still does see, however, moccasins with hair inside and out, and very soft, warm, inviting slippers they make. Raccoon skin now furnishes cheap fur garments in these parts, and winter residents buy or hire overcoats of coonskin to brave the January winds.

Raw deer hide is used for many purposes. It makes excellent thongs for tying articles of one kind or another, good whips and undersized bile snowstrings. You may buy in these parts rustic chairs with seats and backs of woven rawhide. The green skin is cut in thin strips, stretched until it is almost translucent and then woven into a seat. The result is a comfortable, elastic chair of almost indestructible material. Deerskins with the hair on are still used for carpets and mats, though here again, as in the case of the deerskin suits, the skin is not serviceable unless the deer was shot just at the right season. Nobody is more fastidious than the Adirondack guide in these little matters. If he cannot have his deerskin coat or carpet just as it should be, he will go without, though he is indifferent enough as to store clothes and ordinary household furniture.

Out of the marrow from the shank bones of the deer the guides make by a laborious process a beautifully clear, sweet oil, which will keep in good condition for years. It is much used by jewellers and watchmakers because of peculiar qualities that exactly fit their needs. This oil is sufficiently scarce and useful to sell for a high price.

Buckhorn walking sticks are much commoner in New York than in the Adirondacks, and, indeed, the hunter of to-day finds little use for the antlers save as trophies. A tiny bone of the leg furnishes sharp and strong toothpicks for the native hunter, and you may occasionally see in the houses of guides stools, the legs of which are those of the deer, carefully cured with the hide and skin. In beauty and usefulness they fall far short of the excellent and durable furniture that guides make from native evergreen timber.

OVERLAND TO ST. MICHAEL.

A Journey of 1,500 Miles Recently Made by a Lone Alaskan Guide.

The journey which Mr. L. L. Bales made in Alaska early this summer, alone and without firearms, was an interesting illustration of the feats of travel which a hardy man, accustomed to roughing it, may perform. Bales is an Alaskan guide and his long experience has given him confidence that he can reach most any part of Alaska he wishes to visit, depending entirely upon his own resources.

He wanted to go to Nome early in the summer, so he went up from the south by the overland trail along the coast till he reached the Alaska Peninsula at the neck joining it to the mainland. There he was, almost under the shadow of the splendid Iliamna volcano, without further means of getting north, for he could sledge no longer. The snow had disappeared, but the coast was still choked with ice, and Behring Sea was covered with floes, for the southern limit of the pack is only a little north of the Pribyloff Islands, until about May 15. He could not pack provisions on his back enough to last him for a tramp of 500 miles through the wilderness to the neighborhood of St. Michael; but he could buy a light kyak and make his way by the rivers that would carry him in the general direction in which he wished to go; so that is what he did.

Most of the country through which he travelled is extremely flat except where ranges of hills border some of the river valleys. Owing to this flatness the portages between river systems are very short and easy to cross and sometimes there are no portages at all, for a lake will send its waters in two directions to join two distinct river systems. This fact was very helpful to Bales, who thus made his way from one small river to another in a general northwest direction till he came to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. Then he paddled up this river for about 250 miles, advancing now in a general northeast direction, until he came to the point where the Kuskokwim and the Yukon most nearly approach one another. Then he crossed the low-lying country between them, utilizing their little tributaries that nearly run together. At last he reached the Yukon, descended the mighty river to its mouth and made the remaining 100 miles of the journey to St. Michael by sea.

Bales travelled 1,500 miles to reach the military post that was only 500 miles away in a straight line, but he made the journey rapidly and brought up in St. Michael some weeks before the arrival of the first steamer from the south.

THEATRICAL AMUSEMENTS.

ENTERTAINMENT TO BE HAD INSIDE AND ON TOP OF THEATRES.

The Seaside Resorts Have Revivals of Standard Operas—The Last Day of This Week Brings the Forerunner of the Regular Season, Which Is Yet Nearly a Month Off.

This week brings the forerunner of the dramatic season, but nearly a month will pass before general activity will be found in other than the usual summer shows, which are so good this year as to be quite exceptional. Surely nothing will be lost, and to some ideas something in art will be gained by the change scheduled for this week at Manhattan Beach. Pain's exhibition of fireworks and Fanciulli's concerts will be altered only enough to introduce sufficient variety to make a second visit pleasant. The Castle Square Opera Company will come to the theatre for a fortnight's stay, during which four standard operas will be revived, two each week. The lay-out for the first half of the engagement provides for representations of "Il Trovatore" to-morrow, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings and Wednesday matinee, and "Martha" at the other performances. The admirable manner of production and the popular prices of admission that were potent factors in the success of the organization at the American Theatre will prevail in the beach revivals, and many of the admired singers will appear. Adelaide Norwood, Joseph F. Sheehan, Harry Luckstone, F. J. Boyle, Maude Lillian Berri, Maude Lambert, Reginald Roberts, William Pruette and Homer Lind are names familiar to Castle Square frequenters and leaders in the seaside contingent. Two recruits are Grace Cameron and Eleanore Broadfoot, both known to music lovers but new to this organization.

Standard opera is in revival at another of the seaside resorts, Bergen Beach, where the American Opera Company has settled down for a summer stay with weekly changes of bill. The company is headed by J. Aldrich Libby, William Blaisdell, Belle Travers and Edith Hutchins. To-morrow's reproduction will be of "The Chimes of Normandy."

The first of the city theatres to open for the season will be the Star, which has set Saturday for a production of "Quo Vadis." The Grand Opera House is scheduled to follow suit a fortnight later with the "Belle of New York," and after that some productions and revivals of more artistic importance will be made.

"The Cadet Girl" still has the field to itself and will probably not soon have a rival in its own line. As is the case with nearly all extravaganzas, it has improved with each performance and is now admirable for other than its tasteful and rich scenery and costumes. Mr. Chamberlyn has won a prominent place for himself by his artistic mounting of "The Cadet Girl." Not only in the beautiful dressing of the piece does it command artistic attention, but in its originality and cleverness in stage groupings and grotesque dances.

An almost wholly new entertainment will be shown on the Victoria roof this week, only two of the former acts being retained. The Johnson Brothers and Hayes and Healy will remain, but an even dozen of new performers are promised. Foremost among the strangers are the three Yoscarys, European tumblers never before seen in this country; Marzella, a bird trainer, Josie de Witt, the singer and violinist, and Ollie Young and Brother.

The show on the New York roof and has the Russell Brothers as newcomers among many familiar good ones.

The Casino roof has a varied entertainment, divided in three parts, a female minstrel, a vaudeville, and a burlesque.

One of the coolest resorts of the city is the garden on top of Lion Palace. When too cold there, as it sometimes is even in midsummer, the show is given in the downstairs music hall. Some good performers are named in the bill.

The proportion of new matter in to-morrow's continuous show bills is considerable. At Proctor's Fifth Avenue Edmund Day will make a vaudeville debut. He has provided several short plays for the continuous shows, and will use a new one entitled "An Old Song." Familiar dramatic folk will be Sidney Drew and wife, who will use the well-tried short farce, "When Two Hearts Are Won." On the specialty list will be Alice J. Shaw and her daughters, Bruno and Russell, Johnson, Riano and Bentley, Hageman, Schroeder and James, Howard Thurston and Josephine Harvey.

Lafayette continues as the chief entertainer at Keith's, and is the only one of last week's roster to hold over. Among the incoming lot are Christina's dogs, which are a European importation; Dunn and Jerome, Clarice Vance, Bingman and Adele, the Williscs, Loring and Hall, Gallagher and Barrett, the Crawfords, Dorothy Neville and the Merrills. New views for the biograph should be interesting. Three of them were taken in the Philippines. One shows Battery D of the Fourth Artillery going into action near La Loma Church in Luzon, and another pictures an insurgent attack on a small garrison of our soldiers at Dagupan.

The short play at Proctor's Twenty-third Street will be "Checkmate," and will be acted by Grace Huntington, Frank E. Camp and Clarence Heritigh. Williams and Walker, two unusually amusing negroes, will be conspicuous specialists. Comic acrobatics for Starkey and Martelle, an odd musical inning for the Gardners, a sketch for the Fieldses and an exchange of jokes between Callahan and Mack will come as specialties, a dozen lesser performers filling the bill out to ten hours' length. Motion pictures, too, will come in for three daily showings. With them the rule at the Proctor houses is for a new batch each Monday.

Kathryn Osterman will take first place easily at Proctor's Palace. She will use the brief farce, "The Editor," which she makes so laughable a matter that it already has had many repetitions. Variety performance will make up the rest of the programme. Jennie Yeamans will have an amusing budget of jokes and imitations, "ragtime" exercises will fall to Jennings and Alto, something unusual in dancing will be displayed by the Bicknells, illustrated songs will fall to Ingram and Jacklin, Young and Sells are down as contortionists, and Wood and Ray, Garetta's trained birds and Flo Perry will have innings.

At Pastor's a new short farce entitled "A Friendly Intruder" will engage Nan Lewald, Joe Totten and Louis Prudhoff. Specialists well liked here are numerous in the variety roster. Such are Midgeley and Carlisle, Belle Gordon, Ben Harney, Edith Murray and Mulvey and Inman. Others retained are Grogan and Bacon, Melville and Conway, Fredo and Forrest, Morrell and Evans, the Engstroms and the Wests.

Three continuous performances are down for to-day. The conspicuous places will be given to Victory Bateman, Harry Mestayer and Hughey Dougherty at Proctor's Palace; to Minnie Dupree, Riano and Bentley and Merzella's birds at the Twenty-third Street, and to Max Unger, Grace Huntington and Kelly and Ashby at the Fifth Avenue.

A way figure of the late King Humbert of Italy will be shown at the Eden Musée to-day in an alcove fitted up to represent the room in which the ruler's body lay in state. In the Chamber of Horrors a figure of the assassin Bresci will occupy a cell. Band music and displays of motion pictures will be in almost continuous alternation here throughout the day.

DESICCATED OYSTERS.

One of the Articles Sold by Lee Yip in His New Orleans "Glocely Stol."

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

"A few days ago," said a New Orleans bohemian, "I dropped in to see my friend Lee Yip, who keeps what he calls a 'glocely stol,' which is as near as he can come to grocery store. He gave me an excellent cigar, and presently he said: 'You likee dly ostel?' 'What in the name of Confucius is "dly ostel?"' I asked before I realized that he was talking about dried oysters. 'Come!' I show,' he replied, and opening the lid of a big box he took out a handful of what looked exactly like oysters carved in mahogany. They were not shriveled and warped, like other dried foods, but were as plump and symmetrical as any well-conditioned bivalve fresh from the deep shell. The only difference was they were dark brown in color and as hard as bricks. When Lee Yip tossed them back into the box they rattled like a handful of marbles.

"Of course, I was greatly surprised, and before I left I took pains to find out all about them. The oysters are caught and prepared at the big native shrimperies on the other side of the lake. The process is a trade secret, but as nearly as I could gather from Lee, they are spread on the tops of large sheds and exposed to the sun for several weeks. What prevents decomposition I don't know, but they come out of the operation as sweet and brown as nuts. Last night I tried some by special invitation in the back room of a laundry run by another Mongolian friend of mine. They were brought in in a bowl and formed a sort of stew or sauté, which was really delicious. The oysters themselves were firm but exceedingly tender, and had a peculiar peppery flavor, different from anything else I have ever tasted. The Chinaman who did the cooking told me he had simply boiled the dried oysters in water and added a small strip of pork and 'seasoning.' When I tried to probe into the seasoning feature he suddenly lost command of English, so there, I suspect, the secret resides.

"I am told that the local colony consume many barrels of these oysters every month, and that large quantities of them are sold in San Francisco and New York.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

The Sunday night concerts given by the Kaltenborn Orchestra at the St. Nicholas Garden are now attracting the largest audiences of the week in spite of the impression that New York is likely to be empty on that day. Leopold Winkler and Carl Engel will be the soloists tonight. The full programme is as follows:

Overture, "Fra Diavolo".....Auber
"Le Cid," ballet music.....Massenet
String orchestra, Barcarolle.....Fontmagne
Flirtation.....Steck
Piano solo, "Hungarian fantasie".....Liszt
Ride of the Valkyries, "Die Walküre".....Wagner
Symphonic poem, "Les Preludes".....Liszt
Fantasie, "Carmen".....Bizet
Overture, "Merry Wives of Windsor".....Nicolai
Traumbilder.....Lumbyé
Hungarian march, "Damnation of Faust".....Berlioz

On Tuesday evening Dvorak's symphony "From the New World" will be played for the second time during the present season.

Oscar Merikanto, a Finnish organist and composer who has won particular ren