THEATRES LOWER PRICES.

THE EXPERIMENT SUCCEEDS IN THREE CASES IN NEW YORK.

Crowded Houses Reward the Managers—The Example Not Likely to Be Followed by All Theatres—The Public's Willingness to Pay High for the Plays It Wants to See.

Three New York theatres which formerly had a schedule of prices ranging from $2 down to 50 cents have recently reduced their rates so materially that in at least one case the price of tickets is now just one-half of what it was, while in two other theatres seats can be had for 50 cents which only a month ago cost four times that amount. This change in theatrical rates has naturally not escaped observation, and many persons are wondering whether or not such an example is to have an influence on other managers who have not yet considered it worth while to charge less than they do for the privilege of witnessing their plays.

In the three cases in which the change has been made the experiment has been a triumphant success. The theatres have been crowded as they were not before, and the experience of one music hall in particular has been discussed by every theatrical man in New York.

This great theatre, capable of seating more than 2,000 people, had never been really profitable to any of its lessees. Nothing seemed to meet with much success there in spite of all kinds of experiments on the part of the manager. Finally one of the lessees determined to try another means of attracting the public to his house.

He reduced the prices to one-fourth of what they had been and since that time his theatre has been packed. So soon as the news of the reduction in prices spread the public began to come in such numbers as had never been seen there before. Now groups of speculators stand outside the door giving their final testimony to the great financial success of the scheme.

The two other theatres that have followed this plan have been just as successful, and the belief in the eventual adoption by other theatres of this policy is based on the great prosperity that has come to these few so far. Of course, if all the theatres reduced their prices to the same figures there would not be equal anxiety on the part of the public to get to the places which are at present distinguished by low prices. But it is a matter worthy of notice that the managers selling tickets at one-quarter the sum they formerly asked are still able to make money out of it so long as their theatres are crowded. That gives one an idea of how great the profit must be when theatres are filled at the customary prices.

"Of course, the cheap-priced theatre, crowded to the doors," said a manager, who knew what it was to see lots of empty seats, "is much more profitable than a high-priced house with only one-quarter of its capacity made use of. That was the thought that inspired the managers who recently reduced their prices. They had a large theatre, and with it filled at even a third of the customary price of the seats it could be made highly profitable. A manager with a small theatre, or with more limited seating capacity, could not afford to follow their example, and in a great many cases it would not be necessary.

"There have been, indeed, this year, a large number of plays that did not please the public than usual, and vacant seats have been much more numerous than they usually are. I heard only the other day of a dressmaker who had forty tickets to a Broadway theatre which is supposed just now to be playing to very large business. She knew one of the men connected with the management of the theatre and he had sent her the seats to get rid of them.

"Some other examples of the same sort of thing would be just as surprising to the general public, which believes that a play must be making lots of money just because it stays at a theatre for a certain length of time. But even plays with half houses can make money for their managers. As in every other business, it is the question of the outlay that decides the profit.

"If a company can be cheaply engaged, or if the number of characters is small, or yet can be acted without the presence of experienced or costly players, the manager can of course make money if the house is half filled during the week and he does a large business on Fridays and Saturdays.

"You would be surprised to know the number of theatres that exist on the strength of their Saturday night performance. The desire of New Yorkers to get to the theatres on Saturday nights and great that a play must be naughty had not to have some sort of audience then.

"It frequently happens in the case of a play which has met with no great success that the Saturday night and Saturday matinee audiences will be good enough to go a long way toward paying the expenses of the week and enable the management to come out without loss, if not with some small degree of profit.

"It is a fact that theatre prices are generally higher in New York than they are anywhere else in the world. It is true that in London orchestra stalls, as they are called, bring more than $2.50, but these seats are very limited in number, and are spacious and roomy compared with the average New York orchestra seat. I understand that in London theatre that costs $2.50 there are twenty in our Broadway theatres selling for $2. It can readily be seen that the general expense is much greater here than in London.

"It is an amusing feature of our theatre business that whatever the price may be for the evening performance, whether the best seats be $1.50 or $2, the same seats at the matinees are rarely likely to cost more than $1.50 because the women flatly refuse to pay any more. They know what the theatre is worth to them, and will not be bulldozed into paying any more. Nearly all the theatres have to let down the prices when they are going to rely on the women for support.

"May Irwin said last winter that no play was ever written that was worth $1.50 to see. I don't believe that experienced managers would assert that she is right in the matter. I will give you an instance to show the fallacy of her theory. I bought in ink bottle yesterday that must have cost about 25 cents to make. I paid 15 for it. I could not have got it for the cost less anywhere in the world. I was determined to have it, because of the antique apparatus that keeps the pen from going all the way into the ink.

"Now, the man who owns that patent ink bottle is a stockbroker and just as private as he wants to be, because he knows that persons who want it will not be able to get it anywhere else, and must pay what he asks or go without it. That is the situation of the manager who has a play the public wants to see. It is an actual monopoly for the time being as much as the ink bottle is, and he knows it.

"The public cannot get the enjoyment that play will give them from any other source and must come to him. So he is perfectly justified in charging whatever audiences are willing to pay, and he always will be. For that reason I don't believe that the present reduction in theatre prices will ever be generally followed.

"The man or the woman very anxious to see a play and possessing money to buy a ticket is not going to stay away if it is merely a question of cost. If, on the other hand, a person wants to go to the theatre, and doesn't care particularly which one it is, the low-priced theatre is likely to be selected. Therefore the managers who have really nothing very powerful to offer the public are very wise to reduce the prices to come into something like enthusiasm the desire to see their production, which continued luke warm so long as the barrier of high prices intervened.

"Another instance in which it points of difference. If a manager has a large theatre he can say, I can make a certain amount of money by charging less than the usual prices for my seats, if my theatre is filled, therefore I will keep it always crowded by cutting a slice off the prices. This course is possible only when the theatre is large enough to bring receipts up to a certain sum, whatever the prices may be.

"So the manager who controls a particular play or the services of a particular popular actor will be able to maintain his high standard of price and no general reduction can ever be expected. More money is spent in New York on theatres than in London and productions continue there with apparent prosperity when the receipts would be considered a tragedy in New York theatre.

"It is practically impossible, as I have myself admit, for the public to get seats at box office prices. Our tariff is virtually the same as that of London, as the best two-dollar seat has to be bought everywhere at the special rate, and not at the outrageous price in the box office. But people are willing to pay that much when the play is the one they have made up their minds to see. The theatre with the attractive novelty will always be able to hold its own, whatever the other managers may do about the prices for what they have to offer.

"Somewhat analagous to that the incident witnessed nearly every year at the Metropolitan Opera House, although it has not yet taken place during this present season and will not. It has been customary to give there a performance at $7 for the orchestra stalls, which is an advance of $2 over the regular tariff. This performance is invariably repeated two weeks later at the regular box office price, but the public always flocks to the first representation.

"The public always knows that the same thing can be heard within a week or two at the regular prices, but it wants to hear this particular performance, makes up its mind to that effect and amiably hands out the money. That proves what I say, that under all circumstances people will pay any price the managers ask for what they really want when there is no competition to dispute the manager's exclusive control."

It is interesting to learn that the theatre managers of Paris are just now discussing with great warmth the question of reducing their prices. All but two or three have struggled along during the winter with such poor patronage that the directors have now come to the conclusion that they must make some money or go into bankruptcy.

Antoine, who produces the most advanced plays of the realistic and poetic school in Paris, is able to keep his theatre filled because he has brought down prices to a level that puts his theatre within the reach of persons of modest means who are willing to risk the small sum asked to see how his experiment will really turn out. His example has had its effect on other managers, who are wondering if they can accomplish the same results by reducing prices.

Another course which they have thought of is the reduction of expenses in the manner of producing their plays. They are thinking whether the recent introduction of costly materials for costumes and scenic effects upon the stage had not better be done away with in order to enable them to reduce their prices. It is thought that all but the most noted theatres—and there not more than two or three of these—will materially lower their schedule for the next season.

Theatre prices in Paris have been steadily ascending for the last few years, and every exposition has carried them up a little higher than they were before. One theatre has refused to follow this example and charges the same to-day for its best seats as it did in the days of the Second Empire, and this theatre, which asks but five francs for its best seats, has known almost continuous prosperity, while others have come to grief.

A LITTLE MAN AND A STOUT WOMAN.

Unexpected Ending of a Suspected Case of Mashing in a Street Car.

A small, neatly dressed man made himself extremely obnoxious to a stout, middle-aged woman who sat beside him in a Lexington avenue car yesterday afternoon. When the little man began his operations there was clear space between them, but he edged over inch by inch until he was almost lost to view behind the ample folds of the stout woman's velvet coat.

At first the stout woman merely glared at him, but when he got too close she turned away with such suddenness that her back rammed him forcibly into the man who sat on his other side. The people in that part of the car looked at the little man with disapproval but he seemed no whit discouraged.

He worked forward on his seat and over past the stout woman's defending shoulder until he was again snug beside her. The stout woman glared at him ferociously and gathered her skirts about her with a flirt.

In reply the little man gazed at her stony profile with a mild appeal that would have been funny had not the rest of the passengers been so disgusted and indignant. The stout woman looked three-edged snickersnees at the little man for a moment and then moved away from him as far as possible.

Inside of two minutes the little man was cuddled beside her again. In the movement a fold of the stout woman's coat fell over the little man's arm. He glanced at the stout woman and back at his arm, then sat very still for a few moments the picture of guilt.

Finally, with an inexpressibly shy look at the stout woman's face he brought his left hand over and laid it softly on the fold of her coat. The interested passengers could almost hear him purr.

The action, however, attracted the stout woman's attention. She took in the situation at a glance, snatched her coat away and wrapped it closely about her, while the little man shrivelled visibly under her gaze.

The incident was too much for the rest of the passengers. A big man a few seats away on the opposite side of the car got up and took off his hat to the stout woman.

"Madam," he said, "if this monkey is annoying you I should be delighted to throw him off the car."

The stout woman turned her lightnings from the little man to the big one.

"Sir," she demanded, "how dare you speak to me in that manner of my husband!" "Daniel," to the little man, "are you a man to sit there and see me insulted?"

"Oh, damn!" choked the big man, making for the door.

The rest of the passengers smiled at things in the street.

ST. MALACHI'S PROPHECIES.

Story of the Predictions About the Papacy Made by Armagh's Archbishop.

One of the English magazines has been explaining once more the oft-quoted prophecies of St. Malachi, which have found astonishing backing in history. St. Malachi was, it appears, an Irishman. He distinguished himself in battles against the King of Ulster in the twelfth century and was so handy with the sword that they made him Archbishop of Armagh.

Then he went to Rome and received high honors, going back to Ireland as the Pope's legate. On a second pilgrimage to Rome he died in the arms of Bernard of Clairvaux.

His prophecy is all concerned the future of the Papacy and were handed down orally until the sixteenth century, when they were written. The Papal succession has in many instances corroborated these sayings of the Irish saint.

Clement XIV was indicated by the phrase, "Rosa Umbria." He came from Venetia, which is the home of the flower. The place of Pius VI in the prophesied line was filled by the description, "An Apostolic Pilgrim." No words could better have described the man who was driven from Rome and borne from prison to prison until he died in exile.

Next after Pius VI, said Malachi, would come a Pope whose lair lay in the words "Aquila Rapax." Pius VII certainly fulfilled the prophecy, being but wax in the hands of Napoleon of the Imperial Eagle.

Pius IX, who saw the white cross of the house of Savoy wave above the crossed keys of the Papal flag in Rome, was described in the prophecies as he who would "bear the cross from the cross," and the present Pope was to come "as a light in the heavens." The Pope bears the arms of his family, a silver cross on a azure field.

Six more Popes are foretold by Malachi's prophecy, their mottoes being, "A Burning Fire," "Religious Laid Waste," "Intrepid Faith," "Pastor and Pilot," "From the Work of the Sun" and "The Fame of the Olive," and those who believe in the Irish saint's foresight trust that the six Popes will be long lived, for, said the Archbishop, "in the last persecution the Pontiff of Rome shall feed his flock amid sore persecution, and at the appointed time the City of the Seven Hills shall fall, and the Judge shall judge the nations."

FROM A LECTURER'S EXPERIENCE.

True Significance of What Seemed Flattering Evidence of His Eloquence.

"When I first began public speaking," said a man of prominence in the lecture field, "I saw, upon one occasion, after the close of the lecture, what seemed to me conclusive, as it was certainly most delightful, proof of my eloquence.

"Walking down the aisle in the hall from the platform, after the lecture with one of the local committemen my eye fell on a man's hat under one of the seats, and my heart at the sight of it certainly did give a good big jump. One of my listeners had evidently been so impressed that he had got up and gone away without his hat.

"I called my friend's attention to it, just incidentally, you know, without, of course, in any way indicating the pride that was in my heart, I said.

"Ah, somebody has left his hat."

"Yes," said the committeeman. "We had a drunken man come in just before the lecture began and sit down about here somewhere, and I guess that must be his hat. They got him out all right but apparently they left his hat behind."

"Of course, you know, I said nothing, but really it was a great come down. So far from his having gone away hatless, still under the spell of my eloquence this man had in reality never heard my voice at all and most probably would have gone to sleep under it if he had. And, as a matter of fact, while I have been trying faithfully ever since to move men I have never yet succeeded, so far as I know, in making anybody do actually what I thought for a moment I had led that man to do that night at the outset of my career."

Every Home Is Bettered Intellectually through reading THE SUN and EVENING SUN'S "Woman's Page." Tastes are moulded and an accurate knowledge of society gained. No better papers are published.—Adv.

THE PIPE AND ITS CARE.

POINTS FROM A DEALER ABOUT CHOOSING A BRIAR WOOD.

Artistic Principles Applied to Pipes—Mouthpieces of Amber and Other Substances—Straight Pipes and Drop Pipes—About Meerschaums—The English Club Pipe.

"A pipe doesn't mean to the average American what it means to the average Englishman," said the tobacconist. "In the first place, comparatively few Americans smoke pipes, although the practice is increasing here, and, in the second place, few of the men who do use pipes know a really good one from a bad one.

"Pipe making is a science and an art. Some men are willing to smoke anything that will burn tobacco. Others will smoke anything that is costly, but your true pipe lover studies the lines of a pipe as he would study a painting or a building, and notes every detail. It is just as important that the proportions and curves of a pipe should conform to the accepted laws of beauty and art as that the perspective in a picture should follow mathematical laws.

"If the pipe bowl is the smallest fraction too long or too large for the proportions of the stem, the pipe is bad. Curves should be introduced in every possible detail of a pipe, but if one of those curves is out of harmony with the others there is a serious flaw in the pipe. Especially in the drop pipe this matter of curve and line is a serious problem.

"Then when it comes to materials, you have other problems. There's a world of difference in the grain and finish of a briar wood, in the quality of amber, in the treatment of vulcanite and horn. A cheap pipe, excellent in quality and workmanship, is an impossibility. That is why most of the pipes made in this country are inferior. The public demands a cheap article, and in order to supply it, other requirements must be sacrificed. It is easy to copy a pipe design that is the result of careful study of mathematical and artistic principles, but machine work will not produce the finish of hand work, and first-class pipe materials are never cheap.

"Look at amber for example. Good amber grows more and more expensive, and more and more rare. Yet there is no mouthpiece material so beautiful or so sweet. You know the amber fisheries are a German Government monopoly. The gum of pine trees that grew on the shores of the Baltic thousands of years ago, has fossilized and is found off the coast of North Germany. Men dive for it, and the industry is in the hands of a company that pays a tremendous sum to the Government. The amber is sold in bags now, and the wholesale dealer has to buy the bad with the good. On the London market the buyer chooses his pieces, and an expert judge of amber is rare.

"Even the cleverest is likely to make bad mistakes, and the whole business is a regular lottery. You may pick out a piece of amber that seems fine, in color and quality, and pay $100 for it. When you come to cut it you may find it internally full of flaws that make it practically worthless. On the other hand, you may get a bargain in a piece of amber and find in it the flaws are only external.

"It is hard to get pieces long enough for good mouthpieces, and each extra half inch on a piece of amber makes the value jump wonderfully. A piece of amber nine inches long is rare and is worth about $100 if its color is good.

"An artistic pipe maker considers clear amber practically valueless for his purposes, and you find it only on cheap and low-grade pipes. The idea is to select a piece of amber that is beautifully clouded and have it so cut that the clouding will entirely shut out and hide the yellow mouthpiece, which naturally becomes discolored by nicotine. In clear amber this dirty line shows and ruins the beauty of the pipe.

"Pipe makers who want to make a cheap pipe use imitation amber or ambroid. It is made of amber powder or clippings, treated with a special process and many chemists say that it is dangerous. They say it is likely to poison the lips and tongue and even in some cases leads to cancer. If a man can't afford a good amber, he would much better use horn or vulcanite.

"There is a big difference in horn mouthpieces, too. They ought to be made from the solid tip of the cow's horn. Now, in order to make the material cheaper, some pipe makers bell down the hollow part of the horn and mould it, but such horn makes poor mouthpieces and is likely to expand and become loose in the pipe. Yes, there are any number of ways in which a pipe buyer may be cheated if he strikes an unscrupulous dealer and isn't an expert himself.

"Vulcanite makes a good mouthpiece, but not American vulcanite. In England a fine quality of vulcanite is made specially for pipe use. It is particularly hard and takes a beautiful polish. Then the vulcanite mouthpieces over there are all hand turned, and here most of them are machine made. Of course there are exceptions. I'm speaking of generalities.

"By the way, while we are talking of mouthpieces, the kind used on a pipe should depend upon the individual. A man with soft or tender teeth has no business using vulcanite or amber. He needs a horn mouthpiece. It is softer and the pipe will wear away instead of the teeth. Using a pipe does wear away the teeth, you know.

"The ordinary smoker hasn't the least idea of the leverage of his pipe. Sometimes you'll meet a man who is biting a hole in his pipe. There's nothing surprising in that. You see the lower teeth are the fulcrum, and the pipe bowl the weight. Now, mathematically computed, the ordinary briar wood pipe has a leverage of three-quarters of a pound. That's fatal to the pipe. It is in the course of time. A drop pipe is easier on the jaw, because the weight is nearer the fulcrum. That's why many smokers prefer a drop pipe. Others like it merely because it is more beautiful from an artistic point.

"Some men don't know how to smoke a pipe. They say the smoke from a drop pipe is annoying, but that isn't true if the pipe is smoked in the proper fashion. It should be held like the boiling pipe, in the corner of the mouth, and then the smoke will go past the face.

"A little while ago every college man wanted a bulldog pipe. The fad began at Cambridge, but it is dying out now. The thick-set squat pipe isn't so universally popular as it was. Men select a pipe which suits their fancy, depends a good deal on his build, that is, unless he is utterly indifferent to appearances. Men age as well as women, only they don't have so many opportunities for showing it. A man likes to put a pipe into his mouth and see how it becomes him, just as a woman does. Certain pipe shapes seem to go with certain men. I've evolved a theory that a thoroughly bad man never picks out a really good pipe. Harmonious beauty doesn't appeal to him. A touch likes a vicious pipe. Still, you can't judge by appearances, for I know a good many decent-looking fellows smoking vicious pipes. In their cases, ignorance, not immorality, is the explanation.

"For the last ten years there have been reports that the supply of meerschaum was nearly exhausted, but I don't see that there's any immediate danger of that calamity. There's always plenty of the wood in the market. It grows near the borders of Italy and France, and, though it is called French briarwood, as much of it comes from Italy as from France. It is the root of the tree, you know, and is sent to the market in rough chunks. Its value depends upon the grain. There are four qualities, but it is all expensive here on account of the big duty, so very little of the cheap and medium grades are imported. Very little is used on the Continent. England takes most of the supply. In buying a briarwood pipe you want to choose wood that is thickly covered with either birds-eye or zebra stripe graining.

"The meerschaum pipe has its fad, too. It is very sweet, and coloring one is a fascinating process. That is really what a smoker loves in a meerschaum. Man has a natural love of processes. Meerschaum varies greatly in quality. It is a mixture of fossil shells and is produced by the washing of the sea against certain kinds of chalk cliffs, and is tucked away in gulleys and crevices. When taken out it is soft as soap, but as soon as it is exposed to the air it hardens.

"Its value depends upon its purity and density. When it is too dense it will not color well. It ought to be light as a feather. That's another reason why some smokers prefer it to briarwood. It isn't easy to color a meerschaum well. For that matter meerschaum never really colors. It is only the coating of fine spermaceti wax rubbed on the outside that takes a color. If a smoker finds that his pipe isn't coloring well he can take it to a pipe shop, have the surface lathed off and begin all coloring again. This should be done well, by the professionals, as so many men do. Nine chances to one he will only make things worse. Meerschaum is plastic when hot and men often spoil their pipes by rubbing them too much.

"A small Englishman doesn't start his own pipe. If he is a good customer, the man from whom he buys the pipe will have it started for him. Every fashionable pipe shop has men whose duty it is to start pipes. Of course, the mouthpiece sold to the customer isn't used. If the customer doesn't choose to leave his pipe at the shop, he has his valet start it, just as he has his valet break in his gloves and shoes. An English swell wouldn't be seen wearing bright new gloves or smoking a glaring new pipe. With the pipe it isn't altogether a question of looks. There's a disagreeable taste to both briar wood and meerschaum at first.

"Of course there are men who buy expensive pipes, but no one save the parvenu will smoke one of the gold ornamented and jeweled things. If a genuine pipe lover with artistic tastes wants to put money into a pipe, he will spend it in having a meerschaum beautifully carved. I've seen meerschaum carved by great artists. I remember selling one meerschaum, carved with a design commemorating an episode in the Crimea. It cost $400, and a carved table upon which it was to lie, cost $500 more.

"Some of the finest carving done on pipes is done for the club pipes. I don't believe they exist anywhere outside of England. The idea is rather a foolish one, and Englishmen haven't a reputation for being long on sentiment, but when a Briton shares his pipe with a friend, he has gone the limit in friendship. Sometimes two chums or several fellows who have been used for years to meeting on certain evenings will have a common pipe made. A big pipe bowl is made to rest on a small table, and long pipe stems are adjusted to it, one for each member of the party. Then the fellows sit around the table and smoke from the one bowl. A good deal of expense can be put into that sort of pipe.

"I find that few of my American customers take good care of a pipe. It is absolutely necessary that a pipe should be kept clean, and that requires time and attention. Very often a man thinks his briar wood is coloring when it is only dirty from handling. It should be rubbed or polished with a smooth oiled cloth, never with rough cloth, though many men have a foolish fashion of rubbing their pipes on their trousers or coat sleeves. An old silk handkerchief is, perhaps, the best thing one can use for the purpose."

MEAL TICKETS AS ALMS.

One Restaurant Keeper Who Doesn't Like the Latest Form of Charity.

When the man with the new hat and the stylish overcoat had closed the door behind him the proprietor beat a thoughtful tattoo on his forehead with the tip of his pencil.

"It's strange why they've all picked on me," he said.

"Picked on you for what?" asked the visitor.

"To feed the hoboes," said the proprietor. "They're simply eating me out of house and home. I used to have a nice run of customers here, not a tramp crossed the threshhold. But, Lord! just look at 'em now.

"They swarm in here by the dozens and scores, and merciful fathers, how they do eat. There are no scraps left when a hobo gets through. I can tell you.

"The situation is really alarming, and the worst of it is that I don't know how I'm going to help myself. I can't shut off on the hobo trade without offending the philanthropists who are responsible for their coming here.

"It was an evil day for me when the charitably inclined business men and women downtown decided to give beggars meal tickets instead of money. So long as the poor devils got currency the chances were ten to one in favor of their spending it at a free-lunch counter, but now that they have to take a pasteboard equivalent for a meal I am at their mercy.

"That man that just went out is one of my greatest trials. He is what might be called a strenuous member of the benevolent order. He bought four tickets to-day and four on Monday and it will be just like him to buy another batch to-morrow.

"I asked him one day why he sent all his protegés to me and he said he felt sorry for them and wanted to make sure when they did get a chance to eat their food was clean and wholesome. He meant that as a compliment to me, I suppose, and I appreciate it after a fashion, nevertheless I have half a notion to turn my restaurant into a regular pen to correspond to the appearance of the customers he sends me, then maybe he'll direct them elsewhere.

"Isn't there something new to bestow alms in the form of meal tickets?" asked the visitor.

"No," replied the proprietor, "it is not new, exactly, but it has never been adopted as a common practice until the last few months. Men who give liberally now swear by meal tickets. They say they are much more satisfactory than money. They reduce the chances of imposition to a minimum.

"If a man is really hungry he will regard the meal ticket as a boon from heaven. If he wants a drink he will have difficulty in disposing of the ticket for cash. Occasionally, of course, some scamp will auction off his tickets among his brethren at a discount, but as a rule meal tickets have been found to be the most satisfactory method so far devised for bestowing charity upon the vagrants about town.

"The restaurant men in this neighborhood are the only ones that do not enthuse over the scheme, but even we don't dare kick, for one man's money is as good as another's and we can't afford to turn away trade."

HOBOKEN'S SALOON MUSEUM.

Curios Among Which Deacons Discuss Sermons Over Rhine Wine on Sunday.

On the walls of a Hoboken saloon there are 2,000 prints and portraits, and not one of them is the picture of an actress, pugilist or baseball player. The saloon is the favorite meeting place on Sunday afternoons of the German deacons, priests and elders of some of the Hoboken churches. Here they discuss the morning sermon over their Rhine wine and enjoy the character sketches of Bismarck. There are seventy of these sketches, all by Allers and all signed.

The saloon is the only museum in Hoboken. Last summer when souvenir hunters were stripping the wreck of the steamship Saale everybody had an eye on the great wrought iron imperial eagle in the ship's main saloon. Finally Superintendent of Health Helfer, by virtue of his office, seized the eagle and announced that it was to be presented to the man who had done more than anybody else for Hoboken in an artistic way.

The eagle was taken to the museum-saloon and is now the centre piece in a memorial group of honor of the officers and sailors who were lost in the big steamship fire. Below the eagle is a fine portrait of Capt. Meyer, whose ashes were found on the bridge of the Saale. The portrait is framed in a big copper circle from one of the ship's portholes.

Almost a third of the portraits are pictures of German officers. The saloon is their meeting place when ashore. When abroad they send things for the museum. The latest addition is two Boxer uniforms. They were sent by Paymaster Wulle of the German troop ship Rolin which carried reinforcements of German soldiers to China at the time of the Boxer uprising. There is also a haversack picked up on a battlefield in the Transvaal.

Among the animal trophies in the place is a stuffed Bengal tiger. The tiger got loose on board the steamship Scandia during a storm in 1891. Capt. Reuter called for volunteers to kill or capture the beast. The men had just risked their lives in saving the crew of a sinking ship at sea, but not one of them would tackle the tiger. Capt. Reuter and Engineer Jung then went for the tiger themselves and killed him with bullets.

Then there is a devil fish with eight big tentacles and an armadillo with eight rings, monkeys, birds of Paradise, blowfish from Zanzibar, and eaters and alligators and a collection of deer and moose heads worthy of a sportsmen's show. And each of them was shot by a patron of the saloon and friend of its proprietor.

Capt. Denters of the steamship Stettin contributed a dancing mask and a quiverful of poisoned arrows from New Guinea.

Besides the pictures and the trophies the curator and proprietor has an interesting collection of autograph letters and old documents. One of the letters was written on the flagship Olympia at Manila by Dewey's Flag Lieutenant, Brumby. There are also a letter from Attorney-General Griggs to Gen. McClellan's monthly payroll for November, 1848, when he was a Captain, and Phil Kearney's payroll for August, 1843, when he was an aide-de-camp on Gen. Scott's staff.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S COMPANION.

Enviable Place at the English Court Occupied by Miss Knollys.

A very plain and unpretentious woman occupies, to-day, in England, a place which the first ladies of the land might well desire. Miss Knollys has for years been the companion and trusted friend of the Princess of Wales, and now has as much influence with Queen Alexandra as any woman in England.

The Princesses are devoted to the gentle little woman, and the King is her good friend. It is said that King Edward will make her a peeress, in her own right, so that she may be eligible to one of the high places near the person of her Majesty.

This question of places in the new court is causing many heart burnings, and, although the new sovereign is too tactful to make speedy and sweeping changes, there are removals and rumors of removals. Some of the old incumbents have been pensioned. Others, who do not need pensions, have simply been dropped.

One of the two East Indian attendants, who always assisted Queen Victoria to and from her carriage, has already gone back to India, and it is said that the other will follow. As a matter of fact, little that is definite is known about the prospective changes.

The stock of presentation jewels and trinkets marked "V. R. I." which was left by the late Queen, is being conferred, by King Edward, upon his mother's friends and servitors.

FLOWERS HARD TO GROW.

TRIALS OF A WOMAN WHO TOOK UP THE FLORIST'S BUSINESS.

It Is Not an Easy Occupation—Hard Work and Perseverance Required for Success—Little Tragedies That Must Be Endured—High Prices, but Not Large Profits.

A young woman who owns and manages a large wholesale flower business in New Jersey and a retail flower shop on Broadway recently talked to a SUN reporter about her experience.

"When you hear any one say that the flower business is an easy and profitable occupation for women, don't believe it," she said. "The magazines are full of stories about the romantic and beautiful side of the florist's work. They are enough to give any girl a tempting vision of a life all sunshine. You would think, to read them, that all a girl florist need do is to wear a white frock and gather roses and violets. I always smile when I read the fairy stories. A florist's business is profitable enough, if one succeeds, but as for its being easy, I know better.

"I was fortunate enough to have some money so that I could go into the work under favorable conditions, but as I look back at my experiences I wonder that I held on through those first months and years. I was not strong, but had always been eager to do things and injured my delicate constitution by all sorts of experiments in work. My family protested, but I vowed that I couldn't live without an absorbing occupation. I needed country life, but I wouldn't stay in the country and stagnate.

"Finally my family proposed that I should build a greenhouse on our country place and go in for raising flowers. They thought the work would be healthful and would keep me at home and I suppose they had no idea I would take it very seriously. I did. I went into the new experiment with all my might. I was utterly discouraged any number of times, but I wouldn't give up. I finally won out, but life was a succession of tragedies for the first two years.

"In the first place there was the building of the greenhouses. I had two houses, 100 by 20 feet in size, and then a smaller cold frame house. They were built according to the most improved principles of greenhouse construction. I selected a slope with the right exposure. When the men began on the cellar they found it had to be dug out of solid rock. The rock was too hard to be worked with picks and too soft to be worked with dynamite, and, as the men said, we 'had the divil's own time with it'; but I consoled myself by thinking the cellar could never be damp. Still to make sure we dug a foot and a half below the floor and filled in with broken stone.

"The houses were finished in November. I put the flowers in at once, and just as soon as I had them in the man came tearing to the house to tell me that in spite of there was four feet of water in the greenhouse cellar and the fires were out. That was at 4 o'clock on a December morning. I knew it probably meant destruction to all the plants, but I climbed out of bed and went out in the cold to see what could be done. There wasn't any use in crying.

"We patched things up, after almost killing one workman, and then I put in an automatic cellar drain. Three weeks later there was another flood, worse than the first. After that we depended on a pump in the cellar and down the hill, so we had no more floods, but there were other tragedies.

"Everybody had told me that I was perfectly crazy to undertake the thing, that no woman could do it, that it meant work night and day, frightful exposure, mending, care, anxiety and responsibility, all that was true except the statement that a woman couldn't do the work. I did everything except run the furnaces.

"Every leaf had to be drenched, the paths had to be wet down. I dragged hose until I thought my back was broken, and I drenched myself as thoroughly as the flowers. Then, of course, I took horrible colds. By and by I got rubber boots and a waterproof short skirt and blouse. After that things went better, but there was still plenty of excuse for colds.

"I worked hour after hour in the moist hot air of the greenhouse, and then went into the cool air outside. I got up at 4 A. M. to do the packing for shipping, stood in the cold storage room, and dabbled in icy water, until my hands ached with the chill. I couldn't even tie the strings on the boxes and had to get the furnace man to come in and do that.

"I got up at all hours of the night and went out to the greenhouses with a lantern to peer or watch for the dreaded change in the temperature had changed. You know a fall of six or eight degrees in temperature may be a very serious matter in a greenhouse, and I was so worried for fear the weather would change in the night that I didn't half sleep. Often I did sleep I dreamed awful things about red spiders and mildew and red worms and grubs. Oh, those diabolical red spiders that you can't see! Yet mildew is worse. A draught or damp weather, or too high temperature, and mildew may appear from nowhere and ruin all the foliage in a night. I'll never forget the first one I saw. I went to the greenhouse, one morning, and there was my favorite rose tree, looking like a wilted collar. It was utterly ruined. I couldn't see anything to account for it, except the common sense I told me to dig. I dug, and, down by the roots, I found a fat white worm, with big vicious black eyes. I'm positive it glared at me, and I was in such a rage against it, that I was sorry I could kill it only once. I met lots of things like that.

"Florists put tobacco stems all around a greenhouse to drive away the green fly, but sometimes the little wretch gets a hold, in spite of the precautions. Then one has to fumigate with tobacco smoke. The green flies descended upon my plants, and I had to resort to fumigating, but I hate tobacco smoke, and, every time I fumigated the house, I was desperately sick.

"I never had any big catastrophes, but the days were full of maddening little ones. Violet culture is very difficult. You would think to read the articles about the women who are doing it, that it is as simple as wearing a bunch of violets, but it isn't. Sometimes one will have phenomenal luck with violets for seven years, but in some sense I told me to dig. I dug, and, down by the roots, I found a fat white worm, with big vicious black eyes. I'm positive it glared at me, and I was in such a rage against it, that I was sorry I could kill it only once. I met lots of things like that.

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