HAMMERSTEIN WELL PLEASED.

NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HIS OPERA SEASON.

Says He's Kept His Promises and If the Public Supports Him Well and Good—Had No Outside Financial Aid—Receipts So Far Are Satisfactory.

Oscar Hammerstein, inventor, theatre builder and the creator of the Manhattan Opera House, sat back in his chair yesterday afternoon with a smile of satisfaction on his face. In spite of the strain that he has gone through recently there were no signs of worry or no lines of care on his face. He seemed to be as happy as a schoolboy on the eve of a long vacation.

"What about this opera venture of yours; is it going to be a success?" he was asked.

Mr. Hammerstein beamed upon his questioner. "There is no going to be about it," he said. "It is an accomplished fact, as you can see for yourself. In other words, I have made good—that is, I have given New York genuine grand opera, as I promised that I would. And New York has responded most generously. As to the future of the venture I am not concerned at all. If it succeed permanently—and I most earnestly hope that it will—I shall of course be proud of the achievement, but I assure you that I am not losing any sleep over the possibility of a failure. If my hopes and plans in this direction are not realized it will not disturb me in the least. I went into the enterprise with my eyes open and I am willing to abide by the results as expressed by the music loving public of this community.

"Judging by the enormous attendance at the Manhattan Opera House in the first week of its career I feel that I am able to say that my theory is correct. That theory is that New York city is able and willing to support not only a grand opera company but a grand opera company containing the greatest artists in the world. Such is the company that I have presented to New York."

"Are you satisfied with the practical results of the first week of grand opera at the Manhattan?"

"Most emphatically yes. The income for the first week was much larger than the expenses. But, then, you know a payroll of $37,000 a week requires an extensive patronage. It requires more than the enthusiastic approval of the upper tiers of the house. It requires, in fact, the steady attendance of those who have the means to pay for high priced seats and boxes. But I am far from being discouraged by the showing made thus far in that respect. Of course, we can not expect to have always such vast audiences as greeted the company on the opening night. There was naturally a slight falling off in the number who sat on the lower floor and in the boxes at the performances on Wednesday and Friday evening, but it was due mainly to the fact that my subscriptions are not so large as they will be when the Manhattan establishes itself as a permanent institution.

"Nevertheless, the demand for boxes and the higher priced seats is steadily growing and the advance sale for all the operas already announced is very encouraging. I am astonished at the number of people, absolute strangers to me, who have come to me and thanked me for the quality of the performances at the Manhattan.

"So far I have been disappointed in none of the artists who are so splendidly aiding in making the Manhattan Opera House a permanent success. The entire negotiations necessary to bring them here were carried on by me in person and we are all the best of personal friends. I think that these artists will grow in the esteem of the public as they become better known to the people of New York. Strangers as they are, however, their reception has been unexpectedly warm and enthusiastic. This, I think, will be admitted by the most exacting critic.

"I do not assert by any means that the opera has gone along with uninterrupted smoothness since the opening night. There are bound to be a few hitches here and there. This being a new house, it must be taken into consideration that the enormous machinery of the stage needs to be run for some time to show anything like the best results. The combination of a new opera house and the formation of a new company of such artists as I have brought here and will continue to bring here would seem in itself an utter impossibility."

Asked what had inspired him to enter the field of grand opera when he was doing so well in vaudeville and other theatrical fields, Mr. Hammerstein said:

"Why, it has been the dream of my life. This is not my first venture into grand opera. In fact, it is the fourth. That the others were failures did not deter me in the least from my idea, and if the Manhattan does not prove successful my ideas on the subject will not be altered in the least.

"When I announced my project to build the Manhattan and give grand opera as it should be given in New York the world apparently thought I was crazy. In the financial world I was looked upon as something of a lunatic and I could have raised more on some wild balloon building scheme than I could upon the opera project.

Mr. Hammerstein paused for a moment and then said earnestly:

"The idea that any one helped me financially to found or build up the Manhattan Opera House is entirely wrong. I have heard the stories that this man or that man was my financial backer, but there was nothing in them and I did not think they were of sufficient importance to be denied. Now it was said that Charles M. Schwab was financially interested in the enterprise and again that John W. Gates was my backer. There was no truth in the stories. I do not know these men at all. Whatever was done was done by me and solely upon my own resources.

"It was only last March that I took up the task in earnest. At that time the opera house was but partially built. Coupled with the problem of erecting this structure was the task of building and decorating the mountains of scenery required for some twenty répertoire operas. And then there was the making of costumes, which in this case already number more than 5,000. And they were all made here under my personal direction. To add to this was the acquiring of the properties necessary for the stage, an undertaking in itself that in the minds of the public as well as those versed in opera and theatre affairs seemed utterly impossible in view of the early date I had set for the opening of the new institution. That was one of the reasons why the outcome of the undertaking seemed problematical to even experienced men.

"But I was able not only to furnish the house and open it practically on time, but I succeeded in getting together a company worthy of the patronage of the great army of opera goers in this city. The formation of the company required two trips to Europe and what seemed to be countless days of negotiation.

"The result of my work is before the people and I feel that I have reason to be satisfied. I look upon the Manhattan Opera House as an unqualified success that will improve with time. But if it doesn't I will sit down, regret it and then—forget it. As I have said, the receipts have thus far been greater than the expenditures.

"On the first night the sale of seats resulted in receipts of over $12,000, and the prospects are indeed encouraging. And I repeat that if the lower part of the house takes as kindly to the institution as does the upper New York with its two grand opera companies will stand at the head of the musical world."

Some idea of the steam engine character of Mr. Hammerstein's energy can be gained from the fact that nine years ago he was absolutely cleaned out financially in the Olympia Theatre venture which he went into on Longacre Square, which was considered then by many to be well up toward Yonkers. He retired, he said, from the construction of that building, which is now the New York and Criterion theatres, without a dollar. Since then he has built and now owns the Belasco, the Victoria and the Hackett theatres and the Manhattan Opera House. Other theatres that he has built are the Windsor in the Bowery, the Harlem Opera House, the Columbus in 125th street, which is now Proctor's, and the Harlem Music Hall.

He arrived in this country without a cent when he was a boy and went to work at $2 a week as an apprentice for a cigar maker. He has invented machinery that brings him in considerable revenue. He plays three musical instruments, has studied harmony, and he is proud of his knowledge of the art. Once, on a wager, he wrote an opera, words and lyrics, in forty-eight hours. He was locked in the room for the whole time and he succeeded in the task.

TO BREAK UP A COLD.

An eminent authority on lung trouble, who effected many remarkable cures in his camp for consumptives in the Pine Woods of Maine, advises the use of the following formula: Virgin Oil of Pine (Pure), one-half ounce; Glycerine, two ounces; good Whisky, one-half pint. Shake well and take in teaspoonful doses every four hours. It will break up a cold in twenty-four hours and cure any cough that is curable. The ingredients are not expensive and can be secured from any good prescription druggists, but great care should be exercised to have them pure, as there are many adulterated imitations of this pine tree product, and these create nausea, and never effect the desired results.

Virgin Oil of Pine (Pure) is put up in half-ounce vials for druggists to dispense in filling prescriptions. Each vial is securely sealed in a round wooden case with engraved wrapper, with the name—"Virgin Oil of Pine (Pure)"—plainly printed thereon. To avoid substitution, it is best that the ingredients be purchased separately and the mixture prepared at home.

THE METROPOLITAN CONCERT.

Mme. Cavalieri Makes Her First Sunday Night Appearance.

The second of the Sunday evening concerts this season drew a great throng to the Metropolitan Opera House last night. The main floor and the balconies were filled and if anything the crowd along the rail was larger than usual. Many of them apprently had come to hear the new Italian soprano, Mme. Lina Cavalieri, who sang for the first time in concert last night. Her appearance was charming and she sang "Nenia" from Boito's "Mefistofele" with splendid dramatic effect, her lower notes being especially effective. She was recalled half a dozen times but on account of the ironclad rule at the Metropolitan concerts she could not reward her admirers with an encore. After the intermission she sang three songs, "Mattinata" by Leoncavallo; "Je t'aime," by Barthelemy and "Penso," by Tosti.

Another great favorite whom the audience greeted warmly was Scotti, the barytone, who was in splendid voice and who sang the Prologue from "Pagliacci" most impressively. He also rendered two songs, "Tristi ritorno," by Barthelemy, and "L'Ultima Canzone," by Tosti. Andreas Dippel, the German tenor, gave the aria from "Cosi fan tutte," by Mozart, and the Romanza from Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots." Mr. Dippel was generously applauded, as was Mme. Josephine Jacoby, who sang a selection from "Les Huguenots" and the aria "Che furo" from Gluck's "Orfeo."

The orchestra, led by Samuel Bovy, played with splendid effect the overture of Berlioz's "Carnival Romain," the rhapsody "Espana," by Chabner, and the "Marche Française," by Saint-Saëns.

THE BARNABEE BENEFIT.

Well Known Players to Take Part in Tuesday's Performance.

The Barnabee-Macdonald testimonial benefit performance is to take place on Tuesday afternoon at 1 o'clock at the Broadway Theatre. The beneficiaries are to be Henry Clay Barnabee and Mrs. W. H. Macdonald of the old Bostonians company.

The Tinkers' chorus will be sung as never before, with Barnabee as the *Sheriff of Nottingham* and the following tinkers: Joseph Weber, Sam Bernard, Peter F. Dailey, Richard Carle, Charles Bigelow, Raymond Hitchcock, Andrew Mack, Otis Harlan, E. S. Abeles, E. J. Connelly, S. Weinberg, Campbell Donald and George Frothingham.

Victor Herbert and his orchestra will open the performance. Mrs. Fiske will deliver an address. Lew Fields will appear in the duel from "About Town." Blanche Ring and May Irwin will sing. Margaret Anglin will play the first act from "The Great Divide." Eleanor Robson in "A Tenement Tragedy" will be followed by Forbes Robinson. The Chorus Lady, Rose Stahl, will play the talked of dressing room scene. Marie Dressler, Kyrle Bellew, Louise Dresser and John Drew will give favorite numbers. William Gillette with his company will play the supper scene from "Clarice." Anna Held will sing, "I Can't Make My Eyes Behave." Several other well known stage people will take part.

News of Plays and Players.

Thompson & Dundy announce that on Monday, December 31, they will present at the New Amsterdam Theatre Edward Abeles in "Brewster's Millions," a dramatization of George Barr McCutcheon's novel, by Winchell Smith and Byron Ongley. The cast includes Mary Ryan, Emily Lytton, Josephine Park, George Probert, Joseph Woodburn, Jack Deveraux and Albert Sackett. The story tells of the efforts of *Montgomery Brewster* to spend $1,000,000 in a year.

Henry W. Savage has decided to give a professional matinée of "Madam Butterfly" on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 19, at the Garden Theatre.

George C. Boniface, Jr., and Bertha Waltzinger will appear shortly in vaudeville in a one act farce, "The Singing Lesson," by J. Clarence Hyde.

TO BETTER GALVESTON TRAFFIC.

Texas Railroad Commission Proposes That Roads Build Union Causeway.

AUSTIN, Tex., Dec. 9.—The Texas Railroad Commission has notified the Santa Fé, the Southern Pacific, the Missouri, Kansas and Texas and the International and Great Northern railway companies that it contemplates issuing an order requiring those companies to build a joint causeway across Galveston Bay, a distance of two miles, to connect the mainland with Galveston Island.

The object of the proposed causeway is to afford those roads an adequate entrance to the port of Galveston and thus relieve the freight congestion that has existed for some time in that city.

The cost of the causeway would be about $1,500,000.

Ottawa Hears of Vancouver Boom.

OTTAWA, Ont., Dec. 9.—The announcement that the Canadian Pacific Railway will complete the colonization and development of Vancouver Island was confirmed in Montreal to-day. This means the commencement of what will be one of the Canadian Pacific's most gigantic undertakings. The move is unquestionably to block J. J. Hill, who has been extending his systems with the view of tapping the riches of this island.

THE DIVVLE IN PITT STREET.

SHRIEKS OF A TORTURED SPIRIT WAKE ALL THAT SLEEP.

Pshaw! Says Frau Swiss, the Friend of the Friendless Cat, 'Tis But Mein Bismarck Come Back and I'd Like to Know Who Dropped Him Down the Chimney.

Just before the dawn came to Pitt street yesterday morning a fearful noise broke from the house which Frau Augusta Swiss keeps at the corner of Grand. It began with a long wail and continued with a series of short, high pitched screams, a racket as if little devils had fed on something which didn't agree with them and were seeking vainly for their paregoric.

The wailing and yelling awoke the notables of Pitt street and sent them with curses to their windows. Old Solomon Ickelberg, head of the seedcake trust, leaned out of his window, grumbling, dropped his skull cap into the street and called to Herr Pinkus Mandelbaum, hurrying past with Frau Mandelbaum and their seven sons, to save his precious koppel. Round little Mandelbaum and his round sons padded past, paying no attention to the magnate.

Counsellor Zeltner, up late tinkering with the wireless apparatus that gathers news instantaneously from the whole East Side, pressed button after button unavailingly. There was no response because the morning papers had quit business. A spitting and sparking from the machine that connects with the office of the Yonkers *Statesman* detained the counsellor for a moment, but he found that the machine was merely trying to get out of its system a joke of the *Statesman's* funny man with which it had been clogged up for several days. The counsellor, annoyed and excited, hurried out himself and tripped over the long robe of Herr Ickelberg, who was headed toward the corner.

The screaming and wailing had awakened the whole quarter, and there was a good sized crowd in front of Frau Swiss's house listening to the tale of Isaac, the ragpicker, when the Mandelbaums, old Solomon and the genius of the East Side Wireless News Corporation got there. Isaac, the ragpicker, told an alarming tale, a tale that was not good to hear in the cold dawn on an empty belly. He had been, he said, at work in the cellar of Frau Swiss's house sorting over Saturday's take of old rags, shredding them and picking the good wool from the worthless shoddy, when the devils got to fighting on the rooftop. First he heard a blood curdling yell which frightened him so much that he cut his hand on the shredding machine.

"Behold that hand, Herr Mandelbaum," said Isaac, "and see if I tell the whole truth."

Herr Mandelbaum examined the hand, swelling importantly, and pronounced it devils' work beyond a doubt. He advised immediate application of the goosegrease that old Rebka Shabboth keeps in her tiny shop under the Williamsburg Bridge, and sent his fifth son immediately for a rabbi.

Isaac, the ragpicker, told how the yells continued, how he murmured a prayer and how, a little later, one devil peered in on him from a coal hole leading to the areaway. It was a devil with red eyes, black head and a long red mustache. He was still relating the details of his fearful experience when Frau Sinde, who lives on the second floor of Frau Swiss's establishment, burst out of the front door in nightgown and slippers, screaming:

"Helfen sie mir! Der teufel iss loose by my chimney!"

Herr Mandelbaum being directly in the way of Frau Sinde, she precipitated herself on to his round stomach and bounced off like a rubber ball. Certainly, said Frau Sinde, when she had become slightly calmer, there were devils in the house. She had been sleeping peacefully, except for the snoring of Herr Sinde, when she was startled by the same yell that disturbed Isaac the ragpicker. She had tried to awaken Herr Sinde, but nothing, she said, ever disturbs him until he completes his eight hours. What had happened to the good man she did not know. He might have been torn to pieces by the devils already. Wouldn't the brave Herr Mandelbaum go in and see?

Most decidedly the brave Herr Mandelbaum would not. There wasn't a devil from here to Harlem that he feared, but there were to think of the frau and the seven sons, was it not? Wouldn't Herr Ickelberg go in and see what had happened? The head of the seedcake trust refused gruffly. Mandelbaum was a coward, but he was not. He didn't believe it was a devil, anyway. Perhaps it was Ikey Edelstein quarrelling with his wife; they hadn't been married long and it was likely. Why should a man of substance interfere with the amusements of the young? Counsellor Zeltner was appealed to vainly, because the frau of the Blackstone of Pitt street was clutching him by his coattails and demanding that Herr Sinde be left to his fate.

"There isn't a devil in Pitt street that would touch Herr Sinde if they got a look at him first," she said. Frau Sinde scowled and was about to reply. What might have happened then nobody knows, because the stout housekeeper, Frau Swiss, appeared, clutching at the neck of her voluminous nightgown, rubbing her eyes and demanding what the trouble was that brought her from her warm bed. They told her, and she laughed at them fearlessly, because Frau Swiss fears nobody, not even the loafer who kicks stray dogs or the bearded fish pedlers who ill treat cats.

"You are fools and sheepheads," she said scornfully. "There isn't a man among you. I will go up myself."

They followed her, Mandelbaum keeping close to Frau Mandelbaum, the others treading heels, and old Ickelberg bringing up the rear, pulling at his long beard. She took them to Frau Sinde's flat, where Herr Sinde was still snoring comfortably. Then she called softly:

"Bismarck! Bismarck! Katze! Katze!"

From the chimney came again the sound that frightened Pitt street, a wail and a series of frantic caterwauls.

"I knew it," said Frau Swiss. "It is Bismarck, meine liebe katze! I heard his calling while I slept, but I couldn't believe it. Who threw him down the chimney?"

There was silence then while Frau Swiss scanned them with a threatening eye. They looked at each other sidewise to see if the guilty one would reveal himself, and most looked at Counsellor Zeltner, promoter of East Side wireless news. The counsellor proved an alibi. It was well that none looked guilty, because Frau Swiss is fearsome when she is angry. Was it not the good frau who, when the neighbors threatened trouble and declared they would move if she did not give up the home and hospital for sick and destitute cats that she still maintains in the areaway of 460 Grand street, told them flatly:

"If my neighbors don't like my cats, then they can move."

How to get Bismarck out of the chimney was a problem. One by one the notables of Pitt street left while Frau Swiss puzzled over the matter. Finally she got a chair, climbed on it and pulled down the stovepipe. She reached a long arm in the hole, but couldn't quite touch Bismarck, who was jammed tightly in the flue. At length, however, poking Bismarck gently with a broomhandle, she loosened him so that he worked down toward her hand. Then she pulled him easily out of the hole.

He was a bedraggled and dissolute looking cat when he appeared. There was soot in his eyes and whiskers and mouth. He was too scared and tired to be angry and was only the ghost of the famous warrior that fought the pirate of Pitt street, Napoleon the outcast, and killed him in the areaway of the house months ago. He had been missing for months and Frau Swiss hadn't seen or heard of him until she pulled him from the chimney. How he got back and how he got in the chimney, falling six stories and catching in a tight place, was a mystery.

Yesterday afternoon Bismarck was looking up a bit. Frau Swiss had laundered him and fed him, and although his ribs showed plainly against his thin sides, he had perked up enough to walk majestically back and forth in the areaway, presiding over the dispensation of cooked cow's lung and liver and receiving the compliments and condolences of his harem.

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COP HOLDS UP HELICOPTERE.

GOT TO HAVE A LICENSE TO BLOW ITSELF UP BROADWAY.

A Helicoptere Is a Reverse Skewgee Windmill on Wheels—Can Almost Catch Some Kinds of Dogs, Even if Its Rider Can't Get Into the American Aero Team.

Preceded by a black and tan dog of uncertain antecedents and followed by a shouting mob of small boys and by a no less curious crowd of men and women dressed for Sunday afternoon, Dr. Julian P. Thomas ran his new wind wagon from Seventy-sixth street to Seventy-first street on Broadway yesterday afternoon until a cop threatened to pinch him for running a motor vehicle without a license.

Dr. Thomas calls his machine a helicoptere—or winged screw. It is gray in color and looks like an overgrown tricycle with a big fan on the forward end. This fan is really a propeller or puller and is driven by an 8 horse-power gasolene motor. The operator sits on a bicycle saddle so that his head misses the shafting above it by nearly an inch.

Dr. Thomas says his helicoptere is an experiment to determine the relation between horse-power, fans, lifting power, and a few other things. It is easier, he says, to work out these things on the ground than in the air. When these various problems are solved the idea is to put them in practice in connection with a gas bag or an aeroplane.

Yesterday's experiment was set for 1 o'clock. From that hour until 4 o'clock the doctor, with a corps of assistants, tinkered with the helicoptere on the top floor of the Locomobile Company's building at Seventy-sixth street and Broadway. Among those present were Mrs. Thomas, her little son, Odin, Mrs. Ernest La Rue Jones, wife of the assistant secretary of the Aero Club of America, and a number of reporters.

At 4 o'clock machine and party descended to the street. There half an hour was spent tightening bolts. Then Dr. Thomas took his seat under the shafting, lifted his feet from the ground and was towed to a point on Broadway, facing downtown.

The small boys were driven out of reach of the fan and the helicoptere popped away with a true Mineola accent. It moved down Broadway fast enough to make the black and tan dog hurry to keep in front, and many of the ladies were left at the post. At Seventy-first street Dr. Thomas made a turn, crossed back, circling the new Verdi statue, and started on his return. The vehicle showed signs of skidding and followed a rather devious path. This prompted the doctor to throw off the clutch a moment. But the clutch had "frozen," and it was found necessary to stop the engine.

While wild rumors of a breakdown were circulating among the crowd Bicycle Policeman Dobbyn of the West Sixty-eighth street station appeared.

"Drive these people away from in front of the fan, officer," said Dr. Thomas.

"Where's yer license?" said the policeman.

"This is only an experiment," explained the doctor.

"Whatever it is, 'tis a motor vehicle and yer have to show me a license if ye want to run it."

Dr. Thomas wanted to know if his regular automobile license wouldn't do. He was told it wouldn't if it called for the one car. He then said he would take out a manufacturer's license immediately.

The helicoptere was pushed back to Sixty-sixth street.

"The experiment was, on the whole, successful," said Dr. Thomas. "I had trouble in steering, partly because it is my first attempt with this machine and partly from defects in the steering gear. Then, the only brake was my feet, and the snowy, frozen pavement gave them no grip. I was afraid I would run into the crowd and hurt somebody. The people bothered me more than the machine did. I had to stop the engine because the clutch froze."

The doctor added that he had got an engine of twice the power of the present one and that this would be installed in the helicoptere when he had become used to running the new machine.

Dr. Thomas told the reporters that he had attempted to enter next year's race for the Gordon Bennett cup but that he was having trouble with the cup committee.

"The committee," he said, "holds its sessions in secret and without announcement. I learned through a friend that the competitors were to be chosen and went to the cup committee. They informed me that they had already selected the American team, which was to include McCoy, Stevens and Lieut. Lahm. I insisted that by the terms of the deed of gift an elimination trial must be held in case of more than three applying for entrance. They then told me that applications must be made in writing. I sat down right there and wrote an application. They then informed me that $100 must accompany it. I gave them a certified check.

"The next day the check was returned with the statement that I would be notified in due time who were selected. This means, I suppose, that I am to be frozen out."

Dr. Thomas said he would try to force an elimination race.

APPEAL FOR NON-UNION MEN.

Union Members Say Cigarmakers Need More Pay.

The joint advisory board of the fourteen unions belonging to the Cigarmakers' International Union in New York decided yesterday to send a circular out through the non-union factories and among the public generally asking for better pay for the non-union cigarmakers. The circular says that in view of the unprecedented growth of the industry they were entitled to higher wages. There was general prosperity in this as well as in all other industries, yet the non-union workers had received no advance in wages.

"This army of unorganized workers," the appeal says, "is at the mercy of the employers. Latterly they have been allowed to work longer hours to make a few cents a day more. The union cigarmakers are paid 40 per cent. higher than the unorganized cigarmakers. In view of these facts we want to ask the people generally to try and get a slight increase for these workers."

Russian Symphony Concert.

A fair sized audience attended the concert of the Russian Symphony Society of New York at the Hippodrome last night. Besides, the orchestra of sixty pieces under the directorship of Modest Altschuler, there were seven soloists.

Mr. Jefferson — Mrs. Madison — Mr. Madison

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS OF WASHINGTON SOCIETY

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

"Some men have curious ways of guiding themselves in their work," remarked a well known author. "I was in a large publishing house the other day and I became interested in a man sitting at a desk, who was apparently reading proof. Every few seconds he counted softly to himself, 'one,' or 'one, two,' or 'one, two, three.' The monotony and frequency of his whispered counting fascinated me, and I inquired what he was doing. I was told that this particular proofreader was in the habit of punctuating according to the number he could count in the natural pauses between the parts of what he was reading. If he paused long enough to count one, it was a comma. If he could count two, it was a semicolon. If he could count three it was a colon, and anything longer than that was a period."

"I have actually got so that I dread to advertise for women employees," said the manager of an art store. "The reason is that it brings calls from so many professional advertisement answerers. These triflers do not really want a position; they answer advertisements merely as a fad. It is without doubt the craziest hobby womankind has ever ridden, and my only hope is that they will soon give it up. A part of these idlers are social reformers bent on writing books and tracts and things. Somewhere they have imbibed the idea that men who employ help are regular vampires, ever on the lookout for new victims, and their object in visiting us is to investigate our methods of securing clerks and afterward acquaint the public with our wicked procedures. But I can stand even these troublesome spies with even more equanimity than the women who, finding time hang heavily on their hands, tramp around from office to office just for the fun of the thing."

"We came near having a tragedy in our family a few days ago," said a West Side man, "owing to the workings of the credit system in one of the large department shops.

"If you open an account with the shop they give you a credit card, which simply bears a number, without your name or address.

"I lost my card. I at once reported the loss to the shop and thought no more of the matter until I received their bill, which was mailed to my house and fell into my hands about five minutes before my wife might have got it. On this bill were about $200 worth of items of feminine wearing apparel which I felt sure my wife had not bought. I told her about the loss of the ticket and asked her about the items. She repudiated them and investigation at the shop proved that they had been bought by a young woman, who had evidently found my ticket and learned to whom it belonged.

"Of course the loss of the goods was on the shop; but I have been wondering ever since what would have happened to me if my wife had received that bill before I had a chance to explain."

"The Police Commissioner's substitution of caps for helmets in the cop's uniform is a boon to us illustrators, whatever we may think of the change from the standpoint of æsthetics," said a magazine artist. "I don't suppose there ever was a simple and familiar object so hard to draw correctly as the policeman's helmet. Many a man who could offhand sketch a silk hat with absolute accuracy fell down flat on the helmet. Try as he would, he couldn't strike a true to life combination of curves and straight lines. If you don't believe it, look up magazine pictures of policemen and prove it. Anybody can see that the helmet isn't right. The artist knew it, but he couldn't help himself. But the German army-hotel carriage man headpiece is a cinch. It's as simple as the Rollo books."

"Notice the number of men walking around with their hands behind their backs?" demanded the man who prides himself on being "observant." His victim had not. "Keep your eyes open," continued the observant one. "You'll be surprised at how many there are. I've got the answer, too. Roller skating. That's what's causing it. Your roller skater—and there are hundreds and thousands of 'em now, of course—likes to look easy and graceful gliding around with his hands behind him as though he wasn't making an effort. The habit clings when he gets off his wheels. I see a lot of girls and young women who have the habit, too."

It was a dull morning in the police court and the Magistrate, a benedict of long standing, sat in his chair looking into space. A prisoner was brought before him and the policeman made a charge.

"Intoxicated, eh?" muttered the Court, absentmindedly.

"Yes, your Honor," admitted the prisoner.

"Are you married?" asked the Magistrate.

"No," was the reply.

"Then what excuse *do* you have?" demanded the Court, mechanically signing the commitment paper.

A titter ran over the audience and the Magistrate came to with a start, glancing apprehensively at the reporters. When court was adjourned, contrary to his usual custom, he called the newspaper men before him.

"Did you find anything to write this morning?" he asked in a clearly apprehensive tone.

"No," was the reply.

The Magistrate looked relieved. "That's good—that is—I—I mean I thought there wasn't anything worth writing," he said.

Churches Appeal for Early Christmas Shopping.

Clergymen in the different city churches made special appeals to their congregations yesterday to do their holiday shopping as early as possible before Christmas, and particularly to make their daily purchases before 5 o'clock in the afternoon whenever possible. These appeals were made in compliance with personal requests made to the clergy of the different denominations by the officers of the Consumers' League on behalf of the store employees to lighten the labor incidental to the crush of holiday business.

For the Children's Christmas

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Books altogether bewitching within and without, stories of fairies and dolls and birds and children.

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AMERICA CLOTHES MRS. FISH.

SHE FINDS BETTER GOWNS HERE THAN PARIS OFFERS.

Says Report of Eugene Higgins's Engagement to Calve Is Silly—Britons Shy of Mining Stocks, Says R. E. Glass—A Black Retail Postmaster-General.

Among the passengers who arrived yesterday on the American Line steamship New York were Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish and her daughter, who sailed from here last October on Eugene Higgins's steam yacht Verona.

Mrs. Fish said that she was very glad to get back to America. She took occasion to boost American dressmakers when a zealous reporter asked her if she had brought back many Paris clothes.

"No," smiled Mrs. Fish. "I did not. I brought back very few, for the reason that I think that American made gowns are far better than those one gets in Paris. The materials are more durable, they are better made and the dressmaker in this country is to my mind more original in her ideas than are the dressmakers of Paris. The American woman is the best dressed in the world because she is not bound by style. She is original and her individuality is expressed in her garments. In Paris that is not so. The women there are slaves to mode. They are all of a pattern."

The Misses Brice accompanied Mrs. Fish.

Apropos of the suggestion that Mr. Higgins and Calvé were engaged Mrs. Fish said it was silly.

Why, I don't think that Mr. Higgins even knows Çalvé," she said.

The English as investors in mining stocks was the subject of a small talk by R. E. Glass, formerly of Deadwood, S. D., who has been in England for the last two years. Mr. Glass thinks that the promoter of the future will have to have something tangible to hand out when he goes to London.

"You see the British public has lost millions of pounds in mining shares in the last ten years and is wary. Once London was a good market—now the Englishmen simply won't take the package."

Another mine expert on the ship was J. H. Hildebrandt, formerly of Cripple Creek, who has been in Africa. He says that the German colonies there are very poor and are having much trouble with the Chinese question. The corporations favor Chinese labor because it is cheap, but there are hard times there, and they are caused by Chinese labor. Chinese labor, he declared, would be the ruin of British South Africa.

Mr. Hildebrandt related an amusing incident of his trip from South Africa. His steamer stopped at Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, and the Postmaster-General came aboard the ship with stamps to sell to philatelists.

Mr. Hildebrandt didn't care for such a quantity as the Postmaster-General wanted him to buy, but bought a few to put on letters. When the Postmaster-General had gone and he was about to write the letters the captain told him not to mail them at Monrovia if he wished them to reach their destination. The captain said it was pretty certain that the stamps would be removed.

Want a Shelter House on Williamsburg Bridge Plaza.

An effort is being made by a number of persons who use the Brooklyn Rapid Transit cars over the Williamsburg Bridge to have a shelter house built on the Williamsburg plaza for the accommodation of those who travel on the cars. Several thousand persons transfer at this point every morning, and some have to wait from five to ten minutes in the cold for the cars. The Broadway Board of Trade of the Eastern District of Brooklyn has been pushing the matter for the last few weeks.

HARPER'S BOOKS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Books are the one always satisfactory solution of the holiday problem. But the question often is—**what book?** Discrimination in your choice is a compliment to your friend's taste. Books not designed merely as gift books have the more enduring value. For example:

William Dean Howells' **Certain Delightful English Towns** is a delightful volume on English town and countryside. Whether your friend plans to go abroad or stay at home, this book will prove an entertaining companion. Mr. Howells makes the best of traveling comrades, and his adventures along the road are narrated in exquisite prose. The illustrations are a beautiful feature of the book, and make clear to the eye each town, cathedral and historic site which Mr. Howells visits.

If your friend has read "Ben-Hur"—and who has not?—he is bound to be interested in the great life-story of the author—**Lew Wallace: An Autobiography**—which has just appeared in two sumptuous volumes. A man who has achieved distinction on the diverse fields of arms, letters, politics and diplomacy must have that in him which compels attention. His life, as told by himself, has striking points of interest at every turn; for example,—his graphic picture of Lincoln when an obscure young man, his vivid stories of the civil war, and how he came to write "Ben-Hur."

Among books that are "worth while" there is perhaps none quite so novel or fresh in interest as Bishop Talbot's new volume **My People of the Plains.** Bishop Talbot spent twelve years as the first missionary bishop among the miners, cow-punchers, gamblers, and other raw pioneers of Idaho and Wyoming in the early days. He rubbed shoulder to shoulder with these rough people as one of them; saloon-keepers hospitably screened their bars to afford him a meeting room. His experiences are rich in humorous situations that were constantly occurring, and his many anecdotes vividly reveal a stage of our early civilization that has now almost passed away.

Both churchmen and laymen will be interested in the account of the growth and present organization of St. George's Church, New York, with its 7,000 members of all classes. **The Administration of an Institutional Church** describes the thorough business system by which this great parish conducts its manifold charities, schools and various other departments.

HARPER & BROTHERS.

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To be sold
WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, Dec. 12 and 13,
AT 10 O'CLOCK EACH DAY
Exhibition Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 10 and 11.

SORGUES & SIMMONS, auctioneers, sell paintings and bric a brac evenings 750 P. M., 59 Cortlandt st.

EDWARD A. KASELLE, Auctioneer, sells daily and evening Japanese bric a brac, 562 E. 149th, Bronx.

I. ERNSTTHAL will sell bric a brac, bronzes and paintings afternoon and evening, 1003E. Nicholas av.

LOUIS LEVY & CO. will sell all week at 131 Park row, jewelry and bric a brac.

M. SOVA, auctioneer, sells noon and evenings, 182 East Houston st., Japanese goods.

EGERS & WAGNER, auctioneers, sell evenings this week bric a brac and oil paintings, 479 6th av.

A. SANDERS, auctioneer, sells evenings Jap high art at 687 Manhattan av., Greenpoint, L. I.

BENJ. GOLDSMID, auctioneer, sells this week Japanese high art and books, 591 B'way, Brooklyn.

JOHN DAVIS, auctioneer, sells Oriental art for Yoshimi & Co., 36 West 34th st.

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