JUSTICE TO A PLAYWRIGHT

"THE MOLLUSC" TO BE DONE AS ITS AUTHOR INTENDED.

How Sir Charles Wyndham Will Help Make Amends for the Professional Sins of Joseph Coyne—Mr. Sothern and Miss Marlowe in Shakespeare.

It isn't very often that a theatrical season so nearly ended affords an opportunity to see in one week in this town four such distinguished players as Julia Marlowe, Mary Moore, Sir Charles Wyndham and E. H. Sothern. Yet this is the opportunity that is offered this week to local theatregoers. Miss Marlowe and Mr. Sothern in "Hamlet" and Miss Moore and Sir Charles in "The Mollusc." The English Knight says that he did not start on his journey to this country with any idea of appearing on the American stage, but to see a performance of a play now popular here, the English rights to which he holds. Miss Moore came along because she is going to play the chief feminine part in the piece; but the Frohman office, finding the Empire Theatre stage empty by reason of Miss Adams's rehearsals for "The Maid of Orleans," to be performed at the Harvard stadium on June 22, conceived the notion of persuading Sir Charles to play in "The Mollusc" for a fortnight. So the thing was arranged by wireless, the arrangements being particularly simple because the cast of the play is very small.

On the whole, though we have seen "The Mollusc" here already, this arrangement will be very well worth while, because, though we have seen "The Mollusc," we haven't seen it at its best. Its author, H. H. Davies, is a man who gets his big results by means of a series of microscopic details. He would have been an excellent cameo maker if he hadn't turned out to be a playwright. When we saw "The Mollusc" here last autumn the leading feminine part was played by Alexandra Carlisle, and very well played it was. It will be interesting to compare her methods with those of Miss Moore. Miss Moore is a much older actress than Miss Carlisle and lacks some of the personal fascination that the latter young woman exhibits, but she is a finished and intelligent actress with a long and honorable record of successful impersonations, especially in the field of light comedy. When it comes to the chief masculine part of the play the contrast will be even stronger. Sir Charles Wyndham is now very nearly 70 years old. He made his first appearance on the stage in this country in 1865 with John Wilkes Booth only a few weeks before Booth assassinated President Lincoln. This gives him a stage career of nearly forty-five years, for he has been playing ever since.

The part which Sir Charles will play was orginally assigned for the American production to Bruce McRae, who is, by the way, a nephew of Sir Charles, but for some reason unexplained a change was made and Joseph Coyne was selected in his place. Coyne had just been successful in the London production of "The Merry Widow." He was highly unsuccessful in "The Mollusc," and why it was ever imagined that he could properly impersonate such a character, involving as it does the daintiest and subtlest kind of modern high comedy, it is hard to see. Anyhow Coyne played it very much as if it were musical comedy and much of the play's comparative failure here was unquestionably due to his presence in the cast. Sir Charles is about twice Coyne's age in years and about a century older in professional skill. With him and Miss Moore in the cast we shall now have a chance to see something like "The Mollusc" as its author wrote it. It is the best play of its kind that has appeared here this season and the production that is now made of it constitutes a sort of belated justice to its author.

The imitative faculty is admittedly strong in the actor. Recent developments in this city emphasize the fact that it is still stronger among those persons who are responsible for the character of many of the plays that reach our stage. With the great material success of Eugene Walter's play about the losing fight of a weak woman to be decent it became practically certain that there would soon be a young flood of plays dealing with approximately the same subject. The flood has begun to arrive. The only wonder is that it was so long in coming. One of the first fruits of the peculiar belief that the public's liking for certain kinds of plays goes in streaks is "The Narrow Path," which had a run of one consecutive night last week. There was absolutely nothing to commend it. It was poorly constructed, there were few good lines and the characters were feebly drawn. The manager who set it forward on the stage must have been induced to do so solely because another play on a like theme had been successful.

This manager reaped the reward that was his due. It was the same reward that will always follow the acceptance of the silly theory that the theatregoing public gets a craze for this or that sort of a play. When "The Prisoner of Zenda" was dramatized and proved successful there followed a perfect avalanche of swashbuckling romance in stage form. When "Too Much Johnson" hit the bullseye there followed a stream of farce. After "Secret Service" we had many melodramas. "The public wants melodrama" was the rallying cry of the managers, and many of them marched to failure with that cry on their lips and that queer belief in their hearts. As a matter of fact the public didn't want melodrama, it didn't want farce, it didn't want swashbuckling. It wanted what it always wants—good plays. It didn't want then any more than it does now bad imitations of good plays. The theatrical public is really a good deal more intelligent than it often gets credit for being. It is frequently far from impeccable on the score of taste and occasionally it allows itself to be hypnotized into the belief that noise is art, but if there is one thing for which it can de depended upon it is to recognize an imitation.

In the professional union of Miss Marlowe and Mr. Sothern no cause can be found for anything but gratitude. These two players are at the head of their profession in this country and as a team England would find it hard to match them at the present time. They have already played "Romeo and Juliet" for a week. This week they will be seen in "Hamlet" and in "The Merchant of Venice," and the third and last week of their engagement at the Academy of Music they will present "Twelfth Night" and "The Taming of the Shrew." No one who enjoys Shakespeare should miss seeing them, for these represent the best there is of the type. Miss Marlowe's *Juliet* has been by far the best American embodiment of that character since she first appeared therein a number of years ago, and at the present time she has no rival as the unfortunate daughter of the Capulets. Her *Portia*, her *Viola* and her *Katherine* have all been seen here before and measured thoroughly. They represent a fine total of achievement. *Malvolio* too is a character well suited to Mr. Sothern's best talents, while his *Petruchio* is probably more like the *Petruchio* that Shakespeare wrote than any other seen here in many years. "The Taming of the Shrew" is played in fact by Miss Marlowe and Mr Sothern in the true key of Elizabethan farce. Mr. Sothern's *Hamlet* has mellowed and deepened steadily since he first played it until now it has taken on a stature of high nobility. In short the present season has offered intelligent theatregoers no more attractive opportunity than that which is afforded by the Marlowe-Sothern engagement at the Academy.

SVENGALI IN PAJAMAS.

A Dog and Cat Fight and an Audience in Kimonos on Fire Escapes.

The rear of a house on the upper West Side looks out on a little yard in which there are a grass plot, a clothes line, some bushes along the fence and a bull pup. The occupant of the house is an actor who once played *Svengali* so successfully and so long that he took on the face of the hypnotizer of *Trilby*.

The rear of the house back of it also looks out upon the little yard, its bushes, the clothes line and the bull pup. There is a fire escape for each apartment of this building. As the building has five apartments it follows that there are five of the fire escapes.

To go back to the home of the actor. The yard is enclosed by a very high fence, but the fence is not too high for stray cats. The more inaccessible a carpenter tries to make a fence the easier it is for cats.

On the top of the fence of *Svengali* a cat clambered and prowled. It was in its kittenhood. It was lean and frowsled and full of meows.

Whether a bone in the yard attracted the kitten's attention or whether it was a case of cussedness such as every cat has at times will never be known; but it wasn't happy, the kitten wasn't, until it got into the yard.

The bull pup of *Svengali* was asleep on the stoop. The kitten meandered unsuspectingly under the bushes that had put on their first green spring attire. A servant spied the feline invader. The way in which she said "Scat!" was like the letting off of a Fourth of July cracker.

That was enough for the bull pup. He sprang forth from his siesta as if he had been propelled by a catapult. The first encounter between any sort of dog and any type of cat is well known to our readers; therefore no description will here be attempted.

The kitten manœuvred so that it got into the bushes, where the dog could not got at it. *Svengali's* bull pup tore the grass and barked and yowled until the servant rushed to his assistance with her dustpan and broom and beat the bush. Out jumped the kitten.

"Sic 'em!" said the servant.

That was where the dog and the cat got together. They rolled and whined and hissed. Aided and abetted by the servant the bull pup got the better of the scrimmage. It is due the kitten to say that it was not in fighting weight. The pup was at his best, for he had been living on the fat of the land.

In the storm of noise several occupants of the building with fire escape attachments came forth. It was at the hour when women have their hair in curl papers and wear kimonos of different patterns. If you have ever got a glimpse of a clothes line on Monday you know that there are no two kimonos that look as if made in the same country.

Let your immagination in its calmest moment contemplate five women in curl papers and kimonos standing on five fire escapes all yelling at a servant in a yard below to make a dog quit fighting a cat. The dog in such a case thinks that he is being encored. That is what the *Svengali* pup thought, or so he acted.

It will never be known what the kitten thought. A cat is like a woman—the more trouble it has on hand the more it believes it has.

One woman yelled to the servant that if she didn't take off the dog she would call the police. Funny how the mention of the police will make a servant act as if she had St. Vitus's waltz. The servant in question screamed.

The scream reached *Svengali*, who was in his hammock, and down he came in his pajamas. The spectacle of a suit of striped pajamas mixed up in a cat and dog fight on one side and five highly kimonoed curl papered women on five fire escapes on the other side, with an excited servant on the rim, make a crazy quilt look like a second hand dishrag just out of the pan.

Svengali lifted up his great eyes to the five fire escapes and hissed, "What's the matter with you women?"

Five women in kimonos replied in stage unison: "Take that pup of yours away from that kitty."

Just then the kitten gave up the fight. One of its lives passed out and it stretched its form on the sward. *Svengali* placed his hands on his hips and surveyed the field. He called off his dog, but what was the use? The dog hadn't anything more to do anyhow.

Then *Svengali* raised his great eyes toward the five fire escapes, kimono dressed. The look in his eyes was like that which he turned on *Trilby* when he told her the audience was calling for her to respond.

One woman on the fire escape shouted to another, "That's *Svengali*." The word ran from fire escape to fire escape until five kimonoed women stood transfixed for a moment. Then there was a combined scamper to the various apartments. Down banged five window sashes.

Svengali took his pup and slowly sought the quiet and ease of his domicile. The servant took the body of the kitten and threw it over into the next yard, of the people who are out of town.

Five dinners in the fire escape equipped building were late that day as five heads of households sat and listened to five tales of the fight between *Svengali's* bull pup and a starved kitten, and five oaths were recorded that if *Svengali* ever played again in this town there would be five boycotts on the play, if not more.

Flooding a Bank.

From the Strand.

Like the Bank of England the Bank of France is now guarded every night by soldiers, who do sentry duty outside the building, a watch being likewise kept inside its precincts; but within quite recent times the officials at the French bank resorted to a very novel method of protecting their bullion.

This consisted in engaging masons to wall up the doors of the vaults in the cellar with hydraulic mortar as soon as the money was deposited each day in these receptacles. The water was then turned on and kept running until the whole cellar was flooded. A burglar would be obliged to work in a diving suit and break down a cement wall before he could even begin to plunder the vaults.

When the bank officials arrived next morning the water was drawn off, the masonry torn down and the vaults opened. Curiously enough, within a few months after this obsolete manner of protecting the bank's cash was done away with burglars did actually get into the vaults and decamp with about $45,000 in gold coin.

Birds' Nest in Oil Can.

From the Westminster Gazette.

For the sixth year in succession a pair of blue tits have again this season built their nest in a two gallon oil can which is suspended by a piece of string to the wall at Biel East Lodge, Prestonkirk.

The birds are remarkably tame and the tit can be taken from the wall and returned again without the birds being in the least disturbed. The adroit manner in which the birds drop in through the narrow neck of the can has been a source of much interest to onlookers.

WYNDHAM IN "THE MOLLUSC"

ENGLISH ACTOR TO PLAY THE PART HE CREATED.

With Mary Moore, Who Also Appeared With Him in London—Sothern and Marlowe Draw Crowds to the Academy of Music—Other Notes of Theatricals.

Sir Charles Wyndham and Miss Mary Moore will appear at the Empire Theatre to-morrow night, cast in the parts that they created when "The Mollusc" was first produced in London. Almost every theatregoer of the present New York season knows what a mollusc is, for the comedy had a fairly long run at the Garrick Theatre in this city. People who are like the mollusc of the sea, which clings to a rock and lets the tide flow over its head—people who spend all their energy and ingenuity in sticking instead of moving, in whom the instinct for molluscry is as dominating as an inborn vice—people of this sort are to be found on all sides. In the play *Tom Kemp*, the part played by Sir Charles Wyndham, is an authority on molluscry. He is almost a pessimist upon the subject, especially when he attenuates the theory out of a love of phrasing and rephrasing it, or out of a desire to convince his sister, *Mrs. Baxter*, the rôle that will be played by Miss Mary Moore, that "once a mollusc, always a mollusc. It is like drink or any other vice. If grappled with it can be kept under. If left to itself, it becomes incurable." The Empire Theatre engagement of Sir Charles Wyndham and Miss Mary Moore will under no circumstances last more than two weeks. Sam Sothern and Beatrice Waldegrave are the others in the company.

Charles Dillingham's newest musical folly show, "The Candy Shop," at the Knickerbocker, is generally conceded to be the gayest of all the musical productions of the same management. Certainly no Dillingham musical piece has boasted so many big musical comedy names. These include Rock and Fulton, Louise Dresser, Frank Lalor, Mrs. Annie Yeamans, Malcolm Williams, John Barrymore and Florence Morrison.

To-morrow night William Collier begins the sixth week in the increasingly popular farce, "The Man From Mexico." In the face of the popularity of the play Mr. Collier has abandoned all ideas not only of a trip abroad but even of a trip into the country.

Marie Dressler is back again with all her vivacity in "The Boy and the Girl," a musical summer show, at the New Amsterdam Roof. It is as good as the usual production of its kind.

The Sothern and Marlowe Shakespearian season has attracted to the Academy the same enthusiastic gatherings that signalized the engagement there two years ago. Theatregoers have realized that the combination of these two leading stars ranks among the rare events in dramatic art. But two weeks more of the limited season remain. For the first three nights of this week and including Wednesday matinée they will present "Hamlet," and for the last half of the week and including Saturday matinée "The Merchant of Venice." The following and final week will be divided between "Twelfth Night" for the first three nights and Wednesday matinée and "Taming of the Shrew" for the latter half of the week.

The 350th time of "The Man From Home" at the Astor Theatre will be celebrated on Friday of this week. William Hodge and his assistants are making of this Liebler & Co. attraction the record success of the entire theatrical year.

"A Gentleman From Mississippi" is on its way to a 400th performance in the Bijou Theatre. This comedy has been from the beginning one of the most satisfactory of the season's entertainments, and has served the purpose of placing together in well fitting rôles two admirable comedians, Thomas A. Wise and Douglas Fairbanks.

"The Beauty Spot" is at Lew Fields's Herald Square Theatre, and each week sees the De Koven-Herbert musical play winning new popular laurels. The music is tuneful and catchy, the ensemble numbers attractive and the cast of principals clever in comedy.

"The Climax," at Daly's Theatre, has begun the third month of its phenomenal success. The deadly peril of the first stage of the heated season had no effect on the success of Edward Locke's melody drama, the play's popularity seeming to rise with the mercury.

The burlesque "Follies of the Day," at the Lincoln Square Theatre, is gaining in popularity. The second act has been practically rewritten; new features have been introduced and old ones remodelled. Barney Gerard is at his best in the dialogue of the piece.

J. E. Dodson continues his run in "The House Next Door" at the Gaiety Theatre. Seats are now on sale for a Fourth of July matinée, and Messrs. Cohan & Harris plan to extend the engagement until the autumn opening of their new comedy, "The Fortune Hunter." Frank Losee is a new member of the cast, in the part of *Sir Isaac Jacobson*.

It has now come to the point where the application of "the survival of the fittest" is applied to current plays. "The Third Degree," now in its fifth month at the Hudson Theatre, will probably run into the heated term. The exceptional ability displayed by Helen Ware, Edmund Breese, Wallace Eddinger, Ralph Delmore and John Flood have won the indorsement of thousands of playgoers.

Robert Hilliard in "A Fool There Was" ends this week his run at the Liberty Theatre. He has made an impression on theatregoers because of his delineation of the character of the *Hon. John Schuyler*.

"The Midnight Sons," with Blanche Ring, continues to crowd the Broadway Theatre. The fact is that the play is one of the biggest spectacular musical offerings ever produced. In addition to Miss Ring, whose new song "Rings on My Fingers" is a hit, other principal entertainers are Lotta Faust, Harry Fisher, Fritz Williams, George Monroe, Vernon Castle and the Marvellous Millers.

The success of James T. Powers in "Havana" at the Casino continues unabated. This famous production, with music by Leslie Stuart, composer of "Florodora," has already beaten the "Florodora" records at the Casino.

George Fawcett in "The Great John Ganton" continues at the Lyric Theatre. This drama of Chicago business life offers Mr. Fawcett a good opportunity and all authorities have united in praising his interpretation of the title rôle.

"The Blue Mouse" is so delighted with her new cage, Maxine Elliott's Theatre, that she announces her intention of remaining there for many months. The warm weather business of this attraction has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the Messrs. Shubert.

"Going Some," the new Western footrace comedy by Paul Armstrong and Rex Beach, now running at the Belasco Theatre, always goes at the same speedy clip and carries the audience's approval along with it.

"The Girl From Rector's" is still running along at Weber's Theatre. This French farce, adapted pretty literally by Paul M. Potter, has enjoyed good patronage in spite of the discussion which it and several plays of its kind aroused.

The Messrs. Shubert announce that they have arranged for the presentation of moving pictures and vaudeville at the Majestic and West End theatres during the summer months. With the beginning of the next theatrical season both houses will resume the playing of regular attractions.

At Keith & Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theatre this week Prescelle, the hypnotist, will commence the second week of his engagement, and in addition to his experiments will introduce several new comedy features, including his ball game. Bert Leslie and company in "Hogan in Society" will be a feature of the bill, and Alick Lauder, Harry's brother, will show for the first time in America his European success entitled "The Christening." The Millman Trio will make their first vaudeville appearance in New York since their English engagement and Willy Pantzer and company will present their comedy balancing act.

For the second week at Hammerstein's Roof Garden Mrs. William E. Annis and company will be the novelty of the programme. Mrs. Annis, with the assistance of six other musicians, offers a "Vaudeville Musicale." For the first time in America Rocev's monkey actors present "A Night in a Monkey Music Hall," which is a complete variety performance given by monkeys. La Belle Americaine, the novelty equestrian, and the Seldoms, in living plastic art, will continue at the roof indefinitely. Among the works of art they depict are "Reaching the Winning Post," "The Fountain," "Samson's Bound" and "The Revival of Galatea." Princess Rajah in her Cleopatra Dance, the Four Fords, America's dancing family; the Five Musical Avolos, xylophone experts; Hoey and Lee, comedians; the Great Lester; Hastings and Wilson, the lunatics, and De Haven and Sidney compose the remainder of the bill.

Owing to his success at the Colonial Theatre Pauline, the French hypnotist, has been retained for a third and final week. Of equal importance here will be the first vaudeville appearance in New York of George Beban, assisted by Frank Sheridan and an excellent company, presenting "The Sign of the Rose." Fred Bond and Freemont Benton will be seen in their comedy sketch, "Handkerchief No. 13," and Paul Valadon, the famous magician, will entertain with feats of prestidigitation.

Percy G Williams announces for the week at the Alhambra a programme made up mostly of comedy features, among which will be the first Harlem appearance of the famous song writer Gus Edwards. Clayton White and Marie Stuart are also headliners presenting George V. Hobart's huge laughing success "Cherie." Al Leech and his Three Rosebuds have a good comedy singing and dancing skit in "The New Teacher." Other attractive numbers on the programme are Tschernoff's animals, Barry and Wolford, the singers; Violet King in a musical specialty, and the three Hanlons, comedy acrobats

Several New York favorites who have long been absent from Broadway will make their first appearances at the American Music Hall this week. James J. Corbett will signalize his début by appearing with his own company in a comedy, "A Thief in the Night." Billy Clifford, recently a star of "The Girl at the Helm," returns from out of the West with a rattling répertoire of repartee and songs, and Miss Maude Lambert, the singer, is also announced. James J. Morton, "the boy comic," remains over another week, and among the new entertainers are to be noted Harry Brown, "the man who made 'The Mascot' famous"; Henry and Alice Taylor, who bring a novelty act that embraces sharpshooting and balancing; Techow's cats, direct from the Hippodrome; Campbell and Barber, trick and comedy cyclists; the Kohler trio, and Smirl and Kessner, acrobats.

"Aida" will be sung at the Metropolis this week. It is the last week of the season there. The Bowery Burlesquers will be at Hurtig & Seamon's.

Up at Terrace Garden in East Fifty-eighth street the Original Farinelli Ensemble is playing on 110 musical instruments. The variety of the concert selections of this versatile aggregation is as infinite as the adaptability of its members to any sound producing instrument.

Harlem Casino, at 125th street and Seventh avenue, has again become a summer amusement centre. A series of concerts by a Viennese orchestra will be given each evening from 6:30 until after midnight.

Beginning this week Huber's Fourteenth Street Museum will make a departure in the line of amusements. "All white" performers will be the rule in the vaudeville bill from now on. Prominent on the headline is Chief Yellow Boy, the sword swallower. Giovanni's troupe of trained monkeys and birds and Anderson and company in a one act comedy entitled "I Love My Fedora" are also announced.

Bowlers from all parts of the country have visited the Eden Musée in large bodies to see the tableau of the purchase of Manhattan Island by Peter Minuit from the Indians in 1626. At the Sunday concerts the Hungarian Band plays special music.

BROOKLYN AND THE BEACHES.

The Brighton Beach Music Hall Opens Its Vaudeville Season.

For the week at the Orpheum Richard Golden in a comedy sketch entitled "A Case of Divorce" is announced. Another headline attraction, to be seen for the first time in Brooklyn, will be that of the ventriloquist who is billed as the Great Lester. His manipulation of the funny dummy is skilfully accomplished. A new wrinkle in the ventriloquial line is the introduction of a telephone, thus allowing for a variation of the old time method of voice throwing. Other attractive features on the bill are Kelly and Kent in a comedy singing and talking skit, Sidney Deane and company presenting their sketch "Christmas on the Island," Howard and Howard in "The Hebrew Messenger and the Thespian" and Lee Harrison, the musical comedy comedian.

Brighton Beach Music Hall will be thrown open for the summer season tomorrow afternoon. The programme for the first week will be headed by Irene Franklin, who plays her farewell engagement in America for at least a year. The Felix and Barry Four in a musical absurdity, "The Boy Next Door"; the Delauer-Dobrimont Grand Opera Trio; Harrigan, the "tramp" juggler; Hugh Lloyd, an Australian, who makes his first American appearance in a tightrope bounding act; the Camille Trio, acrobats and horizontal bar performers; the Doherty Sisters, singers and comediennes, and Waterbury Brothers and Tenney, instrumentalists and comedians, make up the bill.

The new Brighton Theatre will open with vaudeville next week.

The last week brought to Greater Dreamland the largest crowds in the history of the park. Every one of the shows has done a good business and the new dance pavilion, which is free, was patronized by thousands. Mr. Gumpertz has booked strong acts for the free circus, which takes place in the ring over the lagoon.

"The Bounding Bell Buoy," the newest of rides in Coney Island which has been opened in Luna Park, has proved everything that was said for it in the way of being odd. All the new shows in Luna Park continue to draw crowds, and the attendance on Decoration Day broke all records. Several attractions have been enlarged to accommodate the throngs. "Billiken's Temple" is now a network of mazes and fun making devices. The demand for rides on "The Witching Waves" has necessitated the installing of more wicker boats.

The attraction for the week at the Gayety Theatre in Brooklyn will be the Rentz-Santley company. It is the oldest organization of its kind on the road and has held the same title for nearly a third of a century, having succeeded Mme. Rentz's Female Minstrels, which was a popular company away back in the '70s. Two farce comedies, "The Married Widow, or Two Weeks of a Soul Kiss," and "The Girl with the Golden Vest" are on the programme.

Midland Beach in Staten Island is now open, with several new attractions in addition to the popular old ones. Band concerts are given there every afternoon and evening.

Palisades Park has attracted attention by the airship experiments carried on there. There are many other entertainments offered, including a musical comedy, "The Girl From Boston," in the open air theatre.

POLO IN CHINA.

Played There Thousands of Years Under the Name of Horseball.

"One day while walking along Liu-Li-Ch'ang, the great book and curio street of Pekin," says a writer in *St. Nicholas*, "I stepped into a store to look at some Chinese paintings. The street is more than a mile in length, not very wide and not particularly clean, but it is the model street in all upper China and one of the most remarkable in the world. It contains nothing but book stores and curio stores.

"There you will find a history—not a history of the world—not a universal history, but only a history of China which would fill a two horse wagon. There you can also find an encyclopædia which contains as many volumes as there are days in a hundred years. And there you will find the works of a man who, besides governing 400,000,000 people, wrote as many separate poems as there are minutes in two weeks.

"Among many other things the dealer brought out a painting of five men dressed in the style of the Ming dynasty—a garb of four or five hundred years ago, playing polo. The picture was painted on a piece of silk about three and a half feet long and fifteen inches wide. The silk had originally been white, but through the years and centuries since it was executed it had turned a beautiful brown.

"I found by the inscription that it had been painted by a man named Ch'iu Ying, the greatest landscape and figure painter of the Ming dynasty, some 400 years ago.

"'What are the men doing?' I inquired of the merchant.

"'Knocking horse ball,' he answered.

"'But they are not riding horses; they are on mules,' I continued.

"'Quite right,' said he; 'a horse would be too large to turn quickly and play easily and he would not be tough enough to stand the game.'

"'Why, is it a violent game?' I asked.

"'I do not know,' he continued; 'I never saw it played, but I suppose it is. When men are riding mules, turning, twisting, galloping, swinging clubs and yelling, it cannot be very mild. They are liable to run into each other, their mules may fall, or they may be unseated and trampled under the feet of their antagonists. It is not child's play.'

"'How long have the Chinese played this game?' I inquired.

"He waved his hand at me in that queer way the Chinese have of saying they can't answer.

"'I do not know. I suppose they have always had it; at least,' he modified his statement, 'for 2,000 or 3,000 years.'"

WORK OF TEREDOES.

Rapidity With Which They Demolish Wooden Piers and Caissons.

From the San Francisco Call.

That the teredoes in the vicinity of Fort Mason are the hungriest and busiest and equipped with the most effective augers of any of their kind to be found in the bay has been demonstrated by the contracting concern that is building the new army transport wharves at Blackpoint. The company has paid a fancy price for its knowledge, and incidentally and at its own expense has demonstrated the wisdom of the all concrete construction advocated by the present board of harbor commissioners.

The new army wharves are to rest on concrete piers and the plans call for the construction of a concrete breakwater to provide shelter for the troopships that may be tied up at the wharves. In the construction of this breakwater great wooden caissons were built and sunk, to be pumped out later and filled with concrete.

A temporary wharf was built of green piles and on this were erected the concrete mixing machinery and other gear essential to carrying on the work. A few weeks ago this wharf tumbled down and an investigation showed that the teredoes had eaten the green piles as easily as if they had been young onions. The wharf is now being rebuilt with creosoted piles.

In anticipation of the early restoration of the temporary pier an examination was made yesterday of the wooden caissons, and to the contractor's grief it was discovered that they had been practically consumed by the teredoes. The chewed up caissons will have to be replaced and then it will be a race between the concrete mixers and the teredoes, with the betting on the worms, if in the meantime they should eat through the creosoted piles that support temporary wharf No. 2 and cause another delay in filling the moulds with concrete.

Gold From Sunken Spanish Ship.

From the London Chronicle.

In the most boisterous part of Mount's Bay, and almost unapproachable except by sea, lies Dollar Cove, where for the past three months a treasure seeking expedition, sent down by a London syndicate, has been quietly working. The company of seekers some three or four weeks ago suspended operations in order to get more powerful pumps and gear. These are in working order, and although the salvors have little to say about the matter, they appear to be hopeful of success, in the year 1788 a Spanish ship went ashore there with about twenty tons of specie aboard.

Everybody who lives on the coast is familiar with the appearance of the dollars, as large numbers have been washed up on the beach from time to time. Gold pieces are said to have been discovered recently by people walking on the beach.

Numbering the People in China.

From the London Globe.

China is preparing to take a census of her 400,000,000 people. The census is to be a thorough one, and after it is done the facts and figures are to be kept pretty well up to date.

One provision of the regulations for officials reads: "After the completion of this census all births, deaths, marriages and adoptions must be reported by the head of the family to the local census office or police station; the records of families must be revised every two months and records of individuals every six months and reports must be made annually to the Board of the Interior by the directors general of the census from the various provinces."

CATCHER AND FIRST BASEMAN

STARS IN THESE POSITIONS ARE THE SCARCEST.

Professional Baseball Has Developed Fewer of Them Than Players of Same Relative Degree of Skill for Other Places in the Lineup of the Diamond.

It is a recognized fact that star catchers in professional baseball, catchers of the same relative degree of skill as third basemen, shortstops and other positions of the diamond, are fewer proportionately than the stars of other positions. With the number of catchers who are developed—each club carrying two at the least—it doesn't seem that this ought to be so. No team carries two third basemen, two first basemen or two players for any other position except pitcher. Yet catchers of the really first rank have been and are the hardest to find.

The requirements of the position doubtless have something to do with it. Of good mechanical catchers there is no lack, but in those matters of generalship, head work—whatever the subtle something is that the catcher must have in addition to the good arm and the watchful eye for base runners—the national game is none too well provided in its backstops. We all know how valuable such a catcher is to a team with his knowledge of batters, his ability to direct his pitcher, his ability to oversee the defensive play and adjust it to suit the attack—points of play which are all important, though quietly done and not in the limelight.

To argue that the positions which call for the most work develop the most stars would not do, because the catcher is a very busy man. More actual exertion falls to his lot than to anybody except the pitcher. In the long and prosperous course which the national game has run the development of players by the various positions is an interesting study. It has been an uneven development.

A striking proof of this latter state of affairs is to be found at first base. There is a position which the occupant of some other place on the team may tell you is soft. If that is so it nevertheless is a fact that top notch first basemen are scarcer than top notch second basemen, shortstops or third basemen. Maybe the possibilities of the position have been slower in being realized and enlarged. It is reasonable to suppose that the men who play first are as intelligent as any others. That being the case, it also is reasonable to suppose that they would be as quick to realize on the possibilities of the place. Then why is it that there has been a comparative scarcity of star first basemen?

The best first sacker in the country today is Hal Chase. By some he is considered the best that ever played the bag. It is true that his ability as a base runner, as an inside player, his speed and quick grasp of points add to his reputation; but as a first baseman pure and simple he also excels. He doesn't make any less errors than his contemporaries—he may make more—but a majority of these are due to his superior agility in getting to a ball and planning and making the play before his companions are ready for it. His style too adds to his reputation; he has magnetism on the field. Perhaps were he a bit more of a plodder, had a bit more stability, so to speak, he might be still better.

Style and rapidity of action aside, Chase has solid ability as a first sack guardian, and we come back to the main point, which is that in spite of the long list of first basemen there have been few of the Chase class. Of the present day first basemen in the big leagues when you name Jiggs Donohue, Chance and Tenney you have named them all; and there are one or two of these who are not Chase's equal in taking all sorts of thrown balls and killing bunts.

Now as to what the position has produced in the past. Comiskey was a star in his day—a great first baseman. The bold and rugged figure of Anson always will stand out, but it was more because he was a great batsman and successful manager. McKinnon was considered the best fielding first baseman of his time, but he wasn't the versatile man at the bag that Chase is. Start, Morrill and Long John Reilly were good in the bygone days, but never acquired the preeminence of the Chases and Chances.

Tom Tucker in his day was so much above the general run of first basemen as to be a conspicuous figure, while there never was a better man on thrown balls than Carey, but he did not excel in other respects. Brouthers, Orr and O'Connor were hard hitting first basemen who did not shine especially as fielders. Harry Davis is a hard hitter and not far from the top rank as a fielder. Beckley and Tebeau were versatile, Ganzel an accomplished receiver for thrown balls and McGann ungainly but reliable when in his prime. Hugh Jennings was a fine first baseman the short time he played the bag. All had good points, but the work of only a few—five or six—has made first base play stand out clear cut and conspicuous.

Second base has produced men who are more nearly matched in skill—McPhee, Pfeffer, Gerhardt, Dunlap, Burdock, Danny Richardson, Quest, Cupid Childs, Lajoie, Wise, Lowe, Reitz, Ritchey, Williams, Gilbert, Evers, Tom Daly and Schaefer. It has some newcomers too who are holding their own in attainments at the middle pillow, namely, Miller of Pittsburg, Knabe of Philadelphia, Collins of the Athletics and McConnell of the Boston Red Sox.

Take third base, where the drives come hotter off the bat than to any other infield stand, and the list of first class men who have been turned out is long and notable. There was the old timer Charley Smith, and later Billy Nash, the wonderful thrower; Jerry Denny, who scorned the glove; Lave Cross, he of the huge glove and knee stop; McGraw, Tom Burns, Ross Barnes of the '70s, Jimmy Collins, the best of them all, and Bill Coughlin, players no longer in the big leagues; also Jimmy Williams, now a second baseman. Present day big leaguers at the bag are Bradley, Devlin, Steinfeldt, Elberfeld, Leach, though covering centre field this season; Lennox and Ferris. These men are all tiptoppers. They are not exactly matched in ability, but there isn't the difference that there is among first basemen.

When it comes to playing shortstop there have been so many high class performers that the really good players far outnumber those who are not quite first class. They are numerous from the time of George Wright down. The illustrious Wagner is among the lot, and the roster contains such names as Williamson, Glasscock, Fuller, Fred Ely, Irwin, Herman Long, Bob Allen, George Davis, Hugh Jennings, George Smith and Ed McKean. Still in the ring are Bill Dahlen, Freddie Parent, Bobby Wallace, Terry Turner, Kid Elberfeld, converted into a third baseman; Wagner, Bridwell, Tinker, Doolan and McBride, not to mention Bush of Detroit, picked up this season from the minors. There isn't a shortstop in the lot who wasn't or isn't high class in his position play.

Of outfielders of the same relative degree of proficiency as shortstops there are not so many, even though there have been three outfielders to shortstops' one. There have been lots of good outfielders, but not so many who could measure up to the standard set by masters of the Fogarty, Welch, Johnson type. The best latter day outfielder in baseball left it last season when Fielder Jones retired. McAleer, Lange, Corkhill, Griffin, Fultz, Duffy, O'Brien, Hornung and Burkett were all superb judges of a fly ball who covered a wide expanse of ground. So were Ned Hanlon, Mike Tiernan, Chick Stahl, Joe Kelley and Andy Leonard.

Fred Clarke and Billy Keeler are veteran outfielders who are still playing and who always have been among the best. Three new men who are making their mark this season are Cree, Speaker and O'Hara. Ed Delehanty was not as finished a player as a number who have been in the outer garden, but was great as a hitter. Hartsel, Hofman, Beaumont, Mitchell, Wilson, Thomas, Blake, McIntyre, Crawford, Murray and Sheckard are past or present outfielders of pronounced ability. The spectacular Ty Cobb could not be overlooked, but were it not for his sensational batting and base running it is a question whether he would be regarded as in the class with Johnson, Jones, Fogarty, Keeler, Lange, McAleer and Welch.

Naming the crack catchers is a briefer task. There was only one Ewing. He was conceded to be the best that went behind the bat. Bennett, Bushong, Tom Daly and Flint were good, but no Ewing. Johnny Kling, Lou Criger, Roger Bresnahan and Billy Sullivan are almost unanimously ranked as the best of the catchers of the present and in a class which is at least a shade superior to the rest. Mike Kelley, Wilbert Robinson, Malachi Kittredge and Martin Bergen were catchers of the past whose work rated them head and shoulders above their rivals, and in this list might be mentioned Duke Farrell, Gibson, Jay Clarke, Street and William Bergen, catchers now doing duty who are better than the average.

Notwithstanding the constant demand for pitchers there are lots of good twirlers—quite enough to offset the batting department of the game, though they can't all be Mathewsons, Browns or Walshes. They have been coming and going in quantity since the days of Spalding, Matthews and Cumming. Radbourne, Clarkson, Keefe, Rusie, Ferguson, Kilroy, Nicholls, Ramsey, Whitney, Hecker, Mullane, King, Goldsmith, Carruthers, Bond, Galvin and Buffington are bygone names to conjure with. As compared to other positions the list is interminable.

The mere passing pitcher who flashes through one season and maybe gets away with a no hit game is not to be considered, for length of service counts as one test of a man's worth; but taking that into consideration as well as such needful accomplishments as control, nerve, head work, curves and a delivery which embraces variety, and enough capable men can be found to make the average of merit in the box noticeably large. It is true that some teams are weak in the box, but that is offset by teams which possess a first class corps of twirlers right through.

Modern baseball has produced Young, Willis, Howell, Powell, Wiltse, Bender, Plank, McGinnity, Waddell, Joss, Orth, Mullin, Chesbro, Ewing, Donovan, Philippe, Leever and later than these Johnson, Camnitz, Summers, F. Smith, Graham, Pelty, Fromme, Bell, Overall, McQuillen, Rucker, McIntire, Lake, Warhop, Quinn, Brockett, Raymond, Marquard, Arellanes, Morgan, Cicotte, Mattern, Willett, Coombs, Scott, Manning, Chech, Covaleskie and Leifield, moundmen who already have made their mark or give every promise of so doing.

THE FANCY WATER CAP.

Decorative Ideas for the Automobile Seen Nowadays.

Water cap decoration is one of the new things in automobiles. A while ago, when the teddy bear was popular, it used to be the thing to have a teddy bear, arms outstretched, riding on the front of the auto above the radiator.

Now the teddy bear has gone out. The billy possum doesn't lend himself to decoration of this kind, as he has to hang down to be really in keeping, so his place has been usurped by the billiken.

If the god of things as they ought to be does his charming properly certainly no one ought to be arrested for speeding with one of the ugly toys riding in front. Perhaps it would be better to have one of them tied on the tail light, so that pursuing policemen would come more quickly under the influence.

There are other sorts of decorations that go on the water cap. On some cars an eagle with wings outstretched can be seen. Some others have an elk's head with branching horns. It isn't always well to have a glistening object up front, because the sunlight may reflect into the eyes of the driver, causing him to go awry in some ticklish traffic tangle.

Nesting in a Beehive.

From the London Evening Standard.

A wagtail has built its nest in a beehive at West Ashby, near Horncastle, and is sitting on ten eggs, despite the bees being busy at work below.

The bird enters by the roof of the hive through a small hole; it has carried quite a heap of hay and other material bit by bit through this hole. The bees are by no means dis