THE PRESENT AND THE PAST

SINGERS OF TO-DAY AND OF YESTERDAY.

Are There Any Great Vocal Technicians To-day?—Why Are the Writers of Comment on Music Always Accused of Indigestion?—They Are All Happy.

Some readers of this department of THE SUN have written recently to its editor asking him whether he believed that there were no great singers now living, whether he thought that all the good singers were embalmed in histories, whether he believed that the method of singing taught by the early Italian masters could be applied to the music of to-day and whether he would not be kind enough to point out what singers of to-day had perfect methods.

This constitutes what our transatlantic cousins might call "a tall order." Yet much of the ground can be cleared by the proposition of a single belief cherished by this writer: The singers of the early eighteenth century would have to acquire a totally new style in order to sing the operatic music of to-day, but they would not have to learn a new technic.

Mr. Caruso would have to acquire a new style to sing the music of Handel, but he would perhaps have very little to add to his present technic. Just how much facility he possesses in the delivery of florid music it is impossible to tell, as we have not heard him sing any of it; but his voice is so well posed, his tone production so free and natural and his voice so flexible in nuance that there is every reason to suppose that he can sing florid music well.

The famous operatic singers of the early eighteenth century were distinguished for their perfect tone production, their easy mastery of rapid passages, their exquisite treatment of the pure legato and their tenderness of expression in pathetic arias. These are the fundamental elements of good singing.

They must be acquired before the singer is competent to deliver the more declamatory compositions of contemporaneous masters. It is not merely an opinion of this writer that the singers of to-day do not thoroughly ground themselves in these fundamentals. It is a fact. Teachers of singing all over the world testify to it. They declare that their pupils are unwilling to spend the time to go through the old courses of study. They refuse to apply themselves to such things as the vocalises of Concone. They demand that after a few preparatory lessons in tone placing they be put to work on repertoire. They expect to graduate from the studio in about two years. People who are not in touch with the profession of music cannot know the real conditions.

These singers are no more fit to enter upon a professional career than a pianist who has not mastered scale playing or a violinist who is not sure of all the positions. The singer has the advantage of the instrumental performer in that he carries his charm within himself. An untrained voice which has been skilfully coached in certain rôles may earn its possessor a swift and easy success. It is this that the singer desires.

Many of these half trained singers are capable of giving interesting operatic impersonations for the simple reason that they distract attention from their vocal defects by a display of dramatic temperament or clever stage business. Furthermore some of these half trained singers have real musical instincts and sing with much interpretative eloquence.

What the writer of this department of THE SUN regrets is the sad loss of opportunity among just such singers. They are content with half way things. They are satisfied with the easily obtained applause of the opera house crowd, of which the discriminating part is naturally the minority. They make no progress. They never reach the limit of their own possibilities. And whenever they are called upon to sing music demanding for its proper execution skill in the fundamentals of song they fail to reach the standard of excellence which has been accepted by connoisseurs ever since singing was recognized as a fine art.

THE SUN'S musical chronicler has often regretted that he could not gratify more operagoers by rhapsodizing as they do about certain beautiful personalities. But musical criticism has no very great concern with personalities except as disclosed in musical art. When they evade musical art and seek to influence the public by other means it is the unpleasant duty of the critic to call attention to that fact. It is his business to prevent, so far as is in his very limited power, public adoration of false gods.

The argument put forward at the present day is that the study of singing in the old fashion is no longer necessary, because the style of the music is altogether different. This argument rests upon a confusion of ideas. The character of the music to be sung has no bearing whatever upon the manner in which the singer should be trained in the technics of his art. When a young man sets out to become a pianist he does not study along certain lines for the express purpose of becoming a Chopin player. He applies himself to the general technic of the piano and when he has mastered it he possesses the mechanical means with which to play anything.

In singing the truth is quite the same. The vocal artist must first acquire the general technics of singing, and these are in certain sense mechanical. The technic of the singer rests first of all on the perfect formation of tone, the equalization of the scale from top to bottom of the voice, the management of the breath so that the tone shall be properly fed and the training of the vocal organs to attack with readiness and certainty any possible succession of notes in either quick or slow time.

When the singer has mastered these elements of technic he is prepared to sing any music from that of Handel to that of Richard Strauss. All that comes after the mastering of the technic is musicianship and style. Singers used to have great difficulty with the music of Wagner, not because it was unsingable but because their ears had never been trained to Wagner's harmonic conceptions. Singers will laugh at you if you tell them in these days that Wagner is unsingable. Some singers have voices unsuited to Wagner's music, but even they are equal to its technical demands. If any one supposes that Mr. Caruso cannot sing the notes of *Tristan* or *Parsifal* he is mistaken. But the style would be foreign to him.

When THE SUN'S chronicler of musical doings laments the lack of thorough vocal training in the ranks of opera singers he is doing only what hundreds of old time operagoers are doing. He is lamenting the want of adequate technic, not the absence of beautiful voices, gifted natures and splendid theatrical talents. These indeed we have and we have also some singers who can "sing" in the old sense of that word.

But this writer must be excused from attempting to enumerate the sheep and the goats. Nothing can be gained by such a proceeding. No one would be any wiser than he is now. Those who do not know well founded singing when they hear it cannot be taught to do so by a newspaper article.

There is one other point to which reference may be made, because it really needs a little clearing up. Whenever a critic expresses regret for the "good old times" he is accused of inability to live in the present. He is getting old, they say, and he is sour. He looks at all things through green spectacles and he suffers from "indigestion." Oh, indigestion, what things are done in thy name! If it were not for you Geraldine Farrar's *Juliette*—but she does not look as if she suffered from indigestion.

The present writer would like to speak a word for his brethren, but that would be presumptuous. He will venture only to say that if they are old they do not know it and if they are unhappy they are the best aggregation of actors he has ever seen. They should be engaged for the New Theatre. They would cheer it up. As for himself, this writer can only say that he is getting younger every year and that he finds the present charged with keenest interest to its very lips. But none the less he is satisfied that it is a period of musical transition and that perhaps after he has passed beyond the consideration of earthly problems the experimental labors of D'Indy, Strauss, Debussy, Reger and the rest will lead to new and noble things in musical art.

Singing too will not pause, and the recognition of the immortality of its fundamental principles will come again about the same time as the perception that music cannot be composed without regard for the basic laws of design. New forms, new manners, new styles and even new methods will come with new creative minds; but since the Greeks first built their scales of two like tetrachords the law of balance and rhythmic distribution of parts in music has reigned and it will continue to do so.

But musical art has not ceased the way of progress like a stream flowing through a valley. It has advanced rather like the rising tide in waves, each rolling forward and receding, but certainly moving further and further forward. Writers on music many times now far back in history have lamented the "good old days," and the utterances of these are pointed out as evidence that critics have always made the same sort of complaint. As matter of fact, nothing of the sort is true. An intelligent student of history has no reason to be pessimistic with regard to the future.

For example, one reads Nanini and Fontanini complaining about the decadency of vocal music in their day. But history shows us that there was a decadence in just such time about 1700. When you read Chorley fifty years ago you find him bemoaning the loss in qualities of famous singers of his time. You do not read any lamentations about the older days. Investigation shows that Chorley was right. The days of Malibran, Grisi, Rubini, Mario, Ronconi, Tamburini and Lablache was one in which the critical commentator could bask in the sunshine of delight.

A pursuit of this method of inquiry will very quickly satisfy the student that critics have not always been a sour brood, grumbling at what is and lamenting the absence of what is not. They have from time to time bewailed the decadence of their periods and usually with good reason. The inevitable reaction has caused the next generation of critics to sing paeans of glorification simply because there was something to glorify. But no one mentions those critics.

And in conclusion one final word about that dearly beloved old bugbear indigestion. Of all the comfortable and prosperous knights of the trencher known to this writer there are none to excel his brethren of the gray goose quill. They all eat with unction and smoke their after dinner cigars with satisfaction. One or two of them have a little gout, to be sure; but what would you? Can men feast all their lives on the riches of music and not grow gouty? Fie upon you, uncharitable reader! Dost think there shall be no more cakes and ale?

THE SUN'S chronicler of musical doings is writing this beside a window into which the splendid sunshine streams in almost intolerable glory. The sky is of that soft yet brilliant cobalt, veiled in tender gray, which is seen only in the Western world. A sweet breeze is blowing out of the inviting south. A thousand varicolored flags are dancing to its Aeolian music. It is very, very good to be alive. There may be unfortunate creatures who suffer from indigestion, but they must dwell in some other sphere. This one is filled with delight. Beauty is everywhere and life feeds upon it.

The "events" in the musical world of the week past were not insignificant, yet they have been discussed pretty thoroughly in these columns. Perhaps one or two added comments can be made, however, and the first of these should be in reference to the performance of "Götterdämmerung" at the Metropolitan on Wednesday afternoon.

The hurried reference to the *Gunther* of Mr. Soomer was not happily phrased, since it seemed to indicate that the impersonation was deficient. Mr. Soomer interpreted the rôle correctly, inasmuch as he made the man a weakling. But he also disclosed the pathos of *Gunther's* situation, and this has been missing from most recent performances. Mme. Gadski's *Brünnhilde* was received with the general praise which it deserved. One of the principal merits of the impersonation was the artistic continence of the singing. There are certain passages which imperatively demand the employment of the full force of the tones, and in these Mme. Gadski responded to the call. But she did not fall into the error so common among German singers of supposing that it was her duty to shout from beginning to end.

She sang most of the time with just as much tone as was necessary to carry her message across the footlights and no more. The result was very beautiful. The noblest utterances of *Brünnhilde*, those over the bier of the dead *Siegfried*, became thus profoundly impressive. When they are sung in the familiar squeezed and forced style of the German stage they become the scoldings of a petty nature.

Mme. Gadski's acting has improved remarkably. She has learned much about the value of facial expression, which even in the capacious auditorium of the Metropolitan has its office. In carriage, pose and gesture she has advanced far beyond her earlier accomplishments. She now enters the small society of tragic actresses who can create an illusion. To realize the completed *Brünnhilde* of Wagner is something apparently beyond the reach of any living operatic artist, but Mme. Gadski approaches well toward that achievement. She has composed an impersonation uniting noble dignity with fine intelligence and sincere feeling.

In the concert world the one important incident of the week was the reproduction of Strauss's "Don Quixote." The importance of this reproduction was due to critical comment rather than to the work itself. When will progressive commentators learn that cleverness in the contrivance of new mannerisms in art is not a manifestation of genius?

Strauss has befooled the world successfully, but temporarily. He has squarely placed himself beside the artist who painted grapes so naturally that the birds came and tried to eat them. He has even painted the curtain which his fellow artist took for a real curtain concealing a picture. How much better it would be if he would stop trifling with curtains and paint pictures.

Poor old Don Quixote! He has his moments of pathos, and those moments satisfy all the adorers of Strauss. They may perhaps deprecate the bleats of the sheep and the shrieking of the wind machine, but they ask us to accept these as examples of pure humor in music. We are obliged to accept them as such, for they cannot be accepted at all otherwise.

But when we get right down to the true psychological matter in "Don Quixote," is it really the proclamation of a genius?

W. J. HENDERSON.

NOTES OF MUSIC EVENTS.

Leo Slezak will be heard to-morrow night at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time this season in the title rôle of "Otello," in which he makes such an impressive figure. The *Iago* will be Mr. Scotti, the *Desdemona* Mme. Rappold, and the *Emilia* Miss Maubourg. Others in the cast will be Messrs. Bada, De Segurola, Audisio, Bègue and Rosebiglian. Mr. Toscanini will conduct. "Natoma," the new American opera, music by Victor Herbert and libretto by Joseph D. Redding, which had its first production on any stage last night in Philadelphia, will have its first New York hearing on Tuesday night, when it will be presented by the Philadelphia Chicago Opera Company, with Miss Mary Garden in the title rôle. The opera will be done in English. The cast will include also Miss Lillian Grenville, Mme. Nardini, Miss Minnie Egener, Messrs. McCormack, Huberteau, Dufranne, Sammarco, Crabbe, Nicolay and Belver. Cleofonte Campanini will conduct. "Tosca" will be sung by the Metropolitan Opera Company at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn on Tuesday evening, with Mme. Fremstad in the title rôle and Messrs. Jadlowker and Scotti in the cast. "Aida" is the Wednesday night bill at the Metropolitan, with Mmes. Gadski and Homer and Messrs. Martin, Amato and Didur. Mr. Toscanini will conduct. "Konigskinder" will be given at a special matinée on Thursday, with Miss Farrar and Mr. Jadlowker and the regular cast. Mr. Hertz will conduct. "The Girl of the Golden West" is announced for Thursday evening, with Mr. Bassi of the Philadelphia Opera Company as Johnson in the place of Mr. Caruso, who is recuperating at Atlantic City. Mr. Bassi created the rôle in Chicago and has sung it there and in Philadelphia with success. The rest of the cast will remain as heretofore, including Mmes. Destinn and Mattfeld and Messrs. Amato, Gilly, Reiss and De Segurola. Mr. Toscanini will conduct. "The Bartered Bride" will be the Friday evening opera, with Mmes. Destinn, Mattfeld and Wakefield and Messrs. Jorn, Goritz, Bayer, Witherspoon, Reiss and Rothier. Mr. Bartik's corps of Bohemian dancers will again be a feature of the performance. Mr. Hertz will conduct. "Tosca" will be the Saturday matinée bill, with Miss Farrar, Mr. Martin and Mr. Scotti. Mr. Toscanini will conduct. "Parsifal" is announced for Saturday night, beginning at 7 o'clock sharp. The cast will include Mme. Fremstad and Messrs. Jorn, Amato, Goritz and Witherspoon. Mr. Hertz will conduct.

Mme. Fremstad will be heard for the first time this season at a Sunday concert to-night, when she will sing the "Liebestod" from "Tristan" and a group of Norwegian songs. Alexander Heinemann will sing a number of German lieder, while Mr. Smirnoff will contribute some Russian songs in which he is said to excel. Arthur Hochman, the young Polish pianist, will play the Liszt E flat concerto with the orchestra, and some other numbers unaccompanied. Other operatic artists participating will be Miss Florence Wickham and Messrs. Soomer and Rossi.

For the concert of the Philharmonic Society in Carnegie Hall this afternoon Gustav Mahler has chosen several Wagnerian works not previously performed this season. "The Kaiser March," "The Good Friday Spell" from "Parsifal" and "Siegfried's Rhine Journey" from "Die Götterdämmerung." "The Kaiser March" was written by Wagner to celebrate the victory of Germany over France in 1870 and was played in Berlin when the victorious troops were welcomed home by the Emperor. A portion of Luther's hymn "A Mighty Fortress" (called by Heine "The Marseillaise of the Reformation") was employed by the composer. The symphony selected for this programme is Beethoven's third, "The Eroica," while the other number is Goldmark's overture "Sakuntala," based on a famous Sanskrit drama or epic of India.

Miss Isadora Duncan and Walter Damrosch, with the New York Symphony Orchestra, will have two more appearances in New York on the afternoon of Thursday, March 2, and Saturday evening, March 4, both at Carnegie Hall. Owing to the remarkable success of the concert of last week, containing the scenes from "Orpheus" and the Schubert dances, the same programme will be repeated on Saturday evening, March 4, with the assistance of Mrs. Florence Mulford, contralto, and a small chorus. In addition to this Miss Duncan will dance several extra numbers, including "The Beautiful Blue Danube." The Thursday afternoon performance will include scenes from Gluck's "Iphigenie in Aulis" and miscellaneous selections.

After an absence from New York of a year and a half Mme. Luisa Tetrazzini returns to this city, not for opera, however, but at the head of her own concert company with which she has so successfully been touring the country since December last, and will be heard at Carnegie Hall on Monday evening, March 6. Additional interest is lent to the concert by the fact that Mme. Tetrazzini will be heard in several numbers which she sings for the first time in New York, among them being the famous mad scene from Ambroise Thomas's "Hamlet," "Bel Raggio" from "Semiramide," and the aria from Felician David's "Perle du Bresil," besides several of her most popular and better known selections. Frederic Hastings, barytone, Andre Benoist, and other artists will assist in the concert.

For the fifth symphony concert for young people on Saturday afternoon, March 11, in Carnegie Hall, a very interesting programme of Slavic music has been arranged by Walter Damrosch. Two Russian folk songs, whose titles, "Song of the Mosquitoes" and "Cradle Song," should attract the younger subscribers; Dvorak's Carneval Overture and a song by Rimsky-Korsakoff appear in the first part of the programme, while the second half is devoted to the works of Tschaikowsky. The last number will be the overture "1812." At the last concert of the season, on April 1, a spring festival of music and dance is being arranged, with professional dancers in costume.

The success of the stage version of Pierne's choral work, "The Children at Bethlehem," when it was presented at Carnegie Hall, has induced Walter Damrosch to include it in the series of performances given by the Symphony Society at the New Theatre. Next Friday afternoon, therefore, this work will be presented again, with a large chorus of children and the same soloists who assisted when the work was given at Carnegie Hall. "The Children at Bethlehem" in its stage form, with costumes, scenery and dramatic action becomes a mediæval mystery play. The first act takes place on a snowy plain—an anachronism if one does not consider that mediæval mystery plays were always conceived according to the locale of their presentation. The children, dancing in the snow, follow the star and the procession of the three kings and their attendants to the manger where Christ was born. This is shown in the second act where the Virgin is seen seated bending over the cradle in company with the *Ox* and the *Ass* who have singing parts. Mr. Damrosch has made a close study of old pictures for the costumes which are used in "The Children at Bethlehem" and very appropriate scenery has been painted for the piece. On next Sunday afternoon in the New Theatre the final concert of the French series will be given by the society. The symphony on this occasion will be that of César Franck, which has been heard in New York comparatively little of late. Debussy's "L'Apres midi d'un Faune," the work which first won this composer prominence and which is still the most popular of his compositions is included in the programme scheme. The soloists are both members of the orchestra. Paul Kefer will play an air for 'cello by D'Indy, and Mr. Barrere will play a cantabile and presto for flute by Enesco, the Rumanian composer whose symphony was heard at the last concerts of the society. The programme will close with Lalo's "Arlequin," and Chabrier's "Marche Joyeuse."

The third concert of the historical series of pianoforte recitals by Sigismond Stojowski will be given at Mendelssohn Hall on Saturday afternoon, March 4, at 2:30. Under the heading of Romantic Classics and Classic Romantics Mr. Stojowski will play the following programme:

Carl Maria von Weber,
Sonata in A flat major, op. 39
Franz Schubert,
Three Musical Moments, op. 94, Nos. 2, 3, 4
Minuetto from G major fantasy
Two Impromptus, B flat major, op. 142, No. 3
A flat minor, op. 90, No. 4.
Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy,
Variations serieuses
Four songs without words
Hunting Song, F major, No. 22
Spinning Song, G minor, No. 46
John Field.....Rondo in E flat major

Frank Farrell, pianist, well known throughout New England, is to give his first New York recital in Mendelssohn Hall on Tuesday evening, March 28, under the management of Loudon Charlton.

Miss Carolyn Beebe and Edouard Dethier will give the last of their series of sonata recitals in Mendelssohn Hall on Tuesday evening, February 28. Faure's sonata in A major will be heard for the first time, while the other offerings will be Reger's suite, op. 93, and Nardini's sonata in D major.

Novelties will characterize in large measure the recital programme which Mme. Frances Alda will offer in Mendelssohn Hall on Friday afternoon, March 3. Opening with a group of old Italian songs and compositions by Handel and Purcell, the programme will include "Laue Sommernacht," by Alma Maria Mahler; Schindler's "Abendständchen," Moussorgsky's "Chantilult," and an English folksong, "The Crystal Spring," all of which will be heard in New York for the first time. Other interesting features will be Humperdinck's "Wiegenlied," to be sung in English; Cadman's "From the Land of the Sky Blue Water," Debussy's "Romance" and Bemberg's "Chant Venetien." Mme. Alda will be assisted by Kurt Schindler at the piano.

Edmond Clement's programme for his second Carnegie Hall recital on Tuesday afternoon, February 28, contains seventeen numbers, divided into five groups, one of which contains songs in English—Campbell's "A Violet in Her Lovely Hair," Chadwick's "Sweet Wind that Blows" and Clay's "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby." Mr. Clement will repeat by request Massenet's "Reve de Manon," accompanied on the harp by Charles Salzedo, who will also assist at the piano. Among other numbers that the French tenor will sing are Gaston Schindler's "Addration," Lully's "Amadis," Grieg's "Je t'aime," Bizet's "Serenade des Pecheurs de Perles" and Saint-Saëns's "LA-has."

Mischa Elman, who will make his farewell appearance in this city at the Metropolitan Opera House on Sunday evening, March 5, has selected as his programme Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" and the "Ave Maria" by Schubert-Wilhelmj and "Palpiti" by Paganini. Following this Mr. Elman will leave New York for his Pacific coast tour, returning here the middle of May, when he sails for Europe.

Schumann Heink will make her only appearance of the season in this city with the New York Philharmonic Society in Carnegie Hall on March 21 and 23. After this engagement the great contralto continues her wonderfully successful tour which will last until June, when she goes abroad to sing in the Wagner festivals in Bayreuth and Munich.

Josef Hofmann is meeting with great receptions on the Pacific coast. Last week he gave three recitals in Los Angeles, the third being an extra one. He is now in San Francisco, where he will be playing five concerts during the coming week, after which he visits Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Victoria and Spokane. Hofmann's next appearances in New York city will be with the New York Symphony Orchestra at the New Theatre on March 31 and April 2. He is also to give a farewell recital at Carnegie Hall on April 8, which will close the most successful tour he ever had in America. In place of the original fifty engagements he was announced for he will have played seventy-four after his farewell recital here.

John McCormack, the Irish tenor, assisted by Marie Narelle, the distinguished balladist, and Ada Sassoli, harpist, will give in Carnegie Hall this evening a concert of songs and harp music.

Leo Ornstein, a young Russian pianist whose parents brought him to this city four years ago to escape religious persecution in their own country, will make his first public appearance on Sunday evening, March 5, in a concert with orchestra at the New Amsterdam Theatre.

Clarence Whitehill will give a song recital at Mendelssohn Hall to-morrow afternoon.

Ferdinand Kaufmann, violinist, will give a concert at Mendelssohn Hall on the afternoon of March 2.

The novelty of next Tuesday evening's Oratorio Society concert at Carnegie Hall, the brilliant setting by Camille Saint-Saëns of Psalm CL., is dedicated to a New Yorker, Whitney Warren, a compliment that may be taken as a reminder of the American visit of the famous French composer. Another suggestion of Saint-Saëns's oversea journeyings is found in an Oriental dance introduced in this psalm and justified by the words "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance." Unlike some other composers Saint-Saëns has studied in their own habitat the characteristic dances and music of many races, north Africa and the Canary Islands being favorite regions of exploration with him. Besides the Oriental dance there is skilful use in this psalm setting of the chorus, heard by itself and with the several orchestral choirs. The larger of the two works set for next Tuesday evening, February 28, by the Oratorio Society is César Franck's "The Beatitudes," not previously heard here in English. In the last decade César Franck's name has been in frequent use on American concert lists, and his single symphony and string quartets have especially made their places secure. The composer's harmonic boldness and rhythmic freedom have been noted in his masterwork, "The Beatitudes," but above all his complete sincerity and deep earnestness have won appreciation. The modest and retiring organist of the Church of Ste. Clotilde in Paris was remembered by some as the man who was always in a hurry and wore clothes that did not fit him, but the twenty years since his death have given him a commanding place in modern French music. Soloists at next Tuesday's Oratorio Society concert, under Frank Damrosch's direction, will include Miss Florence Hinkle, Mrs. Cara Sapin, Evan Williams, William Wheeler, Emilio de Gogorza and Reinald Werrenrath.

TAFT'S BENGUET BOULEVARD.

Yankees Build in Philippines One of the World's Great Roads.

The Benguet Boulevard in the Philippines is a road of 200 bridges. Here it starts into the cañon on a fourteen foot shelf cut from the solid rock, and never gets out till after traversing seventeen miles of ever winding course, now hundreds of feet above the river, now at the water's edge, it comes to Camp Colgan, the foot of the zigzag, where in a supreme effort it struggles up and out, rising thousands of feet above the river in a two mile stretch.

The view from the top back and down is a wonder. On the one hand one gets glimpses of the road in thirteen places, while on the other stretch the interesting rice terraces made by our non-Christian visitors to the World's Fair at St. Louis, the hill tribes of Igorrotes. The first white man who went to Baguio told his friends on his return of gold in the rocks, but better yet, of the cool place he had found.

So more men went, and now there is this road. A $2,000,000 boulevard built by Uncle Sam for his boys in the far East, every kilometer of which is carefully guarded and maintained by a camponero, or caretaker. It is a road to be compared to the famous passes of the Alps and Norway or the Government road to Darjeeling.

The men who made "Tafts Benguet Boulevard" built a monument to be proud of, says a writer in *Travel and Exploration*. They dug it out of the mountain side or built it up from the river. They swung it across the yawning gorges on grapevine bridges made of wire cable, which never fail to bring squeals of terror from the New England school ma'am as the cars slowly crawl out and swing 200 feet above the rushing torrent.

GOSSIP OF MUSICIANS.

Giulio Gatti-Casazza is by no means certain that there will be an opportunity to see and hear "The Knight of the Rose" at the Metropolitan Opera House next year. He has read the Italian criticisms sent after the first production to the Italian newspapers, but is unable to derive any definite opinion as to the success of the performance from these contradictory reports.

"Then it would be necessary to have some reasonable agreement with the publishers of Richard Strauss's music," he said, "as to the terms on which the opera could be sung at the Metropolitan Opera House. The first proposition was altogether out of the question. It would be absurd to acquire the rights to the opera on terms that made financial loss certain. We must expect to make a certain profit or we must not give the work.

"When I produced 'Salome' at La Scala the terms on which we got the opera were very different. I gave it sixteen times before large audiences, not always to a sold out house but before good houses always. For that work I had to pay only $1,500. Now the Strauss publishers want as much for this new work as we had to pay for all the rights of Puccini's 'The Girl of the Golden West,' although the Puccini operas are proved to be among the most profitable in the répertoire. It will be necessary to learn on what terms the opera may be obtained and what its real success has been before any decision as to its performance can be reached."

Signor Gatti has no idea when another work may be expected from the composer of "The Girl of the Golden West." It will be some time before the subject for his next opera will be found.

"One of Puccini's great qualities as a composer," the general manager of the Metropolitan Opera House said, "is his recognition of the importance of a good text. He is perfectly willing to wait for two years until he finds one. But he will not employ a book that is certain to meet with failure. How different the result would have been in many cases if other composers had devoted as much thought to this matter. Look at 'William Tell,' which is such a sublime opera, but is made practically impossible by reason of the libretto. There are many other instances of the waste of a composer's genius. I estimate the share of the libretto in the success of a work at one-half at least. One can fairly say that it is half as important as the music."

Signor Gatti is uncertain as to the French novelties with which it will be possible to enrich the répertoire of the Metropolitan Opera House next winter.

"I am satisfied that 'Ariane et Barbe Bleue,' which will be given next month," he said, "is the most striking French composition that we could have selected. I do not say that his work is the equal of 'Louise' or 'Pelléas et Mélisande,' but I am sure that Dukas is the most potent musical force in the school of French composers to-day. There are, of course, grounds on which one may criticise the libretto of Maeterlinck. But it is imperative that one regard the book not as a romance but wholly from a symbolical viewpoint. Then it is eloquent and poetic enough."

Andreas Dippel is delighted that the first two audiences to hear the new opera of Victor Herbert were large enough to leave no vacant seats in the theatre.

"There never could have been any doubt as to the artistic success of the experiment," he said. "But what after all is the consolation of complete artistic success when there is no audience to honor the performances. To have had small or even medium sized audiences hear the first representation of an opera by an American composer of the importance of Victor Herbert would have been such a reflection on the patriotism and musical enthusiasm of the American public that it would have taken a long time to recover from such discouraging conditions. As it is there could have been no more flattering reception for the new work, both here and in Philadelphia."

"The Secret of Suzanna" and "Quo Vadis" are to be the two new works of the Chicago-Philadelphia company. The first named is a one act work by Ermanno Wolf Ferrari, and has been sung with great success under Felix Mottl in Munich. It was announced recently on the programme of a symphonic concert here, but something in the name so alarmed the ladies in charge of the programmes that the overture was suddenly withdrawn to the consternation of the admirers of the orchestra, who were delighted at such an evidence of enterprise. It was their efforts to ascertain the reason for the withdrawal of the work that led to the explanation that the ladies of the committee had understood that Suzanna was the Biblical character who has been identified in the public mind with the elders and was not the sort of a person to play any part on a programme at any concert organized by them.

Otto Goritz, the popular barytone of the Metropolitan Opera House, recently accomplished a tour de force which recalled those busy days in which Edouard de Reszke used to try to take part in every performance under Maurice Grau and by his comparative success led the gentle Plançon to exclaim more in envy than in sorrow: "Dear Edouard is not an artist. He is a horse." The versatile Goritz took the part of *Alberich* in a performance of "Siegfried" on Monday afternoon, sang the *Spielmann* in "Königskinder" the next afternoon in Philadelphia, assumed the part of the matrimonial agent in "Die Verkaufte Braut" for the first time on Wednesday evening and had his regular part in the representation of "Königskinder" on Thursday afternoon. In spite of this exhausting trial of his powers his difficulties were much increased by the antics of Adamo Didur and Albert Reiss, who were determined to make life as trying for him as possible. His tormentors had their principal opportunities in the "Königskinder" when they sprinkled him with water from the fountain, splashed it in his face and when he is unable to leave the scene without his cap threw it into the spring. Spectators of the next representation of Humperdinck's opera will doubtless have some fun in watching the revenge which Otto Goritz has prepared for his colleague. There is a certain lack of fairness in the fact that there are two against one in these struggles, but Otto Goritz seems able to take care of himself.

Berta Morena, who has sailed for Europe, will again be a member of the company at the Metropolitan Opera House next season. She will appear in concert for the first time in this country during a brief tour before the beginning of the season at the Metropolitan.

On the programme of the song recital soon to be given by Francis Alda appears a song "Laue Sommernacht," by Alma Maria Mahler. The composer is the attractive wife of the conductor of the Philharmonic Society and ever since her first visit to this country has been regarded as a charming type of Viennese beauty. Mrs. Mahler has already put a number of songs to her credit and received only the other day from Vienna a new series of her works which had just been published. She does not come of musical parents, but was the daughter of a famous painter in Austria.

THE WEST INDIAN ICE HOUSE

A NAME THAT COVERS WIDELY VARYING PLACES.

Goes Back to the Days When Ice Importation Was a Monopoly—Now for the Most Part It Means a Hotel Where the White Population Gathers.

When the Northerner first heads for the tropics he is apt to get one valuable and reiterated piece of advice: Don't drink liquor in those hot countries. Alcohol is sure death.

The advice is the best and the least followed in the world. In fact a stranger, especially in an English colony in the West Indies or in British Guiana, is apt to come to the conclusion that drinking is one of the chief local industries. And there are some good drinks too. Any one who has been introduced to a planters' punch on a hot afternoon in Kingston, Jamaica, and who has the moral courage to stop at one, deserves a Carnegie hero medal.

And any one who has drunk Scotch Pilsener out of pewter mugs in the icehouse at Nassau has something to look back at. The icehouse is an institution peculiar to the British colonies, apparently. The stranger is apt to find it early in his experience for this reason: In a population nine-tenths, or it may be ninety-nine-hundredths, black he is put to it to find a place where the white man can drink without running foul of the proprieties and crossing the color line.

There is of course always a club. It takes only two Englishmen in a colony to form a club, and the two can get into a dignified quarrel as to the best way to run things as soon as one is formed.

But the club is not always available, and the icehouse is the alternative. The icehouse may be a store or it may be a hotel, but it is sure to be a drinking place for white folks.

Take one of the most northern of them, that at Nassau. There the ice house is a general store plus a real ice house and a back room where one may drink cool beer and talk with the quaint Scotch proprietor, who holds to the theory that most folks sit up too late and who to be consistent goes to bed at dark.

His place lives up to its name. The ice making machine has not, or had not a few years ago, reached the Bahamas and the ice house had a monopoly on ice, bringing it by schooner from Maine and selling it at a cent a pound. There are times when ice runs short and that fact has given it a new value in the eyes of the Bahama negro. He has no real use for it. He has nothing that needs to be kept on ice and he wouldn't drink an iced drink if you gave it to him, but since it is valuable to the white man it must be worth having.

For that reason the negro when he has money goes to the ice house, buys a five pound piece of ice, ties a string around it and walks home, swinging it in the hot sun. By the time he gets home it is melted but it has served its purpose. For once in his life he has worn "diamonds."

In other British colonies the ice house has outlived its name. Artificial ice has taken the place of that which was brought by schooner from the north Atlantic. In Bridgetown, Barbados, the ice house is a hotel in a corner of one of the main streets with a veranda on which one may sit in peace and watch the hurrying black crowds in the dazzling sun beaten street below.

Here too one may have that unique Barbados delicacy, the flying fish dinner. Just why the flying fish as food should be peculiar to Barbados can only be explained on the theory that nowhere else in the West Indies are the natives really forced to hustle for food. In Barbados the population is so dense that the negro really works when he doesn't want to, the result being that the black man in Barbados is one of the most pestiferous in the world, never letting go of a traveller whom he has once spotted and who may have a shilling to waste on a guide.

In Port of Spain, Trinidad, the ice house is like its Barbados cousin, a comfortable hotel in the business quarter serving an excellent meal at a modest price and priding itself on a bar where one may get American cocktails, as well as Scotch and soda.

Move a step further south and one finds in Georgetown, Demarara, the ice house serving a double purpose. Two travellers from New York ran into that odd characteristic two years ago.

They had wandered through the streets of that city of 60,000, investigated its market, where coolies, South American Indains and negroes join in indiscriminate trade. Then they grew thirsty and walked a while until the "ice house" sign confronted them. They entered a dingy bar, drank Scotch and warm soda, and noticed that the bartender, a mulatto, seemed puzzled.

Two hours later under the guidance of a white resident they discovered their error. They had gone into the downstairs apartment of the icehouse, where only negroes go. Properly escorted they went a floor above to find a spacious billiard room and bar where they were introduced to that inspiring tropical mixture, the swizzle.

The best that the dictionaries can tell us is that a swizzle is "a mixed drink, one of several variously compounded" and that a swizzle stick is "a stick used in making swizzles." To those two thirsty travellers a swizzle is a far finer thing than that definition implies. To the expert swizzle maker are brought a pitcher, gin, bitters, ice and water, and above all the swizzle stick, a hand carved implement a foot or more in length with four blades like a propeller radiating from one end. Rotated rapidly between the palms of the hands after the fashion shown in the old geography pictures of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego making fire by friction it stirs the gin, bitters and water into a frothing, creamy drink that reconciles any wanderer in the tropics to the discomforts of a 100 degree thermometer.

The Black Sleeve Band.

From Browning's Magazine.

The custom of wearing a black band on the sleeve as an indication of half or second mourning invites remark. Black bands were first worn by liveried servants in England, when it was not thought necessary to fit them out in complete uniform of black. It is usually considered better form to abjure entirely the livery of grief if one cannot afford or does not approve of wearing black, and as nearly every one has at least one black suit, or should have, the necessity of the band is not quite apparent.

A Kentucky Mail Carrier's Adventure

From the Elizabethtown News.

One of the greatest adventures made by Frank Forbis, the Cub Run mail carrier, was with a consignment of pills. Charlie Richardson, the postmaster, got a large supply of pills directed to people on Frank's route. There were 25,000 pills, which required an extra mail sack to hold them, and Frank was considerably packed up.

Going over a rough place in the road his horse heard the pills rattling in the boxes, took fright and ran a long distance. The people along the route were apprehensive that Frank was in danger of great bodily injury. Paul Revere never made so fast a run. The faithful horse finally fell from exhaustion. Frank never moved in his saddle and never lost a pill.

TO REMOVE STAINS.

English Ways of Taking Out Various Kinds of Spots.

Fruit stains should be treated at once, says an English writer in the *Queen*, for if allowed to set they are difficult to remove. Rub the stain with soft soap or good yellow soap, well wetted, then cover it with a paste of salt and water. Or rub the stain well on both sides with a good yellow soap, and then tie over it a little pearl ash, and let it all soak in hot water, boiling it if necessary; rinse well and dry in the open air.

If the stain is very persistent try the following: Crush four ounces of chloride of lime in a basin and work it to a smooth paste with a little cold water; when perfectly mixed, add to this from one and a half to one and three-quarter pints more cold water, using in all two pints of water; now stir the lime well, cover closely, and let it stand for a day or two, stirring it occasionally. Now leave it till quite settled, when you skim it, pour off the clear liquid, straining it into a bottle, and keep tightly stoppered.

To remove the stains rub the spot with a rag dipped in the mixture, rinsing it at once after the spot is removed in clean cold or tepid water. Should the article be badly stained soak it in cold water to which you have added sufficient of the mixture to make the water smell slightly of lime; watch this, and directly the stains are removed lift out the linen, rinse well, and dry in the open air in the sun if possible. Care must be taken with this, for if the linen be left in too long the bleach will rot it. This remedy will remove almost any stains.

If the fingers are stained from walnuts dip them in strong tea, rubbing the nails well with it with a nail brush, and wash the hands at once in warm water and the stains will at once disappear.

If grass stains on cotton are rubbed with pure alcohol they will disappear, but this should be done at once. For claret stains soak the cloth at once in skim milk two or three times and wash out in cold water.

To make balls for removing grease stains mix well 1½ ounces of powdered French chalk and 5 ounces of powdered pipeclay, then work them to a paste with 2 ounces of spirits of wine, shape this paste into balls and leave them to dry. To use, moisten the grease stains well with warm water, then rub them thoroughly with the ball; now let dry, if possible in the sun; then brush well and sponge with a little water if any stain be left.

To clean discolored hearths mix whiting to a thin paste with skim milk, adding a drop or two of liquid blue or a morsel of stone blue. Put it on the hearthstone with a paint brush. This does not crack off.

White stains on polished wood caused by upsetting any spirit or by overhot dishes or plates may be removed by applying to these spots a feather dipped in spirits of camphor. This must be used very sparingly and the furniture rubbed well at once with a cloth d