A STAR'S DRESSING ROOM.

The Artist and the Reporter Get a View Behind the Scenes.

THE RAPID CHANGES OF SOTHERN.

How the Great Actor Makes-Up For the "Prisoner of Zenda"—Swift Rushes and Very Ready Helpers.

(Copyright, 1895, for The Times.)

The theatrical success of this fall is without doubt "the Prisoner of Zenda," in which E. H. Sothern has scored the greatest triumph of his career, at least from the standpoint of popular appreciation. If one wants proof of this, let him stroll up to the box office of the Lyceum theatre some evening after dinner to secure a seat, and discover that he is a week too late.

But if Sothern has won this brilliant success as the hero of Anthony Hope's thrilling romance, he has won it honestly by the hardest work of his life. The play begins at 8, and ends at 11:20. Three quarters of an hour of this time are intermissions. Mr. Sothern's actual time on the stage is one hour and three quarters. That doesn't sound drearily laborious. It isn't. The work on the stage, the acting he has to do, compared to the other work of the evening, is rest. Yet he plays three characters, and through the greater part of the play simulates, as Rudolf Rassendyll, the King of Euritania, and he engages twice in pretty energetic fencing bouts. Yet this is repose and peace of mind compared to what he does off the stage. All the time he is off the boards, with the exception of a few minutes after the false King Rudolf leads the Princess Flavia to their coronation, his brain and nerves are at the highest tension, while his arms and hands are flying like shuttle-blocks. Moreover the activity of two strong, alert young men is taxed to the full in simply assisting him.

If anyone will read the following exact account of an evening with Sothern in his dressing room and behind the scenes during the performance of "The Prisoner of Zenda" he will find the preceding statements to be but the boldest truth, without one grain of exaggeration.

One more preliminary remark. Owing to the drawing powers of the play, three matinees are given weekly. The night on which Mr. Sothern's movements off the stage were followed by the writer with Boswell-like noting of every turn, was one that had been preceded by a matinee performance only a few hours before, in which the actor had been through exactly the same work.

This work for the evening really began after the matinee, when he dressed and arranged the three red wigs which he uses in the play. They are brushed, combed, treated with brilliantine, fluffed out and curled. A number of brass hairpins holds the locks in position until the wigs are to be used. Each one is stretched on a wooden head. There they stand on the mantel in Sothern's dressing room, as if there had been a triple decapitation in the Elphburg family.

Mr. Sothern dines at half past five. His dinner is not a part of this story; but every body must hope that it is substantial and nourishing, and that the young actor brings a good appetite to it.

When he arrives at his dressing room, everything is in apple-pie order. The incomparable Spice has put in two or three hours work there by way of preparation. Edward Spice is Mr. Sothern's valet. Next to Mr. Sothern, he is the most essential factor in the play. If the spirit of evil were to seduce his healthy brain into a "strike," there would probably be no play that night.

But before Spice or Mr. Sothern arrives, let us take a look around the dressing room. You are enjoying a privilege rarely accorded to the public, which usually gets no nearer to it than a view of the three chintz-curtained windows on the top floor of the small brick house, 22 East 30th street. The room is the office of Mr. Williams, Stage Mananger of the Lyceum, but the heat in Mr. Sothern's dressing room was so great that he was transferred to this.

The floor is of wood, painted but bare except for a white sheet which is pinned to it with flat-headed drawing nails. This is in front of the table or bracket where Mr. Sothern makes up. At the left of the door as you enter, this white pine shelf, about twenty inches wide, runs three quarters of the length of the room. It is at a height that brings the myriad factors of the make-up within easy reach of Mr. Sothern's hands when he is seated in front of it. A mirror about 4x21 inches stands on its long side in the middle of this shelf. A linen cloth covers the shelf, and on it Spice has disposed half a dozen rouge-pots in various tints of pink, eight or ten powder puffs, two or three hares' feet, a pot or two of lip paint, several camel's hair water-color brushes, a box of water-color paints, a pot of vaseline, bottles of listerine, ammonia, alchohol, benzoin and bay rum, tin boxes galore with paint powder, powder to slip into boots and gloves so as to run them on more easily, wads of cotton-wool, several small waffle cloths, hair brushes, combs, etc., etc. One or two white handkerchiefs are tucked in over the mirror.

A brilliant arc of electric lights is just above the mirror, and there are two gas jets at its sides. At the left on a small bracket hangs a round hand-glass.

This bracket supports an electric fan. There is another on the opposite side. Everything has been placed by Spice just where it should be.

Near this dressing table is a red tin washing stand. On the walls hang the entire wardrobe of the actor for "The Prisoner of Zenda," arranged in order. On the north side of the room, just across from the table where Sothern sits and makes up, is a long pier-glass, adjustable at any angle.

The gas jets are at its sides, enclosed in the wire globes which theatre gas jets always have around them. There are three tables in the room, and on one are the wigs and orders which the actor wear as Prince Rudolf. The tables are to lay out the clothes on, as they are needed. Under one of the tables is a small tub with cracked ice in it on which rests a bottle of Lithia water. A bottle not of Lithia water stands on a shelf. Under another table is a portable tin bath tub.

All the lights are lit, and the room is almost dazzingly illuminated when Spice arrives with a rush, at ten minutes of seven.

"We have to be in a hurry," he remarked, using the editorial plural with the most natural air in the world. "We never had to work harder than in this play."

He drops a bundle of fresh white handkerchiefs on the table, gets into the neatest and smallest of white linen jackets, and begins to hustle. Spice has a day with fourteen working hours in it, but he is devoted to his employer, and is blithe and good-natured. He takes a long coat of lawn with lace ends, that looks for all the world like an altar cover. But there is nothing more sacred than the neckscarf of Prince Rudolf in the Prologue.

Another assistant, Dan Dickers, has shown up now, and the two fold the neck-scarf. Then Spice lays out the insignia of the Garter, and the several orders worn by Prince Rudolf. In all the important articles there are second sets in case of any accident.

There is a hurried step on the stairs, and Sothern quickly but quietly enters the room. After greeting the writer he made a request that he should not be asked about anything, and that nothing anywhere should be in any way disturbed.

"I get rather nervous and have to make use of every moment of time. Any distraction or misplacing has an irritating effect," he said in explanation of this request.

Before he had finished speaking he had begun pulling off his things, and having reduced his attire to undershirt and drawers, he threw a chocolate colored bath gown over him. A moment later he is seated at the dressing table, and had begun his evening's work.

He first carefully combs his hair and gets it flat. He has to wear a crop wig, and a peruke over it in the prologue. He wets the comb in a tumbler of water on the table.

"Get me a towel, please, Spice," he says.

All through the dressing and make-ups of the evening, he made these requests or short remarks without taking his attention off the work in hand, and no matter how heated or hurried he might be, there was always this "please," or "won't you?" that toned the demand very agreeably.

He takes a stick of pomade and greases back his hair; then he smears the preparation for the make-up over his face and neck, afterward rubbing it in vigorously with his hand or a small sponge. Throughout, his eyes are fixed on himself in the glass with a constant but impersonal attention. In the meantime Spice is sewing a jeweled star on a garter, and Dickers is putting studs into the fresh white shirts, three of which are used at each performance. It may be remarked, en passant, that Mr. Sothern's laundry bill is $12 or $15 a week.

There is a silence like a prayer meeting in the little room where the actor, two assistants, a writer, and an artist, are all busily engaged. A messenger boy arrives. Sothern, without interrupting the work on his face, finds out what he wants, gives him instructions, and with an "all right, thank you," promptly dismisses him.

He takes the hand-glass now, and with a fine camel's hair brush pencils his eyes. Then he loads the powder puff heavily, and dabs it all over his face vigorously till he looks at himself in the glass through a snow-storm of poudre de riz, like a peering Pierrot. Then with yellowish red powder he colors his hair, which may show under the edges of the wig and then treats his heavy eyebrows in the same way. He is rapidly blossoming into the Red Elphberg. Next he grasps a huge wad of cotton and tones it all down, carefully, painstakingly, thoroughly.

He rubs his finger tips, tinged with bright carmine paint, along his lips. Then with a water color brush full of India ink, he deftly outlines a five-cornered star on his right cheek-bone. No professor of mathematics could have drawn it more accurately. He then fills it in, and, next paints an oval spot on the south-west corner of his chin—pausing for the briefest intervals to study the effect of the face he is putting on himself, just as an artist walks back from the easel to look at his canvass.

"Some water, please," he cries, rising quickly. Spice, who is ever in readiness, turns the spigot of the tin apparatus at the right, and he washes his hands, resuming his seat at the dressing table as soon as he has dried them.

The next step is to smear a thick line along the top of his forehead where the hair begins. The toupee fluff which he uses is to hold his wig tightly on. Spice, unbidden, had placed the block with the rutilant wig of the Elphberg on the dressing table. Sothern takes it, poises it above his head, adjusts it daintily, and then tugs it down. With an ivory paper-cutte, slipped under the edges, he arranges it smoothly.

At this moment an electric bell over the door buz-z-z-z noisily the half hour warning before the curtain for the prologue. It may not be generally known that Mr. Sothern is the stage manager of this play. He always inspects the stage before the curtain rises, to be assured that every smallest detail is as it should be. This electric bell is his "call-boy." It rings at half past seven, quarter of eight and at five minutes of eight.

With the same intense concentration he continues his makeup, rubbing paint now on the forehead where the pink groundwork of his wig joins it. He brushes the auburn locks into order. Great fun. He is the Red Elphberg, and a very good-looking "red-head" Rein.

The last touch is to paint a black crescent on his left temple. Then he flies up, washes his hands again in a jiffy, while "The overture," remarks Mr. Sothern. Through the whole long make up and dressing, with all his quickness, he has work. He darts out to take a look at the stage, and returns after two minutes. Everything is all right. He does not go on the prologue for twelve minutes after the curtain rises; so he improves this interval of waiting by a few little attentions to the red wig of Rudolf Rassendyll which he is to wear in the next act. He snips off a few straggling hairs with a pair of scissors. A little rosin is thrown on the floor and he rubs the soles of his shoes in it. The handle of his sword is also rubbed with rosin. There is a duel in the Prologue, and there must be no slip. Then he goes down the stairs to make his entrance. The stage is on a level with the second floor of the house in 24th street.

This was the leisurely make-up and costuming of the evening's work. The rest were made harder and more hurried, and two or three of them were breathlessly rushed through with. At the end of the Prologue, Princes Rudolf is left dead on the stage at the curtain. Some muffled music creeping up to the dressing-room from the orchestra announced the conclusion of the Prologue.

"Now it will be lively work," says Spice with boyish excitement. Spice is a small, wiry young Kentishman of twenty-four, though he doesn't look it.

Sothern bursts into the room on a run. His peruke is off, he plucks the crop wig from his head on his way to the pier glass and hurls it across the room. They have got Rassendyll's tweed suit and everything in readiness. Between the time the Prologue ends and the entrance of Rassendyll in the first set there are fourteen minutes. But Sothern has warmed up to his work. Little rills of perspiration make glistening wet lines on his face.

"Dan, turn the fan off, quick. Shut the door, too," he exclaims quickly. In a moment, his costume is on the floor. Here it must be remarked that in this first act Sothern changes his costume as Rassendyll to that of Rudolf V., in less than three minutes, and again changes back to Rassendyll, a little later, in less than two minutes. This last is the quickest change he has to make. His disappearance on one side of the stage as Rudolf V., and reappearance on the other so soon as Rassendyll naturally adds much to the effectiveness of his impersonation of the two characters. Rassendyll has a tweed suit, straw hat and walking stick, and wears a red Henri Quartre beard and moustache. Rudolf V. wears a wine-colored Hussar or jacket, tight black breeches and top boots.

Therefore in dressing for act I, which Sothern is now doing, he first gets on the black tight breeches and boots. Spice holds one boot in readiness for him, and Dan the other. He plunges one leg after the other into them. All these things take less time than the telling of them.

"Open the door now, Dan," he says, as he springs to the pier-glass. He is more clothed and there is not so much danger of catching cold. Spice is standing back of him, bent over, holding the tweed trousers open for him, to turn round and jump into. This, Sothern does literally, for as soon as he got his legs through he gives an agile spring in the air and pulls them up tightly as he comes down. The next moment he is seated at the makeup table repairing his face.

"Turn on the fans, Dan, please," he says, as he powders himself anew.

"Open another window, Dan. It's awfully hot."

The hare-foot is flying over his face with its tempering touch. In the Prologue he was white with powder. Here he is the ruddy-faced Englishman. He adjusts the other red wig with the same attention.

"These shirts are absolutely useless. They melt if you look at them."

He catches over the top of his ears the wires that hold on his beard, plants the mustache with a firm dab on his lip, and then makes up a little more.

In the exciting rush, with every nerve on edge, Spice in trying to start the electric fan on the left hand bracket, knocked it off with a bang on the floor. Sothern's foot gave an eloquent little tatter of irritation, but without any impatience in his voice, he said cooly as he went right on.

"Never mind. Dan will fix it during the act."

Here the bell clangs off in a way to make a fire horse jump. A moment later it gave another spiteful "Who-the-deuse-don't-you-hurry" sort of snarl. Sothern leaps for his coat, grabs his hat and stick from Spice's hands on his way out, and rushes down the stairs. Seven minutes after he goes on for this first act he exits at the right, and has to cross over to the other side to make his entrance from the left as the drunken king. He goes down four or five steps, turns and descends fifteen more, crosses a passage way under the stage, and back of the orchestra, then mounts the same number of steps on the other side. There is a fine of $10.00 imposed on anyone who gets in his way in this transit.

A small table with make-up material, a glass with a strong light in front of it, and a small stove are in the corner of this part of the wings. The space is so narrow that two people could not start in line. Two or three steps with a small platform go up and lead into the stage.

The faithful Spice was waiting for his master to appear. The moment he did he stripped off his coat and trousers, and helped him into the Hussar jacket, all in a twinkling. Sothern sat down and gave some touches to his face to represent the raddled visage of the drunken king, wet his hair and plastered it down upon his forehead. During this time he has to utter maudlin remarks and incoherent words every now and then. A moment more and he reels upon the stage, the King. This change, including his passage down and upstairs and across, consumes less than four minutes.

When he falls senseless they take him off. As they push him in on the little platform the actor who is dressed and made up to take his place is crouched down ready to spring into Sapt's and Tarlenheim's arms the moment they release Sothern, and be taken on to the stage. As they release Sothern he falls back into the stage-carpenter's arms. It is quite a dramatic little scene. Like a flash he is out of his jacket and into his suit, down on the stone getting on his beard and arranging his wig smoothly; then with a wild clutch for his straw hat and stick he jumps down the stairs. In case he should fail to get them, or anything should have befallen them, Dan is waiting on the other side with another hat and cane exactly like them.

"You see we can't leave anything to chance," observes the admirable Spice, apropos of this arrangement.

Mr. Sothern's dress for the second act in which he simulates the king, is a very swell military costume, with brass breastplate and helmet. It is exactly like one the Kaiser wears. He has a quarter of an hour to make up and costume himself, but there is not a moment of it in which he is not as busy as a beaver, and the two young fellows are working like hatters, too.

"This is quick dressing, isn't it?" he remarks as he puts the finishing touch, drains a glass of Lithia with a spoonful of Glenlivet in it, and rushes down the stairs. He is on the stage in the second act all the time, except about five minutes. This is the period off the stage in which he has a moment's rest. Even here the ubiquitous Spice meets him with the hand-glass tucked in his waistband, a conge-pot, powder puff and pencil, with which Mr. Sothern makes a few strokes. He also calls the attention of the British Ambassador to a point to be observed, and thoughtfully straightens out the ribbon of the Turkish Ambassador's orders. All the people who have just come off the stage are crowded in the wings. The interval before they return is too short to do anything in.

After this act there is a repetition in kind of the scene already described. He tears off his things and drops them on the floor, leaving Spice and Dickers to colect them. Again the rouging, barefooting, powder-puffing, and again, the run from the dressing room to the stage. Before he goes down he squirts a red liquid on his white shirt, where he is to be stabbed by Hentzan in this act.

"This stuff keeps getting away from me," he remarked to Spice, about the stick of adhesive paste that he wanted. "Break it up into dozens of pieces. It always escapes me when I want it."

When Sothern came hurrying in, as usual after this third act, he exclaimed pantingly: "I came up those stairs too quickly. I'm so tired I can't—" He was so tired that he couldn't finish the sentence. The make-up for this act is for the poor, wasted king in the prison of Zenda. As he blocks out red and white patches on his face the effect is a little awful until he softens it down with powder. Then he paints on his face the hopeless king's straggling beard. In this act he has to make another quick four minute change from the King to Rassendyll. Spice carried the suit down to the stage in the bath-tub. The little table and glass are set up just where Sothern makes his change. There is the same rapid change, and he is on the stage as Rassendyll for his last work.

As he came off up the little board with the transverse pieces of scantling nailed on it after the affecting parting with the Princess Flavia, the sense of his part clung to him until he had nearly reached the end of the board. It died out as the color does from a live coal taken from the fire.

"Well, to-morrow is Sunday," said one of the actors to him with sympathetic significance. But he lightly sprang on to where he could peer through a little hole in the scene and view the effect of the morning light breaking on the sorrowful Flavia. Not until the curtain fell were his labors over.

Will any one question that he had done a good day's work, with a matinee and evening performance entailing such a strain, jump and hurry? If any one can, it is because this attempt to describe the work Mr. Sothern does off the stage in the "Prisoner of Zenda" has quite failed to do justice to the subject.

JOHN J. A'BECKET.

E. H. SOTHERN MAKING UP FOR THE IMPRISONED KING.

THE LIGHTNING CHANGES.

Religion.

Religion is an unchangeable fact. It abides forever in the world, despite all assaults.

Here we have at this time a Convention of the New York State Societies of Christian Endeavor, branches of a recently formed national body, which is said to have over a million members, most of whom are young men and young women.

Here we have the Salvation Army, the strength and activity of which grow with the years.

We have the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association, both of them great in numbers and vigor.

We have councils of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, conventions of the Episcopalian bishopric, assemblies of the Presbyterians, conferences of the Methodists and other Protestant communions.

We have thousands of American Sunday schools, at which there are millions of boys and girls.

We have churches, the number of which is enlarged every year.

We believe that there is more, far more, religious activity in the world in our times than ever existed at any other time since Christianity was propagated.

Religion is the strongest, the most enduring, and the most vivacious of all the powers in our world. Firmer than the rock it stands.—New York Sun.

How Gladstone Buys Books

For a good many years I was deeply interested in British politics. I was converted to Liberalism, so-called, by an incident which I deem well worth relating.

One afternoon I entered a book shop in High Holborn and found that the Hon. William E. Gladstone had preceded me thither. I had never seen Mr. Gladstone before. I recognized him now by his resemblance to the caricatures and by his unlikeness to the portraits which the newspapers had printed. As I entered the shop I heard the bookseller ask:

"What books shall I send?"

To this, with a magnificent sweep of his arms indicating every point of the compass, Gladstone made answer:

"Send me those!"

With these words he left, and I stepped forth to claim a volume which had attracted my favorable attention several days previous.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the bookseller, politely, "but that book is sold."

"Sold?" I cried.

"Yes, sir," replied the bookseller, smiling with evident pride; "Mr. Gladstone just bought it; I haven't a book for sale—Mr. Gladstone has just bought them all."

The bookseller then proceeded to tell me that whenever Gladstone entered a book shop he made a practice of buying everything in sight. That magnificent, sweeping gesture of his comprehended everything, theology, history, social science, folk lore, medicine, travel, biography—everything that came to his net was fish!

"This is the third time Mr. Gladstone has visited me," said the bookseller, "and this is the third time he has cleaned me out."

"This man is a good man," says I to myself. "So notable a lover of books surely cannot err. The cause of home rule must be just, after all."

From others intimately acquainted with him I learned that Gladstone was an omnivorous reader; that he ordered his books by the cart load, and that his home in Hawarden literally overflowed with books. He made a practice, I was told, of overhauling his library once in so often, and of weeding out such volumes as he did not care to keep. These discarded books were sent to second-hand dealers, and it is said that the dealers not unfrequently took advantage of Gladstone by reselling him over and over again (and at advanced prices, too) the very lots of books he had culled out and rejected.—Chicago Record.

Nobilitas.

It grieves me much to know I cannot trace
My ancestry, as other men have done,
Back through the ages, coming face to face
With those who wore the purple; not a one
Peers through the shadowland to help my case,
And prove I am of sires a noble son,
Entitled to a place above the level
With those whose blood runs bluer than the devil.

Some of my ancestors obtained a hunk
Of wealth beyond my highest expectations,
And none of it I'm sure was ever sunk
In helping any of their poor relations.
One uncle's sole delight was getting drunk
And never wasting anything on rations,
And one or two to Congress were elected
And drew their pay, as might have been expected.

Some of the gang as well as I can learn
Stood rather high in public estimation,
Were always glad to do a clever turn
And helped a time or two to save the nation;
The others had no very deep concern
In anything except their own salvation;
They lived and loved amidst life's mirth and weeping,
And now are doing their full share of sleeping.

My ancestors, from all that I have heard,
Were very like the mortals of to-day,
With arms and legs, I always have inferred,
Some bald and some with hair to give away;
Of those I knew, now decently interred,
There were some specimens of model clay,
And one or two whose local reputation,
Until they died, scarce met my approbation.

My father's tribe I'm told from Adam sprung,
And he was not a man of great pretensions,
To trace the line from him—but I'm too young,
And then perhaps the job might breed dissensions.
No doubt a fair per cent. of them were hung,
I think that our chronology so mentions;
And others, to the feudal system wedded,
Achieved renown who should have been beheaded.

Those of my ancestry I do not know
Concern me very little as I wander
Along the streets and let the night winds blow
Through pumpkin-colored whiskers while I ponder,
And wait until a ton or two of snow
Rests on my grave and I away up yonder.
Then I can read my fair ancestral story
Where noble blood is pumped plumb full of glory. —Nebraska Journal.

My sweetest love, what time the night
Hushes the roaring of the street,
And Dian shows her silvery light—
My sweet!

I sit me down and take a sheet
Of paper, and I try to write
A daintily love song, trim and neat.

I try until the dawn is bright,
But still the verse is incomplete,
Love can't be told in black and white
My sweet!

"There is only one thing," she said to her dearest girl friend, "that makes me doubt Herbert's affection for me." "What is that?" "He thinks that some of the snapshot photographs he has taken of me are good likenesses."—Washington Star.

MUNYON.

Mrs. Serven Says His Improved Homoeopathic Home Remedies Saved Her a Small Fortune in Doctors' Bills.

She Consults Munyon's Guide To Health, Buys a 25 Cent Specific, and Treats Herself and Family at Home—All of Munyon's Remedies Act Promptly and Cure Permanently.

Mrs. John Serven, 310 west Fourth street, New York city, says: "Professor Munyon's remedies have really saved me a small fortune in doctors' fees. We have had a great deal of sickness in our family, and I used to call a physician for my little ones several times a week. Now I am glad to say that we have not employed a doctor for two years; whenever any one is ill a few doses of Munyon's Remedies act like magic and save us long spells of sickness. We have used Munyon's Cures with wonderful success in colds, coughs, fevers, sore throat, diarrhoea, liver complaint, and dyspepsia, and, in fact, in all kinds of sickness. For myself, I have been cured of asthma by Munyon's Asthma Remedies."

The charm of Munyon's Remedies, next to their healing power, is their mild pleasant action. Under Munyon's system of treatment there are no bitter doses. Professor Munyon puts up a separate remedy for every disease. His Rheumatism Cure seldom fails to relieve rheumatism in from one to three hours, and cures in a few days. His Catarrh Cure is guaranteed to cure catarrh, healing the afflicted parts and restoring them to health. His Kidney Cure speedily cures all forms of kidney disease. His Nerve Cure restores overstrained and overworked nerves to a healthy condition. His Liver Cure corrects headaches, biliousness, and all liver diseases. His Cold Cure never fails to cure the most severe cold. At all druggists, mostly 25 cents a bottle.

Personal letters to Professor Munyon, 1505 Arch street, Philadelphia, Pa., answered with free medical advice for any disease.

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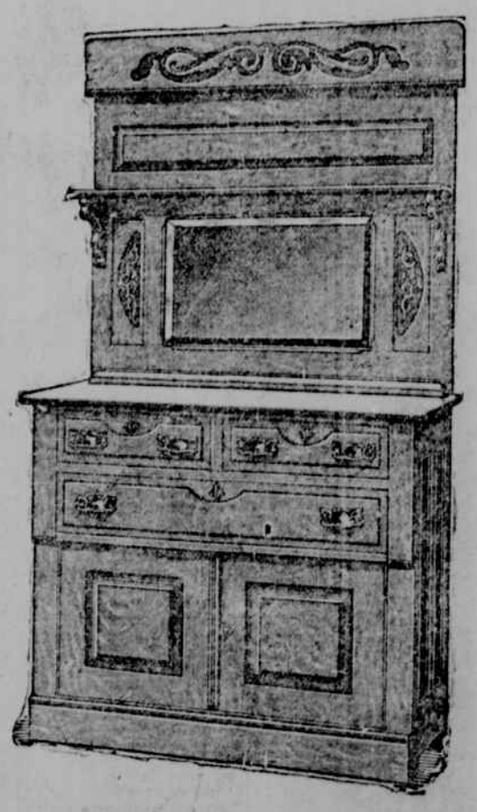

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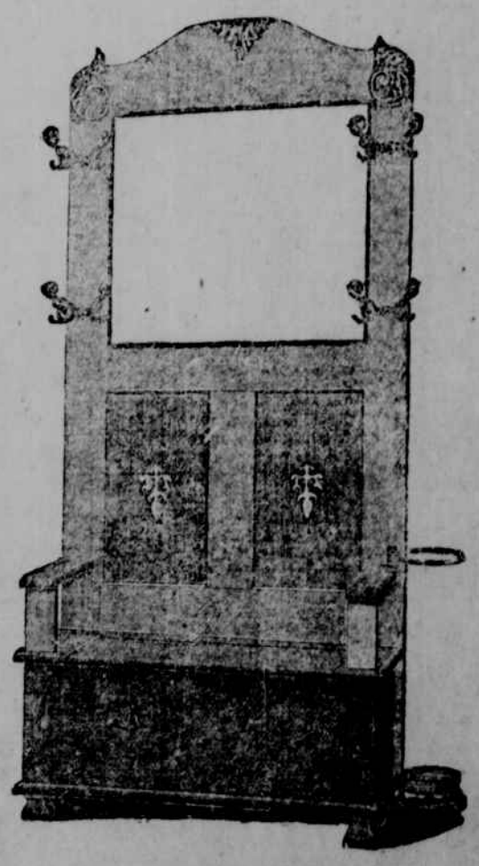

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