

The Times' Daily Short Story.

UNDER THE CAR OF JUGGERNAUT

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There was scarcely breeze enough to rustle the leaves of the wistaria vine which shaded the piazza where Dorothy Bennett was embroidering impossible strawberries on a dolly. A small brown sparrow perched on the rail viewed the work critically for several moments and then fluttered noisily away. As her eyes followed its flight to a neighboring cherry tree she heard the front gate bang and, turning, beheld coming up the path Mr. James Dent, better known to the summer colony, from the most staid matron to the smallest urchin, as Jimmy.

IMPRESSIONS OF "PARSIFAL"

Wagner's Opera as Viewed by a Musician and a Dramatist.

WALTER DAMROSCH DISAPPOINTED

He Misses Impressiveness of Balreuth Production and Regrets Performance Here—Belasco Says Balreuth Is Oudone—Declares Mystic Play Is Not Sacriligious—Audacious? Yes!—Second Act Marvelous.

The following article in the New York Herald contains two impressions of the New York production of Wagner's opera "Parsifal" from the viewpoint of a musician and a dramatist.

Walter Damrosch, the musician, records the production of "Parsifal" as a bold and brave effort on the part of Mr. Conried and his company to achieve the impossible.

"Wagner's last will and testament bequeathing 'Parsifal' to Balreuth exclusively was no idle whim, but inspired by an absolute conviction, born of an intimate knowledge of operatic conditions, that this work was of a character so unique that a proper performance is almost impossible in a regular opera house and decidedly so during a regular opera season.

"It would, therefore, be folly to criticize this performance on the lines laid down by Wagner, for, though Mr. Conried had spent money lavishly and had given the work a fine cast of singers and more rehearsals than are usually vouchsafed a new production during an opera season, and though the performance moved briskly and almost glibly along, Wagner's good judgment was abundantly proved, and I cannot help but wish that Mr. Conried's fine energy and desire to prove his mettle had expended itself on some work less exalted in character and in which so many fine points of art and morals were not at stake.

"At Balreuth performances there were imperfections—artists even there have been known to sing out of tune—but the theater is ideally planned, and artists and audiences alike are enabled to concentrate themselves on the work, inspired by the unique conditions surrounding them and undisturbed by the trivialities of ordinary life.

"I cannot say that the performance reproduced on me the Balreuth impression of the beauty and solemnity of the various ceremonials of the Christian church which are enacted and symbolized before us in the first and third acts. These scenes, which were so deeply moving and impressive in Balreuth, became dull and almost irrelevant. It was frankly 'operatic,' and the scenes might just as well have been taken from some Masonic ceremonial. In the main lines the 'stage business' was the same as in Balreuth, but the inner spirit was often wanting.

"Whether it was the trivial manner in which the Holy Grail was uncovered or the slouchy way in which the knights of the Grail walked or fussed with their cloaks or the garish lighting of the Hall of the Grail, there was but little illusion and none of the mysticism which should envelop these scenes as with a holy mantle. It was heavily borne in upon me that a performance of an art work dealing directly with things and symbols most sacred should either leave the whole stage paraphernalia to the imagination or by incessant rehearsals and discipline succeed in producing a perfect stage illusion. There should be no betwixt and between."

Mr. Damrosch heartily praises the musical performance, though he criticizes the weakness of the chorus. Finally, he cannot see why "Parsifal" should not be given frankly as an opera at ordinary hours, without all this flummery and affectation of long intermissions and trumpet calls. These, he says, "are but externals and cannot reproduce the Balreuth spirit. These are but a mockery of that ideal which Wagner tried to rear in that faraway little country town and which we, who starve in great cities, can only long for as young Parsifal longed for a sight of the Holy Grail in his long wanderings."

David Belasco, the dramatist, says: "I saw 'Parsifal' in Balreuth; I saw the Passion play in Oberammergau. Transplanting is a delicate undertaking, and 'Parsifal' is almost as difficult to transplant as the Passion play. Race, association, training—all these have fitted Mr. Conried for this remarkable task.

"There is only one great tragedy in the world, the divine tragedy. Wagner has been influenced by it, by the 'Man of Sorrows' and acquainted with grief. Stripped of its incidental adjuncts, 'Parsifal' deals with a young man who, in the hope that he may prove a redeemer remains insensible to his suffering until he becomes clairvoyant by the kiss of the temptress Kundry and thereby made to understand the meaning of pity. Wagner, this volcano of emotions, this creator of barbarians and lusty young lovers, has written a work immortalizing pity. But remember he wrote it at the end of his life. Already his blood ran cold. 'Parsifal' is predestined. Hence there is no complication, no great fall and no great story—that is, from a dramatic standpoint. Wagner's earlier poems of men and women who lived to love and loved to live are far more dramatic because they are more human. After all, humanity is the playwright's keynote.

"The difficulties of the book of 'Parsifal' are obvious. For instance, Kundry, who is what we must call the prima donna, has the only female role in the drama, and her singing is confined almost entirely to the second act. How we find the 'woman' element lacking. No wonder such a strange story

needed a peculiar setting! Was it because he feared the theme of his drama that he first hedged it in at Balreuth? Sacriligious? No. Audacious? Well, yes. And how much more daring out in the white light of Broadway! In Balreuth all things would have been possible, even the sermon on the mount as an epilogue. There, hedged with enemies on every side, like gods, Wagner battled for the impossible and in spite of the gnats achieved it. 'Parsifal' is a monument to a daring deed. For today there is only one Wagner, although the many gnats still remain.

"To infuse the soul of a man—all the delicate shades of his meaning—into a work like 'Parsifal' would seem to be impossible. As the drama moved along I said almost unconsciously to a neighbor, 'Wagner is dead.' The best testimony to the excellence of Mr. Conried's undertaking throughout is that one does not miss Balreuth and Wagner still more. Even personal contact with genius, so to speak, at second hand is a priceless legacy.

"While I cannot but think the original scene of 'Parsifal' a more fitting place for its setting, Mr. Conried has far surpassed the Balreuth production. His enchanted garden of the second act, with its wonderfully charming flowers and beautiful coloring, was by far the better.

"In this scene Wagner brought a storm of criticism about his ears by the astonishing size—the exaggerated orientalism—of his flowers. He had his own purpose in mind, to emphasize the symbolism of his flower maidens. But Mr. Conried's conception was more artistic in that it left more to the imagination. It was a pleasing contrast to the garden in Balreuth, where many of the ladies, artists though they were, failed utterly to preserve the illusion of youth or the power to tempt. The transformation scene was magically effected. This second act was the scenic blemish at Balreuth.

"The lights, too, were better here; costumes, detail, accessories, better, better! Americans have a way of praising something that takes place at a distance. They may make many comparisons, but there can be no question as to the better presentation of the drama itself."

A LAKE OF SOLID SODA.

Strange Discovery of Major Barnham, the American, in Africa.

Major F. R. Barnham, the American scout, recently returned to London from another difficult expedition to east Africa, this time through the east Africa protectorate and Uganda to the borders of the Kongo Free State, penetrating about a thousand miles and exploring much territory that had never before seen a white man, says the Kansas City Star. The major was accompanied by several hundred blacks and twenty white men, three of whom died of fever and six were invalided home.

The most interesting result of the expedition was the discovery of a lake of about forty-nine square miles composed almost entirely of pure carbonate of soda, forming a snowlike crust so thick that the party walked across on it. In some places the chemical is solid clear through to the ground. It is the largest deposit of the kind that has ever been found. The lake is fed by mineral springs carrying soda in solution, and the deposit is formed by the evaporation of the water under the burning equatorial sun. In years to come, when the inevitable railroads run through Uganda, this chemical lake will doubtless be of enormous value, but at present it is one of nature's inviolable reserve funds.

An active volcano was found at Lake Rudolph, and several others which were busily spouting mud and steam were seen.

New Use For a Whipping Post.

Rural England still contains a number of whipping posts, most of them attached to stocks. One of the most interesting examples in the home counties stands on a patch of green by the roadside at Standon Massey, in Essex. A peculiarity of this relic is that, though it still bears the iron by which offenders against law and order were formerly tried up to receive castigation, it now performs the office of a traveler's guide, having arms which point the way to Ongar and other places in the district, says the London News.

The Lovely Winter Time.

[Well, I dunno. Of course it's kind of nice to get around in your shirt sleeves sometimes in the summer, but people ain't never real healthy except in the winter. We need seasonal weather to kill off the diseases and things, and a good, old fashioned winter always makes me feel like gettin' up and doin' somethin'—Frenz "Heart to Heart Talks With an Old Settler."]

I love the happy winter time, When all the hills are white, When frost is thick upon the panes And pipes freeze up at night.

I love the joyful winter time, When, snuttin' out the air, We huddle in our houses and Inhale the poison there.

O happy, happy winter time, What joy the blizzards bring! How sweet it is to have cold feet While gladly reveling.

O glad, O joyous winter time, When ice coats all the stones And people without rubbers on Get home with broken bones.

I love the lovely winter time, The time of chills and ills, The time of doubling up on gas And coal and doctors' bills.

Come, let us join the ones who think The winter time is grand And that it brings a thousand kinds Of blessings on the land.

O merry, merry winter time, The times of mumps and croup Never real healthy except in the winter. Let's gaily, gladly whoop!

Oh, let's exult with them who say The winter season frees The world of germs and its return Brings beautiful ecstasies.

—E. Kiser in Chicago Record-Herald

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IN BOSTON MARKETS.

Quotations on the Leading Products That Are in Demand. Boston, Dec. 30.—Butter has been in limited supply, especially of extra quality, but the demand has been light and prices have sagged off a little. Northern creamery, round lots, 24 1/2 @ 25; western, 24 @ 24 1/2; Vermont dairy, 21 @ 22; renovated butter, 17 @ 19.

The market for cheese continues quiet and unchanged. Round lots, Vermont twins, 11 1/2 @ 12; New York twins, 12 1/2 @ 13.

Eggs have been very firm owing to small supplies. Choice lots are in demand and high prices are obtained. Stocks of refrigerator eggs are much reduced and they are quoted firmer. Western, fresh, 35 @ 38; eastern, 36 @ 38; nearby, 42 @ 43; refrigerator, 29 @ 30.

Beans are firm in sympathy with country markets, but prices are not notably higher. Carload lots, per, \$2.15 @ 2.20; medium, \$2.15 @ 2.20; yellow eyes, \$3 @ 3.10; red kidneys, \$3.15 @ 3.25; California small white, \$2.45 @ 2.55; foreign pea and medium, \$2; jobbing prices higher.

There is a firm market for choice apples with a good demand. Harveys, \$2.25 @ 2.50; snows, \$2.50 @ 3; Kings, \$2.50 @ 3.50; Baldwins, \$2 @ 2.75; greens, \$2 @ 2.75; Hubbards and Hurlburts, \$1.50 @ 2.25; pound and Tolman sweets, \$1.50 @ 2.25; northern spies, \$1.75 @ 2.75.

Cranberries are firmer at \$2.50 @ 2.75 per box and \$7.50 @ 8 per barrel. The receipts for the week were 1216 bbls, against 1372 bbls for the same week last year.

Table nuts are steady and are selling at: Walnuts, 12 1/2 @ 15 per lb; chestnuts, 10 @ 11; pecans, 10; almonds, 13 @ 15; hickory, \$1.50 @ 2 per bu.

Potatoes are firm at the recent advance. Arrostook hebrons, 70 @ 75; Green mountains, 75 @ 78; York state Green mountains, 65 @ 68; sweets, Norfolk, cloth heads, 7 @ 8.50; Jersey double heads, \$2.50 @ 3.

Celery is selling at: Pascal, \$3 @ 4 per long box; Boston market, \$4 @ 6 per long box; white, \$1.25 @ 1.50 per doz.

Onions are quoted at: Spanish, large cts, \$2.50; natives, \$1 per bu; small, \$2.50 @ 3.

Cucumbers sell at \$1.50 @ 1.75 per bu; yellow turnips are selling at \$1 per bu; white French, \$1.50 per bu; white, 50c per bu; beets, \$1.25 per bu; carrots, 75c per bu; parsnips, 75c @ 81 per bu.

Marrow squashes are quoted at \$1.50 per bu; Bay state, \$1.50 per bu; turban, \$2 per bu; per ton, \$35 @ 40.

Cabbages sell at \$2.25 per bu for native; Savoy, \$1.50 per bu; red, \$2.50 per bu.

Lettuce is quoted at \$1.50 @ 2 per bu; radishes, 35c per doz; mint, 75c per doz; cress, 50c per doz; beets, 40c per doz; oyster plants, \$1 per doz.

A firmer market has developed in pork provisions, and prices advanced both on barrel meats and on lard. The offerings of hogs have been well maintained. The quality is good, although the weights are irregular in some instances to more than usual degree. Prices represent a moderate advance, prominent markets making an average of 44.50 per 100 lbs.

Fresh beef has been very quiet, with prices easy. Only a very few choice cuts will bring full prices.

Lambs are firmer, with receipts very light; muttons are steady; veals are firm. Western fall lambs, 7 @ 9; spring lambs, 8 @ 10; yearlings, 6 @ 7; muttons, 6 @ 7; veals, 9 @ 11.

Owing to heavy receipts of western turkeys, many lots were placed in cold storage. The good weather, however, prevented loss as arrivals were all in good condition. Northern turkeys were entirely out of the market at the close. Chickens and fowls were quiet and easy, with some stock going into storage. The same was true of geese, the market being flooded at the close. The quotations are: Turkeys, western, 17 @ 18; chickens, northern, 16 @ 18; western, 13 @ 14; fowls, northern, 13 @ 14; western, 12 @ 13; ducks, 12 @ 14; geese, 10 @ 12.

Hay continues weak, with a full supply and light demand. Eye straw is firm. Millfeed is firm at full quotations. Hay, No. 1, \$17 @ 18.50; low grades, \$12 @ 14; rye straw, \$21.50 @ 23; oat straw, \$9 @ 10.

The shrinkage in the Minneapolis flour output last week was 48,500 bbls. The quantity turned out was 341,400 bbls. Less mills were in operation due to quiet flour trade. The closing for the Christmas holidays is expected to have a beneficial effect upon the market, owing to the prevailing dullness. Trade in flour was very quiet. While there may have been instances where the output of a mill was sold, it was the rare exception. Eastern buyers stood aloof and would not even give shipping directions on old orders. This condition is expected to continue until after Jan. 1.

Locally flour has shown very little change, the market being quiet but steady. Mill shipment prices on spring patents were \$4.80 @ 5.10, the latter being for choice special brands. Trade estimates prices were unchanged from the previous week. Cruminal and oatmeal were also steady and unchanged.

New corn is beginning to arrive and sells at about 14 1/2 @ 15 below old corn. Old corn for shipment is no longer quotable, new being quoted at 54 1/2 @ 55 for prompt and 53 1/2 for 30-day shipment.

Christmas Tree on a Yacht. A new steam yacht, the Vergemere, with A. C. Bostwick, the millionaire automobilist and family and a party of friends aboard, recently left New York for the Mediterranean, where Mr. Bostwick expects to spend the winter, says the New York American. Mr. Bostwick and party plan to celebrate the holidays on the yacht, and the feature of the trip will be a big Christmas tree for the children. The party will visit the principal ports of Africa and Italy to take snap shots. A dozen large cameras were taken along for this purpose. Last year Mr. Bostwick and friends cruised in the West Indies and took pictures.

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WASHINGTON CHITCHAT

Item of Interest Gathered at the National Capital.

BOB CHAMPIONSHIP OF A FRIEND

Why the Massachusetts Senator Wouldn't Shake Hands With Editor Harvey Scott—How an Ohio Author Relieved the President's Anxiety as to Motive For His Call—One of Vest's Stories.

Senator John H. Mitchell of Oregon and Editor Harvey Scott of the Portland Oregonian got on the senate elevator in the subbasement recently, says the Washington correspondent of the New York World. When they reached the basement floor, Senator George F. Hoar of Massachusetts entered. Senator Mitchell introduced Mr. Scott to Senator Hoar in a pretty little speech.

Mr. Scott put out his hand to shake hands. Senator Hoar put his hands behind his back. Both Scott and Mitchell were much surprised and looked inquiringly at Senator Hoar, who said:

"You notice I did not shake hands with you."

"Yes," Scott replied. "And why?"

"Because of something you printed years ago in your paper concerning my friend, the late Senator Morrill of Vermont."

"What was it?" asked Scott.

"Your paper said that Senator Morrill was staying alive merely to save funeral expenses."

Scott didn't know whether to laugh or get indignant. He said:

"Of course that statement may have been printed in my paper, but I have no recollection of it. I had a man from Vermont working on the paper once, and he may have written it, but I do not remember it."

"You are responsible for what appears in your paper, are you not?" inquired Senator Hoar very seriously.

"Yes, sir," Scott replied emphatically.

"Well, sir, then I shall not shake hands with you."

"Don't worry, Mr. President," said Saxby. "I don't want an office, and I have my luncheon in my pocket."

They were talking of a point in grammar in the Democratic cloakroom of the senate the other afternoon, and the discussion reminded Senator Berry of one of Senator Vest's stories.

"Two men," Vest used to say, "were riding along in a sparsely settled country arguing on a point in grammar. They contended strenuously, and for a time it looked as if the argument would end in a fist fight. Finally they saw a man coming toward them.

"Here," said one of the disputants, "let's leave it to this man coming up the road. He will settle it, and that is better than fighting about it all the afternoon."

"The other man agreed. As the stranger rode up one of the wranglers hailed him, saying:

"My friend, are you a grammarian?"

"No," said the man. "I'm a Missionarian."

And that reminded Senator Bacon of the quadroom who went into a restaurant in a southern city where they did not serve food to people with any negro blood in their veins. This man was almost white and looked like a Caucasian. There was some suspicion, however, and the manager of the restaurant went over to him and said:

"My friend, you are colored. You are a negro."

"Not me," protested the quadroom, seeing what was coming. "I admit I am a little dark, but I am a Malay, not a negro."

"A Malay?" said the restaurant manager, nonplused. "What's a Malay?"

"Why," replied the man. "I was born in Malasia."

Leader Charles F. Murphy of Tammany Hall took Phil Donohoe, president of the Anawanda club of New York, severely to task the other day in Washington for being up so early in the morning. When Mr. Murphy found Mr. Donohoe, he was standing watching the hodcarriers at work on the new building being erected between Senator Depew's home and the Army and Navy club.

"What are you doing here anyway, Phil?" asked the Tammany leader.

"Oh, I got so tired of these a gratias, demitasses and finger bowls that I began to feel like a Citizens' Union man," answered Donohoe. "And I came out here to watch the hodcarriers to make sure I'm still a Democrat."

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