



four times round the stage in search of a fire, or a procession of twenty men headed by one carrying the bows of a toy ship, another the mainmast, and the last with the rudder tied behind him, are regarded without a smile, even though the bows often chase the rudder.

Professor Abbott, of New Jersey, is one of the few naturalists who speak in a kindly way of toad voices. He thinks the batrachians have never yet received the consideration that is their due from the poets, and he asks:—"Is it because their music is not popular with the masses?"

"Now, professor," said the young man with musical aspirations, "I want you to tell me exactly what you think of my voice." "No, sir," was the emphatic reply. "I see through you. You were sent here by my enemies to get me arrested for profanity."

Palermo was once noted for the popular songs of the peasants in the vicinity, and there were annual competitions participated in by singers from all parts of Sicily. An effort has just been made to revive the ancient glory of the 'cazonetta popolare siciliana,' but only thirteen singers presented themselves, and the affair was pronounced an utter failure.

At St. Petersburg they are about to erect a new theatre almost entirely of iron. When completed it will contain 2500 persons.

Tamagno, the rich, penurious tenor, has been fleeced out of 2,000,000 francs by a clever Italian deputy. He induced the tenor to buy an old and decrepit hotel in Rome for the luxurious sum of 2,000,000 francs, under the false pretence that it would be bought back at a great advance by the Government, which was in need of this building for one of its departments. Now the tenor is suing the wily deputy.

Last week the Auckland Choral Society gave its sixth orchestral concert of the season. The Choral Hall was crowded on the occasion, and a programme of a very attractive character was performed with exceptional success. Mons. de Willimoff acted as leader and solo violinist, while Mr. A. Eady was among the instrumentalists, and the able baton of Professor Carl Schmitt directed the orchestra. The orchestral items rehearsed included the first second and last movements of Beethoven's first symphony, which were splendidly rendered, Adams' 'Le Brasseur de Preston,' and the evergreen overture to 'Maritana.' A quartette—the Minuetto Andantino and Finale Allegro, from Rheinberger's Piano Quatuor (op. 38) was played by Miss Yates (piano), Mr. Keating (violin), Cox (viola), and Mr. Heale (cello) and was warmly and deservedly applauded. The violin solos by M. de Willimoff—Zarziely's Mazurka and an arrangement of 'Maganello'—were, however, the numbers which were most loudly appreciated. The musician gave the audience a very fine rendering of both pieces. As a finale to the concert, a waltz entitled 'Phyllis,' and composed by Mr. J. B. Macfarlane, a local amateur, was played. Mr. Macfarlane conducting. The composition is tuneful and rich in many parts. Interspersed with the instrumental items were several solos. Miss Lizzie Black sang 'The Promise of Life' (Cowan) and 'The Lost Chord' (Sullivan), while Mr. George Reid contributed Bevan's 'The Flight of Ages' and Balfe's 'Come Into the Garden, Maud.' Mr. Reid's voice is too well known to need commendation. The lady, on the other hand, is a newcomer, but she has a fine contralto voice that we shall be very glad to hear again.

The principle of the incandescent gas light is now available for oil lamps. The principle of the petroleum burner is exactly the same as that of the incandescent burner. The burner used is similar to the ordinary duplex, except that it has a circular instead of a double horizontal wick. The mantle and chimney are fitted on a gallery, which can be lifted by a screw, exposing the wick, which is lighted in the ordinary way. The lifter is then lowered, and the flames, from being an illuminant, become a perfect atmospheric flame, causing the mantle to become brilliantly incandescent. The burner gives a fifty candle-power light, with, it is said, a saving of two-thirds in the consumption of oil.

In matters of male tailoring (says 'Talks Talk') London now undoubtedly gives the law to all the civilized

world. Did you ever hear of an Englishman who desired to pass for a well-dressed man going over to Paris to get himself fitted out? If there is one thing more than another which an Englishman desires to avoid it is to look like a foreigner in his dress; while, on the other hand, it now appears to be the ambition of all the 'jeuneurs dorees' and the 'beau monde' in every capital of Europe to dress like an Englishman. A year or two ago I remember seeing this Anglomania well hit off in a French pictorial paper. An exquisite sauntering along the Boulevards was encountered by one of his friends, who asked in amazement why he had his trousers turned up, as it wasn't raining. 'No,' said the exquisite, 'it isn't raining here, but possibly it is in London.'

According to the 'Review Encyclopedique,' the idea that the habit of smoking dates only from the discovery of America must be abandoned as a vulgar error. Clay pipes which had been used as far back as the Gallo-Roman period in France were found in 1844 while excavating a cemetery belonging to that epoch. Their antiquity was doubted until similar remains were discovered beneath the foundations of the palace of Charles the Bold. Subsequently, upwards of a hundred prehistoric forges, of a date anterior to the Roman occupation of Switzerland, were brought to light in the Bernese Jura, and smoking pipes of iron were found in these. In the prehistoric tombs of Holland many similar objects were disclosed, and a bronze pipe excavated from the ruins of ancient Rome has been preserved in the celebrated Campana collection now in the Louvre. A Spanish poem, which is known to have been composed in 1276, speaking of one of the captains of the Christian army, Pedro Espigol by name, describes him as smoking lavender in order to dissipate the 'humour of the brain.' And a corbel carved in the eleventh century in the church of Huberville, in France, represents the head of a man with what the Irish call a 'dudeen' in his mouth. In the County of Northumberland similar relics are often lighted upon in connection with early Roman remains, and popular superstition assumes that they were left there by the fairies, hence they are generally known as elfin pipes.

Lord Wolsley, according to a quaint chronicler, is extremely superstitious; indeed, he has owned that while in Ireland he had worn out several hats brims through saluting single magpies (single magpies are supposed to foreshadow sorrow), and that he would not 'on any account' walk under a ladder. He also believes in ghosts, and can tell 'some exceedingly strange stories of regimental spectres.'

The once famous Fat Men's Association of America, that attracted to its annual meeting large numbers of men who weighed five hundred pounds, has dwindled to a few light-weights of four hundred pounds or so.

We have one suggestion to make to the Government of India (says the Simla 'News'), and that is, that should these complications increase, and still more troops be required on the frontier they should ask, say the Maharaja of Patiala, as an experiment, if he would undertake the task of crushing one of these tribes, Mohmands, Afridis, Orukzais, or any other. Give him a fee hand, and let him make his own arrangements, and we venture to think that he would speedily give them such a lesson as would live in their memories and keep them quiet for the next twenty years. The British Government is far too gentle in its treatment of these border ruffians, who do not understand it, and it only encourages them to rise again at an early date. A little roughness would appeal very forcibly to them. Probably the methods employed would not commend themselves to Exeter Hall, and as we must take account of the cowardly fear of both the Indian and Imperial Governments of this obsolete old bogey, why the Government of India might refuse to allow press correspondents to be present.

Some surprise has been created in St. Petersburg by the sudden way in which the publishers of the 'Rus' ceased to issue their paper. Hajdeburff, the publisher, was thought to be in financial difficulties. This is, however, a mistake. Hajdeburff lately employed an assistant named Brucanretzky, who signed as responsible editor. This man was nothing but a police spy, who had obtained the position to inform the police of what is

going on in journalistic and literary circles. He was paid for this £300 a year. When Hajdeburff discovered the true character of his editor he dismissed him, and stopped publication.

It is a proverbial fact that life and property are well protected in the British Colonies, and that most distant of British possessions, the far North-west of Canada, is no exception to the rule. Of the shooting and fighting, the murders which followed every new discovery of gold in the United States, nothing has been heard in the Klondike district, simply because a detachment of the mounted police was on the spot from the beginning. When the Canadian half-breeds rebelled under Louis Riel, the mounted police was raised to an effective strength of 1000 men, and it has never been reduced. It is truly an elite corps. Wherever these able horsemen show themselves smugglers and Indians vanish. They travel with the most astonishing celerity from one part of the Dominion to another. They are not specially well paid, but young men of the best English and Canadian families are anxious to join this force, whose duties are very varied and exciting. They are organized like the Irish Constabulary, and are such picked men that they would know how to command respect even without carbine, sword and revolver.

For some days past (says a London paper) a motor cab has been parading the streets of the city, in defiance of an Act of Parliament, being practically a theatrical advertisement. On the roof of the cab is a large travelling basket, such as those used by ladies in theatrical touring companies, bearing an immense label giving the name of a play now running at a West End theatre. Inside is seated a coloured gentleman, attired in all the magnificence of an Oriental potentate. After braving the police for some days—the authorities evidently being unable to make up their minds as to the legality of the proceeding—the progress of the cab was suddenly arrested in Fleet-street the other day by a police constable. "Stop," demanded the officer. "Give me your number, name and address." "What for?" returned the driver, with a blandly innocent smile. "Because you are an advertisement and not using the cab for legitimate purposes." "I'm engaged by the gentleman inside," expostulated the driver, "and I'm a-driving of him to see the sights of London, including of the Griffin at Temple Bar." "Go on," curtly returned the constable, "you'll hear more of this."

Miss Marie Lloyd's first engagement was at the Star, Bermondsey, where she received the salary of fifteen shillings per week. Nowadays one hundred pounds weekly is not considered too much for her. She was originally a teacher.

Sir Alexander C. Mackenzie's compositions for Mr. J. M. Barrie's play, founded on 'The Little Minister,' are an overture, three entractes, and some incidental music. At the start of the overture there is a snatch of the bag-pipes, and an effect is made with clarionets. There is a slight suggestion of the air of 'Duncan Grey.' Each of the entractes is a dance. The Little Minister is the only character to whom Sir Alexander has given any leit-motif. This pathetic melody is heard in the overture.

'A School of Beauty' has been started in New York, in which lessons are given with respect to the expression of the face. According to the canons laid down in this remarkable academy, laughter is a vulgar distortion of the features, and has a demoralising effect. It astrows the shape of the mouth, thickens the nose and causes lines round the eyes. Tears are not to be indulged in under any provocation. To 'smile vaguely' is the object at which all students ambitious of walking steadily in the ways of beauty should aim; while tears should never be anything less poetical than 'dewdrops in the eyes.' This seminary is so decidedly suggestive of new ideas in the way of looking a part that it may appropriately be mentioned in 'Stage-land.'

The first instance on record of a death upon the stage occurs in 1745, when an actor named William Bond, who had unsuccessfully attempted to get his friend Aaron Hill's translation of Voltaire's 'Zaire' acted at Covent Garden or Drury Lane, gave a private performance in a concert-room. He played the part of Lusignan, afterwards enacted by Garrick and Barry.