

A MODERN RESIDENCE.

A FEW OF THE IMPROVEMENTS IN A NEW HOUSE.

Ready for the Incandescent Light—Speaking Tubes and Electric Buttons—The Yard Gate Worked from the Kitchen—The Elevator and Ash Shoots in the Grates.

Progress mentioned last week that Mr. McGaffigan's new house was wired and ready for incandescent lighting when it comes. There was not time or space then to speak of some other things that will interest every man and woman who live in houses. It would almost seem as if the owner of this house had been thinking for years of building and snatched every economic improvement he came across for his own use.

To enter the rear gate, instead of the front entrance, you can't get in until you whisper through the speaking tube to the bright-eyed Phyllis in the kitchen to come and open the gate. She doesn't come, but the gate opens, and, rather surprised to see no one about, in you walk, to find to your amazement that with an equally noiseless motion the gate swings to after you. What the mischief ails that thing? But if you are a small boy with a parcel you haven't time to ask questions. You enter the rear door and see a strange sight—a contented buxom lassie pushing a box on wheels upon an elevator! Actually, an elevator, a small one surely, but an elevator in a private house. Down it goes, the box upon it; and when it reaches the bottom the girl lifts her hand, pulls a strap, and rattle, rattle, something very like coal falls into the box. This continues for a minute until the box is filled, when the girl pulls the strap the other way. The trap of the coal bin shuts and with another simple movement of the arm the elevator rises with the box now full of coal, which is rolled to one side for use. The servant says that the family up stairs uses the same elevator and anything and everything rises on it from a barrel of flour to the daily market basket. With a pardonable curiosity the boy wants to know how the gate is worked. He is shown that by pulling a strap in the kitchen, similar to a bell pull, the gate is opened and that by pulling another strap alongside the gate is closed. Two other speaking tubes are alongside that leading to the gate and these, the girl explains, lead to the second and third flats.

This kitchen appears to be a wonderful place. It is large and has three closets off it, one for a pantry, one for pots, pans, etc., and one for the cook and her flour barrel—a pastry closet in fact.

The dining room does not strike you at first as being much different from that of any ordinary house, but when you see the handsome walnut sideboard built in the niche you conclude it is rather nice. Something else will puzzle you if you remain to luncheon or dinner; how is it that the servant always arrives at the right time and without any bell being tinkled. The riddle is solved by a question and an electric button in the floor is shown you, which, when pressed by the foot of the hostess, rings a bell in the kitchen and summons the servant.

Any description would be incomplete without some idea of the plumbing and its protection. The ventilation is perfect by means of pipes leading to the roof and the patent air fan that revolves at the top of them, making a suction that draws not only foul air from the house but is even powerful enough to carry out pieces of paper, though this is unnecessary. The water pipes that run under the floors are laid in zinc troughs, which incline toward the front of the house and if at any time there is a break in them there will be no danger of flooded floors and ruined carpets, for the zinc channels will carry off the escaping water. The slate washtraps with hot and cold water leading into them are not found everywhere, and the wet cloak and umbrella closet off the front hall, the separate drawers for ladies and gentlemen's boots in the closets off the bedrooms, the huge linen closet off the upper hall and the ventilators in the sides of the stone front steps that connect with the vegetable departments in the cellar, all contribute to this "modern residence."

Not the least among the improvements doted on by the domestics, are the shoots in the fireplaces for ashes. Before the fires are rekindled all the servant has to do is to pull a slide and the ashes descend through this passage in the brick work to the ash box in the cellar. These are but a few of the improvements the tenant of this new house will enjoy. Progress is glad such a class of houses is being erected in St. John. Owners think of something else beside a mere shelter, for they are making their houses comfortable in every respect.

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TALK OF THE THEATRE.

What on earth will I write about? Ah, that's the question. You see, after all the rush and bustle of the last nine weeks there has come a calm, and—I'm beamed. The truth of the matter is, I have been devoting my attention and my evenings to The Martyn College of Elocution and Oratory and, though it does not strictly come within the scope of this column, yet as many of my readers may find it of interest, I will next week give you a summary of the rules to be followed, according to the professor, if you desire to become another Bright or Gladstone.

Just now I can only speak of the dramatic recital with which Edmund Shaftesbury and Miss Cora Shaftesbury opened the course, and a most enjoyable one it was. Cultured, refined and artistic, it appealed to the intelligence and won the admiration of the small but critical audience present.

Although the programme styled everything impersonations, yet, to my mind, it was divided into three parts: the recitations and impersonations by Mr. Shaftesbury, and the contributions by Miss Shaftesbury.

That Mr. Shaftesbury is an elocutionist of the highest order is beyond dispute, but that he is a versatile one, as Recorder Jack said in his address, is open to some question. In The Pathway of Gold, The Roman Tragedy, The Congressman and The New Jersey Orator, his voice, gesture, action and style were all that could be desired; but The Lean Man's Apology was only fair; The Yagobonds was not as finished or the sense made as apparent to one who might not know the piece as I have heretofore heard it done, and The Frenchman in Macbeth, while excellent in make-up, was weak in dialect.

Of his work that comes strictly within the line of impersonation it is sometimes very difficult to form a decided opinion. Having never seen Joseph Jefferson but in Rip Van Winkle I suppose I must accept the Song of Songs as being a correct copy, though the audience would have much preferred it if he had given us a touch of the Sleeper of the Catskills. Shylock may not have been in the least like Edwin Booth's, but it was a great piece of work—fine, delicate, impassioned, and out of the whole programme worthy of first mention.

The Uncle, under the name of An English Tragedy, was recited like—that is, it was alleged to be like, Henry Irving, "his mannerisms avoided." What nonsense! Henry Irving at all, and consequently the imitation deceived no one, but bore upon its face the evidence of its own inaccuracy. Otherwise the piece was well delivered, though at times it appeared to be a little overdone, caused by the want of orchestra music which accompanies its recitation by Mr. Irving.

Play actors call Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage the acrobat of the Brooklyn pulpit, but from the little we got from Mr. Shaftesbury it was impossible to judge how far the term was applicable.

As I sat and listened to his impersonation of O'Connell, I thought that when Lord Beaconsfield and Jeffery, Mr. Roebuck and Charles Dickens voted the Irish Tribune the greatest orator of his day in the commons, they must have been either mad or drunk, for the character the reader gave us was more like a western ranting spouter on a stump than one whom history says could move to tears and laughter at will. Of course, remembering that Mr. Shaftesbury could never have heard O'Connell, and must have gleaned his knowledge of him from books, the feat was too difficult to expect any degree of success. And then, why did he use a speech of Shiel's, whose style was entirely different from his chieftain's, when he could get scores of O'Connell's.

Miss Shaftesbury read Aunt Jemina Before and After Marriage exquisitely, but her singing was weak.

From the very choice and readable "Recollections" Dion Boucault is contributing to the North American Review, I clip the following repeated in the Dramatic Mirror:

In 1874, in pursuance of a contract made with Mr. Lester Wallack, Boucault had undertaken to compose a new Irish drama, in which he was to appear in the principal character, to be produced in November of that year. The play, entitled Boyne Water, was in a forward state in September, when Wallack strode into the author's room in Fifth-street to ascertain what scenery would be required. Then for the first time Boucault laid before him the plot of the new play, and read some of the scenes. As he proceeded, the countenance of the manager fell so miserably that the author paused.

"You don't seem to like the piece?" said Boucault, throwing aside the manuscript. "Oh, yes, that is the difficulty," replied Wallack. "I have just bought the last London success, Clancarty. The part suits me, and it entered into my mind this season to make my appearance in that play, at the conclusion of your engagement next January. This drama of yours involves the same historical characters, especially that of William the Third, and the same costumes. You will bless my piece. You will take the wind out of my sails. What can be done?"

"Nothing that I can see," replied Boucault, "but to change the period of my play, say to the present day."

"But you cannot change Boyne Water to another period."

"No," laughed the author. "If we could, it might end differently. No matter, John; leave it to me."

And he did. In a few days an entirely new play was shaped out of which some of the scenes of Boyne Water were used. This was The Shaughran. The first performance of this drama was a complication of mishaps. When Boucault arrived at the theatre, two hours before the curtain went up, he was met by his dresser, who asked him what he was going to wear for the part of Con. The question suddenly reminded him that he had been so busy with other people that he had forgotten to provide for himself. They mounted into the wardrobe of the theatre.

"Have you got an old red hunting-coat? Where is your Tony Lumpkin dress? Surely you have a Goldfinch coat?"

"But, sir, they will not fit."

"That is just what I want. Tear the arms to make them shorter; slit up the back—so. What have you there? Toney Lumpkin's hunting-cap?—black velvet—the very thing! Tear the lining out. I see a splendid pair of old boots yonder."

"Those are not a pair, sir."

"So much the better."

And thus in half an hour the costume of Con was patched together. What an escape! At the end of the second act we had a very fine scene by Matt Morgan—the ruins of St. Bridget's Abbey moonlight. A bright full moon appeared over the sea and the silver ripple on the water, admirably contrived by a new process, was depended on to produce a great effect. Just before the scene was discovered, there was a "wait"—something had gone wrong. The gas-man appeared before the author, breathless, perspiring with despair. "Oh, sir, if you please, the moon has bust"—that is, the glass of the apparatus by which the moon was imitated had broken. There was no help for it. The scene must be discovered; and when it was, it exhibited a total eclipse—a big round black hole in the scene represented the lunary; but they had forgotten to shut off the ripple in the water, which continued to sparkle bravely, to the great amusement of the audience, in which Con, joined heartily. Surely here were accidents enough, but the worst was to come. In the last scene the villain, Kinchela, is shot, and the English officer, examining the body, finds the bullet entering his heart, has been stopped by a pocket-book he carried in his breast pocket.

"Ah!" cries the captain, "the bullet has entered here; this pocket-book has saved his life."

When Montague approached Arnott and felt for the pocket-book, he could not find it. "Good heavens! Arnott," he exclaimed, "you have forgotten the book!"

"No," whispered Arnott, "it is in my tail pocket." Montague rolled him over and, searching in that region, exclaimed: "Ah! the bullet has entered here; this pocket-book has saved his life!"

Not another word of the rest of the play could be heard. Boucault was so convulsed with laughter that he broke down in the last speech. But good humor never spoiled anything.

the reality of the fluid. Why, bless you man! Miss Haswell didn't take the bath at all; it was Miss Bainbridge, a substitute, who took the wetting while the other lady received the call and the honor.

And in the same connection, this was not Mr. Frawley's first appearance in St. John. He was here five years ago, with the John H. Murray company.

Arthur Rhea proposes to have a great company this season. Besides Mrs. Jamieson, there will be J. H. Ryley and Madeline Lucette his wife, the celebrated comic opera people, Adelle Waters, Henry Hoto and Burr McIntosh. The Lottery of Love, under the name of The Surprise of a Divorce, will be the attraction. They intend to come this way.

Fritz Williams has been re-engaged for the Madison Square company. Tyrone Power is with The Lion and the Lamb. J. M. Francouer supports Mlle. Rhea. By the way, wasn't she here three years ago on her farewell tour? Yes; now I remember well; they advertised her wardrobe and not her ability and that is the reason I did not see her. Melbourne McDowell, the present husband of Fanny Davenport, is said to be a brother of our own Eugene. Bassett Willard and Edith Stanmore have been captured by George Fawcett Rowe. J. M. Hill is preparing to star M. A. Kennedy in A Possible Case.

Robert Graa is resting; address, Ludlow street jail.—Dramatic News. He will be remembered as the gentleman who stranded the large opera company in Montreal early last year and made many of the citizens of that city regret their confidence in him.

And now it turns out that the story of amputating Duncan Harrison's leg was only an advertising dodge after all. OWEN T. CARROLL.

MR. DOUGLAS SLADEN'S TOUR.

Where He Has Been and Intends to Go Before He Returns.

Mr. Douglas Sladen has been at Quebec. He left Windsor by the Windsor and Annapolis line for Annapolis, N. S., and is enthusiastic over the beauties of the Annapolis valley and the picturesqueness of historic Annapolis. Thence he went to St. John by the sound steamer City of Monticello. At St. John he was met by Mr. Carter, editor of PROGRESS, and called upon by Mayor Jack and Mr. Hannay, the historian, directly after his arrival. Mr. Carter then drove him around the city, and on the following day Mr. Hannay took him over the historical parts. After a couple of days in St. John to collect materials for his loyalist poem, he went up the St. John river to Fredericton, and is loud in its praises. He thinks it one of the most charming river trips he has made.

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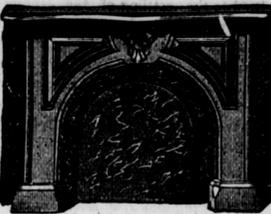
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