SERMON.

The Gracious Art of Giving.

By The Rev. St. Clair Hester.

Sunday morning at Brooklyn, N. Y., the Rev. St. Clair Hester preached on "The Gracious Act of Giving," The text was from St. Mark xii: 41, "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury," Mr. Hester said:

It was the last thing He did before leaving the temple forever. It happened on the Tuesday before His crucifixion on Friday. He had cleansed the temple, He had taught in the temple. He had spoken as no man ever spoke before in the temple, He had been despised and rejected of men in the temple; and now He goes out of it for the last time, we can well believe with sadness unutterable. Fierce argument, hot dispute, bitter opposition, seemed ever in unholy alliance to disturb and embitter His visits to the sanctuary. He lingers for a time in the court of the Israelites, as if reductant to go, and there witnesses one of the very few things to cheer and console Him during the last tragic week of His life. It was the sight of the people casting money into the treasury of the Lord's House, showing as it did that even though His experience had been of such a nature as to convince Him that pure and undefiled religion was sadly lacking in the hearts of the priests and scribes there was still something of earnestness and devotion in the hearts of the people. The rich cast in much and the poor widow cast in all she had, even all her living. One likes to dwell upon the scene, to analyze an action and a character so pleasing to the Lord.

We can fancy this poor woman intent only on what she is doing casting her contribution into the chest, looking neither to the right nor to the left, passing on into the temple to offer her morning prayer, and then returning directly to her home. She had no recollection of having seen any one, she had spoken to no one, and no one had seen or spoken to her, and she does not know to this day what we know. Nor will she know till that day, when everything shall be known and made manifest. What, think you, would she have thought if she had been told who had seen her that day and what He had said about her and that we, centuries after, would be hearing about her in this far-off Western World beyond the sea? And that her two mites would multiply, all down the ages, into millions upon millions of gold and silver, the same kindly eyes watching the increase all the while? And what will she think and what will she say when all this is told about her by the Judge of all to His adoring children in the last great day? It was not the money so much as the minds of the contributors that Jesus watched and weighed that day. He looked beneath the surface and read the motive and intent of the heart and forthwith declared the poor widow had cast in more than all. And why, think you? Because, as St. Paul had it, she had first cast in herself. There is need for us to learn the same lesson—that it is ourselves first and then, after ourselves, it is our time and our money and our work.

On dwelling upon the incident, the thought comes into my mind that the Lord Jesus Christ was rich, even the owner of all things, and yet for our sakes He had become so poor that the poor widow was richer than He was that day. He had absolutely nothing; not so much as two mites to call His own that day. He had absolutely nothing but a willing mind. And thus it was He sat so near the treasury, enjoying the sight of the liberality of those who had both the willing mind and money, also. He had no money. He had only Himself. And as they cast in their money He again cast in Himself. And this He continues to do. We are too apt to give only of our abundance, our surplus, but He gives Himself.

I love to think He was pleased and gratified, this once certainly, during the bitter days preceding the sacrifice of Himself on the cross. It was the single ray of comfort amid the darkness of farewell. It was to linger in His mind as one evidence, at least, that all religious activity under the Mosaic dispensation had not degenerated into pretense and profession and mockery. He to whom the cause of God was over all and above all and all in all, during the dark days that followed, in the midst of rejection, betrayal, denial and desertion and death, must have reverted to this scene again and again. "All is not lost even though I be crucified, faith is not dead, there is still hope for the people, God's name is honored by some—because I saw the rich casting in much and the poor casting in all they had."

And so it has been from the beginning, through all the ages of human history the offering has been a sign, a test, a demonstration of the faith and earnestness and devotion of the child of God. The Old Testament has a great deal to say about the consecrating, by offering it to God, of a portion of the wealth with which God blesses men. The tabernacle and the temple were erected, adorned and supported by the willing offerings of the people. The old Jewish worship and the Christian worship which succeeded it were in agreement in this particular. The idea of offering as a central act of worship—as a condition of offering before the Lord in His house—passed over from the Jewish Church to the Christian as naturally as prayer, as naturally as reading the Psalms and the Prophets. The communion office witnesses to the ancient, universal idea of worship, that an essential part of it is the placing of gifts on the altar. Giving is just as truly and obviously a part of public worship as praying, singing, reading the Bible, preaching, taking part in the holy communion, and there has been no exception to the custom and rule. And yet one sometimes hears even religious people and church members complaining the "jingling of money in the plates disturbs their devotion." It reminds them of the shop and the bank and the exchange. This really amounts to confessing that their weekday lives are devoted to the service of Mammon, that money in their minds is connected only with thoughts of the world, the flesh and the devil. On the other hand, it is true that Christianity, if it amounts to anything at all, must go with men and influence them in the shop, in the bank, on the exchange, week days just as much as in the pew on Sundays. What, in the last analysis, does money stand for? It is the result of a man's work. He has put the moral worth of his life into it. With an honest man it represents faithful work in his chosen place for God and man. He is asked to offer to the Lord, as a religious service; to give to His Saviour, to lay on His holy altar, this money, which so represents the moral value of His life.

There is only one way to remove the taint from money, and that is consecrate it to the Lord's service. An article printed the other day includes this phrase, "The offertory a lost act of worship." It is sad if true, sad for the people, for the church, for the Christian religion. If we believe that parting promise of our Lord, "I will be with you till the end of the world," we must believe that there is bound to come a change in the opinion and habits of Christian people with regard to their duty. The only way at present to help bring it about is for Christian people to pray for God's help and to speak about it, to agitate it, to keep it before the mind of the careless and the indifferent. If Christian people generally or even largely would begin to give according to Christian principle in any systematic way, it is beyond the power of any man to forecast and measure the tremendous result. The effect would be due not so much to the money or to the revival of interest and zeal and piety which it would betoken. It would kindle enthusiasm, it would uplift a wave of psychic spiritual force that would carry all before it.

Giving is a solemn duty to Almighty God. It is a way of paying the interest due Him on the investment this earthly life embodies. It is merely a high and exalted privilege for poor creatures of this little earth to be permitted to offer gifts to the omnipotent, benevolent Creator in whom we live and move and have our being. Yes, it is putting into substantial, tangible sacramental shape our graitude, our affection, our loyalty. "Give and it shall be given unto you," is the teaching of our Lord and obedience is the test of a faithful soldier and servant. Do you apply it? Can you stand it? What pleases Him once, pleases Him forever. He does not change. He does not forget. So far all we have said amounts to this—giving is a duty to God, an essential divinely appointed part of public worship, an evidence and expression of faith and love and obedience.

Now let us see how it is done. "All things come of thee, O, Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee," is an appropriate saying when the offerings of the people are presented. It is an inspiring and splendid scene when the entire congregation stands up and sings "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." But when the occasion of it is a mere pittance, from abundance, a mere cast-off minimum to save embarrassment, it bespeaks a very false and mean idea of the Lord's own. It makes the doxology a much ado about nothing, the impressive ceremonial a pretentious parody of a solemn farce.

The problem of the ever-present church penny is one of the most difficult with which the Christian church of today has to deal. Complaints are heard now and then that our churches are not comfortable, not well lighted, that the music is indifferent, that the preaching is not what it ought to be, that improvements and enlargements are not made, that things generally are at sixes and sevens. Let us be candid and see things as they are and look beneath the surface, behind the scenes, even into the alms basin, and is it not true that the ubiqitous penny is one explanation and cause? An interesting experiment was tried in a Philadelphia church some time ago. The request was made just before the offerings were taken that no pennies be put into the plates. The statement was given out that at the preceding service 765 persons were present, 400 of whom had put in a penny, 65 had exceeded this amount, and 300 had failed to contribute anything; that the collections were free-will offerings, no one was obliged to give, but if any did feel so disposed, that the offering should exceed a penny. The result was the substitution of a nickel for the penny. This seems a little thing, a small increase; nevertheless, if it could be made to prevail generally, it would solve the problem of church support. It is a beautiful thing for the poor widow to cast in her mite;it is quite the reverse for him to whom more has been given to dress his charity in her mourning weeds.

We need to get clearer ideas as to what constitutes giving. Paying for a pew does not, buying articles at a church fair, or tickets for an entertainment does not. There is the pretense or fact of value received in such a case. The truly Christian level is reached only when we give freely, gladly, generously, without being solicited, without expectation of return, without hope of reward, not for the sake of self, but out of pure love and kindness of heart and for the sake of our dear Lord and Saviour. No church can grow strong nor can its members rise to the measure of their responsibility or graft and grow into their characters the simplest Christian graces when the treasury of the Lord's house is avoided or neglected. It is harmful to the cause of religion that there are so many who drift from church to church, getting the benefits of all but doing nothing toward the support of any, ever flitting but never settling, ever learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. It is hurtful, too, to the people who acquire this habit. It destroys all sense of responsibility. It tends to lower religion to the plane of sensationalism and fads and fancies. It is another illustration of the old adage, "The rolling stone gathers no moss." The nomad stage is far behind us in our civilization. The same thing ought to be true of our religion. Dr. Rainsford used to say that the worship of God that costs nothing amounts to nothing; that if the person who gives a dollar and a half for a seat at the theatre and more than that for a seat at the opera, gives only five cents toward the collection of the church and does not think the service was worth it, it is wrong to give anything at all. No doubt it is true that if many realized that their offering expressed their idea of the value of the service there would be greater liberality.

There is such a thing as laying too much emphasis upon the expression "religion is free, without money and without price." Of course, religion is free; of course, salvation is without money and without price. It was so in Christ's day. It is so now. He did good in a thousand ways—healed the sick, cured lepers, taught eternal laws of righteousness, and never received a cent for it. But—mark well this point—He did not stop the rich from casting their much into the treasury, nor did He stop the widow when she cast in all her living. He was rejoiced by the sight and pronounced it an action worthy of commendation. He pointed to the poor widow casting in her mite as a beautiful example deserving of emulation. What He said of her was in accord with His injunction. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Just as it cost money to sustain that temple, so it costs money to sustain a church today. Everything free in this world costs somebody something. A free religion must be sustained by somebody. The cost of fuel, light, repairs, books, music, clergy support, comes out of somebody's pocket. It does not fall from heaven as the manna and the quails for the Israelites, as some seem to think. How much more loyal and becoming the spirit and desire to do for others than have others do for us!

You know what the money cast into the treasury was used for. It provided for the upkeep of the temple, and it sustained and supported the worship therein of the Most High God. When we remember that the sight of people engaged in such willing and loving service pleased the Lord Himself and called forth His commendation, no minister or servant of His has any right or reason to hesitate or feel embarrassed in speaking out boldly and positively to all people. This ought ye to do. Not only is the church the Lord's body, the organizations of Jesus Christ on earth, and as such entitled to our loyalty and support, but it has demonstrated its value to humanity and society in manifold ways. No greater calamity could befall our country than to have the doors of its churches closed. A single year of such a state of affairs would mean anarchy, discord, strife, excesses, calamity, a retrograde movement in Christian civilization. In the firmament of moral darkness the churches are the stars of glorious guiding light. In every other place or relation where men assemble and meet together they put into use and apply the virtues, graces, goodnesses, and the church is pre-eminently the producer of virtue, the generator of graces, the source whence comes the finer spiritual influences that makes life worth the living. The world's great need is righteousness and love, and both are the church's output.

The highest aim and end for mortals here below is to know God and His Son Jesus Christ, to become like Him, to follow in His footsteps, and the greatest help, the appointed agency, the agency without which it is hardly possible to grow or move in this direction is the church which He bought with His own precious blood. Give to every good cause as you are able—educational, benevolent, social, but do not fail to extend and apply your generosity here.

The grace of giving is far more beneficial and refining to ourselves than we realize or suspect. For one thing, it is the antidote against as well as the remedy for the sin of covetousness.

The habit of giving, giving independently of whether one has much or little, tends to produce that state of mind to which St. Paul attained when he said, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am to be content." They who are quarrelsome, ever clamoring and complaining direct their gaze inward, centre their thoughts upon themselves, confine them to themselves, their surest remedy and method of relief is to give whether they receive return or appreciation, give for their own soul's sake. The tenth commandment is the injunction of the giver of all good not to grumble. And what a host of people are guilty of breaking it? The child that grumbles at its food; the boy who grumbles at going to school; the young man who grumbles at his work and can see no good in doing the daily task; the young miss who grumbles at her dress and is not satisfied with what her parents can afford; the father who grumbles at the little household discomforts and pours his sourness upon the family table; the mother who grumbles at the burden of the household cares—they all break this commandment. And yet the Heavenly Father goes on pouring the blessed sunshine upon the evil and the good; upon the grateful and thankless alike.

Did it ever occur to you how different the lot of most of us would be if we all had given to us with the same measure that we mete withal? If many were done by as they do, they would receive little consideration, small sympathy, a minimum of generosity in this present world. But thank God there is a Benefactor who overlooks and disregards man's unworthiness and is continually bestowing gifts and blessings larger than he desires or deserves, larger than his willingness sufficiently ever to appropriate or appreciate them. You may sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" all the days of your life, but unless you give something along with it, self, thought, means, love, it will be nothing more than sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.

As we dwell upon the scene in the temple court, let not the reflection escape us that the opportunity of the rich and the poor widow is also our own to give joy to our Lord, to call forth His benediction by what we give and present in His name, whether our praises, our prayers, our means, our services, ourselves.

To God they all belong; to Thee,
The Treasurer of the earth and sea,
And when we bring them to Thy throne,
We but present Thee with Thine own.

GIGANTIC IRRIGATION PLAN IN NORTH WEST

St. John Man Writes Interestingly of the Fight Against Nature in Province of Alberta.

CALGARY, Alta., March, 1906.

To the Editor of the Sun:

Sir—Thinking that perhaps some of your readers would be interested in the life and workings of some of the residents of Western Canada, I will attempt to tell them through your columns, how they propose to farm here by means of irrigation, for let me say at the start, that rain here during most seasons is almost nil, the average for the past eight years being about 20, and some years going as low as 11; hence the name given it here, Sunny Alberta.

Irrigation is a branch of engineering science which has rendered fruitful many millions of acres of arable lands which otherwise would have been given over to small herds of cattle, or deserts of sand and cacti. The Canadian Pacific Railway have one of the largest irrigation enterprises in the world today. This is the tract of three million acres, lying between Calgary and Medicine Hat, it is the intention of the company to turn the water into their ditch by May 1st next.

The experience of the past year has fully demonstrated that the whole of this country is well suited for all kinds of farming operations, if a supply of water is assured at the time of year when it is most needed, and at the present time thousands of farmers are finding their way into this new country.

There is all ready in Alberta over 800 miles of canals and ditches for irrigation, so that laws have been enacted for the fair treatment of all concerned, and the present irrigation law says that the company shall furnish to the farmer one cubic foot of water per second, continuous flow, for each 150 acres, from May 1st to Oct. 1st. The minimum flow of water in the Bow River, the source of supply depended upon by the company building the canal, now is 3,000 cubic feet per second, but as the river is fed by the glaciers and in consequence has a greater flow in the warm weather, it has been found that it will furnish 6,000 cubic feet per second, and as the permit issued to the company only allows them 2,000 feet, there is ample margin.

The charge to the farmer has been fixed at fifty cents per acre, less than the price of one bushel of wheat.

It is said here that a man who has once farmed by irrigation will never revert to the old style of depending on natural rainfall if he can help it.

The whole country traversed by the canal is rolling prairie, the soil is a black, sandy, vegetable mold, from six inches to three feet in depth, and is covered with a heavy growth of native grass from six inches to two feet high. There are no stones, brush or timber, and the whole country is ready for the plow. The company deliver the water at the highest possible part of the farm and the farmer distributes it over his farm to suit himself, usually by plowing, through which the water runs to the desired place.

The main canal, which is 16 miles in length, leaves the Bow River, on the east side of Calgary, its course for six miles is southerly, following the bank of the river and gradually working its way to higher ground, and soon becomes much above the river, as the river banks are steep, and the earth sloping rapidly away from the mountains, gives the river a sharp descent and makes the work of the company to get the canal on the high ground a comparatively easy task. Along its whole length the canal looks as though it had been constructed for shipping purposes. It is 44 feet deep, wide at the bottom, and is designed to carry a depth of 10 feet of water. At some places it is 180 feet wide at the top and 100 feet deep, and during its construction, some three or four years, hundreds of men, horses, special railways, steam shovels and dredges have been constantly employed. There are many intersting engineering feats along its path, such as locks and gates for controlling the flow, and at two places considerable falls occur, and artificial means had to be employed for lowering it down. The total excavation has been about two and a half million cubic yards of earth, besides about as much more on the branches, and the work is not nearly completed yet.

A few miles east of Calgary a spillway has been put in, whereby the canal can be emptied and any necessary repairs made. For fear that the drain will at any time become too great (for, as I have said, the company are allowed a certain amount of water from the river), several large lakes between Calgary and the mountains have been arranged as reservoirs, and can be emptied into the river at any time. One of these, Devil's Head Lake, with a length of 12 miles and a depth of 40 feet, is capable of standing a drain of 80 gallons a second for 187 days (the irrigation season) to lower it a foot.

It is in the development of this storage that Calgary is particularly interested, as during the seasons when there have been heavy snowfalls in the foothills, or heavy rains in June, there is trouble along the river front at Calgary, and the lower parts of the city are sometimes flooded, and railway and traffic bridges suffer, but when these lakes are held in check by controlling dams, and the water is allowed out only as required, this will be obviated.

GEO. W. MULLIN.

IS JAPAN PREPARING FOR WAR WITH AMERICA?

MOSCOW, April 4.—General Vonmack, the Russian representative of the Red Cross, has just returned here from Japan. He declares that the Japanese are actively engaged in war preparations, and he adds that it is evident that the enemy in view is America and that operations are being planned against the Philippine Islands.

The best results can be obtained only by everlasting and persistent effort.—Gus Lavenson, Sacramento.

SOLDIERS COURT-MARTIALED FOR MAL-TREATING COMPANION

ALDERSHOT, Eng., April 4.—Four lieutenants, Hamilton, Dalrymple-Hamilton, Jolliffe and Harford, were placed on trial today before a court of inquiry, which is making an investigation into the hazing of Second Lieut. Clark Kennedy, who was severely maltreated by his fellow officers last month because, it is alleged, he was too poor to meet all the regimental subscription lists.

The court is composed of four generals and two colonels, Lieut. General Sir Gerald Morton presiding.

Lieut. Kennedy testified that after mess March 18, just after he had returned from sick leave, he was tried by a mock court-martial on the charge that the medical officer had found him in a filthy condition and that he had told his colonel a lie. Kennedy was thereupon sentenced to be stripped and to take a bath. The sentence was carried out with force and a mixture of motor oil and other ingredients was poured over him and jam was spread over his hair. Subsequently Kennedy escaped naked to his room. His persecutors, however, proceeded to break open the door, whereupon Kennedy jumped out of a window and took his refuge in a hotel.

Kennedy comes of a family of well known soldiers, and the other lieutenants belong to the first battalion of the Scots Guards. He had previously served in the fourth battalion of the Prince of Wales Own West Yorkshire regiment.

Colonel Cuthbert, comanding the Scots Guards, testified that it had been reported to him by the medical officer that Kennedy was suffering from a skin disease as the result of neglect. The colonel thought it disgraceful that such a thing should exist among young men of their station in life, and expressed the hope that his brother officers would deal with Kennedy.

Col. Cuthbert added that he only intended to suggest moral pressure and did not foresee that it might result in physical force.

The trial was adjourned.

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A TIME HONORED CURE FOR SPRING AILMENTS THAT EVERY PHYSICIAN RECOMMENDS.

But every year has seen the popularity of Ferrozone increase, and today it is used by the people of many nations for weakness, debility and the characteristic ailments of spring.

Let Ferrozone help you!

It enriches the blood supply and thereby vitalizes and quickens the whole body.

Humors and impurities are driven off. Disease germs of every kind are destroyed.

Nutritious material is supplied for restoring the waste, and day by day the process of rebuilding goes on till health that outlasts old age is established.

Mr. W. A. Renick, of 285 Hunter street, Hamilton, Ont., writes: "A year ago I became run down and lost my health. My strength was greatly reduced and on account of the weakness of my heart I was afraid to take up work.

"On going up stairs or walking fast my heart would beat like an engine. I would gasp for breath and get exhausted quickly. At night I would wake up in an excited condition and find my heart going like mad.

"In this terrible state nothing helped me but Ferozone. Such good it did me I can hardly explain. It built up my strength, put new life in my heart and made me feel like a new man."

Even in advanced cases of weakness Ferrozone is unfailing. Your druggist sells it, 50c. per box, or six boxes for $2.50, at all dealers, or by mail from N. C. Polson & Co., Hartford, Conn., U. S. A., and Kingston, Ont.

BISHOP BARRY WELCOMED HOME

Chatham Fishery Officer Seized Ton of Smelts.

CHATHAM, N. B., April 4.—Bishop Barry arrived here today, having returned from his visit to Rome. He came via Bathurst, reaching this town shortly after twelve. The mayor, town council, members of the C. M. B. A., and A. O. H. societies, church officers and a large concourse of citizens assembled at the railway station to greet the returning prelate. This large assemblage formed in procession and headed by the Citizens' Band, escorted the bishop to his residence. Many flags and decorations are in evidence, welcoming the return of Bishop Barry to his pastoral charge. A reception is being held this evening and several addresses and a substantial purse are some of the features of the function.

Fishery Officer Abbott seized about a ton of smelts at the railway station, where they were awaiting shipment by last night's train. The confiscated fish were boxed, labelled flat fish, and were being forwarded by express. The citizens are hoping to be able to secure a few of these dainty little fish if they are sent up at auction. Quite a quantity of smelts are being caught by hook and line in the river opposite the town, but those seized were evidently bag net product.

W. S. Loggie, M. P., returned to Ottawa last night.

NO SETTLEMENT YET OF WINNIPEG STRIKE

WINNIPEG, April 4.—No settlement of the street railway strike has yet been effected. After prolonged conferences it is announced that neither side will make any concessions. The company claims to have had 30 out of its 78 regular cars in service today, but they are poorly patronized. They stopped running at six o'clock. There was no disturbance.

CLERGYMAN NAMES JEALOUS HUSBAND

Mr. Koppe Says De Paul, Whose Wife Leads Church Choir, Attacked Him With a Hatchet.

GREENWICH, Conn., April 3.—The Rev. John Koppe, pastor of a German Lutheran church in East Port Chester, who was attacked last night with a hatchet as he was about to enter the church with several parishioners, yesterday said he recognized his assailant as Albert De Paul, a marble cutter, from Rome, Italy, husband of a woman who leads his choir and teaches in the Sunday school. He said he believed the man intended to kill him, and that he was insane from jealousy, but without cause.

Unless complications set in, Mr. Koppe will recover. He is in the home of Frederick H. Ponty, in Port Chester.

"Mr. De Paul and I have been friendly, and I have been entertained by him and his wife on Sundays," Mr. Koppe said. "Mrs. De Paul has helped me wonderfully in getting a large congregation for a church which was run down when I came to it from Brooklyn six months ago. Our relations were only those of pastor and churchworker. Sunday afternoon she and a half dozen other young persons and myself took supper with the Sunday school superintendent, Mr. Ruhloff. We walked to church together, I with Miss Alves, and Mrs. De Paul and her sister, Mrs. J. H.Schmehl, behind. There were three men in the party.

"De Paul came suddenly from the darkness by the church and raised his hand. I saw a hatchet. I tried to ward off the blows, but was hit six times. I am not a coward, but I did not want to fight. I called to the men to help me. They are mild men, and stood back. Mrs. De Paul alone came to my aid. She grabbed her husband's arm and exclaimed: 'My, God, don't kill him.' I didn't fall.

"I will do everything in my power to have De Paul captured, as I believe he would kill his wife and myself if allowed to."

Mrs. De Paul has returned to her mother, Mrs. Dold, in Port Chester, where she will live. She is twenty-five years old. Four years ago she and De Paul were married without the knowledge of the family. He has not been recognized by the Dolds.

De Paul took a train in Port Chester after staying around half an hour and saying he was not afraid of arrest. It is believed he is in New York. Henry B. White, prosecuting attorney, has issued a warrant for his arrest on a charge of attempt to murder. The New York detective bureau is working with the Greenwich officials.

MELBA ENGAGED BY HAMMERSTEIN

Prima Donna Signs a Contract to Sing at the Manhattan Opera House.

NEW YORK, April 3.—An announcement that was made yesterday by Oscar Hammerstein is calculated to emphasize the fact that it is the early impressario that catches the operatic star.

While Mr. Conried is still here deferring concluding his operatic engagements for next winter until his summer tour tour to Europe, Mr. Hammerstein, emulating the practice of the early bird, is completing his contracts now.

He has already captured Bonci, a tenor who divides honors with Caruso, is negotiating with Mme. Nordica and Jean de Reszke, has engaged Edouard de Reszke, Charles Gilbert and others, and now cables that he has closed a contract with Mme. Melba, by which that popular prima donna will appear next winter with Mr. Hammerstein's company in the Manhattan Opera House.

It is stated by Mme. Melba's business representative that Mr. Conried had made her an offer for next winter at the Metropolitan, but Mr. Conried when seen last evening made a quasi-denial of this, saying he had not made her "a direct offer," but had inquired as to her plans. The cable sent yesterday from Paris by Mr. Hammerstein to his son, William Hammerstein, says that he had secured Mme. Melba, notwithstanding the "strenuous, unavailing efforts" of the Metropolitan director to have her join his company.

Mme. Melba sang at the Metropolitan season before last, having been engaged for a few performances, all that she could fill, owing to her numerous concert engagements, but a heavy cold cut short her appearances after. She had made a most successful re-entry at the opera house in La Boheme, and she returned to Europe for a rest, which completely restored her to health.

THE LOVE LETTERS OF A BOSS

Sensational Suit of Miss Mae C. Wood Is Ended.

OMAHA, Neb., April 4.—The sensational suit filed by Miss Mae C. Wood against U. S. Senator Thos C. Platt, William Loeb, secretary to the president, and former Postmaster General Wynne, for $150,000 damages, was called in court today and dismissed by Judge Kennedy because no one appeared for the plaintiff.

Miss Wood alleges that she had written a book entitled "The Love Letters of a Boss," which comprised a number of letters she said had been written to her by Senator Platt. She said that Mr. Platt, with the assistance of Mr. Wynne and Mr. Loeb, got the letters from her and refused to return them.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OLD HOME WEEK

Fredericton Committee Met Last Evening—Royal Gazette Announcements.

FREDERICTON, April 4.—Today's Royal Gazette contains the following: Incorporation is granted the Jacquet River Lumber Company, capital $45,000; the Colonial Cigar Company, capital $49,000; Amland Bros., Ltd., capital $49,000; Edwin K. McKay Company, capital $1,000; the Hartland Drug Co., capital $2,000; the Review Printing and Publishing Company, capital $3,000.

The following parties apply for incorporation: Daniel J. Purdy, Susan A. Purdy, Jarvis C. Purdy, Willard G. Purdy, Mabel L. Beverley, Annie M. Purdy, all of St. John,, as the Crystal Steamship Co., capital $24,000, of 240 shares; F. A. Secord, Arthur P. Hazen, A. P. Barnhill, St. John; Simeon H. White, Walter J. Mills, Sussex, as the Dr. Scott's White Liniment Co., capital $49,000, of 4,900 shares.

G. W. Gibson, J. S. Eagles, W. B. Drysdale, A. C. Calder, Jennie Gibson, Edith U. Eagles, all of Woodstock, as the George W. Gibson Company, capital $24,000, of 960 shares.

The general committee of the old home week carnival met this evening, with the mayor presiding. There was a large attendance. The evening was chiefly taken up with receiving the reports of the various committees. Mr. Farrell reported that the city council had granted $250 towards the celebration. Mr. Dibblee reported that the estimated cost of the carnival was fixed at $1,000. Chief Engineer Rutter recommended a change in the programme as laid down, and it was decided to omit the firemen's festival for the second night and substitute an illuminated water parade and to do away with the torchlight procession on the third evening. For this evening a band concert will be arranged for. It was the general opinion that an automobile race should be one of the events and Mr. Barrett was appointed to make arrangements. Smythe street will be set aside for this event, but where it will come in the programme has not yet been decided. It was finally agreed to have the whole programme as outlined to the publicity committee.

Chief Rutter said that Secretary Hooper was today in St. John and while there he would try to arrange with the Kennebeccasis Yacht Club to have them take their annual cruise two weeks earlier this year in order that they may be here for the carnival. W. T. Whitehead, who was present, said that he would donate $50 towards the polymorphian. F. B. Cooper thought that a parade of Fredericton driving turnouts would be an attraction and the suggestion was left with the publicity committee to deal with.

The annual meeting of the Tobique Log Driving Company was held this afternoon and the following board of directors elected: Senator Baird, Henry Hilyard, R. A. Estey, N. C. Murchie, D. Fraser Gregory, jr., J. C. Hartley, secretary. The estimated cut was placed at between thirty and thirty-five millions.

STARTLING STATEMENTS OF CROWN ATTORNEY

When York County Loan Case Was Taken Up Yesterday.

TORONTO, April 4.—When the York County Loan case was taken up in the police court this morning, E. J. Burt, one of the York Loan officers, said legislation as to forfeitures caused a big loss to the York County Loan. He denied that Phillips got any share of the commissions for writing insurance in the Toronto Life Assurance Company. The crown attorney pressed him hard on the point and said he was prepared to prove that he got two-thirds of the over-riding commission, amounting to $10,000.

"If I had as much evidence when I lodged the complaint, as I have now," said Curry, "I should have charged Phillips with conspiring with Georgina Hudson, Lillian Hudson, E. J. Durt and others to defraud the shareholders of the York County Loan."

Jones pleaded that the crown attorney was not fair to the defendant.

"It is only extra work for myself," said the magistrate. "In all my experience, never have I come across a case so mixed up, so complicated, and everything with the purpose of defrauding. There has never before been such a secret complicated method perpetrating fraud brought before me, and it should be fully investigated. There is no object in my continuing this investigation save to get at the facts."

WEDDED AT HAMPTON.

HAMPTON, Kings Co., April 4—This evening at 7.30 o'clock the Church of the Messiah, at Hampton Station, was filled with a large congregation to witness the marriage of Miss Florence R. C. Barnes, only surviving daughter of Mrs. and the late J. W. Barnes, for many years a well known dry goods merchant of St. John, to Geo. T. McAvity, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. D. McAvity, Norton.

The bride and groom were unattended. The former was simply but becomingly attired in a suit of cream colored serge with a white flower hat creation.

After the ceremony the happy couple drove direct to Hampton Village where they will reside in the future.



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