THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1871.

DRAMATIC SKETCHES-No. 1.

and -----

The Prompter-Long-delayed Tribute to an Old Public Functionary.

People have very vague notions about the internal economy of a theatre. The most refreshing ignorance upon stage matters is constantly shown by men who are fully abreast of every other topic. Professional people even-lawyers, doctors, newspaper men-persons whom we know to have a trained eye and intelligence, swallow the old fables gravely, and puzzle the actor whom they may chance to meet with the owi-like sagacity of their theatrical views. That the stage is a kind of scaled region does altogether explain this ignorance; for although "no admittance" is the rule, yet the mystic ground can nevertheless be approached, in ome way, by almost any one who cares enough about it to press the matter. Further, we are sure that there is not the same ignorance among actors of the practice' of other professions. Not that actors have often the knowledge necessary to the practice of, say, law or medicine, but they know the rules of these professions-of college life, of debate, etc.-better than lawyers or doctors know the order of an actor's life, and this, notwithstanding that the Bar Association and the Dissecting Room are almost as much unknown ground as the region Behind the Scenes. We intend from time to time to do what in us lies towards putting an imperfectly understood subject in its true light.

If, in furtherance of this idea, we speak first of all of the prompter, it is not because we think that that individual, indispensable though he is, ranks all his stage companions in importance. But his position is one that is least of all generally understood. We long ago made a vow that if any enterprising publisher ever gave us a show on this subject the prompter should have justice. Let us see, then, what is the extent of his claim on the amusementseeking public.

We assert that the prompter is the hardest-worked man in the theatre. The actors are all off of many scenes, and are severally entirely out of the casts of some plays, but the prompter is an essential part of each scene in every piece, day in and night out. The amount of weariness that this induces is hardly to be appreciated by the lucky individuals who have never tried it. The attention is incessantly on the stretch. To relax the tension for a single instant (we speak now of performance) might be to involve a scene in inextricable confusion. The weight of this responsibility is on the prompter from the time the curtain rises until it falls, and it is as tiring as the playing of a heavy part.

There are, to be sure, some gradations in this anxiety. The prompter grows to know the material of his company, which members of it are surest footed and which are the most liable to "stick;" and although, if he is a trusty man, he will follow all with a like fidelity, yet as regards his own comfort the difference of material is important. The best actors, it may be stated, are very often the most nervous, and, although really perfect in their parts, require the prompter's constant watchfulness; while the respectable dullards of the stage are not seldom "dead-letter" actors, and could of themselves entirely dispense with any assistance.

The common idea is that the prompter's work at night constitutes his entire labor. Never was there a greater error, for irksome though it is, it is the least part of his duty. During all the long and tiresome rehearsals he must hold his book as vigilantly as at night. For other people there are rest and holiday, but not for him. In very many cases he is virtually stage manager. He not only follows the dialogue, but he directs the "business" as the rehearsal proceeds. The small people of the piece, the corps de ballet, etc., are especially under his direction, even when the stage manager actively conducts the rehearsal, which as we have intimated he does not do at all, very frequently. The rehearsal is a constant fret and worry to the prompter, for if the piece is not properly digested in the morning there will be most assuredly a series of blunders at night.

More than this, the prompter's day work does not

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC. The City Amusements.

AT THE ARCH Sheridan's comedy of Th School for Scandal will be performed this even ing, with A Kiss in the Dark as an afterpiece. Mr. S. K. Murdoch will be the recipient of a complimentary testimonial benefit to-morrow complimentary testimonial benefit to-morrow evening, when he will personate "Claude Mel-notte" in *The Lady of Lyons*. Miss Lizzie Pier-son will appear as "Pauline." On Wednesday Mr. W. H. Wallis, an excel-lent actor and an established favorite, will pre-sent his claims to the regards of the public. On Thursday Mr. John J. Holmes, the box book-keeper, and Mr. Fred. Trefts, the ticket taker, will have a joint benefit, for which an attractive bill is announced. On Saturday Mr. Adam Everly will offer a fine

On Saturday Mr. Adam Everly will offer a fine bill on the occasion of his benefit. He will appear as "Frank Heartwell" in the comedy of The Soldier's Daughter, and as "Caleb Kestral" in the domestic drama of The Harvest Home. Mr. Everly's many friends will be pleased to see

him sgain upon the Arch Street stage, and his benefit will undoubtedly attract a full house. AT THE WALNUT Tom Taylor's play of 'Twixt Are and Crown will be represented, with Miss Ella Burns in the character of "Lady Elizabeth." This play had an extraordinary run in London, and is said to be of more than usual interest. Miss Burns has on benefit occasions played the arduous parts of "Queen Katharine" in Henry VIII and "Constance" in King John, and has given evidences of undoubled ability. On this, her real debut as an actress, we hope

she will be greeted by a full house. AT THE CHESNUT Mrs. E. L. Davenport will have a benefit this evening, which should attract a large audience, for Mrs. Davenport is an a large audience, for Mrs. Davenport is an actress of great' ability, and her performances have contributed much to the success of the Chesnut since it has been under her husband' management. Shiel's tragedy of The Apostate will be represented, with Mr. Davenport as "Pescara," Mr. Thorne as "Hemeya," and Mrs. Davenport as "Florinda." The performance will conclude with the farce of The Rendezvous. The benefit of Mr. Charles R. Thorne Jr.

will conclude with the farce of The Rendezvous. The benefit of Mr. Charles R. Thorne, Jr., will take place on Wednesday. The programme will consist of Dreams of Delusion, The Two Friends, and A Bull in a China Shop. On Thursday evening Mr. Walter Lennox will have a benefit, when She Stoops to Conquer and Sarah's Young Man will be represented. Mr. Lennox is an excellent low comedian, who is fairly established in the regards of the playgoers of Philadelphia, and we hope his benefit will be a substantial compliment.

a substantial compliment. The benefit of Mr. H. Torchiana, the box book-keeper, is announced for Saturday evening. AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC the spectacle of The Black Crook will be represented this

evening. AT THE ASSEMBLY BUILDING the beautiful diorama of "Ireland in Shade and Sunshine" will commence its third week this evening. This is one of the most attractive entertainments ever given in this city, and is well worthy of the regards of the public. The pictures themselves are artistic representations of some of the most

attractive features of Irish scenery, while the performances of Miss Julia Esmond, Barry Aylmer, Bryan O'Lynn, Frank Roach, and W. E. Misdale add greatly to the enjoyable char-Acter of the entertainment. AT THE AMERICAN Miss Kate Fisher will enter upon the second week of her engagement, and will appear on this and every evening of the week in her great role of "Mazeppa."

AT THE ALHAMBRA, an attractive miscellaneous programme will be presented this evening.

AT THE MUSEUM, Ninth and Arch streets, Mr. Lewis Baker will appear this evening as "Wilkins Micawber" in a dramatization of Dickens' novel of "David Copperfield."

A GRAND COMPLIMENTARY CONCERT to Mr. George A. Conly will be given on Friday even-ing, May 5th, at Concert Hall, under the direc-tion of Professor Ettore Barill, who will be assisted by a number of well-known artists.

CITY NOTICES.

THOSE WHO DESIRE A BRILLIANCY OF COMPLEX-

DIED. ALERIGHT. At his residence, No. 1715 Market street, on the morning of the 24th instant, John G. ALERIGHT. Due notice of his funeral will be given.

FORTER.-On Saturday afternoon, the given. FORTER.-On Saturday afternoon, the 29d instant, ELIZABETH B., wife of Joseph H. Foster. The relatives and friends of the family are respect-fully invited to attend the funeral, from the resi-dence of her husband, No. 1217 Arch street, on Wed-nesday afternoon, the 26th instant, at 3 o'clock. **

HARDIE. -On the 21st instant, CARLTON R. MOORE, only son of David and Mary Hardie, aged 2 years

only son of David and analy finite, as and 9 months. Relatives and friends are invited to attend his funeral, on Tuesday, the 25th instant, at 9 A. M., from bis parents' residence, No. 715 Tasker street. **

MARIS.—On Sixth-day, the 21st instant, SARAH ANN, daughter of the late Jesse J. Maris. The friends of the family are invited, without fur-ther notice, to attend the funeral, from the resi-dence of her mother, near Ohester, on Third-day. the 25th instant, at 10 o'clock A. M. Carrieges will be in waiting at Chester on arrival of train leaving Philadelphia at 8:30 A. M.

MARSHALL.—On the morning of the 23d instant, BENJAMIN MARSHALL, in his 62d year." His friends and those of the family are invited to attend the funeral, from his late residence, No. 1116 Spruce street, on Fifth-day morning, the 37th instant, at 11 o'clock. To proceed to Laurel Hill.

SCULL .- On the 24th instant, HANNAH E., wife of

David Scull, Jr. GLOTHING. FINE READY-MADE CLOTHING, COMBINING STYLE, DURABILITY AND EX-CELLENCE OF WORKMANSHIP. Jones' ONE-PRICE ESTABLISHMENT.

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SPECIAL NOTICES. For additional Special Notices see Inside Pages.

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tillers, THOMAS MOORE & SON, JOSEPH S. FINCH & CO., and THOMAS MOORE. The attention of the trade is requested to test these Whiskies, at market rates. 2 4smws

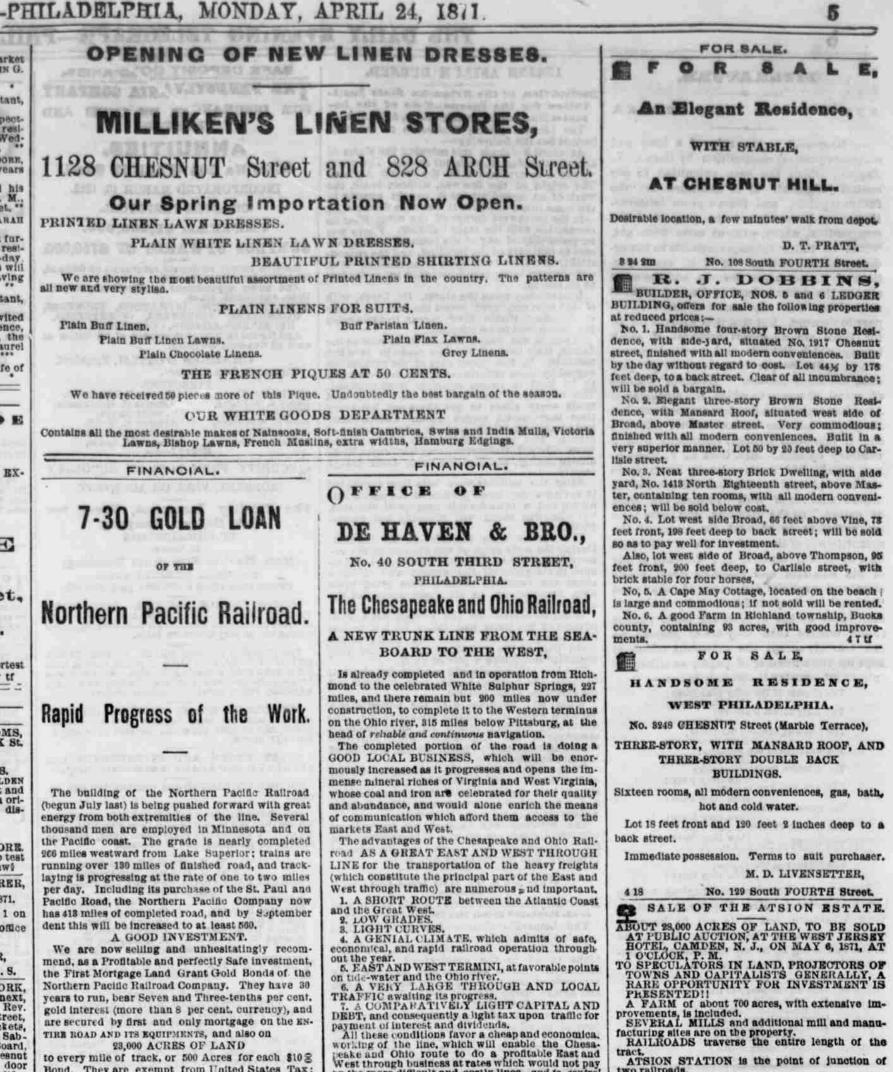
OFFICE U. S. ASSISTANT TREASURER, PHILADELPHIA, Pa , April 22, 1871.

Registered and coupon interest due May 1 on U. S. Loans will be paid without rebate at this office on and after the 24th instant.

GEORGE EYSTER,

Assistant Treasurer U. S. REV. DR. JOHN HALL, OF NEW YORK. April 25, at 8 o'clock, in the Rev. Dr. Wylle's Church, BROAD Street, Dr. Wylle's Church, BROAD Street, below Spruce. Subject—"Personal Power." Tickets, 50c. For the benefit of the Parent and Mission Sab-bath Schools. For sale at Presbyterian Board, No. 1334 Chesnut street; Martien's, No. 1214 Chesnut street; Garrigues', No. 608 Arch street, and door of Church evening of lecture. 4 22 2t*

TRINITY CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, CATHARINE Street, above Second.-The CATHARINE Street, above Second.—The Bemi-Centennial Anniversary of this church will be celebrated on TUESDAY, April 25. Services at 10% A. M. Morning Prayer, Holy Communion, and Sermon by Rev. Leighton Coleman. At 8 P. M. Parish Reunion, Historical and other addresses. Choice musical selections by eminent volunteer talent. talent.



PRESENTED !! A FARM of about 700 acres, with extensive improvements, is included. SEVERAL MILLS and additional mill and manufacturing sites are on the property. RAILROADS traverse the entire length of the ATSION STATION is the point of junction of two railroads. TOWNS and SETTLEMENTS may be favorably located. THE CEDAR TIMBER is of considerable value. CRANBERRIES, GRAPES, SWEET POTATOES, HOPS, etc., can be very successfully cultivated. GOOD TITLE will be made to the purchaser. SEND FOR A PAMPHLET containing particulars, and apply personally, or by mail, to GEORGE M. DALLAS, Assignee, 3 24 37t No. 222 S. FOURTH St., Philadelphia. TO LET OR FOR SALE-ONE OF THOSE

by any means end with the rehearsal. There are dinous demands upon him from the stage hands as well as from the actors. He has, for instance, to draw out for the chief carpenter a list-or "plot" as it is called-of the various scenery to be set for the evening's performance. He follows to a certain extent the traditions of the theatre in this task, but it requires, too, good judgment and a thorough knowledge of the resources of the stage he is working. The "plot" must be made out with detailed exactness; everything needed in every scone must be particularized and its exact position assigned. This is all-important, for with the exceptional occasions when new scenery is painted for a play the scenes are not often set at rehearsal, or at least not perfectly. There are some things that must be, and this is one of them.

In the matter of properties, also, is the prompter directly responsible. "Properties" is generic name for all small articles used by the actors in the course of performance. They are of infinite variety, and the person whose business it is to make, provide, and take care of them (of whom we may speak more fally on a future occasion) is one of the institutions of the theatre. The prompter, in addition to his scene-plot, must also draw out

a property-plot, detailing with exactness all the "props" required for the piece or pieces to be acted at night, explaining where they are to be placed, or to whom they are to be handed. It is a task of great nicety. Any one can see how positively essential it is that the dagger, the miniature, the purse of gold, the package of love letters, the sword that breaks so easily across the knee-that such things should be exactly there at the right moment; and if they are not, Mr. Prompter is to blame. Besides all these, the prompter has yet other duties. The books and manuscripts of the theatre are in his charge. Many of the plays performed by stars, now-a-days, are private property, and unprinted. The actors are furnished with written parts, which must be carefully gathered together after the run of the piece, and returned to the owner. The prompter is responsible for the safety of all such manuscripts. Furthermore, he generally, or very often, makes out the bills of the theatre, and inserts the advertisements in the newspapers. This does not require much labor, but it is a work that needs taste and tact. It is mentioned to show the varied talents necessary in a man who would fill this difficult position well.

Of all impracticable things, it might be thought that a stuttering prompter was the toughest. At first blush it would seem indeed that he might as well have no tongue as one not perfectly under his control. Yet we have known a man who stattered worse than an earthquake, and yet who was so valuable to his proprietors that they would have raised his salary three dollars a week any time rather than have lost him. This worthy manwhich his name was Brown-was long attached to a leading Boston theatre. There was this peculiarity about him. At rehearsal, and at day-work generally, his tongue led him such a life that he and his friends were very often sick to death of it. It seemed, however, when the demand was really upon him that his hesitancy of speech left. At night his voice was generally ready. He occasionally went on for a small part (another item of work, by the way), his unruly tengue very unfrequently going back on him at such times, and at his post his sibillant speech was as a rule unimpeachable. But not always! And woe betide the unlucky actor who, Ishing for the word, glared icily at the promptplace, and saw poor Brown mouthing and gesticuating, but unable to utter a sound ! If nervous, that would be the end of the befogged actor for that scene, unless some one more self-possessed happened to be on with him, and could take up the

We have thus given an outline - a beggarly oneof the prompter's duty. It was Mrs. Harris' opinion of Sairey Gamp that "of all over-worked and underpaid creeturs" she (Saircy), was the overworkedest and the underpaidest. We make an exception however, in favor of our friend of the First Hatrance-R. H. Sometimes, not often, he is, as stors say, "ambitious," and doesn't mind the work ; but the fact remains.

cathartics containing calomel and mercury. Use Nature's remedy, HELMBOLD'S FLUID EXTRACT SAR. SAPARILLA and HELMBOLD'S CATAWBA GRAPE PILLS. Component parts-Fluid Extract Rhubarb and Fluid Extract Grape Juice. For Liver Complaints, Jaundice, Billious Affections, Dyspepsia, Sick or Nervous Headache, Costiveness, etc., the Pills are unequalled.

MR. WILLIAM W. CASSIDY, the jeweller at No. 8 South Second street, has one of the largest and most attractive stocks of all kinds of Jewelry and Silverware in the city. He has also on hand a fine assortment of fine American Western Watches. Those who purchase at this store at the present time are certain to get the worth of their money.

YOUNG LADIES, BEWARE! of the injurious effects of Cathartics and Purgatives, containing mercury, calomel, and other deleterious drugs. In a short time they enervate and destroy the system as well as the complexion, If you would have a fresh, healthy; and youthful appearance, use HELMBOLD'S FLUID EXTRACT SARSAPARILLA and HELMBOLD'S CA-TAWBA GRAPE PILLS. They are purely vegetable; a pleasant purgative, and cause neither nauses or griping pains.

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