"Good heavens!" the young man said "this is dreadful; they had a thousand times better have been shot with their friends. What's to be done, Sergeant?"

"I don't know," Ronald said, "I can't think yet. At any rate, instead of waiting till the men with the wagons come back, I will push straight on out of the wood, and will then send the rest of them back at full gallop to meet you, then you can all come on together. I think you said you would take command of the party going back with the wagons."

The two trains were at once set in motion. Ronald's party met with no further interruption until they were clear of the bush. As soon as he was well away from it, he sent back the Rifles to join the other party, and return with them through the forest. He went on for half a mile further, then halted the wagons and dismounted.

Mr. Armstrong had been placed in one of the wagons going up the country, as they were nearer to a town that way than to Port Elizabeth; besides Ronald knew that if Mr. Armstrong recovered consciousness, he would for many reasons prefer being up the country. Ronald walked up and down, restless and excited, meditating what step he had best take, for he was determined in some way or other he would attempt to rescue Mary Armstrong from the hands of the natives. Presently the head man of the Fingoes came up to him, and said, in a mixture of English and his own tongue:

"My white friend is troubled, can Kreta help him?"

"I am troubled, terribly troubled, Kreta. One of the white ladies who has been carried off by the Kaffirs is a friend of mine. I must get her out of their hands."

Kreta looked grave.

"Difficult thing that, sir. If go into bush get chopped to pieces."

"I must risk that," Ronald said; "I am going to try and save her whether it costs me my life or not."

"Kreta will go with his white friend," the chief said; "white man no chance by himself."

"Would you, Kreta?" Ronald asked eagerly; "but no, I have no right to take you into such danger as that. You have a wife and child; I have no one to depend upon me."

"Kreta would not have a child if it had not been for his white friend," Kreta said; "if he goes, Kreta goes with him, and will take some of his men."

"You are a good fellow, Kreta," Ronald said, shaking the chief heartily by the hand; "now what's the best way of setting about it?"

The Fingo thought for some time, and then asked:

"Is the white woman young and pretty?"

"Yes," Ronald replied, rather surprised at the question.

"Then I think she is safe for a little while. If she is old and ugly they torture her and kill her quick; if she is pretty and young most likely they will send her as a present to their big chief; perhaps Macomo or Sandilli, or Kreli, or one of the other great chiefs, whichever tribe they belong to. Can't do nothing to-day; might crawl into the wood; but if I find her how can I get her out? That's not possible. The best thing will be this: I will send two of my young men into the bush to try and find out what they do with her, and where they are going to take her. Then at night we will try to get them off as they go across the country. If we no meet them we go straight to Amatolas to find out the kraal to which they take her and then see how to get her off."

"How many men will you take, Kreta?"

"Five men," the chief said, holding up one hand, "that's enough to creep and crawl. No use to try force; too many Kaffirs. Five men might do; 500 no good."

"I think you are right, Chief. It must be done by craft if at all."

"Then I will send off my two young men at once," the chief said. "They go a long way round, and enter bush on the other side; then creep through the bush and hear Kaffir talk. If Kaffir sees them they think they their own people, but mustn't talk; if they do Kaffirs notice difference of tongue. One, two words no noticed, but if talk much find out directly."

"Then there's nothing for me to do to-night," Ronald said.

The chief shook his head. "No good till quite dark."

"In that case I will go on with the convoys as far as Bushman's river, where they halt to-night."

"Very well," the chief said. "We go on with you there, and then come back here and meet the young men, who will tell us what they have found out."

The chief went away, and Ronald saw him speaking to some of his men. Then two young fellows of about 20 years old laid aside their blankets, put them and their guns into one of the wagons, and then, after five minutes' conversation with their chief, who was evidently giving them minute instructions, went off at a slinging trot across the country.

In less than an hour the party that was escorting the settlers' wagons through the bush, and the mounted men who had gone to meet them, returned together, having seen no sign of the enemy. The wagons were set in motion, and the march continued. Ronald Mervyn rode up to the officer of the native levy.

"I am going, sir, to make what may seem a most extraordinary request, and indeed it is one that is, I think, out of your power to grant, but if you give your approval it to some extent will lessen my responsibility."

"What is it, Sergeant?" the young officer asked in some surprise.

"I want when we arrive at the halting place to hand over the command of my detachment to the Corporal, and for you to let me go away on my own affairs. I want you also to allow your head man, Kreta, and five of his men leave of absence."

The young officer was astonished. "Of course I am in command of the men, and so have authority over you so long as you are with me, but as you received orders direct from your own officers to take your detachment down to the coast, and return with the wagons, I am sure that I have no power to grant you leave to go away."

"No, sir, that's just what I thought, but at the same time if you report that although you were unable to grant me leave, you approved of my absence, it will make it much easier for me. Not that it makes any difference, sir, because I admit frankly that I should go in any case. It is probable that one may be reduced to the ranks, but I don't think that under the circumstances they will punish me any more severely than that."

"But what are the circumstances, Sergeant? I can scarcely imagine any circumstance that could make me approve of your intention to leave your command on a march like this."

"I was just going to tell you them, sir, but I may say that I do not think it at all probable that there will be any further attack on the convoy. There is no more large bush to pass between this and Williamstown, and so far we have heard of no attempt being made further on the road to stop convoys. That poor fellow who is lying wounded in the wagon is a Mr. Armstrong. He was an officer in the service when he was a young man, and fought, he told me, at Waterloo. His place is near the spot where I was quartered for two months just before the outbreak, and he showed me great kindness, and treated me as a friend. Well, sir, one of the three ladies that were, as you heard, carried off in the wagons, was Mr. Armstrong's daughter. Now, sir, you know what her fate will be in the hands of those savages: dishonor, torture and death. I am going to save her if I can. I don't know whether I shall succeed, most likely I shall not. My life is of no great consequence to me, and has so far been a failure, but I want to try and rescue her whether it costs me my life or not. Kreta has offered to accompany me with five of his men. Alone, I should certainly fail, but with his aid there is a chance of my succeeding."

"By Jove, you are a brave fellow, Sergeant," the young officer said, "and I honor you for the determination you have formed," and waiving military etiquette, he shook Ronald warmly by the hand. "Assuredly I will, so far as in my power, give you leave to go, and will take good care that in case you fail your conduct in thus risking your life shall be appreciated. How do you mean to set about it?"

Ronald gave him a sketch of the plan that had been determined upon by himself and Kreta.

"Well, I think you have a chance at any rate, the officer said, when he concluded. "Of course the risk of detection in the midst of the Kaffirs would be tremendous, but still there seems a possibility of your escape. In any case no one can possibly disapprove of your endeavor to save this young lady from the awful fate that would certainly be hers unless you can rescue her. Poor girl! Even though I don't know her, it makes my blood run cold to think of an English lady in the hands of those savages. However, if I were not in command of the convoy I would gladly go with you and take my chance."

As soon as the encampment was reached, Kreta came up to Ronald.

"Must change clothes," he said, "and go as Kaffir." Ronald nodded his head, as he had already decided that this step was absolutely necessary.

"Must paint black," the chief went on, "how do that?"

"The only way I can see is to powder some burnt wood and mix it with a little oil."

"Yes, that do," the chief said.

"I will be with you in five minutes. I must hand over the command to the Corporal."

"Corporal James," he said, when he went up to him. "I hand over the command of this detachment to you. You are, of course, to keep by the wagons and protect them to King Williamstown."

"But where are you going, Sergeant?" the Corporal asked in surprise.

"I have arranged with Mr. Nolan to go away on detached duty for two or three days. I am going to try to get the unfortunate women who were carried off this morning out of the hands of the Kaffirs." The Corporal looked at him as if he had doubts as to his sanity.

"I may not succeed," Ronald went on, "but I am going to try. At any rate, I hand over the command to you. I quite understand that Mr. Nolan cannot give me leave, and that I run the risk of punishment for leaving the convoy. but I have made up my mind to risk that."

"Well, of course you know best, Sergeant; but it seems to me that, punishment or no punishment, there is not much chance of your rejoining the corps; it is just throwing away your life going among them savages."

"I don't think it is as bad as that," Ronald said, "although of course there is a risk of it. At any rate, Corporal, you can take the convoy safely into King Williamstown. That's your part of the business."

Ronald then returned to the encampment of the native levies. A number of sticks were charred and then scraped. There was no oil to be found, but as a substitute the charcoal was mixed with a little cart grease. Ronald then stripped, and was smeared all over with the ointment which was then rubbed into him. Some more powdered charcoal was then sprinkled over him, and this also rubbed until he was a shiny black, the operation affording great amusement to the Fingoes. Then a sort of petticoat consisting of strips of hide reaching half way down to the knee and sewn to a leathern belt was put round his waist, and his toilet was complete, except as to his hair.

The chief looked puzzled, but after a few minutes' consideration called to one of the women and deliberately cut off her woolly mop close to the scalp, and put it on to Ronald's head. It fitted closely, for he, like all the men, wore his hair cut quite short to prevent its forming a receptacle for dust. The Fingoes applauded by clapping their hands and performing a wild dance around Ronald, while the women who now crowded up shrieked with laughter.

The chief walked gravely around him two or three times and then pronounced that he would pass muster. A bandolier for cartridges, of native make, was slung over his shoulder, and with a rifle in one hand and a spear in the other, and two or three necklaces of brass beads round his neck, Ronald would anywhere, unless closely inspected, have passed as a Kaffir warrior. In order to test his appearance he strolled across to where Mr. Nolan was inspecting the serving out of rations.

"What do you want?" the officer asked; "the allowance for all the men has been served out already; if you haven't got yours you must speak to Kreta about it. I can't go into the question with each of you."

"Then you think I will do very well, Mr. Nolan?"

The officer started.

"Good heavens, Sergeant, is it you? I had not the slightest conception of it. You are certainly admirably disguised, and you might walk through Cape Town without any one suspecting you, but what are you going to do about your feet? You will never be able to get through the woods barefooted?"

"I have been thinking of that myself," Ronald said, "and the only thing I can see is to get them to make me a sort of sandal. Of course it wouldn't do in the day time, but at night it would not be observed, unless I were to go close to the fire or light of some sort."

"Yes, that would be the best plan," the officer agreed. "I dare say the women can manufacture you something in that way. There is the hide of that bullock we killed yesterday, in the front wagon; it was a black one."

Ronald cut off a portion of the hide and went across to the natives and explained to them what he wanted. Putting his foot on the hide, a piece was cut off large enough to form the sole of the foot and come up about an inch all round; holes were made in this and it was laced on to the foot with thin strips of hide. The hair was, of course, outside, and Roland found it by no means uncomfortable.

"You ride horse," the chief said, "back to bush. I take one fellow with me to bring him back."

Ronald was pleased with the suggestion, for he was by no means sure how he should feel after a walk of ten miles in his new foot gear.

(To be continued.)

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MODERN GREEKS, *their business and political methods and their progressive policy, are entertainingly described in to-morrow's* DISPATCH *by Frank G. Carpenter.*

THE LABRADOR COAST

A Voyage in a Schooner Along That Barren and Deserted Shore.

APPETITES OF THE ESQUIMAUX.

Two of Them Who Easily Got Away With 56 Oranges, Skins and All.

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE WINTER NIGHT

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

ON BOARD SCHOONER SOPHIE, August 12.—From Hopedale we proceeded northwest skirting the shore, continually dodging islands, icebergs and homeward-bound fishing craft. There is no change in dreary scene. The shores present the same lofty, massive, desolate outline. At our distance occasionally the moss upon them, under certain conditions of atmosphere and sunlight, gave the appearance of heathery heights such as you will see when cruising along the noble northern shores of Ireland, from Lough Foyle around Malin Head to Lough Swilly; but we knew there was no verdure there, and naught but stone. With that consciousness these shores are ever stern, repellant, awful; and no influence save that curious fascination to semi-Arctic exploration one may have a hint of in going thus far toward eternal ice and silence, can justly prompt any rational being in following our course for aught save danger and fish. Both can be got nearer home.

We agreed on sailing as far as human life permanently existed along the coast, and again had opportunity to carry passengers free without a license. These were a sort of novitiate Moravian missionary who belonged to Hebron and had come to Hopedale with homeward-bound fishers, and two Esquimaux pilots who had brought vessels to the south. I was interested chiefly in the former's narative of life at this remotest American mission, and in the powers of the latter to assimilate our provisions. In all my wanderings I never saw two creatures in the semblance of humans with such swinish capacity and rapacity. We had a few boxes of oranges on board. They had never seen the fruit before. I was curious to know if they could once be sated with it. We made the attempt but failed. These two animals actually ate 56 oranges, skins and all, in one hour and 40 minutes.

A MORAVIAN MISSION.

Passing Nain, an important Moravian Mission where the Home Society annually sends a large ship with supplies and for furs, and Okak Island and village, where there are straggling huts, a few traders and trappers, and where the Esquimaux come in the summer to fish, we finally reached Hebron, and, without anchorage, left our strange passengers, who were taken ashore in a kayak—a sort of hide-bottomed boat, almost precisely like the curragh of the Irish Aran Islands—followed by a procession of kayaks filled with grinning and chattering Esquimaux; when we proceeded on our now wholly dreary voyage to Cape Chudleigh.

Here, as Captain Deschamps set the course of the Sophie toward the St. Lawrence again, in 60 degrees north latitude, our eyes, if but for a brief half hour, rested upon the uncharted shores of Hudson's Strait and could at least see along the steely blue waters the way where so many intrepid searchers for Polar seas had passed never to return.

The result of the information secured during our few weeks' cruise leads me to believe that the portion of Labrador east of a line extending due north from the mouth of the St. Lawrence river to Hudson's Bay, is the most worthless part of the whole world. Indeed it is scarcely worth visiting even as a curiosity in sterility and desolation. In the 1,000 miles of coast upon which there is any pretense of population, the total number of resident human beings all told will not exceed 6,000 souls. This number includes all Indians of the Montagnais, Nasquapee and Esquimaux tribes. Estimating the peninsula as a quadrilateral with sides averaging 500 miles in length, a moderate computation, this would give an area of 160,000,000 acres; and just one human being to about 27,000 acres.

NOT VERY FERTILE.

That there are 100 acres of land capable of cultivation within this mighty expanse has been remorselessly disproved for over 350 years by the efforts of Jesuits and other missionaries, by those of Christianized Indians, and by all settlers who have been lured upon these shores to starve and perish. It is possible that during two, and possibly three months of the summer 40,000 fishermen may be found off Labrador; 15,000 within the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and 25,000 along the Atlantic Labrador shores. These are residents of the United States, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Islands, and Newfoundland. They have no interest here whatever save to come and grab and go. There are not enough standing trees in all the Labrador district named, and that comprises all of Labrador proper, available for building timber, to pay for transporting to any place and lighting the first fire in a single sawmill. All the frantic efforts of the Dominion Government to discover mineral deposits have been unavailing.

What then does Labrador possess? An unmeasured and measureless reach of stone and ice, covered here and there with moss; again occasionally patched with stunted spruce; oftener for hundreds of miles scarred and blackened by burned spruce stumps between which flinty rocks project like cruel spears; with countless impassable rivers plowing in ungovernable torrents through hideous gorges; 4,000 whites utterly unable to leave their prisonment or better their condition, living half of the year like beasts, and the other half little better; 2,000 Indians subsisting on salt fish and raw, with occasionally a bit of musty flour or meal; 300 to 400 Esquimaux dogs; any number of wolves, and countless seals and fish. Now that is all there is to Labrador besides a climate of Greenland; and even the seals and fish do not exclusively belong to it, for they are a common product of the ocean, and as common to all other northeast shores. Any land so God-forsaken that the government possessing it cannot survey it, or procure any form of statistics concerning it, is a veritable castaway indeed. It is impossible to obtain statistics of even seals and fishes. But from the known loss in naval and commercial expeditions, and the wreckage of coasting and fishers' vessels along the coasts, since Labrador was discovered, it would be a safe calculation that for every dollar in value of fish or fur secured upon the Labrador coast for the past 400 years, an equal or greater actual loss by somebody has been sustained. And when the additional frightful loss of life has been taken into account, the inexpressible worthlessness of the entire peninsula may be to some extent conceived.

ALERT RELIGIOUS EFFORT.

But there is a certain interest the world over in how even so hopeless a folk as the Labradorians may live, and in that outreaching of alert religious effort, whatever its faults of method, which aspires through great personal hardship and suffering to keep aflame the tiny lamps of Christian lighthouses along these wild and savage shores. The Jesuit missionaries have labored along the St. Lawrence coast since 1611; and their efforts among the Indians of British America from the Atlantic to the Pacific fill a luminous page in North American history. On the Labrador coast from Seven Islands to Forteau Bay the people, comprising Montagnais and Nasquapee Indians, French Acadians and half-breeds, are all adherents of the Roman Catholic faith. At but a few points are there resident priests.

The fathers visit the different stations and settlements, by boat, twice, the remotest once, each year, devoting themselves untiringly to ministrations from one to two weeks at each place. From Forteau Bay past the Straits of Belle Isle and around the Atlantic coast to Hamilton Inlet, the Church of England may be said to control Labrador territory. This population is almost an English-speaking one, comprising perhaps 1,000 souls which include several hundred Esquimaux and Esquimaux half-breeds. There are also in this territory three Wesleyan Methodist missionaries with roving charges, of whom our melancholy passenger from Mingan to Forteau Bay was one. The Church of England missions were established 40 years ago; and they now possess perhaps half a dozen mission houses and tiny churches all told, which are annually visited with great anguish and trepidation by the Bishop of Quebec.

Beyond this to the north there are no other than Moravian missions. These are four in number, all located on the Atlantic coast, at Hopedale, Nain, Okak and Hebron, the latter the northern-most mission of the continent. The Brethren whom I met informed me that their first missionary and five sailors were murdered by the Esquimaux in 1752. But in 1770, under permission from the British Crown they gained a foothold and founded the mission at Nain. Okak was founded in 1776, Hopedale in 1782 and Hebron in 1830. The total number of Esquimaux along the 500 miles of the Atlantic coast is now about 1,600. Of these nearly 1,200 have been "civilized" and belong to the four missions; and 31 missionaries are engaged in this work upon the entire coast.

ABSOLUTE RULERS.

These Brethren are absolute rulers of the Esquimaux, and in all matters pertaining either to the Indians or to other trappers and residents on lands granted them by the English Government. They control the entire fur trade of the Esquimaux, paying such prices as they may choose, and no article of food or use finds its way into the hands of these simple folks save through the Moravian trading houses at such prices of barter as the missionaries may demand. Vessels come to Nain with stores and provisions from Europe, and to take away proceeds of the one-sided trading. The Brethren state that all profits are turned over to the general funds of the society. I do not wish to belittle their spiritual efforts or disparage their methods unjustly; but as near as I am able to judge, a form of slavery exists here which is not creditable to ostensibly Christianizing effort. It is certain that the dusky flock who are thus fleeced, notwithstanding their sickening servility to the Brethren, have a statement of the whole situation which they sullenly grunt among each other, and occasionally permit a sharp-eared stranger to overhear. This is: "Missionary heap good in church; heap bad in store!"

The manner of subsistence of all the Indians and half-breed population of Labrador is practically the same. The Montagnais and Nasquapees live in lodges the year round, whether in the interior or upon the coast. The Esquimaux generally live in igloes, a sort of turf-covered wigwam, when in the interior, and when at the missions in rude huts modeled after the igloe; while the few remaining inland hunting Indians seldom appear upon the coast, unless driven in by famine, or when they come to the villages to barter, when they bring all their belongings down the rivers and inlets in open boats, camping at night under sealskin tents. The coast Labradorians, and there are not 600 others, are occupied in sealing in the early spring; they fish in the summer, hunt and trap in the winter; and these occupations are common to all, including half-breeds and whites. There is nothing else to be done, whatever the ability or inclination. In the extreme north the clothing is exclusively sealskin; and on the south shore the attire is a combination of sealskin and fustian, the latter being especially prized for withstanding the cruel winds and storms of the region.

PLENTY OF STOCKINGS.

The number of stockings worn by these folk is often astonishing. Four, five and sometimes a half dozen, are used inside their sealskin boots. There is nothing striking about the dress of the few white women who are here, save that they remind one in the mountain fair of clothing they bundle upon themselves of the tremendous skirts of the women of Irish Connamara. But the Indian women of the South and the Esquimaux women of the North are wonderfully apparelled. Anything they can get their hand upon possessing gorgeous color is used for decoration. They almost equal American women in this respect. Perhaps this is more noticeable among the women of the St. Lawrence coast than with the Northern Esquimaux.

The dress of the latter usually consists of huge sealskin boots, petticoats, a sealskin garment covering the whole person from the neck to the knees trimmed with white fur, a cap enveloping the entire head, and a sort of baggy cape or hood hanging down the back, in which their fat little babies are carried. The cradle is unknown among the Esquimaux; but the universal tendency of all mothers to bounce, sway and heave about the helpless infant has illustration here in the "jigging" of the Esquimaux child in its aerial cradle. Walking or sitting the Esquimaux mother has an endless movement like that of an old tar under a heavy sea. It is a writhing, weaving, swaying motion which cannot be adequately described. But it suffices, and the fat mother gets a good deal of exercise out of it, whatever the effect upon the babe. Only among the half-breed women are there forms and faces that are attractive as civilized folk judge these things.

The compensation is here, however; for nearly all the Esquimaux women will measure in girth what they will in height; and all forms of fat represent the Labradorian idea of both utility and beauty. At child-bearing their own women officiate as midwives; and they get along very well in every respect without physicians. There is not a resident doctor in all Labrador; nor for that matter, a lawyer; and our timber-hunting friend regards this fact as a forceful argument against American high-pressure civilization and Boston ethical culture.

SOCIETY IN WINTER.

If there be anything like a social or home life in Labrador it exists exclusively in the long, frozen night of the winter. Then the entire inhabitants retire from the howling coast to winter quarters within the trifling shelter of spruce forests and protecting river crags, and from their burrows of sod, hut and ice, sally forth in their sledges or cometiques to "visit" each other in their storm-swept settlements for distances of hundreds of miles. These trips are made over the glistening snow at the rate of 60 to 100 miles a day, by the aid of their gaunt and ferocious dogs, which are kept in submission by that cruelest and deadliest of all driver's scourges, the Esquimaux whip. Its handle is not a foot long, but the lash is often 40 feet in length, and the drivers are so skilled in its use that a piece can be struck out of a "leader" or "guide" dog's ear at a distance of from 30 to 40 feet. These dogs, fully 150 of which I saw at Hopedale, are simply a species of partly domesticated wolves.

They are fed on fish once each day. In the summer they are sources of endless terror about the coast settlements; but life would be impossible here without their use in winter. These visiting tours are marked by the most prodigal hospitality, and a good deal of rude pleasure, indeed, all these far-away humans in any manner secure is enjoyed. But Labradorian life is an endless round of inane, sodden fruitlessness at best. The summer is passed in a scourging effort for winter's provision. Winter brings its struggle to prevent death by cold and hunger. These human animals seem simply born to exist, be robbed, and to die. One turns from the slightest glimpse of land and people, heart-sick from irrevocability of the hopelessness of both. Labrador can never be else than what Jaques Cartier truly termed it in 1534, "the land given to Cain."

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

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OLIVE WESTON *in to-morrow's* DISPATCH *describes the Empress of Austria and her mad pranks on horseback.*

NOTES OF A NOVICE

On the Wagner Festival at the Home of the Famous Musician.

FINE PERFORMANCE OF PARSIFAL.

An American Describes the Masterpiece as it Appeared to Him.

EXQUISITE RENDITION OF THE WORK

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

BAYREUTH, BAVARIA, August 5.—I made an imposing entrance into Bayreuth. I had been told a strike existed there among the cabmen, so no sooner had I touched the station platform than I made a contract with a small boy to carry my bag. Lodgings had been assigned me by the General Committee of the festival, to whom, on arriving, I paid my addresses, then started the procession for No. 77 Richard Wagner Strosse. Outside the station I found about 1,000 cabs. A cab in Bayreuth is a barouche drawn by one or two horses, harnessed to a pole in either case, and the drivers of about 100 of these offered, even entreated me, to ride for "zwei mark."

But I stuck to my boy, believing my room to be near at hand. But it wasn't. It was an extreme distance; my boy became double, then triplets before proceeding half the journey, and hanging on to him, eager to buy, then supplant him, were a score of his relatives. My bag was heavy. At every block I would order a halt for rest and change of position, when my couriers would mysteriously consult together as to their probable reward. As we advanced the populace appeared more numerously at windows and doors heralding the strange sight. I could not see the humor of the situation they appeared to, for had I ridden from Nuremberg for this? But toward noon my domicile was reached, my train of menials dismissed, evidently pleased with the high-grade pfennig piece I gave to each, and as later I peered from the window of my comfortable room I found the street had resumed its wonted quiet.

THE WAGNER THEATER

and its location have been often described. It was a lovely afternoon as I joined the throng in carriages and afoot, moving along the avenue toward an eminence back of the town, whereon is the ideal structure of its kind of the world. The site, commanding a wide view of a charming valley, is most picturesque. At 4 o'clock I was to hear "Parsifal" for the first time. The theater, which is without adornment, seating over 1,400 people in tiers rising one above the other, so that an unobstructed view of the stage is to be had by all, filled gradually, until at 4 o'clock there were no vacant seats.

The summons to enter for the beginning of a performance, or after the long entre acts are ended is given by a posse of trumpeters at 15 and again at five minutes before the hour, who sound from two sides of the first porch of the building, a theme from the ensuing act of the drama. Before a note is heard from the invisible orchestra the house is darkened, so that reading the score is impossible; the bustle of the audience, which the circumstances of its gathering make unusually interested in each other, has ceased and utter silence awaits, the entrance of the first *motif* of the prelude to "Parsifal," a silence, it may be remarked, which remains unbroken during any portion of a performance in the theater.

THE GREAT WORK AS GIVEN.

"Parsifal," on August 4, was given as usual, under the direction of Conductor Levi, of Munich, with an orchestra of 108 pieces—the elite of German instrumental artists—and with the following leading singers: VanDyck, *Parsifal;* Materna, *Keendry;* Blauwaert, *Geernemanz;* Reichmann, *Amfortas;* Liverman, *Klingsor;* Hobbing, *Titmel.*

It is obviously impossible at this time to more than touch upon the philosophy that lies at the root of "Parsifal." Since "Rienzi" was put aside and the rays of a new art dawned with "The Flying Dutchman," Wagner sought to teach through the medium of his operas and music-dramas some lesson of existence, to engraft upon the magic framework his inventive genius fashioned some eternal truth. The "Dutchman," "Tannhaueser" and "Lohengrin" are so familiar that their ethical meaning has not escaped the thoughtful; the profounder motive of "The Ring of the Nibalung" is only beginning to be studied with us, while "Parsifal," the latest and ripest work of an epoch-making man, still sacred to those who can make

A PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH,

illustrate the purification of the body and the regeneration of the soul through strife.

"Parsifal" is the outcome of years of thought, for Wagner's early writings tell us of his desire to compose a work on the subject of Jesus of Nazareth. Wagner calls "Parsifal" a "Buehnenweih Fest-Spiel" (Consecrated Festival Play), and where is there taught more impressively the divinest truth? To hear "Parsifal" at Bayreuth is, in effect, like a discourse from some eloquent preacher or author; here Wagner is the Emerson of the stage, and with his wonderful sway of the æsthetics and the mechanics of his art moves him who comes within his influence with a power and might unknown in romance or literature.

A sketch of the drama of "Parsifal" may be briefly made. The holy Knights of the Grail—from among whom came *Lohengrin* to succor *Elsa*—guardians of the sacred spear and the cup, are suffering through the downfall of *Amfortas.* He trusting more to physical than spiritual strength, vainly attempts battle with *Klingsor,* a magician who defies all that is pure, and whose domains encircle the castle of the knights. Through the agencies of *Keendry,* who is bewitched by *Klingsor* to serve his evil ends, *Amfortas* is tempted and falls, *Klingsor* wrests from him the sacred spear, and wounds him incurably. At each celebration by the Knights of the Holy Sacrament, which it is the duty of *Amfortas* to administer,

THE WOUND IN HIS SIDE

breaks out afresh. To his despairing cry for relief, *Amfortas* hears a celestial voice saying: "By pity lightened the guileless fool, wait for him, my chosen one."

The first act discloses *Geernemanz,* one of the knights, telling the story of the downfall of *Amfortas* to two of the more youthful brethren. He is interrupted by a tumult, when one of the sacred swans, fatally wounded by an arrow, flutters across the stage, followed by a group of amazed knights, leading the youthful *Parsifal,* the slayer of the swan, who is unconscious of his offense. *Geernemanz,* attracted by the boy, leads him to the castle, whither the knights have repaired, there to witness the celebration of the holy sacrament. *Parsifal* stands mute during the ceremony, not perceiving his mission, and at last is thrust out by *Geernemanz* to roam through the world, gaining grace through experience for the high calling he is to fulfil. *Klingsor* lays a snare for *Parsifal,* and sends alluring maidens, and when these fail him, *Keendry,* the enchantress, in the form of a beautiful woman, to tempt him. *Keendry* alluring *Parsifal* on by reciting the story of his birth and of his mother's repining at his wandering from home, stops not until she presses upon his lips the kiss of his mother's benediction. Stung with grief, *Parsifal* starts up and in intensest tones cries out: "*Amfortas,* the spear wound!" divining for the first time the pure mission of his life.

Keendry, finding all her wiles powerless, finally calls upon *Klingsor,* who appears upon the wall of his castle, and, uttering a curse, hurls at *Parsifal* the spear wrested from *Amfortas.* It remains over the head of *Parsifal,* who grasps it, and with

ECSTACY OF MIEN

waves it above his head, making the sign of the cross. Thereupon the castle falls as by an earthquake, the garden withers, and *Keendry* sinks, despairing, to earth.

The closing act transpires in the domain of the knights. *Amfortas* has become more desperate, the knights are hopeless. As *Geernemanz* and *Keendry*—the latter when removed from the influence of *Klingsor* sustains the position of serving woman to the knights, who are ignorant of *Klingsor's* power over her. *Converse,* a knight clad in black armor, having a spear, appears to them and reveals himself as *Parsifal.* To *Geernemanz* he relates the story of the spear and his purifying experience. The old knight, rejoicing, conducts him to the holy castle, where *Amfortas,* in great despair, calls on the knights to slay him and end his pain. *Parsifal,* until then unseen, turns toward him and touches the wound with his spear, thereby purging *Amfortas* from sin and healing him. The knights hail *Parsifal* as the heaven-appointed one.

The music is very beautiful, the third act being perhaps the most serene and impressive page in Wagner's writings. The exquisite scene of the flower maidens and the Good Friday spell music are perhaps the most familiar to amateurs of the United States of any of the concert excerpts from "Parsifal," though the finale to the first act has had performances both in Boston and New York. The system of leading motives is nowhere more beautifully illustrated than in "Parsifal;" there are

FEWER PRINCIPAL THEMES

than in either of the single dramas of the Nibelungen, but the secret of their use does not fail nor falter.

The orchestra and the stage setting equal all expectations. The ensemble of voices and orchestra is remarkable. There is no preponderance of instrumental tone, there is no covering of voices, but everywhere a beautiful blending of both pervading, but not overwhelming the theater, the like of which is difficult to imagine in music. The degrees of tone which the conductor brought from his band were simply astonishing, yet there was never a fortissimo. The quality of the band is exquisite, but for the orchestra more should be said.

The stage effects introduced in "Parsifal" are unique as they are wonderful. As *Gurnemanz* first leads *Parsifal* to the hall of the Grail, the appearance of the country changes; the lovely meadow scene yields to cavernous rocks, mountains are traversed ere the eye rests on the domed hall of the Knights of the Grail. The effect is possible because of the immense revolving stage; a similar illusion is produced in act three, only then the stage revolves in the opposite direction revealing an entirely different perspective. Again, in the second act, where *Klingsor's* castle is suddenly transferred into a garden of flowers, the stage sinks rapidly out of sight, bringing into view an

ENTIRELY NEW SCENE

fully set. Formerly the flower maidens were concealed behind their counterfeit presentments, but the better practice prevails now of having them enter from the sides. The overthrow of *Klingsor's* castle is an expression of stage mechanics thoroughly real and startling.

One can never overestimate the genius of Wagner, who planned every detail of these wonderful transmogrifications. The painting of every portion of the setting, all the devices used, are the work of skilled artists. Here is, indeed, achieved that unity for which Wagner lived and waited.

The choral ensemble, particularly the extremely difficult Grail scene of act I, were superbly done; the elasticity of the voices, the sympathetic support given them by the orchestra, and the intense effect of the latter being indelibly impressed on my mind. The flower girls music was simply exquisite; when it is remembered that the chorus at Bayreuth is composed of picked singers, artists, it may be possible for the reader to share some of my enthusiasm in describing their work. In the efforts of none of the solo singers did I detect anything but complete devotion to the work in hand. I do not find it easy to talk of them individually; what they did was all

SO ADMIRABLE AND FITTING.

I was impressed with the dramatic ability of Van Dyck, though disappointed in his voice. Materna did not make *Kundry* so ferocious in the earlier scenes as I had drawn the character mentally, but in the opening of act three, where, humbly she bathes the feet of *Parsifal,* her acting was perfect. Her voice has fallen off somewhat since she was in America. The part of *Gurnemanz* is most sympathetic, and was beautifully sung. Reichmann is a fine actor. G. H. WILSON.

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COULD NOT HELP IT.

Did Not Intend to Speak for Publication.

A LADY'S REMARKABLE STORY.

"I had no intention of making a statement for publication. Indeed, it was the last thing I thought of, for I have often said I would never see my name in print. But the result is so complete in my case, and after I had given up all hope, it is such a surprise to find myself entirely well, without a trace of my trouble left, that I can hardly do otherwise than give my testimony."

It was with a great deal of emphasis that Mrs. Pratt spoke these words to the writer, and her statement throughout was given with an earnestness that made it interesting.

"Some years ago, during house cleaning time," she said, "I contracted a severe cold. I paid little attention to it, and it seemed to leave me. Whether it had never entirely left me and I caught fresh colds, I do not know, but after a time I noticed that my nostrils would become stopped up almost continually, my eyes would get dim and watery and there would be a