## THE PITTSBURG DISPATCH.

## AT WAGNER'S SHRINE

Mark Twain's Experience Among the Music-Mad Pilgrims to Bayreuth.

HAS A GREAT GRIEVANCE.

The Renowned Composer Should Have Eliminated the Singing.

HIS ORCHESTRA PARTS ALL RIGHT.

Americans Are Advised to Bring Their Pinner Pails Along.

TANNHAUSER PUT AGAINST PARSIFAL

(WEITTEN POR THE DISPATCE.) It was at Nuremberg that we struck the hundation of music-mad strangers that was rolling down upon Bayreuth. It had been long since we had seen such multitudes of excited and struggling people. It took a good half hour to pack them and pair them into the train-and it was the longest train we have yet seen in Europe. Nuremberg had been witnessing this sort of experience a couple of times a day for about two weeks. It gives one an impressive sense of the magnitude of this biennial pilgrimage. For a pilgrimage is what it is. The devotees come from the very ends of the earth to worship their prophet in his own Kasba in his own Mecca.

If you are living in New York or San Francisco or Pittsburg or anywhere else in America, and you conclude, by the middle of May, that you would like to attend the Bayreuth opera two months and a half later, you must use the cable and get about it immediately, or you will get no scats, and you must cable for lodgings, too. Then if you are lucky you will get seats in the last row and lodgings in the fringe of the town. If you stop to write you will get nothing. There were plenty of people in Nuremberg when we passed through who had come on pilgrimage without first securing seats and lodgings.

Walked the Streets All Night

They had found neither in Bayreuth; they had walked Bayreuth streets a while in sorrow, then gone to Nuremberg and found neither beds nor standing room, and had walked those quaint streets all night waiting for the hotels to open and empty their guests into the trains, and so make room for these, their defeated brethren and sisters in the faith. They had endured from 30 to 40 hours' railroading on the continent of Europe-with all which that implies of worry, fatigue and financial impoverishment-and all they had got and all they were to get for it was handiness and accuracy in kicking themselves, acquired by practice in the back streets of the two towns when other people were in hed; for back they must go over that unspeakable journey with their pious mission unfulfilled.

These humiliated outcasts had the frowsy and unbrushed and appioretic look of wet cats, and their eyes were glazed with drowsiness, their bodies were adroop from crown to sole, and all kind-hearted people refrained from asking them if they had been to Bayreuth and failed to connect, as knowing they would lie.

Mark's Party Were Wise.

We reached here (Bayreuth) about midafternoon of a rainy Saturday. We were of the wise, and had secured lodgings and opera seats months in advance. I am not a



monical critic, and did not come here to write essays about the operas and deliver judgment upon their merits. The little children of Bayreuth could do that with a finer sympathy and a broader intelligence to his operas for the sake of the contrast it than I. I only care to bring four or five pilgrims to the operas, pilgrims able to appreciate them and enjoy them. What I might write about the performances to put In my odd time would be offered to the public as merely a cat's view of a king, and not of didactic value.

Next day, which was Sunday, we left for the Opera House-that is to say, the Wagner temple-a little after the middle of the afternoon. The great building stands all by itself, grand and lovely, on high ground outside the town. We were warned that if we arrived after 4 o'clock we should be obliged to pay \$2 50 spiece extra by way of fine. We saved that; and it may be remarked here that this is the only opportunity Europe offers of saving money.

Neither Sex in Evening Dress.

There was a big crowd in the grounds about the building, and the ladies' dresses took the sun with great effect. I do not mean to intimate that the ladies were in full dress, for that was not so. The dresses were pretty, but neither sex was in evening dress. The interior of the building is simple-severely so; but there is no occasion for color and decoration, since the people sit in the dark. The auditorium has the shape of a keystone, with the stage at the narrow end. There is an aisle on each side, but no nisle in the body of the house. Each row of seats extends in an unbroken curve

which you are to enter the house or leave it is printed on your ticket, and you can use no door but that one. Thus, crowding and confusion are impossible. Not so many as a hundred people use any one door. This is better than having the usual (and useless) elaborate fireproof arrangements. It is the model theater of the world. It can be emptied while the second hand of a watch makes its circuit. It would be en-

If your seat is near the center of a row and you enter late, you must work your way along a rank of about 25 ladies and gentle-men to get to it. Yet this causes no trouble,

men to get to it. Yet this causes no trouble, for everybody stands up until all the seats are full, and the filling is accomplished in a very few minutes. Then all sit down, and you have a solid mass of 1,500 heads making a steep cellardoor slant from the rear of the house down to the stage.

All the lights were turned low, so low that the congregation sat in a deep and solemn gloom. The funereal rustling of dresses and the low buzz of conversation began to die swiftly down, and presently not the

die swiftly down, and presently not the ghost of a sound was left. This profound and increasing impressive stillness con-tinued yet during some time—the best preparation for music, spectacle or speech con-ceivable. I should think our show people would have invented or imported that simple and impressive device for securing Gol and solidifying the attention of an andience long ago; instead of which they continue to this day to open a performance against a deadly competition in the form of noise, confusion and a scattered interest.

Wagner Back From His Grave. Finally, out of darkness and distance and mystery soft rich notes rose upon the stillness, and from his grave the dead magician began to weave his spells upon his disciples and steep their souls in his enchantments. There was something strangely impressive in the fancy which kept intruding itself that the composer was conscious in his



grave of what was going on here, and that these divine sounds were the clothing of thoughts which were at this moment passing through his brain, not recognized and amiliar ones which had issued from it at some former time.

The entire overture, long as it was, was played to a dark house with the curtain own. It was exquisite, it was delicious. But straightway thereafter, of course, came the singing, and it does seem to me that nothing can make a Wagner opera absoutely perfect and satisfactory to the untutored but to leave out the vocal parts. I wish I could see a Wagner opera done in pantomime once. Then one would have the lovely orchestration unvexed to listen to and bathe his spirit in, and the bewilderingly beautiful scenery to intoxicate his eyes with, and the dumb acting couldn't ore with, and the dumb acting couldn't mar these pleasures, because there isn't often anything in the Wagner opera that one would call by such a violent name as acting; as a rule all you would see would be a couple of silent people, one of them stand-ing still, the other catching flies. Of course I do not really mean that he would be catching flies, I only mean that the usual operation gestures, which consist in reaching first one hand out into the air and then the other, might suggest the sport I speak of if the operator attended strictly to business and uttered no sound.

Enjoyed in Spite of the Singing. This present opera was "Parsifal." Mma. Wagner does not permit its representation anywhere but in Bayreuth. The first act of

anywhere but in Hayreuth. The first act of the three occupied two hours, and I enjoyed that in spite of the singing.

I trust that I know as well as anybody that singing is one of the most entrancing and bewitching and moving and eloquent of all the vehicles invented by man for the ocnveying of feeling; but it seems to me that a chief virtue in song is melody, air, tune, rhythm, or what you please to call it, and that when this feature is absent what remains is a picture with the color left out. remains is a picture with the color left out. I was not able to detect in the vocal parts of "Parsifal" anything that might with confidence be called rhythm or tune or melody; one person performed at a time—and a long time, too—often in a noble and always in a high-priced voice; but he only pulled out long notes, then some short ones, then out long notes, then some short ones, then another long one, then a sharp, quick peremptory bark or two—and so on and so on; and when he was done you saw that the information which he had conveyed had not compensated for the disturbance. Not always, but pretty often. If two of them would be put in a duet occasionally and blend the voices; but no, they don't do that. The great master, who knew so well how to make 100 instruments rejoice in unison and pour out their ments rejoice in unison and pour out their souls in mingled and melodious tides of delicious sound, deals only in barren solos when he puts in the vocal parts. It may be would make with the music.

Calls It Vocal Gymnastics

Singing! It does seem the wrong name to apply to it. Strictly described, it is a practicing of difficult and unpleasant intervals, mainly. An ignorant person gets tired of listening to gymnastic intervals in the long run, no matter how pleasant they may be. In "Parsifal" there is a hermit named Gurnemanz who stands on the stage and practices by the hour, while first one and then another character of the cast endures what

he can of it and retires to die.

During the evening there was an intermission of three-quarters of an hour after the first act and one an hour long after the second. In both instances the theater was totally emptied. People who had previtotally emptied. People who had previously engaged tables in the one sole eating house were able to put in their time very satisfactorily; the other thousand went hungry. The opera was concluded at 10 in the evening or a little later. When we reached home we had been gone more than seven hours. Seven hours at \$5 a ticket is almost too much for the money.

While browsing about the front vard among the crowd between the acts I encountered 12 or 15 friends from different parts of America, and those of them who were most familiar with Wagner said that

were most familiar with Wagner said that "Parsifal" seldom pleased at first, but that after one had heard it several times it was almost sure to become the favorite. It seemed impossible, but it was true, for the statement came from people whose word was not to be doubted.

Coming to an Understa from one side of the house to the other. There are seven entrance doors on each side of the theater and four at the butt end—18 doors to admit and emit 1,650 persons.

The number of the particular door by which you are to enter the house or leave it is printed on your ticket, and you can use no door but that one. Thus, crowding and no door but that one. Thus, crowding and enumber of water than the comprehensive absence of what our kind regards as singing. Unlic says Wagner deponding on improssible. Not so many as

tirely safe even if it were built of lucifer matches.

All Stand Till the House is Filled.

If your seat is near the center of a row rate German, he apologizes for the beautiful airs in "Tannhauser,"

airs in "Tanhauser."

Very well; now that Wagner and I understand each other, perhaps we shall get along better, and I shall stop calling him Wagner, on the American plan, and hereafter call him Voggner, as per German custom, for I feel entirely friendly now. The minute we get reconciled to a person, how willing we are to throw aside little needless punctilios and pronounce his name right! right!

Of course, I came home wondering why people should come from all the corners of America to hear these operas, when we have lately had a season or two of them in New York with these same singers in the several parts, and possibly this same orchestra. I resolved to think that out at

Tuesday-Yesterday they played the only Tuesday—Yesterday they played the only operatic favorite I have ever had—an opera which has always driven me mad with ignorant delight whenever I have heard it—"Tannhauser." I heard it first when I was a youth, I heard it last in the last German season in New York. I was busy yesterday and I did not intend to go, knowing I should have another "Tannhauser" opportunity in a few days; but after 5 o'clock I found myself free and walked out to the Opera House and arrived about the beginning of the secand arrived about the beginning of the sec-ond act. My opera ticket admitted me to the grounds in front, past the policeman and the chain, and I thought I would take a rest on a bench for an honr or two and wait

In a moment or so the first bugles blew, and the multitude began to crumble apart and melt into the theater. I will explain that this bugle call is one of the pretty features here. You see, the theater is empty, and hundreds of the audience are s good way off in the feeding house; the first bugle call is blown about a quarter of an hour before time for the curtain to rise. This company of buglers, in uniform, march out with military step and send out over the landscape a few bars of the theme of the approaching act, piercing the distances with the gracious notes, then they march to the other entrance and repeat. Presently they do this over again. Yesterday only about 200 people were still in front of the house when the second call was blown; in another helt minute, they would have been in the when the second can was blown; in another half minute they would have been in the house, but then a thing happened which de-layed them—the one solitary thing in this world which could be relied on with cer-tainty to accomplish it, I suppose—an im-perial Princess appeared in the balcony above them. Gazing at a Real Princess.

They stopped dead in their tracks, and began to gaze, in a stupor of gratitude and satisfaction. The lady presently saw that she must disappear or the doors would be closed upon these worshipers, so she re-turned to her box. This daughter-in-law of the Emperor was pretty; she had a kind face; she was without airs; she is known to be full of common human sympathies. There are many kinds of princes, but this kind is the most harmful of all, for wherever they go they reconcile people to monarchy and set back the clock of progress. The valuable princes, the desirable princes, are the Czars and their sort. By their mere dumb presence in the world they cover with derision every argument that can be invent-ed in favor of royalty by the most ingenious casuist. In his time the husband of this Princess was valuable. He led a degraded life, he ended it with his own hand in cir-cumstances and surroundings of a hideous

cumstances and surroundings of a hideous sort, and was buried like a god.

In the Opera House there is a long loft back of the audience, a kind of open gallery, in which princes are displayed. It is sacred to them, it is the holy of holies. As soon as the filling of the house is about complete, the standing multitude turn and fix their eyes upon the princely layout, and care mutely and longingly and recreefully

more pathetic than this. It is worth ossing many occans to see. It is somecrossing many oceans to see. It is somehow not the same gaze that people rivet
upon a Victor Hugo, or Niagara, or the
bones of the mastodon, or the guillotine of
the revolution, or the great pyramid, or
distant Vesuvius smoking in the sky, or any
man long celebrated to you by his genius
and achievements, or thing long celebrated
to you by the praises of books and pictures
—no, that gaze is only the gaze of intense
curiosity, interest, wonder, engaged in
drinking delicious deep draughts that taste
good all the way down, and appease and
satisfy the thirst of a lifetime. Satisfy it—
that is the word. Hugo and the mastodon that is the word. Hugo and the mastedon will still have a degree of interest thereafter when encountered, but never anything approaching the eestacy of that first view.

Interest a Live Prince Excites. The interest of a Prince is different. It may be envy, it may be worship, doubtless it is a mixture of both—and it does not satist its thirst with one view, or even no-ticeably diminish it. Perhaps the essence of the thing is the value which men attach to a valuable something which has come by luck and not been earned. A dollar picked



np in the road is more satisfaction to you than the ninety and nine which you had to work for, and money won at faro or in stocks snuggles into your heart in the same way. A Prince picks up grandeur, power and a permanent holiday and gratis support by a pure accident, the accident of birth, and he stands always before the grieved eye of poverty and obscurity a monumental representative of luck. And then—supremest value of all—his is the only high fortune on the earth which is secure. The commercial millionaire may become a beggar, the illustrious statesman can make a vital mistake and be dropped and forgotten; the illustri-ous General can lose a decisive battle and with it the consideration of men; but once a Prince always a Prince, that is to say, an

world is the homage of men, whether deserved or undeserved. It follows without doubt or question, then, that the most desirable position possible is that of a Prince, And I think it also follows that the socalled usurpations with which history is littered are the most excusable misdemean-ors which men have committed. To usurp a usurpation—that is all it amounts to, isn't

In Europe It Grows on One. A prince is not to us what he is to a European, of course. We have not been taught to regard him as a god, and so one good look at him is likely to so nearly appease our curiosity as to make him an object of no great interest next time. We want a fresh one. But it is not so with the European, I am quite sure of it. The same old one will answer: he never stales.

European, I am quite sure of it. The same old one will answer; he never stales. Eighteen years ago I was in London, and I called at an Englishman's house on a bleak and foggy and dismal December afternoon to visit his wife and married daughter, by appointment. I waited half an hour, and then they arrived, frozen. They explained that they had been delayed by an unlooked-for circumstance: while passing in the that they had been delayed by an unlookedfor circumstance; while passing in the
neighborhood of Marlborough House they
saw a crowd gathering, and were told that
the Prince of Wales was about to drive out,
so they stopped to get a sight of him. They
had waited a half hour on the sidewalk,
freezing with the crowd, but were disappointed at last—the Prince had changed his
mind. I said, with a good deal of surprise:
"Is it possible that you two have lived in
London all your lives and have never seen
the Prince of Wales?"

the Prince of Wales?" Apparently it was their turn to be sur-prised, for they exclaimed:
"What an idea! Why, we have seen him hundreds of times."

They had seen him hundreds of times, yet they had waited half an hour in the gloom and the bitter cold, in the midst of a jam of patients from the same asylum on the chance of seeing him again. It was a stupe-fying statement, but one is obliged to believe the English, even when they say a thing like that. I fumbled around for a

remark, and got out this one:
"I can't understand it at all. If I had
never seen Géneral Grant I doubt if I would do that even to get a sight of him," with a slight emphasis on the last word.

Comparing Grant and Tummy. Their blank faces showed that they wo dered where the parallel came in. Then they said blandly:
"Of course not. He is only a Presi-

It is doubtless a fact that a prince is a permanent interest, an interest not subject to deterioration. The General who was never defeated, the General who never held a council of war, the only General who ever commanded a connected battle front 1,200 miles long, the smith who welded together the broken parts of a great Republic, and re-established it where it is quite likely to outlast all the monarchies present and to come, was really a person of no serious con-

exactly how long—then the soft music of the hidden orchestra began to breathe its rich, long sighs out from under the distant stage, and by and by the drop curtain parted in the middle and was drawn slowly aside, disclosing a twilighted woods and a litis quite likely, since there are a hundred days, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with three days of ostensible rest per week, and two teams to do the four operas; but ostensible rest is devoted largely to rehearsing from some time in the morning till ten at night. Are there two orchestras also? sacred to them, it is the holy of holies. As soon as the filling of the house is about complete, the standing multitude turn and fix their eyes upon the princely layout, and gaze mutely and longingly and regretfully sacred to them, it is the holy of holies. As imitation god, and neither hard fortune nor infamous character nor an addled brain nor their eyes upon the princely layout, and gaze mutely and longingly and regretfully sacred to them, it is the holy of holies. As imitation god, and neither hard fortune nor infamous character nor an addled brain nor the praying and a man standing near. Present layout and ten names in the orchestra list.

By common consent of all the nations and heard approaching, and from that moment until the closing of the curtain it was mons, funerals—but none which was twin to



HERE WE ARE ONCE MORE.

They Keep Double Teams.

Thursday-They keep two teams of sing-ers in stock for the chief roles, and one of sequence to these people. To them, with their training, my General was only a man after all, while their prince was clearly much more than that, a being of a wholly unsimilar construction and constitution, a being of no more blood and kindship with the plays last from four in the afternoon till the state of the chief to the chief roles, and one of the chief roles, and one of these is composed of the most renowned artists in the world, with Materna and Alvary in the lead. I suppose a double team is necessary; doubtless a single team would die of exhaustion in a week, for all the plays last from four in the afternoon till the plays last from four in the afternoon the chief roles, and one of these is composed of the most renowned artists in the world, with Materna and Alvary in the lead. I suppose a double team is necessary; doubtless a single team would die of exhaustion in a week, for all the plays last from four in the afternoon the chief roles, and one of these is composed of the most renowned artists in the world, with Materna and Alvary in the lead. I suppose a double team is necessary; doubtless a single team would die of exhaustion in a week, for all the plays last from four in the action of the most renowned artists in the world, with Materna and Alvary in the lead. I suppose a double team is necessary; doubtless a single team would die of exhaustion in a week, for all the plays last from four in the action of the most renowned artists in the world, with Materna and Alvary in the lead. I suppose a double team is necessary; doubtless a single team would die of exhaustion in a week, for all the plays last from four in the action of the most renowned artists in the world. being of no more blood and kindship with men than are the serene eternal lights of the firmament with the poor dull tallow candles of commerce that sputter and die and leave nothing behind but a pinch of ashes and a stink.

I saw the last act of "Tannhauser." I sat in the gloom and deep stillness, waiting one minute, two minutes. I do not know avertly how leave the pays last from four in the afternoon till ten at night. Nearly all the labor falls upparently they are required to furnish all the noise they can for the money. If they feel a soft, whispery, mysterous feeling, they are required to open out and let the public know it. Operas are given only on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, when the seft ways of outersille rest per wask.

LADIES' DESKS

music, just music—music to make one drunk with pleasure, music to make one take scrip and staff and beg his way round the globe to hear it. act of the attitude assumed at the beginning of it. You detect no movement in the solid mass of heads and shoulders, you seem to sit with the dead in the gloom of a tomb. Stirred to the Depths.

You know that they are being stirred to their profoundest depths; that there are times when they want to rise and wave handkerchiefs and shout their approbation, and times when tears are running down their faces and it would be a relief to free their pent emotions in sobs and screams; yet you hear not one utterance till the curtain swings to-gether and the closing strains have slowly faded out and died; then the dead rise with one impulse and shake the building with their appliance. Every seat is full in the first act, there is not a vacant one in the last. If a man would like to be conspicu-ous, let him come here and retire from the opera house in the midst of an act. It would make him celebrated. This audience reminds me of nothing I have ever seen, and of nothing I have read

about except the city in the Arabian tale where all the inhabitants have been turned to brass, and the traveler finds them after centuries mute, motionless, and still re-taining the attitudes which they last knew

in life. Here the Wagner audience dress as they please, and sit in the dark and worship in silence. At the Metropolitan in New they please, and sit in the dark and worship in silence. At the Metropolitan in New York they sit in a glare, they wear their showiest harness, they hum heirs, they squeak fans, they titter, and they gabble all the time. In some of the boxes the conversation and laughter are so loud as to divide the attention of the house with the stage. In large measure the Metropolitan is a showcase of rich fashionables who are not trained in Wagnerian music, and have no reverence for it, but who like to promote art and show their clothes. An Explanation of the Pilgrimage

Can that be an agreeable atmosphere to persons in whom this music produces a sort of divine ecstasy, and to whom its creator is a very deity, his stage a temple, the works of his brain and hands consecrated things, and the partaking of them with eve and ear a sacred solemnity? Manifestly, no. Then, perhaps, the temporary expatrice tion, the tedious traversing of seas and continents, the pigrimage to Bayreuth, stands availant. explained. These devotees would worship in an atmosphere of devotion. It is only here that they can find it without fleck of blemish or any worldly pollution. In this remote village there are no sights to see, there is no newspaper to intrude the worries of the distant world, there is nothing going on, it is always Sunday. The pilgrim wends to his temple out of town, sits out his moving service, returns to his bed with his heart and his soul and his body exhausted by long hours of tremendous emotion, and he is in no fit condition to do anything but lie torpid and slowly gather back life and strength for the next service. This opera of "Tristan and Isolde" last night broke the hearts of all witnesses who were of the faith, and I know of some and have heard of many who could not sleep after it, but cried the night away. I feel strongly out of place here. Sometimes I feel like the one sane person in a community of the mad; sometimes I feel like the one blind man where all others see; the one groping savage in the college of the learned, and always, during service, I feel like a heretic in

But by no means do I ever overlook or minify the fact that this is one of the most extraordinary experiences of my life. I have never seen anything like this before. I have never seen anything so great and fine and real as this devotion.

Mark's Sure Thing on Art.

Friday-Yesterday's opera was "Parsifal" again. The others went and they show marked advance in appreciation; but I went hunting for relies and reminders of the Margravine Wilhelmina, she of the im-perishable "Memoirs." I am properly grateful to her for her (unconscious) satire upon monarchy and nobility, and therefore nothing which her hand touched, or her eve looked upon, is indifferent to me. I am her pilgrim; the rest of this multitude here are Wagner's.
Tuesday—I have seen my last two operas.

my season is ended, and we cross over into Bohemia this afternoon. I was supposing that my musical regeneration was accom-plished and perfected, because I enjoyed both of these operas, singing and all, and, moreover, one of them was "Parsifal;" but the experts have disenchanted me. They

"Singing! That wasn't singing; that was the wailing and screeching of third-rate obscurities, paimed off on us in the interest

of economy."

Well, I ought to have recognized the sign

the old, sure sign that has never failed
me in matters of art. Whenever I enjoy
anything in art, it means that it is mighty poor. The private knowledge of this fact has saved me from going to pieces with enthusiasm in front of many and many a chromo. However, my base instinct does bring me profit sometimes; I was the only man out of 3,200 who got his money back on those two overs. those two operas. MARK TWAIN.

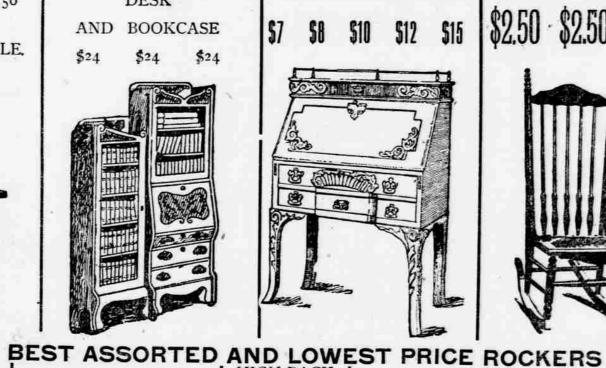
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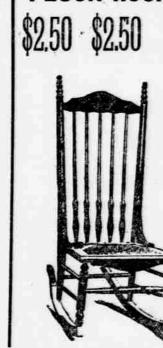
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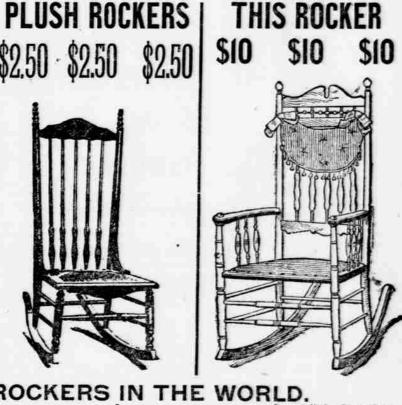
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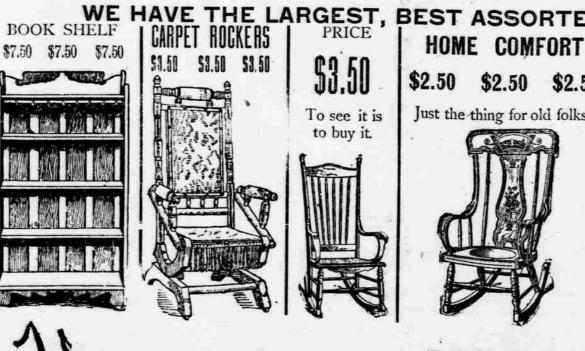
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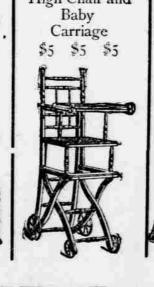












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