

Bennett's Basement Sales.

THREE DAYS ONLY, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY.

TOMORROW we will open the third of a series of Great Mid-Summer Cut Price Sales, and will throw open our entire Basement at cut prices on Crockery, Glassware, Chinaware, Lamps, Trunks, Valises and Woodenware.

Crockery Bargains.

- Engraved Band Tumblers—sale price 6 for 10c
Thin Engraved Tumblers—sale price 6 for 20c
Bargain Table No. 1—Heavy Imitation Cut Glass Butter Dishes, Heavy Imitation Cut Glass 8-inch Bowls, Cracked Ice, Candy Vases, Jelly Stands, Ten-inch Vases, anything on the table for 9c

Crockery Specials.

- Glass Sauce and Berry Dishes—sale price, each 2c
Decorated Odd Saucers—sale price, each 2c
White Semi-Precelain and Granite Vegetable Dishes 8c
Choice line of Table Dishes—sale price, each 10c

LEMONADE FREE

In our Basement Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we will serve a glass of delicious lemonade free to visitors and purchasers alike.

Woodenware Specials

- Potato slicers, sale price 10c
Maple Chopping Bowls, 13-inch, sale price 9c
Bushel Basket, sale price 10c
Wood spoons, 14-inch, sale price 4c

735 DOZEN LEMONS, 5 CENTS DOZEN As long as they last. No more than two dozen to one person. You must present even change, we will be too busy to make change. 5 cents a dozen while they last.

Trunks and Valises

- 26-inch Embossed Zinc Trunk—sale price 1.48
26-inch Canvas Trunk—sale price 1.98
36-inch Canvas Trunk, malleable iron corners—sale price 5.98

Three Days Only

W. R. BENNETT COMPANY

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

FIFTEENTH AND CAPITOL AVENUE. BASEMENT ENTRANCE ON THE CORNER.

LOST ART OF MINSTRELSY

"Happy Cal" Wagner Recalls Memories of the Old-Fashioned Minstrels.

MORE RECENT SHOWS UNTRUE TO NATURE

They Try to Palm Off Tinsel and Red Fire for Talent, but the Public Refuses to Be Deceived.

H. C. Wagner, better known to the American people and some others as "Happy Cal Wagner," is in Omaha on business connected with his position as traveling passenger agent of the Milwaukee road and the sight of his familiar face on the streets brings up recollections of the bygone days when he and the other old-timers of the minstrel stage sang and danced themselves into the hearts of a generation of people.

can be found nowhere today. E. P. Christie committed suicide in New York, but he died wealthy. Matt Peale died in Buffalo, and his partner, Luke West, dropped off soon after, saying that he was going to see Matt. Sam Sharpe, another noted old-time minstrel, died in Providence, R. I., and in these days there is no one to replace them. No Such Talent Now. "These were minstrels," continued Cal reminiscently, "but we have had none such for ten years or more. First came the ambition to control the opera houses and no entertainments were booked except on the percentage plan. The shows were compelled to cut off good people in order to pay the percentages, and soon the companies consisted of one good performer and a lot of amateurs. This was the cause of so many bad shows. For instance, they had five bones and five tamborines. One end man might be a crackerjack, but he had to play in harmony with the others, and the result was to draw the whole end down to the level of the poorest performer. There is no more talent. It is all legs, short dresses, scenery, and red fire. There is nothing left of negro minstrelsy except the black face. Silk stockings, black suits and white wigs do not imitate the negro a bit. Character acting is virtually abandoned because they can't do it. Then the songs they sing now have neither the melody nor the sentiment of those they used to sing in the good old days." Speaking of music Mr. Wagner does not approve of the great orchestras as accompaniment for ballad singing. He says that the ideal accompaniment should be played by five strings and four winds. The first should consist of the first and second violins, viola, cello and double bass, and the other instruments should be the cornet, trombone, clarinet and flute. This is the most effective orchestra for minstrelsy, as all ballads are written for four voices in the chorus. More must drums left, while double voices spell it. The strings should accompany the voice while the winds come in in the chorus. "Good banjo playing is another thing that is seldom heard in these days. Now the performers pick the instrument as they would a guitar, when, instead, it should be pounded with the thumb and finger. Jig dancing is another feature of the old minstrelsy that has practically disappeared and the wretched imitations are scarcely true enough to life to suggest it. We are now down to the variety business and a minstrel entertainment is largely occupied with acts that should be properly seen at the circus or on the variety stage." "What do you think of the vaudeville craze?" interjected a listener, and after some discussion Mr. Wagner declared that amount to anything. "It is for this reason," he said. "The performer gets up and rehearses in the forenoon, then he goes to lunch and back for the performance in the afternoon, then the performance again at night, and this constant occupation gives him no chance to learn anything new. They are overdoing it, as they are a lot of other things. The every afternoon show is a mistake. Six nights in the week and two matinees are enough, and they would make just as much money, besides giving the performers a chance to rest and observe the Sabbath. Then they would have Saturday and Sunday in which to make the big jumps, instead of having to travel all night, as they do now. Then the church people want Sunday, and they ought to have it." Funny Experience in Germany. Among the reminiscences of his professional career that Wagner recalls with the greatest amusement is his experience in Germany, where the mental machinery of the people failed to grasp the idea that the black face was assumed merely for their amusement, and the whole show was compelled to get out of the country to avoid being prosecuted for obtaining money under false pretenses. "This was when I went over with Dumbolton's minstrel," he said. "It was not the first combination to visit the old country. That honor belonged to the Christies, and I had played successfully in England with several companies. But this time we concluded to try our luck in Germany, and it turned out most favorably. We were royally received and made a barrel of money from the day we crossed the Rhine until some one accidentally discovered us in the act of washing our faces after the performance. The Germans at once jumped to the conclusion that they had been imposed upon, and, as there was a law that punished just such a crime, we had to fly the country to escape from being locked up in their prisons for not being real negroes. We didn't have a cent by the time we got safely over the border, and I and one other member of the company worked our way back to Uncle Sam's country in a sailing vessel. It took them a good while to get the fact through their heads that our make-up was not assumed with any intention of defrauding them, but after awhile they took a turn, and then they began urging us to come back. I had struck up a friendship with a nobleman who was very close to the government and he wrote me that the law that had given us so much trouble had been repealed and everyone was waiting to welcome us back. We finally went and made another barrel of money, some of which we this time succeeded in carrying away with us. "One of the funniest experiences I ever had," said Mr. Wagner in the course of a fresh cigar, "occurred in Dan Bryant's old stand at 472 Broadway in New York. Bryant boys—Jerry, Ned, and Dan—started in New York, where they worked for Charley White, who kept a 6-cent place on the Bowery. Dan and Jerry were two happy-go-lucky comedians and Ned played the accordion. They were talented and soon became popular. Dan subsequently married Nellie Fitzsimmons of St. Louis, a daughter of the great photograph artist. But in those days the boys were making their first reputation in this nation-pole joint, and their father, an Irishman of the real old sort, used to point them out to his friends like this: 'Dye see that boy with the check pants? That's me boy Jerry, who is making the jamboree down to Charley White's.' "Dan's Old Man Cuts In. "Well, this brings me down to the time when Dan got hold of the Broadway place, and the house was just like Dan. His friends could drop in, walk to the sidewalk and get a drink and a cigar, and then walk out again. At one time Dan was doing an essence dance during the performance and a big gang of us got together and went over to give him a really professional audience. We sent over and bought two or three seats at a time so Dan didn't suspect what was up, and when the curtain went up the whole front half of the house was packed with essence dancers. I thought I was quite an essence dancer myself in that day, and there were also Bill Arlington, Mark Sexton, J. K. Campbell, Coady and a lot of others, each of whom thought he was a little the best essence dancer in the bunch. When Dan came out to do his dance he took one look

at the crowd in front of him and it rattled him so he could scarcely go on with his turn. To complete his discomfiture it happened that his father had dropped in, as he frequently did, with a tertier friend or two to show them how his boy danced. The old man was in the wings, and when Dan quietly shuffled around while he was getting back his nerve the old man's voice came out like the roar of a bull. "I say, Dan, you don't say that, lape up, I say, lape up!" Of course the old man's exhortation was audible all over the house, and you ought to have heard that crowd. Dan tried to "lape up!" but at the first effort his shoestring broke and he shoe flew off and it plumb under the chin of an old duck out in the audience, and then he gave it up and went off the stage. Later in the performance he came out and gave one of the prettiest dances I ever saw, but he never outlived the old man's injunction to "lape up!" "Do you think we shall ever see any more of the old-fashioned minstrelsy?" inquired The Bee man, and the veteran promptly replied that he shall. "There is only one real minstrel show in the world now," he continued, "and that is at the Eleventh street opera house in Philadelphia, but minstrelsy is going to be revived as soon as the war is over. I know of two first-class companies that will soon go on the road, and if the shows are conducted on business principles they will make a big success. Running a minstrel show is just like running a railroad. The people want something good, and when they get it they will patronize it. The railroad that gets the business in the end that has the best accommodations, the best rolling stock and the best service. So the show that takes with the people is the one that has talent that can be understood and appreciated. Once let the managers get this idea in their heads and quit giving cheap shows with cheap performers and the public will back them up."

HUNTING DOWN THE BUFFALO How Ten Million Were Slaughtered for the Hides in Ten Years. PLAINS DELUGED WITH THEIR BLOOD Vast Herds Annihilated to Make Room for and Fatten the White Man—Piles of Bleaching Bones Put to Use. The same savage periods of the brutal age of the world never shed more blood than ran on our western prairies hardly thirty years ago, when in one brief decade the rifles of the hide-hunters utterly exterminated the millions of buffaloes that trampled the plains, north of the Red River of the South, and south of the Red River of the North. I hardly dare state the grand totals I used to hear Kit Carson or old Bill Bridger give of their off-handed buffalo census in my boyhood days on the plains, writes Col. W. F. Cody in the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post. It was millions and millions, and they were men who knew if any men did. As late as 1869, however, General Sherman reported nine million buffaloes on the prairies, and this was a conservative estimate. Ten years later these vast herds were completely wiped out—a whole division of the animal kingdom struck to death by the bullets of the wasteful professional hunters, who left millions of pounds of fine meat rotting in the sun. Seemingly it was a pitiful waste of the natural resources of the country; but as I look back upon it, I see now that it was a sharp, quick way of ridding the plains of a cumbersome that had to give place to a wiser use of these fine grazing lands. It was another instance of civilization getting what it wanted and never minding the cost. Civilization wanted the west, but it had no use for the Indian or the buffalo if found in possession of the west; and the Indian and the buffalo had to go, as all things go, before the relentless march of the white man. We could not make useful citizens of the Indian, and we could not run our brands on the buffalo, so now there are few Indians and no buffaloes. Extravagant as may seem the slaughter, the country is as much better for it as cities are better than tepees, and as Durham cattle are better than buffaloes. It is not yet hard to find men who can remember riding for days through mighty herds of buffaloes too contemptuous of us in their numbers to mind the crack of a rifle in the least. At night we had to place guards around our camps to prevent these great herds from trampling us out of existence. We found fresh herds in almost every direction, though each herd stayed pretty much on its own chosen range, wandering only a hundred miles or so here and there. They chose the uplands for their ranges, where the crisp buffalo grass was plentiful and water good. They did not migrate in winter, but stubbornly faced the fiercest blizzards, relying for warmth on the hair matted thick about their shoulders. How the Redskins Hunted Buffalo. While the buffaloes were food and clothing and shelter for the Indian, the Indian played no considerable part in the extinction of the species. The buffalo is a slow breeder, the

cow's dropping calves only once in two or three years, but the arrows of the Indians never diminished their number. The Indians were bold riders and good hunters, but they killed only to satisfy their own immediate wants. Nor did the herds suffer greatly from the rifles of the early trappers and scouts who conducted wagon trains across the plains to California. These men were famous shots, and hunted on horseback in bold dashes on the herds, as the Indians hunted, but they had no way of reaching a market with hides and meat, and killed only to supply the needs of the parties they were conducting. After the civil war, when Uncle Sam began to multiply his posts in the great west, some of the best of these plainsmen became hunters for the government, and buffalo meat was an important part in army rations out there. We began to use breech-loaders about that time, and the buffaloes fell faster. I still have an old .45 Springfield, which I use in hunting for the government, and I suppose I must have killed 15,000 buffaloes with it. But it was the whistling of locomotives, crawling farther and farther along the plains that sounded the doom of the buffalo. Angry bulls might lift their shaggy heads and bellow defiance at the strange noise, but the screech of steam valves proclaimed an inexorable fate coming upon the herds. The Creator of all things drew two thin lines of iron across the lease of life He had given to the buffalo and canceled it. For the markets of the world were opened to the hide-hunters, and the heavy old Sharps began to crack faster. Colonel Cody's Nickname. Even before the railroads were finished the real attack on the herds began. The railroad builders found this supply of fresh meat very convenient for feeding construction gangs, and good buffalo hunters, who were not afraid to face the hostile Indians which hovered about, were in great demand. In 1867 I began killing buffaloes for the Kansas Pacific, and shot nearly 5,000 of them to feed the laborers who were building that line. It was from them that I first got the name of Buffalo Bill. For a long time this road, which afterward became the Union Pacific, used buffalo heads as an advertisement, and I used to save for this purpose the handsomest heads I killed. It was when the railroads got in operation on the plains that an army of hide-hunters appeared and sealed the fate of the buffalo. They were a strange class of men, developed by the peculiar circumstances of their trade, and they disappeared with the buffalo. They flourished in the ten years between 1870 and 1880, during which time they completely exterminated the herds. Buffalo hides, dried green, brought \$3 apiece, summer and winter, and the skins were used not so much for robes as for leather of a somewhat inferior grade. Ten or twelve men, with several wagons, made up a hide outfit. They set out from some railroad point, got among a herd, and camped on the trail for a day or two until they had wiped out the whole herd. From time to time they sent back wagon loads of hides to the railroad and shipped them to eastern tanneries. The best men in these outfits were the hunters who used heavy Sharps' rifles and stalked their game on foot. The rest of the men were skinners, who followed the hunters, stripped off the hides of the victims, and left the meat to rot. Funeral Cortège of the Buffalo. Now the bonpickers appeared on the

scene. The vast herds no longer thundered over the plains, but millions of skeletons lay bleaching in the western sun. The bonpickers diverged from various railroad points with wagon trains and, following the routes of the hide hunters, loaded their wagons with the bones of the buffaloes where the hunters had slain them. These bones were carted back to the railroads and shipped east, so the buffalo became commercial fertilizer. Great ricks of bones, piled higher than a house, appeared by the sides of the railroad and long lines of box cars heaped with bones crawled east over the plains. This was the funeral cortège of the buffalo. All this while great herds of cattle were being driven north over the trails from Texas and Mexico and rapidly increasing, filling the range which had been cleared for them by the slaughter of the buffalo. Now came another class of men, quite as picturesque as the other early types of the plains. These were the cowboys; rude and reckless, and many, and many, and brave, leading herds full of hardships and peril places they took. Civilization had cleared the ground of the buffalo to make room for cattle. Possibly far north in the heavily timbered wide of British Columbia a few straggling buffalo may live in timid seclusion, soon to vanish. Personally I saw the last of the buffalo in a lonely valley in northwestern Wyoming many years ago. Riding one morning over a divide I looked down into the little valley, peaceful and quiet, and very still. The rising sun shone plyingly down upon three thousand skeletons, gleaming white in the grass, eloquent of the passing of the mighty herds of buffaloes. Great Speech Delivered in Whispers. When Judge Littlefield of Rockland, Me., enters congress as the successor of the late Nelson Dingley, relates the Philadelphia Evening Post, he will not find himself among strangers. Judge Littlefield has been a prominent figure in Maine politics for many years and he won national fame at the St. Louis convention in 1896 through his advocacy of Thomas B. Reed's candidacy for the presidency. The former speaker's canvass was in the hands of Joseph Manly and Judge Littlefield, and when the former gave up the contest in advance of the day on which the nominations were made the judge was frankly outspoken in his disapproval of that course. The judge has a voice large enough for two men of ordinary size, and it filled the corridors of the leading hotel with picturesque denial that the Maine candidate had retired in favor of McKinley. Partly because of this gift, but chiefly on account of his eloquence, the judge was chosen to second Mr. Reed's nomination, but he had done so much talking in advance that when he rose in the great convention hall his voice deserted him. He began in a hoarse stage whisper which could not be heard fifty feet distant and long before he ended his speech he was talking chiefly to himself. "It would have been a great speech, judge, if the other fellows had let you deliver it," he said. "Never mind about the other fellows," the judge is reported to have replied, partly in signs and partly in whispers. "If I ever catch some of those fellows in a close room I'll make their ears ache." The judge will have his chance next December.

NO INK IS NEEDED IN PRINTING.

New Process for Reproducing Pictures from Artists' Copy. An English company has been formed to print without the use of ink in any form, by simply bringing the plate into contact with chemically dampened paper linen, silk, wool, or other fabric, and obtaining a good, clear impression of any desired density. The operation is as quick and more simple than letter press printing and the work resembles in clearness and delicacy a copper plate or litho-engraving. Ordinary printers' type blocks, forms, stereotypes and electrotypes may be used as a printing surface and drawings, etc., requiring special blocks or electrotypes, lithographic work or copper plate engraving can be done at a great saving. Original sketches, scrolls or fancy lettering can be made upon the transparency or traced through from drawn or printed sketches, the words being typed in their respective places and, if printed on opaque paper, photographic replicas of any size can be made, while engravings can be reproduced direct from the artist's work. Any class of paper may be used, the sensitizing solution is much cheaper than printing ink, and the speed of the process is greatly in its favor. The Miscellaneous Smoker. Catholic Standard and Times: Bings—Say, what's the proper full-dress? Bings—Going to an evening reception? Bings—No, a club smoker. Bings—Wear a bathing suit, sun boots and a mackintosh for that sort of full-dress.