

pers all assemble in the dressing room awaiting the paymaster, who arrives to settle the weekly account. They are paid at the rate of 50 cents for each performance and 25 for each rehearsal. But the fact that they are privileged to hear the opera is what attracts the fine class of men.

The dressing room below the stage is given over entirely for the use of supers. They must be on hand promptly at 7:30, for considerable time is taken up in changing costumes. Here the lawyer, who a minute before entered with his long overcoat and cane, opens his locker, slips on his new gown, and is quickly metamorphosed into a courtier with rouged cheeks, a Spanish cavalier, a knight in steel armor, an Egyptian slave, a waiter, or a pilgrim returned from Rome.

The first night is a scene of hilarious laughter. The supers are not yet accustomed to their new garb and surroundings. The thing is so novel to them that they all crowd around a small mirror and struggle to admire themselves in the glass. Meanwhile a few supers may be seen sketching some of their willing fellow workers until the bell summons them to appear on the stage.

What a different appearance the stage presents from that of rehearsal! Now everything presents a picture of activity. Managers give directions; stage hands move to and fro, ballet girls group to the left of the stage, the chorus takes its position. The lights are turned on, and the machinery of the opera is in motion.

The supers await their cue and proudly march upon the stage with as much concern as the singer at \$1,000 a night. Each super throws forward his chest and believes himself to be the cynosure of all eyes, as if he, too, were making his debut.

This gives them the opportunity of observing the audience from the stage. From this point of vantage, when the lights are on the opera house presents a gazzling and brilliant scene.

With the exception, perhaps, of "Lohengrin" and "Tannhauser," Wagner calls for a few supers in his operas. "Alas!" said a complaining super who took the part of an apprentice in "Die Meistersinger," "if Wagner had only known how anxious we were to appear in the ring he certainly would have had compassion and made place for us." The Italian operas like "Carmen," "Faust," and "Aida" offer more opportunity for the super.

There are many interesting anecdotes of the opera, which seldom reach the public ear.

In the first act of the opera, Lohengrin arrives in a skiff drawn by a magic swan, in response to Elsa's prayer for a champion. Knote, who last season took the part of Lohengrin, on the opening night was much mortified to find that the machinery of the boat failed to work. He was left in the middle of the stream with no prospects of landing. Then the stagehands grew desperate and strenuously tugged at the ropes. The boat would not budge an inch. At last, by a combined effort, a number of stage hands crawled to the boat and actually carried it to the shore.

Though ten bars late, Knote, before he commenced the swan song, found time to whisper in German to the herald who stood near, "That was a narrow escape indeed!"

Pol Plancon, who is taller and more robust than any of the other singers, when walking about the wings of the stage awaiting his cue, once spied a super who was unusually tall. Plancon looked terrible in the role of Mephistopheles. Two long feathers which stuck out of his small cap made him look perfectly monstrous in size.

Walking up to the super, he measured shoulders with him and said: "I thought I was the tallest man here. I discover my equal. I congratulate you."

With that he sang out a theme from the opera and sauntered over to the other side of the stage to find whether there were any more his equal.

While waiting for their cue the artists are restless. One super found satisfaction in watching Galeza walk to and fro twenty-three times on the night when he appeared for the first time in the character of Lohengrin. Mmes. Eames, Walker, Gadaki and the rest of the prima donnas seldom appear on the stage before their cues when they come from their dressing rooms.

The supers of the Metropolitan opera house form a large and important body. Without them much of the glamour of the opera would be lost. Indeed, in some of the operas, they are as indispensable as would be the singers who take the principal roles. In the first act of "Lohengrin" the stage is peopled with supers who for one night are encased in real armor. So, too, the glorious second act of "Aida" would lose all its pomp were it not for the retinue of supers.

Such then, are the experiences of Herr Conrad's force of gentlemen supers. They have never been known to go on strike, but there is some talk of organizing under the name of "The Gentlemen's Super Association," and of electing Herr Conrad an honorary member.

# QUESTION BOX

In a Journal article lately it was said that one state provides the death penalty for eight crimes. What is it? Virginia.

Please give the origin of the use of stamps on letters. I have heard the story, but have forgotten the details.

This story is the one commonly told in this connection: About sixty-five years ago, Rowland Hill was traveling through one of the northern districts of England, and for a time was sojourning at an inn where the postman came with a letter for a young daughter of the innkeeper. The young miss turned the letter over and over in her hand, and after examining the envelope minutely inquired the price of the postage, which was a shilling. She sighed sadly and returned the letter to the postman, saying it was from her brother, but that she had no money. Mr. Hill was an onlooker and was touched with pity. He paid the postage and his action seemed to embarrass the girl. When the postman had gone, she stated to Mr. Hill that some signs marked on the envelope conveyed to her all she wanted to know, and that, as a fact, there was no writing inclosed. In extenuation, she said that she and her brother had contrived a code system of communicating, as neither of them was able to pay post charges. Mr. Hill thought of the results of a system which made such frauds possible. Before another day he had planned a postal system upon the present basis.

When does Senator Dolliver's present term expire? On the fourth of next March.

Which way does the compass point in the southern hemisphere? North.

Who are the oldest members of the senate in point of service?

These have served twenty years or more: Allison, Morgan, Hale, Frye, Aldrich, Cullom, Teller, Berry, Daniel, Morgan, Frye and Cullom have been elected for full terms beginning next March.

What is the corn stalk disease, its symptoms and its appearance in animals affected after their death?

The Kansas Farmer is authority for this: Corn stalk disease is the name given to a peculiar affection of cattle which they contract while feeding in corn stalk fields in the late fall and early winter. The disease is peculiar in that many animals may have died before the owner ever suspicioned its presence. As Moore states, cattle that act perfectly well at night are dead on the following morning. The definite cause of this disease has not been determined.

The rapid course of the disease usually results in the death of the animal before one is able to detect its presence. However in some cases the sick have been observed very carefully. Moore states that one owner found a steer down and unable to rise. Its head was extended, resting on the ground and moving continually from side to side; this was kept up for several hours, when he died. In some instances the animal will get down on the knees, lay his head on the ground, froth at the mouth, groan and die within two or three hours. Other animals will simply appear dull, show great weakness, walk with a peculiar jerky movement of the hind legs, and in a short time fall and seem to be in great distress.

Large numbers of veterinarians report that the organs of cattle dying of corn stalk disease are normal in appearance (Moore). However hemorrhages of the heart have been observed beneath the pleura and under the capsule of the liver. As to medicinal treatment very little can be done as the animals are usually so short lived after contracting the affection that they die before any medicine could be of benefit.

How much gold and silver is in circulation in the principal countries of the world?

The last reports to which we have access give the following figures:

Countries	Gold	Silver
United States	\$1,348,200,000	\$ 686,100,000
Austria-Hungary	306,000,000	79,700,000
Belgium	50,000,000	79,700,000
British Empire		
Australasia	128,600,000	6,100,000
Canada	52,200,000	6,700,000
United Kingdom	623,200,000	153,400,000
India	283,900,000	603,800,000
South Africa	56,000,000	20,000,000
Str's Settlements		19,300,000
Bulgaria	1,900,000	1,900,000
Cuba	20,000,000	5,000,000
Denmark	17,100,000	6,300,000
Egypt	87,400,000	18,000,000
Finland	4,400,000	430,000
France	326,400,000	411,100,000
Germany	880,700,000	210,300,000
Greece	5,000,000	100,000
Hayti	1,000,000	2,500,000
Italy	131,400,000	25,600,000
Japan	62,500,000	41,300,000
Mexico	3,600,000	53,300,000
Netherlands	36,500,000	64,800,000
Norway	4,800,000	1,000,000

Roumania	10,000,000	10,000,000
Russia	782,000,000	161,000,000
Servia	3,300,000	1,500,000
Siam	1,000,000	22,300,000
South Am States	85,000,000	13,400,000
Spain	73,100,000	173,700,000
Sweden	20,200,000	7,600,000
Switzerland	29,600,000	10,700,000
Turkey	600,000,000	40,000,000
Cent. Am. States	2,000,000	5,600,000
China		340,000,000
Total	\$5,987,100,000	\$1,130,400,000

"If I should die tonight, my friends would look upon my quiet face," and so forth. Will you kindly print the rest of the poem?

If I should die tonight,  
My friends would look upon my quiet face.  
Before they laid it in its resting place,  
And deem that death had left it almost fair;  
And, laying snow-white flowers against my hair,  
Would smooth it down with tearful tenderness,  
And fold my hands with lingering caress,  
Poor hands, so empty and so cold, tonight.

If I should die tonight,  
My friends would call to mind with loving thought  
Some kindly deed the icy hand had wrought,  
Some gentle word the frozen lips have said;  
Errands on which the willing feet had sped,  
The memory of my selfishness and pride,  
My hasty words, would all be put aside,  
And so I should be loved and mourned tonight.

If I should die tonight,  
Even hearts estranged would turn once more to me,  
Recalling other days remorsefully,  
The eyes that chill me with averted glance  
Would look upon me as of yore—perchance,  
And soften in the old, familiar way.  
For who could war with dumb, unconscious clay?  
So I might rest, forgiven of all, tonight.

Oh, friends, I pray tonight,  
Keep not your kisses for my dead, cold brow.  
The way is lonely, let me feel them now.  
Think gently of me; I am travel-worn;  
My faltering feet are pierced with many a thorn,  
Forgive, oh, hearts estranged, forgive, I plead!  
When dreamless rest is mine I shall not need  
The tenderness for which I long tonight.

Who were the barn burners?  
The "barn burners," (so called in reference to the story of the Dutch farmer who was said to have burned his barn in order to get rid of the rats that infested it) constituted the more progressive of the two factions which once split up the New York democrats, say about 1845. Later (in 1848) they joined the free soil party.

In their alleged energies for radical measures they were opposed by the hunkers (people who stuck to their "banks" or posts). Whence, in a general way, a "hunker" is a conservative man, one opposed to innovation or change.

Although this name was not heard until the Polk election campaign, the New York faction to which it was applied, existed as early as 1835. They disappeared about 1860.

What are the rulings of the bureau of chemistry in the matter of coloring foods under the federal law?

The food standards committee has decided against all artificial colors except certain vegetable colors and some coal tar dyes.

How was Alaska acquired by the United States?

In March, 1867, the territory was ceded to the United States by Russia in return for a payment of \$7,200,000 in gold, and possession was taken the same year.

What are our national holidays? Also, what states celebrate Jefferson Davis' birthday as a holiday?

There is no national holiday, not even the Fourth of July. Congress has at various times appointed special holidays. In the second session of the fifty-third congress it passed an act making labor day a public holiday in the District of Columbia, and it has recognized the existence of certain days as holidays for commercial purposes, but, with the exception named, there is no general statute on the subject. The proclamation of the president designating a day of thanksgiving only makes it a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories, and in those states which provide by law for it. June 3, Jefferson Davis' birthday, is celebrated in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas and South Carolina. In Louisiana the day is known as "confederate memorial day." In Virginia it is celebrated in public schools.

Can you tell me who is proprietor of the Providence Tribune?  
Colonel Colt, a leading candidate for the senate and head of the rubber

## PATENTS that PROTECT

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trust, is proprietor of the Providence, Rhode Island, Tribune; at least that paper is counted as his personal organ.

Please tell me the date of the election to decide upon the removal of the state capitol from Omaha to Lincoln? There was none. The legislature decided the matter.

## LAST WEEK

GOVERNOR SWETTENHAM of Jamaica was the central figure of the week. Following the disastrous earthquake and fire at Kingston American vessels hastened with aid to the scene of suffering. The American destroyer Whipple, the supply ship Celtic and two warships, the Missouri and the Indiana hastened to Kingston from Guantanamo and gave valuable assistance with supplies and surgical aid for the wounded. When the inmates of a prison threatened revolt one of the warships fired two blank cartridges in the direction of the prison as a warning to the inmates. On Monday morning the dispatches contained the news that the American ships had left the harbor on Saturday, being practically ordered out by Governor Swettenham in an extraordinarily offensive letter. The city council of Kingston requested the Americans to remain and assist in the emergency despite the conduct of the governor, as the withdrawal of the surgeons and medical supplies threatened much suffering, but the Americans did not feel at liberty to stay. The British government immediately offered apologies to the American government, and Governor Swettenham was severely criticised by the English press. After receiving the full correspondence between Admiral Davis in command of the American fleet, and Governor Swettenham, Secretary of the Navy Metcalf made the following statement of the matter: "From this correspondence it appears that Admiral Davis landed a party of six to guard and secure the archives of the American consulate and another party of ten men for the purpose of clearing away the wreckage. Later, on the earnest entreaty of the colonial secretary and the inspector of police, who spoke for the governor (the governor being absent from the city and at Kings house, some three miles distant) fifty men were landed under arms from the Indiana to overawe an alleged mutiny at the penitentiary containing 500 or 600 prisoners. Admiral Davis then proceeded by carriage to visit the governor at Kings house and found him living with his family in tents and was accompanied to the city by the governor. That same afternoon on the request of the governor the men were withdrawn from shore and returned to their ships."

## SEVEN THOUSAND ON STRIKE.

BAKU, Trans-Caucasia, Jan. 29.—Seven thousand employes of four naphtha works here struck today. Their demands include a bonus for 1906, varying from 20 to 80 per cent of their wages for the year. A general strike is being planned in support of the movement.

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