

THROUGH A FRENCHMAN'S EYE

The Latest and Brightest Production of Max O'Reil. JONATHAN AND HIS CONTINENT. We Have a Wonderful Country, He Thinks, But Are Too Vaing About It—Omaha a Future Chicago.

America the Land of Conjecture. Last Saturday the latest production of that bright and vivacious Frenchman, Paul Blouet, known the world over by his nom de plume of "Max O'Reil," appeared in Paris. The New York World's Sunday edition publishes the entire book in nearly two pages of solid nonpareil. It is written in the author's happiest vein. It begins in this breezy style: "The population of America is sixty millions—mostly colored."

An Englishman was one day boasting to a Frenchman of the immensity of the British empire. "Yes sir," he exclaimed to finish up with, "the sun never sets on the English possessions."

Without traveling very far, without even quitting the eastern coast of America, you will see a complete difference in the spirit of towns that are almost neighbors. In New York, for instance—I am not speaking now of the literary society, of which I shall speak later—in New York it is your money that will open all doors to you. In Boston it is your learning; in Philadelphia and Virginia it is your lineage. Therefore, if you wish to be a success, parade your dollars in New York, your talents in Boston, and your ancestors in Philadelphia and Richmond.

There is a pronounced childish side to the character of all Americans. In less than a century they have stridden ahead of all of the nations of the old world. In assembling at their own handiwork, and like children with a splendid toy of their own manufacture in their own hands, they say to you: "Look, just look, is it not a beauty?" And indeed, the fact is that, when you look at it with unprejudiced eyes, the achievement is simply marvellous.

The American people are generally this. Their faces glow with intelligence and energy, and in this mainly consists their handsomeness. I do not think it can be possible to see anywhere a finer assemblage of men than that which meets at the Century club in New York every first Saturday in the month. It is not male beauty such as the Greeks portrayed it, but a manly beauty, an intelligence, a vigor, a hair, a complexion, a nose, a chin, sometimes even almost disordered-looking; the dress displays taste and care without even aiming at elegance; the face is pale and serious, but lights up with an animation and a glow that restful and gentleness live in harmony in the American character.

The features are bony, the forehead straight, the nose sharp and often pinched looking in its thinness. At times one seems to recognize in the face of the individual the features of temples indented, the cheek bones prominent, the eyes small, keen and deep-set. The well-bred American is to my mind a happy combination of the features of the Indian and the European. As for the woman, I do not hesitate to say that in the east, in New York especially, she is much more perfect, well-taken for French women. In the same type, the same gait, the same vivacity, the same petulance, the same amplitude of proportions.

The beauty of American women, like that of the men, is much more in the animation of the face than in form or coloring. The average of good-looking is very high, indeed. I do not remember to have seen one hopelessly plain woman during my six months' ramble through the states.

American women generally enjoy that second youth which nature bestows also on numbers of Frenchwomen. At forty they bloom out into a more majestic beauty. The eyes retain their fire and lustre, the skin does not wrinkle, the hands, neck and arms remain firm and white. It is true that in America hair turns gray early, but so far from detracting from the woman's charms, it gives her an air of distinction, and is often positively an attraction.

Savour pass along can furnish men who do both with equal gusto. In what other country than America could such an anecdote as the following be told? It is the most typically American anecdote I heard in the United States. It came from Mr. Chamney Depey, it is said. But, for that matter, when a good story goes the round of the states it is always put down to Mr. Depey. Mark Twain or the late Artemus Ward.

A new minister has been appointed in a little Kentucky town. No sooner had he taken possession of his cure than he set about ornamenting the church with stained-glass windows of gorgeous hues. This proceeding aroused the suspicions of several parishioners, who imagined that their new pastor was inclined to lead them to Rome. A meeting was called, and it was decided to send a deputation to the minister to ask him to explain his conduct, and beg him to have the offending windows removed.

The head of the deputation was an old man of Presbyterian proclivities, whose austerity was well known in the town. He opened fire by addressing the reverend gentleman thus: "We have waited upon you, sir, to beg that you will remove those painted windows from our church as soon as possible. We are simple folks, God's own light is good enough for us, and we don't want to have it shut out by all those images."

The worthy man had prepared a fine harangue, and was going to give the minister the benefit of it all; but the latter, losing patience, thus interrupted him: "Excuse me, you seem to be taking high ground; who are you, may I ask?" "Who am I?" repeated the good old spokesman, "I am a meek and humble follower of Jesus, that's what I am, and—do you, who are you?"

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The New Yorkers and Bostonians will have it that Chicago women have enormous feet and hands. I was willing to believe this up to the day I went to Chicago. I found the Chicago women, and those of the west generally, pretty, and more color than their eastern sisters, only, as a rule, quite slight, not thin.

GOSSIP OF THE GREEN-ROOM.

Anecdotes of Plays, Play-Goers, Actors and Authors. MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC NOTES. Mrs. Potter's First Night—Our Mary was Caught—Rose Coghlan's Adventure—Mr. Harrigan's Reminiscences.

Mrs. Potter's First Night. New York Herald: Cleopatra had just driven back from a "benefit" at Palmer's. She had been playing the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet," and before she was away again to the evening performance of "Antony and Cleopatra" she was snatching a hurried meal in her little rooms at the Brevort house.

She was clad, as usual, in a soft clinging sarah dressing gown, winding and twining gracefully about her willowy figure, after the fashion of Sarah, the diaphanous. "Do remember my emotions on the first night of 'Antony and Cleopatra,'" murmured Mrs. Potter, "my mother, shall I ever forget them! We had had a dreadful time of it the night before, rehearsing steadily from 10 in the evening till 3 or 4 in the morning, when I crawled back to bed, utterly exhausted."

Miss Ida Miller will probably appear in New York as the Herald of that city, were always impressed with the smooth course of the performances, but they probably never realized what it cost the actress to keep her presentations to the pitch of excellence. Miss Anderson was always in attendance at rehearsals, and during the performance she directed the setting of almost all the scenes. She is of a very nervous temperament, and is greatly to be pitied for her efforts. On the last night of the performance of "The Winter Tale" here, in the closing act, when Hermione is disclosed as a statue, Miss Anderson stepped from the pedestal and descended the steps. She had taken but three steps when she stopped. She swayed to and fro, but came no further and the king (Mr. Barnes) was obliged to ascend and meet her, and to the astonishment of the audience, the scene was closed.

Our Mary was Caught. Miss Mary Anderson's audience at Palmer's theatre during the engagement she recently had at New York says the Herald of that city, were always impressed with the smooth course of the performances, but they probably never realized what it cost the actress to keep her presentations to the pitch of excellence. Miss Anderson was always in attendance at rehearsals, and during the performance she directed the setting of almost all the scenes. She is of a very nervous temperament, and is greatly to be pitied for her efforts. On the last night of the performance of "The Winter Tale" here, in the closing act, when Hermione is disclosed as a statue, Miss Anderson stepped from the pedestal and descended the steps. She had taken but three steps when she stopped. She swayed to and fro, but came no further and the king (Mr. Barnes) was obliged to ascend and meet her, and to the astonishment of the audience, the scene was closed.

Rose Coghlan's Adventure. New York Herald: During Christmas week Miss Rose Coghlan, who was then playing in New Orleans, met with the following romantic adventure: She had gone out one morning on horseback to the city. Her horse, which was a spirited animal, took fright at something by the roadside and bolted. Being a good rider, Miss Coghlan kept her seat. But the strain on her horse, by continuing to tell on her strength, when a gypsy man ran to her assistance and succeeded in stopping the horse. The man refused any pay for his services, and learning that there was a gypsy encampment near by Miss Coghlan thither, in her fortune told and made presents of money to the women and children. From her rescuer she learned that he had never seen a regular performance in a theater, and she therefore gave him an order for seats for the play.

A day or two after she rode out to the encampment, curious to know if the gypsies had gone to the theater and what effect the play had made upon them. The gypsies, however, told her horse recounted their visit to the theater, and when she spoke of the duel which Jocelyn (Miss Coghlan) fights, he added with great excitement: "I watched you all through, lady, and I did not think you were so good with a sword as you did, but I was ready," and he tapped the sheath knife under his belt significantly, "and if you had not killed the man I was ready to do it for you."

Mr. Lackayo, who was Miss Coghlan's opponent in the duel, now objects to her forming such realistic acquaintances. Mr. Harrigan's Reminiscences. New York Herald: "The old variety theater has almost become a thing of the past," said Mr. Edward Harrigan one night recently. "It was a peculiarly American institution, as much so as the music halls are in London, and it has great respectability too. Dramatic authors did not disdain in the old days to write farces, especially for the variety houses, and some of the cleverest people could be found among their performers."

"I think the old variety stage was ruined by the introduction of rum," "Run?" "Yes, the allowing of liquor saloons, run in connection with the variety houses, that gave it its death blow, and the variety house as an institution, has dwindled to very small proportions."

"In its place we now have 'teams'—that is, a man and his wife who do some specialties and sketches, or brothers and sisters, and men and women who are partners. Many of the best people of the old variety stage are now occupying prominent places in legitimate drama, and I think that much of their success, notably in comic opera, is due to the training and equipment through which they made their mark in the earlier period."

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Some Inhabitants Who Have Made Themselves Famous.

AN OVERFLOW OF HARD CASES

A Few Little Incidents in Which Resolvers Were Prominent Actors—A Newspaper Correspondent and the People He Met.

Covington. COVINGTON, Neb., Jan. 26.—[Special to THE BEE.]—Your correspondent arrived in Covington, the wide-famed town located in Dakota county, directly opposite Sioux City, yesterday evening about 7 o'clock.

In strolling about the place, I was fortunate enough to meet several old-timers, one of whom furnished the following information regarding the early history of the town that to-day, perhaps, harbors more bad characters in proportion to its population than any other town in America:

The town was located in October, 1853, and about the first business established thereat was a boarding house, grocery, and saloon combined, which was conducted by a man named Jim Weller.

At that time one of the most beautiful and valuable belts of cottonwood timber to be found anywhere along the Missouri river, adorned the banks of that stream for miles above and below the town site. This naturally attracted settlers, and land seekers poured into the new town at an exceedingly rapid rate, there being as many as three, and in many instances, five claimants to a section of land. A sawmill was soon put in operation where Sioux City to-day stands, and the stately cottonwoods were felled to the ground and "yanked" across the Big Muddy as fast as human hands could "yank" them, each man striving to get there with more logs than his "near neighbor."

After the timber had been thoroughly stripped, the army of home-seekers in the west, turned their attention to the fertile lands that have since made Dakota county famous as a corn-growing district.

Here, trouble commenced in earnest. From three to five men were located on every quarter section of land, each claiming the right to hold it.

Quarrels, fights, and rumors of fights, were numerous, and in one instance a dispute over the rightful ownership of a piece of land adjoining Covington resulted in a COLD-BLOODED MURDER.

One P. J. Gillett, from Illinois, accompanied by a wife and two children, in August, 1854, pre-empted and erected a small but comfortable log cabin on the land, and with spades he and his faithful companion had labored early and late turning up the sod, preparatory to planting a crop the following spring.

This particular piece of land was a very desirable one, and was coveted by three other men, Brown, Johnson and another, whose names your correspondent could not learn. One day while the trio were discussing the matter in the presence of several citizens of the youthful burg, it was agreed that the three play a game of "cut-throat" euchre to determine which of the party should

SHOOT GILLETT. This being the only means by which he could be removed from the land he had chosen for a home. The party repaired to Weller's saloon, played the game, and "stuck" Brown. Here the third party, whose name, as stated above, could not be learned, proposed to "cut" the cards with Brown,

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At that time one of the most beautiful and valuable belts of cottonwood timber to be found anywhere along the Missouri river, adorned the banks of that stream for miles above and below the town site. This naturally attracted settlers, and land seekers poured into the new town at an exceedingly rapid rate, there being as many as three, and in many instances, five claimants to a section of land. A sawmill was soon put in operation where Sioux City to-day stands, and the stately cottonwoods were felled to the ground and "yanked" across the Big Muddy as fast as human hands could "yank" them, each man striving to get there with more logs than his "near neighbor."

After the timber had been thoroughly stripped, the army of