AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

"JONATHAN EDWARDS." OF NORTH CAROLINA, VISITS THE WHITE HOUSE.---A SCENE THAT TOOK HIM OFF HIS FEET.

What He Saw and Heard at the Pie-Politan Hotel.--Hasty Pen-Picture of Some of Pie Hunters From North Carolina.--Robbins Sounds the Key-Note of Alarm.

[Copywrited by "Jonathan Edwards."]

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 15.

I arrived here this morning. As soon as I could get the cinders seperated from the hayseed in my hair and my clothes dusted, I went at once to the White House to see President Cleveland. I did not vote for him, but I was anxious to make a good impression and was a little perplexed how to go about it. They all said here—at the Pie-Politan hotel—that the proper thing to do was to get Senator Ransom to present me, that he was here for that purpose—had nothing else to do and was a master hand at the business. It was rather a delicate matter; for I thought it might embarrass him to be seen in such conspicuous company as one of the plain, common people. So following my natural and political instincts I went it independent. A very dark complexioned, well dressed, polite negro was at the upper door. With a call-by-appointment air, I asked to see the President. I mentioned incidentally that I was from North Carolina, when the darky showed all the ivory in his capacious mouth. He offered to shake hands, told me that his name was Simmons and that he was kin (by purchase) to ex-Congressman Simmons. He took me right in on that card, or announcement and whispered me, "jes tell the President that you are from North Carolina and don't want any office and it will be all right." There was a big crowd in the room, but I had little time to study faces or people. I saw a group of three or four familiar North Carolinians surrounding the President. I heard a name mentioned that took me completely off my feet. I clutched at the back of a chair, saw a pair of long embracing arms violently gesticulating and heard a voice, "like one crying out in the wilderness," "Yes, Mr. President, I am the man that broke the backbone of the Alliance in North Carolina; but it is not dead sir. No sir, that fellow Marion Butler is making speeches over in my country now and unless something is done for fellows like me, I can't tell what may happen!" Well, a Tennessean who was after an office, but didn't get it, as I afterwards heard, (and I am sorry too) came to my rescue. Instantly my equilbrium was restored. The speaker, who had already attracted general attention by the vehemence of his oratory, was a man by the name of Robbins, the one the Democrats were compelled to ball and chain and muzzle during the campaign. By all the gods at once, it was the same corn-husking voice I had heard at Goldsboro on that dark, rainy night when Vice-President Stevenson passed through. Ransom was standing by looking heroic and vigorously pulling at his immaculate cuffs. (They tell me that the cuffs are sewed on to his shirts to prevent accidents when he is under any great mental strain.) Also near by a Congressman (but he didn't look it a bit) by the name of Henderson. They say Henderson is worth all the delegation put together, and that he really is the only man in the lot who has any recognition at the White House. He is very homely looking, with red hair and stooped shoulders. I noticed that "our beloved Zeb" was not on hand, and when afterwards I spoke of it, they told me Ransom and Vance didn't "put up at the same hotel." The story goes here that togeth they have got the Democratic party in North Carolina by the throat—that they are indispensable to each others supremacy, but at heart they hate each other as his Satanic Majesty hates holy water. They are friends for reciprocity only. When my turn came I shook hands with the President, told my name and State, that I didn't want any office, was one of the common people, had saved my best suit of tax-cursed clothes for this visit and that as he seemed to be busy, I would call at another time. He held me by the hand several seconds—it seemed an hour—and said, "I want to see you again, Mr. Edwards. Can you call to-morrow at 6 a. m.?" I did call, and for an hour or more I imagined myself a cabinet officer. I will tell you all about it in my next letter. Mr. Cleveland is not the great big, course man I expected to see, but he has a collossal memory and a wonderful knowledge of people, both big and small. No man seems too insignificant—provided he is after an office—that he does not know something about. The little office hunter would be amazed if he knew how much Mr. Cleveland knew of his small peccadilloes and affected virtues.

WHAT YOU SEE AND HEAR.

From the White House I went back to the Piepolitan Hotel. It was formerly called the Metropolitan, but the pie hunters have changed the name of it, and you will please observe this in forwarding my mail. As a general thing North Carolina people stop here, and as I write I can easily imagine myself in Raleigh attending a Democratic State convention. I counted up to 50 and stopped. And every fellow of them was after and office. Some wanted a big place, some wanted a small place and all of them would take anything they could get and would be mighty glad to get it. I was anxious to meet Robbins and to hear from his own lips the whole tale of woe he had so plaintively formed into the Presidents ears. My dilligence was finally awarded. I found him, and after the unvarying interstate observation (originating, it is claimed, between the North and South Carolina Governors,) he told me all about it. I was anxious to hear it because it was on everybody's lips that Robbins had "played the devil" at the White House—he had made a stump speech to the President who intimated to him that he was an ass, promising to send him out of the country and into obscurity as soon as possible. Robbins says that he told the President who had done the work in North Carolina, and he thought it a "blasted shame" that the party workers were not rewarded. Now I was he said, the first man in the State to take the Alliance movement by the throat and strangle the monstrocity. But for me, I say without boasting, Polk and Butler would have disorganized the Democratic party in North Carolina and yet I must hang on here and beg for a little office. Maybe I made a rash speech to the President, but I am sick and tired of all this tomfoolery. I am going home soon and if something isn't done pretty soon the country will hear from me. We are not out of the woods by any means in North Carolina. Marion Butler is advertise to make speeches in my county and he is a very dangerous fellow to be going about loose."

I felt sorry for Robbins and told him as much. He is a great big headed, burly, manly looking man, but poverty and political ambition has been his curse. He is now very proud and feels very keenly the humiliation that poverty compels him to submit to. He came here with big expectations. Wanted the Mexican mission at $17,000 per year and will possibly get a $3,000 consulate. But there are other star-shooters here besides Robbins. Mr. Eddie Hale, who wears English clothes, you know, patent leather shoes, a plug hat and carries around with him an English case of the gout, wanted the Turkish mission Only a few days ago, I am told, Hale was a hat drummer for a New York house. He is the most aristocratic looking man here from our State, and stays at Senator Vance's house. "He will get something as the saying goes here. Another high-flyer on that line is Mr. Pendleton King. He is a tall, well made distinguished looking man, with Dundreary blonde whiskers. He is one of the Presidents numerous biographers, and was secretary of the American Legation at Constantinople by way of reward. He thinks he honors North Carolina in claiming the State as his home though he has not resided there since early manhood.

The "young giant," W. R. Henry, who made 60 speeches in the last campaign in 60 days is a conspicuous figure in the throng here. His giant stride, imposing rotundity and long tailed frock coat attracts attention to him at once. It was hard for me to believe that he was a born and reared North Carolinian. He told me his object in going abroad was to complete his court education and to give the State reputation among the potentates of the Diplomatic world. He already bows with captivating graciousness for a man of such ponderosity. He met the young Hawaii's Queen when she visited Washington, and he may be sent to Honolulu I hear the aspirants for Diplomatic distinction are very numerous. I have named only a few of the score or more.

It is the home offices that the crowd here is after. If I have asked the question one time, I have asked it 500, who is to be the Collector and Attorney for the Western District? The question is still unanswered, but I have got together a job lot of opinions, guesses, facts and theories that may interest our people. The present incumbents will hold on a month or more. By geographical assignment the Western District patronage is Vance's private property. But it has a string to it. The beneficiary must be friendly to Ransom. It is the reciprocity idea, and surely it seems to be a nice arrangement. For the collectorship Vance has endorsed and urged his cousin, Mr. Hezekiah Gudger. Well, Gudger is not an enthusiastic Ransom man He leans strongly towards his old friend Tom Jarvis, and they tell me here that Jarvis is a real, live candidate for Ransom's place. However Mr. Gudger has given Ransom's friends assurances that he will not use the patronage of his office to defeat the re-election. But Ransom is not looking for that kind of a collector. A vague impression is current that he will need votes in the next legislature. And Mr. Gudger is not a favorite at the White House. In the same mysterious way that he hears everything, the President has heard that Gudger ran up the white flag in the thickest of the fight and surrendered unconditionally to the People's party. So, it is thought, that Vance will be forced to give up Gudger and rally on some one who has no taint on his political foresight, and who is friendly to Ransom. Besides all this the President says he wants a good, consistent Cleveland man for this place. The lantern equipped Diogonies is already on the alert.

There are only two candidates for the District Attorneyshp. The "little terror" Bob Glenn, is Vance's candidate, but the President is dead against him. He has heard that Glenn carried a petition around with him during the campaign and secured endorsements for the District Attorneyship, and that the day after the election he started a literary bureau for the same purpose. Speaking about it, the President is quoted as saying that it looked to him like an attempt to forestall public sentiment in favor of one man, which he considered a discreditable thing in a man who was a candidate for the high office of of Presidential Elector. Then, too, he has heard that Mr. Glenn accepted the nomination on the Electorial ticket with a confidenced expressed belief that he (Cleveland) would not be nominated at Chicago. Another piece of information has reached the President which does not help any of Vance's friends. Somebody—that some Mr. third somebody—has told him that Vance had refuse to endorse one of his friends for an appointment because he was an "original Cleveland man."

It distresses me to write these things, but it is well enough to look the situation squarely in the face. The truth is, perhaps it is not exactly the right thing to do to speak of it in a newspapers. Vance has a great contempt for Mr. Cleveland's Democracy, and Mr. Cleveland appears to be entirely indifferent to Senator Vances operations or wishes. How it all will end no one can tell, but there is a well-grounded apprehension, that "our Zeb" will get badly left. It seems almost certain when it is understood that the opposing candidate is an "original Cleveland man,." went to Chicago a Cleveland man, and had the political foresight to guess that he would be nominated. Vance is in a state of big disgust over these probable disappointments and he is very meagre with his compliments in discussing the administration. He goes to the White House often enough and they all say that he is very urgent in pressing his candidates, but without avail. It is hard to realize in the Vance of to-day the Vance that we all knew so well, not so many years ago. He is a sadly changed man—almost a complete wreck—physically, if not mentally. vascillation and peevishness are noted by those who are thrown with him intimately, but then it ought to be understood that he is daily and hourly subjected to pressure that would distract a sound minded and healthy bodied man.

To my great surprise I hear some doubts expressed about the appointment of chairman Simmons as Collector of the Eastern District. It is only mentioned in whispers, but it has some reference to protested paper in one of the Raleigh banks, which was issued for campaign purposes. I understand that it does not reflect upon his personal integrity but that Mr. Cleveland is very particular about those things, and the information has reached him, possibly in some distorted shape. And our Judy Carroll hasn't got the walkover he was supposed to have for the U. S. Marshalship. Another entry and a very strong one they tell me has been made by Col. Van Richardson of Columbus county, who says "Judy" is something of a "blathaskite" and that he has no claim whatever upon the Democratic party. This is a horrible suggestion, and it will account to you for the abrupt termination of this effusion.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

ALLIANCE DEPARTMENT.

O'er every land, in every age
Some curse of creed or human ban
Has controvened the rights of man,
E'en now some subtle power
Enthrones the wrong, exalts the knave,
While idlers reign and toilers slave.

THE QUARTERLY MEETING

Of The County Alliances over The State.

[FOR THE CAUCASIAN.]

EDGECOMBE.

TARBORO, N. C., April 14th 1893.—Our county Alliance held its regular meeting in this place yesterday with a large delegation of representative Allliancemen in attendance. The routine business was transacted. There was marked enthusiasm shown by the brethren, and they all seemed determined to carry on the grand work of the Alliance, which was so auspiciously begun. Our enemies say the Alliance is dead, but the indications now are that the order will flourish more than at any period of its existence. The brethren are heartily in favor of sustaining the Business Agency. The following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, The impression prevails among many who are not members of the Alliance that the order has been demoralized, disorganized, and disrupted by the recent political campaign, and

WHEREAS, It was the right and privilege of every Allianceman to affiliate with the party that he deemed best to carry into effect our principles. And as it is said: "To err is human, to forgive is divine," let us therefore exercise mental forbearance and forgiveness toward each other; let us burry the past with all its unpleasantness, and take on renewed life, renewed energy and renewed determination to battle for industrial emancipation. Be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we, the members of Edgecombe county Alliance, desire to publish to the world our unfaltering allegiance and faithful devotion to our noble and humane organization; that we renew our pledges to the principles of the Alliance, and the measures in the platform, and promise that in the future we will zealously advocate and defend them.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Tarboro Southerner. Goldsboro CAUCASIAN, and Progressive Farmer with the request that they be published.

JAMES B. LLOYD,
Secretary Edgecombe County Alliance.

Honeycutt's Union.

The Quarterly Union meeting of all the Sub Alliances of Honeycutt's township, Sampson County, was held on April 7th with Salem Alliance. There was a full meeting of delegates and an interesting meeting We made up a large order of goods for the Business Agency.

Bro. Butler, Pres. of the State Alliance and Vice Pres. of N. F. A. and I. U., was by invitation with us and made a public address. This is where he was raised, and at Salem Alliance is where he joined. We were glad to welcome our neighborhood boy back among us. It is needless to say to the public that his speech was an able one and greatly enjoyed. The good ladies brought out an excellent fine dinner for the audience. Salem Alliance is prospering. We have initiated and reinstated 12 members since Christmas.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE SAMPSON COUNTY FARMERS' ALLIANCE ON THE 13TH DAY OF APRIL, 1893.

WHEREAS, The last State Legislature did pass or attempt to pass laws repealing the charter of the State Farmers Alliance and did pass amendments with the intent to destroy or cripple the Business Agency Fund. Therefore we

RESOLVE 1st, That we denounce their action as cowardly, malicious and unjust.

2nd, That they were not actuated by their love of country, but by a low vindictive spirit, to destroy our noble organization.

3rd, That we also express our contempt for their action in compromising the back tax question, which emphatically gives a vast sum of money to one of the richest corporations in the State.

4th, That while they compromised the tax question with the richest corporation in the State they increased the taxes of the people of the State by their unprecedented appropriations.

5th, That we as a body reaffirm our allegiance to the order as our only hope of redemption from the oppressive influences of combined capital.

6th, That we ask THE CLINTON CAUCASIAN and the Progressive Farmer to please publish the above resolutions.

C. J. WILLIAMS,
J. O. HERRING,
J. M. MARSHBOUNE, } Com.
J. J. VANN,
L. O. ROGERS,

Resolutions Passed by Robeson County Alliance April 13th, 1893.

We, the Farmers' Alllance of Robeson county, now in session do condemn the action of the present Legislature in tampering with our charter, and we instruct our Sec'y to furnish a copy of this resolution to the Progressive Farmer, THE CAUCASIAN and Robesonian for publication and we request all papers friendly to our order to copy the same.

W. H. HUMPHREY, Sec'y-Treas.
Robeson Co. Farmers' Alliance.

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

A Child's Apron.

DEAR CHILDREN:—At the request of the Editor of THE CAUCASIAN I will occasionally send a sketch for your column:

CHILD'S APRON.

This little girl was sketched as she peeped out from between the supports of a work table, which made, in her fancy, a secluded hidden place. Three feet away her mother worked upon an apron like that which the child wore. It had a square opening at the top, trimmed with two ruffles of embroidery, the upper one white and the lower pink. Underneath these ruffles was a piece of goods to which the full apron was sewed; the hem was laid in three tucks and edged with a gathered ruffle of the goods. The apron is buttoned in the back, and the material was sheer white batiste, though coarser material would be better for most little rompers.

ESTELLE.

Halifax County.

AIRLEI P. O., N. C.

MR. EDITOR: My Father takes your pleasant paper and I like it very much. I think it is the best paper I ever read, and if the boys and girls would tell more about their homes and their work, instead of telling so much about the color of their hair and eyes, it would be so much better. Now, girls and boys, can you all tell me how many of you has a father that raises his own meat and bread at home, for if they would do so they would not be crying out hard times.

As I have seen so many puzzles in the Children's Corner, I will send one:

Two little caves in the side of the hill,
Just as you come to the cherry mill;
Truly,

BESSIE J. BEST.

P. S.—If this does not find its way to the waste-basket I may write again.

Correct Answer.

I think the answer to the Enigma sent in by V. P. is, THE CAUCASIAM, which I'm very fond of reading.

JERONIA S. FAIRCLOTH.

Wayne County

GOLDSBORO, N. C., April, 1893.

MR. EDITOR—Dear Sir: My father takes your valuable paper, THE CAUCASIAN, and I like it very much, especially the "Children's Corner." Am glad you have given us a column of your paper. I will ask a few questions, viz: What is the oldest town in the United States; when and by whom was it settled?

My father is a farmer and an Allianceman. We live about 8 miles from Goldsboro.

Wishing you and your paper much success, I am

YOUR LITTLE FRIEND.

Answer and Question.

MINGO, N. C., April 12, 1893.

MR. EDITOR: I read THE CAUCASIAN and like it very much, especially the "Children's Corner." I will answer William A. McAulay's question: Independence was first declar May 20th, 1775, at Charlotte. I will ask, who drafted the Declaration of Independence?

I will close with best wishes for THE CAUCASIAN.

Yours truly,
MARY E. THORNTON.

Sampson County.

FRANKLIN, N. C., April 15, '93

MR. MARION BUTLER—Dear Sir I am a girl of sixteen years of age. My father takes your paper and I think is the best one I ever did read, and also like the "Children's Corner" very much. Hurrah for THE CAUCASIAN and its editor.

Your unknown friend,
C. J. SIKES.

An Answer and a Question.

LUMBERTON, N. C., April 22, '93.

MR. MARION BUTLER—Editor of THE CAUCASIAN: I will take the pleasure of writing to THE CAUCASIAN. I have been reading the "Children's Corner" to-day; I enjoy reading it very much. Pa takes your paper and likes it splendid. I will answer Sudie Ingram's question: The Revolutionary war begun in the year of A. D. 1775, and ended the year A. D. 1783, lasting 7 years. I will ask a question: When and where did the Commissioners for Great Britain and the United States meet?

I wil close with wishes for the success of THE CAUCASIAN and its editor.

S. L. PREVATTE.

The Dakota Ruralist One Year For $1.00.

The Dakota Ruralist is one of the pioneer Alliance papers of the northwest. It is edited by H. L. Loucks, president of the National Farmers' Alliance and Industral Union, with J. R. Lowe, president of South Dakota Alliance, as associate editor, which is a sufficient guarantee that it will be a stalwart advocate of the Alliance demands.

We have made special arrangements whereby we will furnish THE CAUCASIAN and the Ruralist for $1.75 per year.

Subscribe to The Caucasian $1.00 per year.

THE DRAMA OF TODAY

FIRST IN A SERIES OF SERMONS ON MODERN CITY SHADOWS.

The Low Theater—Degradation of Our Amusements—The Gates of Hell In Modern Babylon—Prostitution of a Medium For Good.

NEW YORK, April 23.—This morning was the day fixed for the first sermon of the series of 10 sermons on the "Shadows of the Modern City" to be preached by Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., in Association hall from today to June 25. The subject of the sermon this morning was the "Low Theater; or, the Degradation of Our Amusements." The text chosen was:

And when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced she pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him, and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry, but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat, he would not reject her. And straightway the king sent forth a soldier of his guard and commanded to bring his head, and he went and beheaded him in the prison and brought his head in a charger and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother.—Mark vi, 22-28.

I desire to say in the very beginning of this series a word to my traditional enemies in New York, who for four years have been vilifying and abusing me as a seeker of notoriety. I would suggest to my friends, the little quill drivers of the blackguard press, the advisability of changing this tune at least once in four years. It is getting a little stale now, and there are very few people in New York who do not know that this hall is already crowded beyond its capacity and people turned away. There is no reason why the pastor should seek notoriety. There has been no possible reason during the past two years. No more people can get in the house, so what would be the use? I do not make the suggestion that I may escape misrepresentation and falsehood. I simply suggest that they may vary the lie by inventing a new one, as this one now is certainly old enough to be stale.

The scene described in our text gives us an account of one of the first theatrical performances of which we have record. This dance before Herod was a pioneer performance, which has reached its highest development in the nineteenth century. This performance was a model on which a thousand modern theaters are run today. The result of the performance was the surrender of Herod to uncontrollable passion, the yielding of his kingdom to the performer and the murder of an innocent man.

TWO VIEWS OF THE DRAMA.

There are two views of the modern theater that today claim the larger share of the attention of the student of sociology and religion. I do not propose to enter the field of this discussion with any purpose to settle it one way or the other or to outline the possible development of the theater of the future. My purpose is rather to report facts as they are for the present. And yet it is incumbent upon me to say in the beginning which of these two views seems to me true. The antagonistic view held by a certain school of modern evangelical Christianity and held to by the vast majority of the Protestant church in its active working force was expressed a few years ago most adequately by a distinguished Presbyterian minister in Chicago. This is his indictment and definition of the theater:

"I charge that the theater is often a murderous assault upon all that the family circle holds most holy and sacred. I charge that it strips young women of their ordinary attire and exhibits them to the public gaze so clad that to the eye of the audience they seem and are meant to seem almost naked. You need not be told why that is done. I charge that the shafts of wit flung across the stage are often feathered from every obscene fowl. I charge that the theater is the channel through which the filth and pollution of lewd and lascivious playwriters is poured into the minds of young men and young women, thus poisoning the very springs of our social life. The theater is an institution *'which has within it the seeds of corruption and which exists only under a law of degeneracy,'* that the reformation of the theater is out of the question, and the ideal stage is simply an impossibility."

That is to say, the theater is of the devil, was born in evil, is in itself a sin and has no right to exist under any conditions. And therefore no Christian can in any possible way countenance its existence or discuss it as a reasonable force in civic life.

The other view of the theatre current is admirably expressed by Henry Irving in a recent lecture before the Philosophical institute of Edinburgh. I quote his exact words:

"The drama is the heart of human nature in picturesque or characteristic action. The immortal part of the stage is its nobler part. Ignoble accidents and interludes come and go, but this lasts on forever. It lives like the human soul in the body of humanity, associated with much that is inferior and hampered by many hindrances, but it never sinks into nothingness and never fails to find new and noble work in creations of permanent and memorable excellence. The stage has no lights or shadows that are not lights of life and shadows of the heart."

After studying the worth of the theater as a stimulus to the higher faculties of the intellect, he continues, describing its influence upon the unimaginative multitudes:

"They are not inaccessible to passion and poetry and refinement, but their minds do not go forth, as it were, to seek these joys. And even if they read works of poetic and dramatic fancy, which they rarely do, they would miss them on the printed page. To them, therefore (meaning the masses), with the exception of a few startling incidents of real life, the theater is the only channel through which are ever poured the great sympathies of the world of thought beyond their immediate ken. It also follows from all this that the stage is intellectually and morally to all who have recourse to it a source of some of the finest and best influences of which they are respectively susceptible.

"To the thoughtful and reading man it brings the life, the fire, the color, which are beyond the reach of study. To the common, indifferent man, immersed as a rule in the business and socialities of daily life, it brings visions of glory and adventure, of emotion and of broad human interest. It gives glimpses of the heights and depths of character and experience, setting him thinking and wondering even in the midst of amusement. To the most torpid and unobservant it exhibits the humorous in life and the sparkle and finesse of language which in dull, ordinary existence is stupidly shut out of knowledge or omitted from particular notice. Be it observed, and I put it most uncompromisingly, I am not thinking or speaking of an unrealizable ideal, not of any lofty imagination of what might be, but of what is, wherever there are pit and gallery and footlights."

TRUTH AND ERROR IN EACH VIEW.

There is truth in both of these views, and there is error. What Irving says of the stimulating infinence of the drama is true, but when he declares that this is an actual condition wherever there are pit and gallery and footlights he has confused ideals in his own mind with the actualities of life, or else he has supposed that his theater is the standard not only of London, but of all theaters of the world, which is a manifest absurdity. I would accept Mr. Irving's view of the drama and of its function and of its possibilities as a rational statement of the case provided we understand the ideal condition of the drama. But that this is realized as yet, except in rare cases, is certainly not a fact. I have been a close student of the drama for six years.

During the last year I have made a special investigation of the subject from the moral point of view. I speak of what I know and have seen personally. There are a few good theaters in New York, but they are very few. There are a few good theaters in our other large cities, but the bad ones outnumber the good ten to one. There are good plays, and there are bad plays. There are plays that are wholesome and that are helpful, and I wish there were more of them produced today in America. I have come to the deliberate conclusion, after the study of which I speak, that it is the duty of the teacher of morals today to encourage that which is good and wholesome and to discriminate between the good and the bad in dramatic representation.

On rare occasions through these six years I have attended good theaters with helpful results to myself. But the greatest care must be exercised by any man who goes to a theater today lest he bring himself in contact with the vilest and the foulest possible action, which today dominates the theatrical world.

The men who are trying to give the public the highest class of entertainment and instruction in the theater should be sustained and encouraged, and it is time that this element united with the Christian sentiment of the community in a determined effort to crush out or at least to muzzle the evil influences of the low playhouses. The plain truth is—I say it deliberately; I say it from personal knowledge and from study, without prejudice:

Most of our theaters as at present conducted are a disgrace to the morals and an indictment of the intelligence of the American nation and are the sources of immeasurable corruption to our life.

I maintain that this is true.

OPERA BOUFFE.

First—Because the theater is one of the first powers that touches young life in our civic centers, either the life of the youth born in the city or of the new blood which pours into the city from the country. To the theater they go first to see the city. The truth is that the city has created the theater. The theater is a product of city life. It was so in ancient times. It is so today. If the theater is bad, it is because the city is bad. The theater is a growth of city life.

The barrenness of the city, its loneliness, its dull round of uninteresting toil, its gloom and despair, have created the theater as the reaction inevitable from such conditions. In the life of the city there is an awful need of cheer and relaxation, of amusements, of change from rush and din and roar and grind and burden and toil. The city is the loneliest spot on God's earth—that is, for the average man or woman. The theater is created by this morbidly developed need in the human soul. The theater first touches character in the city in this hour of crisis, in the reaction and recoil from these dull elements of life, and it sweeps with resistless power the half formed character.

In that condition of crisis in the development of life, in the awful craving of the soul for the beautiful and the joyous, moral distinctions even are lost sight of. I once knew a spinster of some 40 years of age who had never seen a theatrical production. She decided on one occasion that she would see what the theater was like. As the theaters were crowded during some great festive week, she asked a young gentleman friend to direct her where to go. He decided to play a prank on her, knowing her training and feeling sure it would be a great joke to shock her moral sensibilities by sending her to the worst playhouse in the city. So he purchased the tickets and took her to the performance of a widely known opera bouffe company.

Her friends waited for her return that they might enjoy her indignation and joke her about the evening's entertainment. But to their amazement when she returned she was as enthusiastic as a child. She had never heard such music. She declared she had never seen anything so beautiful in all her life. She had never seen such an array of beautiful color, in such harmony, such gorgeous profusion of all the elements that charm and delight the soul. She was literally carried out of herself over this production, which was a moral abomination. So hungry was the poor soul for music, so barren had been her life of all that makes for beauty and joy, that it had been impossible for her to think of moral distinctions.

So in this awful need of human nature in the city the theater enters, and while the soul is intoxicated with the sense of beauty begins to instill even unconsciously the seeds of moral death. There are elements in the life of the country districts which answer to this need not found in the city. Those who live in the country have the beauties and glories of nature. They can live in her, move in her and have their being in the beauty of landscape and mountain, in field and meadow. Besides, in our country towns today in America there have been established a system of lyceum entertainments and lectures of the very highest order. These things occupy the life of the town through the long winter months. The city fails to provide as yet such centers of intellectual relaxation and social improvement. It is to the theater that young manhood and womanhood immediately go in the city for amusement. If the sum total of the influences of the theater be overwhelmingly evil, how terrible must be the results!

Out of all the theaters in the city of New York you can count on the fingers of one hand those that are conducted upon strictly decent principles. And even these are now and then disgraced by performances which for the time put them on the level of the lower centers of evil. Some years ago, when a distinguished minister undertook an investigation of the underworld of New York city, he started out one evening at 10 o'clock. The detective officer who accompanied him said to him: "It is only 10 o'clock, and it is too early to see the places that we wish to see, for the theaters have not yet let out. The preacher said, "What do you mean by that?" "Well," he said, "the places of iniquity are not in full blast until after the people have time to arrive from the theaters." In that single reply of this police officer we are brought face to face with the terrible fact that the sum total of the influences of our theaters today is overwhelmingly evil and evil in its immediate results as well as its ultimate tendencies.

Second—I say it from the character of the plays that, as a rule, are produced today. Instead of the intellectual work of a Shakespeare or one who modestly aspires to be his disciple, we are now passing through the era of the stage carpenter—the mechanic. It is the hour of the great tank act, of live horses on the stage and of real fire engines that are drawn across in the midst of tremendous applause. It is the hour of mechanics and cheap claptrap. As the fire engine dashed across the stage in one of our theaters the other night a poor woman leaped from her seat a raving maniac and was carried to the lunatic asylum. We do not wonder at this. The character of the plays produced now in a number of our theaters is enough to unhinge the mind of the average man and woman if taken seriously.

JUGGLERS AND ACROBATS.

Besides, there have been introduced elements of daring and danger in our theatrical amusements of late that indicate a downward tendency. In houses once used as decent places of amusement we have jugglers and acrobats, whose feats pander to the basest elements of human nature and are on par with the fight of the gladiator, with the wild beast of the Roman arena, and results are frequently as fatal. Recently at a theater an acrobat 24 years old was engaged in making turns over a pole near the ceiling. He had made several turns about the pole, to the admiration of the gaping audience, when his perch suddenly gave way, and he fell downward. He struck between the orchestra chairs and the musicians and was instantly killed.

The amount of unmitigated rubbish that is dished up in our theaters today is absolutely appalling. Ten years ago a New York daily, in reviewing the condition of the drama, said: "There has been a greater mass of meretricious rubbish put on the New York stage during the last 10 years than during the whole of its existence. We do not of course refer solely to pieces that appeal to the baser instincts, but to the whole body of sensational or emotional products, the feverish slop of a French melodrama." A distinguished dramatic critic told me a few days ago that in his opinion the average production of the last 10 years has been baser than in any 10 previous years in the history of the American stage.

An American writer in The Contemporary Review, speaking of the New York theaters, says: "A friend of mine who made a tour of them all was inclined to think that those patronized by the roughs in the Bowery were less immoral than those patronized by the residents of Fifth avenue. It is a matter of dispute whether they honestly enjoy good music as much as they enjoy immoral plays." The hopelessness of the situation is further accented by the fact that our great newspapers do not seriously pretend to do the work of honest criticism for the public. Either one of two things is sure. They do not publish the criticisms of men of brains, who are able to do the work, who are nominally in charge of the department of dramatic criticism, or else they purposely put this work in the hands of those who write only to praise in the interest of the advertising department.

AN INTELLECTUAL ABOMINATION.

For instance, there is a play now running in the city of New York, and at one of our theaters of high reputation, which has for its end the glorification of a lie, the dialogue of which is full of the most vicious sentiment, the moral teaching of which, as a whole, has little to redeem it from any possible point of view. And yet I have not seen a single word in criticism of this play which even takes note of the fact that it is built on the idea that happiness can be attained by deception and lying in the home.

Upon the other hand, a conscientious actor recently put on the stage of New York a play with high moral purpose and high literary merit. It was prepared with the greatest care of detail, conscientiously performed. The motive of the play was to show the iniquity of a lie. Imagine the answer of the critics. They said he was a fool. Why did he ever confess the lie? Why did not he live it out? They denounced the play as an utter failure because of its moral motive. That is to say, the men who are doing the dramatic writing for our great papers are incapable of conceiving a moral idea.

The consequence is that there is little influence being brought from the realm of public opinion to bear upon dramatic representations in America today. I am told by those who know that there are men of brains and capacity in most of our newspaper offices in charge of the dramatic departments, but that their criticism and opinions are thrown into the wastebasket again and again if they do not tally with the interests of the advertising department.

There are some exceptions to the character of the plays that are produced today that are noteworthy. There are some which teach the sanctity and purity of home. There are those who are giving us sketches of real life in the south and in the west that are in every way worthy of encouragement and support. But taking the theater as a whole, and taking nine theaters out of ten and nine performances out of ten, the character of the plays is simply a moral and intellectual abomination.

Third—The reflex of character from the stage is most damaging upon the character and ideals of the audience. Say what we please about the impersonal character of those who act, the power behind words is character, the power behind an action is character. It is efficient for good or evil as that character is good or evil. The character of the people who today are admitted to the stage as actors and actresses calls for the righteous indignation of all who have the interest of society at heart or who have any pride or interest in the stage itself. Let a man or a woman become notoriously infamous, and the doors of a certain class of theaters today immediately spring wide open with offers of enormous salary.

Let there be a scandal in society with an exposure and divorce, and if the woman in the case is proved guilty and the scandal is of enough dimensions her fortune is made on the stage. The disreputable woman connected with the tragic life and death of Robert Ray Hamilton was invited to enter the dramatic profession by those who are called managers, and the attempt was actually made to expose this personage for a consideration to the American people. She was hounded off the stage by the determined effort of two or three reputable newspapers. When John L. Sullivan or his triumphant rival finishes his brutal prize fight, he goes upon the stage. The success of these people has its influence not simply in inducing other disreputable characters to crowd the stage, but it is a moral object lesson whose influence is utterly damning upon the minds of the young who witness the performance.

THE LIFE OF A DOG.

The stage as conducted today, broadly speaking, is the easiest road to great power and success open to a woman of evil disposition. It is the best possible market for exhibition. It is the best possible pedestal for the exploiting of person, for the formation of criminal intimacies, for dissipation, and it is this fact which attracts an army of disreputable characters to the stage. The stage of today as it is conducted is the hardest and saddest of all fields for honesty to enter and succeed, especially if the aspirant be a woman. It is the life of a dog. The hours kept are irregular, the work feverish, fitful. The normal conditions of a sane life are violated and the results and the work done practically nothing. Only a few succeed in earning a competence. The majority of the women on the stage today get nothing.

A woman of character and force, who is now playing [illegible] the leading parts in one of the best theaters in N[illegible] said recently to a friend that she [illegible]eled a whole season with this c[illegible]pany, played the leading [illegible] ceived a salary of $[illegible] a week. [illegible] that on her return to the city she [illegible] debt $400. She had paid out $[illegible] starting for dresses alone. She [illegible] that if she was not willing to [illegible] part there were others who would [illegible] salaries paid on the stage today are [illegible]terly inadequate to [illegible] who play the parts. Those who [illegible] a salary large enough to do this [illegible] are exceedingly rare.

A distinguished dramatic critic [illegible] has had an experience of a quarter [illegible] century with the stage in America [illegible]cently said: "I have taken special [illegible] to talk with eminent actors like [illegible] Forrest, Fanny Kemble, Charlotte [illegible] Janauschek, John Gilbert and [illegible] Ponisi, and while most of them [illegible] acknowledged that an profession [illegible]est life of work as it offers left us [illegible]void all of them betrayed in their [illegible]tions upon the subject their [illegible]ness of having produced little or [illegible] that remained in evidence [illegible] veteran said to me that it was [illegible] raise onions than to be an actor."

The same critic, in the same article says: "It is the product of this [illegible]ality that forces the actor to resort [illegible] stimulants. I know many actors [illegible] wide repute who have regularly [illegible] before the public in the last [illegible] a state of anæsthesia from [illegible] The condition is so intimately associated with professional success that [illegible] them on leaving the stage and [illegible] married gave up the hard [illegible] struggle."

A DISGRACEFUL PLACE.

These are some of the facts which [illegible] set the honest endeavor upon [illegible] of today. I do not stop to discuss [illegible] question of theaters which are [illegible] lives. There are places of amusement so called, in New York that are [illegible] more than disreputable hotels. There is a place on Twenty-third street [illegible] is a dive of the most disgraceful character, and yet every newspaper in New York admits this infamous advertisement to its columns, announcing [illegible] theatrical performances in the [illegible] There are other places advertised [illegible]ly villainous.

Fourth—I maintain my assertion [illegible] cause the dominant power in the [illegible] or today is found in the reign of [illegible]lis. The introduction of women [illegible] stage in large numbers and for the purpose of disgraceful exhibition of [illegible] bodies has been carried to a point [illegible] must soon demand the active [illegible]ence of the moral forces of our [illegible]tion. The dances made popular in [illegible] recent years are disgraceful beyond [illegible] power of description. They are [illegible] masterpieces of sensuality set to [illegible] and action. The dance today [illegible] field in the theater. It is in [illegible] in season and out of season. [illegible] of dances, in every position in which [illegible] human body can be placed, every [illegible] tortion of limb, every attitude [illegible] movement that can by any possible [illegible] means suggest the sensual, is [illegible] without hesitation.

The serpentine dance, invented [illegible] woman who has become famous [illegible] liaison with the disgusting libertine [illegible] is now in Sing Sing serving a sentence [illegible] has set the fashion of the dance [illegible] She is even giving lessons to the [illegible] Paris in this art. The popular songs [illegible] of today pander to the lowest in [illegible] nature. Three-quarters of the [illegible] in our great city of New York [illegible] time depend almost entirely for their [illegible]cess upon the exhibition of [illegible] women.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.

Nor is this evil absent from the [illegible]est class of our entertainments. The Metropolitan Opera House last year [illegible] the scene of a magnificent production [illegible] grand opera. The singing was [illegible] It was worth any price a man was [illegible] to pay for a seat. But every man [illegible] performance must be marred by the introduction of the chorus, in which [illegible] ancient ballet choir, exhibiting women [illegible] of all sorts, of all sizes, of all ages, [illegible] grandmothers down to maidens of [illegible] 16, in a condition of indecent nudity [illegible] invariably introduced. A writer in [illegible] York evening paper a few days [illegible] said at a low estimate there were [illegible] nearly 2,000 women in tights at the [illegible]ous Chicago theaters this summer. [illegible] E. Abbey's spectac