

GRAND OPERA HOUSE AT SPOKANE FALLS.

IN the rebuilding of the burned city of Spokane Falls, much attention is being paid to beauty of architecture, and the progress already made shows what a beautiful city, architecturally, the metropolis of the Inland Empire will soon become. One of the greatest needs of western cities has been good theatres, but this is now being supplied everywhere. Portland, Tacoma, Seattle and Spokane are all building splendid opera houses, such as any city could well take pride in. The finest of these is the magnificent temple of Thespis now nearly completed in Spokane Falls. This handsome structure will cost \$300,000, and is being erected by J. J. Browne and A. M. Cannon, two of Spokane's oldest and most enterprising citizens.

The building has a frontage of 150 feet on Post street and 100 on Main street. From it a most beautiful landscape may be seen, including the city, the gorge through which rush the foaming waters of Spokane river and the great plain in which the city lies. The opera house is patterned after Broadway theater in New York, and none in the United States is more complete in its appointments or elegant in its furnishings. The hall, eighty feet long and twenty wide, is entered through a high stone archway. The corridors are provided with niches in which handsome statues are placed. The walls are hung with beautiful paintings, and the ceilings frescoed in the highest style of art. This passage leads to the foyer. On the opposite side of the entrance, and a little to the right, is the ticket office. It has a circular front, and a brass railing is placed at a convenient distance therefrom, inside of which all must pass to reach the ticket window. On the left of the foyer is the manager's room, and on the right the ladies' and gentlemen's toilets, while opposite the ticket office a stairway ten feet wide leads up to the balcony floor and on up to the gallery. On the balcony floor, or properly the second story, there is another office, where tickets for the balcony and gallery are purchased, those sold in the foyer office being only for the parquet and dress circle in the auditorium. On each side of the main ticket office there is a wide entrance to the auditorium, hung with rich tapestry curtains. The auditorium is 70x90 feet, containing 800 plush upholstered opera chairs of the latest design. These chairs are provided with coat and hat racks. Four handsome proscenium boxes occupy their proper place. The orchestra is lowered so as not to interfere with the view from any part of the parquet or dress circle. The stage is 40x70 feet in size, with proscenium openings thirty-six feet wide and forty-five feet high; there are four exits off the stage. The stage has all the latest im-

provements, such as traps and every mechanical contrivance necessary for mounting any play, spectacular or otherwise, that can be rendered. The scenery is what is known as vertical flats, made to disappear above when not needed. The drop curtain is of asbestos, which is absolutely fireproof. Electricity and gas are used for lighting the building, and it is heated with steam. Sixteen dressing rooms are provided; real water effects can be produced. The entrance to the stage is of sufficient size to admit fire engines, wagons and horses, which can be driven on or off the stage if necessary. From floor to ceiling of the theater proper is sixty feet, with a cupola of stained glass and sun burner on top. This is also arranged to act as a ventilator. The main auditorium has ten exits to be used in case of fire, while outside iron stairways are provided for fire escapes from the balcony and gallery. By these means the building can be emptied in two minutes. All around the exterior of the opera house proper is an alley or court twenty-five feet wide, except at the point where the corridor crosses it.

This elegant place of amusement will be thrown open to the public about the first of March next, and will be under the management of Harry Hayward, a gentleman of much successful experience in managing first-class theatres. When this house is opened, Spokane will soon become known to managers of star attractions as one of the best "show towns" in the United States, and will be visited by the best combinations on the road.

OREGON FORESTS AND FOLIAGE.

NEW ENGLAND forests, for variety of foliage beauty—especially during the autumn months—have generally been conceded to be without a rival. While this, perhaps, is true, in the main, yet other sections of the Union present claims that cannot be ignored, or even overlooked. For diversity, beauty and brilliancy the forests of the New England states are undoubtedly unsurpassed. Sharp, nipping frosts, the chilly night, and the clear, transparent atmosphere of that famous, historical region of the American continent, have much to do in imparting so many glowing tints to the foliage, and in investing it with so much of dreamy and romantic charms. In the southern states an almost entirely different type of forest beauty is met. Spring, summer, autumn and even winter cast each its peculiar influence over, and impart masterly touches of beauty to woods and shrubs. Brilliant hues of nearly every conceivable shade and tint are painted by "nature's brush," while the glowing heavens and soft semi-tropical air lend a delicious sense of languor to the sylvan scenes.

No less does one find the peculiar characteristics of