Gems In Verse

A Commonplace Life.

"A commonplace life," we say, and we sigh,
But why should we sigh as we say?
The commonplace sun in the commonplace sky
Makes up the commonplace day.
The moon and the stars are commonplace things,
The flower that blooms and the bird that sings.
But sad were the world and dark our lot
If the flowers failed and the sun shone not.
And God, who sees each separate soul,
Out of commonplace lives makes his beautiful whole.

—Susan Coolidge.

Tell 'Em No!

When they ask you if you're wearied out with living,
Tell 'em "No."
When they ask you if there's folly in forgiving,
Tell 'em "No."
Tell 'em "No" with all your might.
Optimism's never trite.
Put the pessimists to flight—
Tell 'em "No."

When they ask you if the world is bound for ruin,
Tell 'em "No."
When they ask you if there's always trouble brewin',
Tell 'em "No."
Tell 'em "No" and say it loud;
Say it open-like and proud;
Howl it out before the crowd—
Tell 'em "No."

When they hint the world's a hotbed of injustice,
Tell 'em "No."
When they hold that folks are foolish when they trust us,
Tell 'em "No."
Say it so they all can hear;
Yelp it out without a fear;
Spread your gospel far and near—
Tell 'em "No."

When they claim the world's unselfishness has perished,
Tell 'em "No."
When they say the things are dead our fathers cherished,
Tell 'em "No."
Laugh whene'er you hear 'em croak;
Give their sore old ribs a poke;
Treat their growling as a joke—
Tell 'em "No."

—Baltimore American.

BLESSING THE WATERS.

Unique and Solemn Annual Ceremony on the River Neva.

Midwinter in St. Petersburg each year sees a unique and solemn ceremony called "the blessing of the waters." A chapel of ice, richly decorated with ornaments from the palaces and churches and dedicated to St. John the Baptist, is erected on the frozen surface of the river Neva. The river is then called the Jordan, and religious services are conducted in the temple by the metropolitan or high priest of the national church, attended by the emperor and all his court. The ceremony is in memory of the baptism of Christ and is supposed to be a safeguard against dangers from floods as well as to benefit those who make their living on the sea.

A hole is cut in the ice in the center of the floor of the chapel. From this the people are baptized by sprinkling by the priests, and the faithful members of the Greek church go in vast crowds to get their share, while religious devotees often plunge into the ice cold flood through the hole. If they catch cold and die, as they often do, heaven is secured for them. On the evening before the ceremony devout churchmen make crosses on their thresholds to prevent the evil spirits that are driven from the water from taking refuge in their houses.—Chicago News.

STORY OF "LAS MENINAS."

How One of Velasquez's Notable Pictures Came to Be Painted.

The story of "La Meninas" is that Velasquez was painting a portrait of the Spanish king and queen (who sat where the spectator is when he looks at the picture). Their little daughter, the Infanta Margarita, came in with her maids of honor, her dog and her dwarfs and accompanied by her duenna and a courtier. The little princess asks for a drink of water; a maid of honor hands it to her with the elaborate etiquette prescribed by the formalities of the most rigidly ceremonious court in Europe. The scene presented so charming a picture that the king desired Velasquez to paint it. The artist has included himself in the group at work upon a large canvas on which it is supposed he was painting a portrait of the king and queen when the interruption occurred. The reflection of the king and queen appears in the mirror at the end of the room, and the chamberlain, Don Jose Nieto, stands outside the door drawing the curtain. The scene is, indeed, represented with such wonderful realism that a famous French critic said of it, "So complete is the illusion that, standing in front of 'Las Meninas,' one is tempted to ask, 'Where is the picture?'"—St. Nicholas.

FIGHTING OXEN.

The Hottentots Trained Cattle to Charge Riderless Into Battle.

When the Dutch first settled at the Cape they found that the original Hottentots owned large herds of cattle, which they regularly rode and trained to act as guardians of their other cattle and their camps. So admirably were these animals trained that they used to charge before the tribesmen in battle, apparently without riders, though there may have been mounted leaders.

An old writer named Kolben says: "Every Hottentot army is provided with a large troop of these war oxen, which permit themselves to be governed without trouble and which their leaders let loose at the appointed moment. The instant they are set free they throw themselves with impetuosity upon the opposite army. They strike with their horns, they kick, they rip up and trample beneath their feet all that opposes them. They plunge with fury into the midst of the ranks and thus prepare an easy victory. The manner in which these oxen are trained and disciplined certainly does great honor to the talent of this people."

Posterity.

"What do you think posterity will say about you?"

"Well," answered Senator Sorghum, "I am not afraid of what posterity will say. People who are mean enough to talk about a man behind his back never wield much influence."—Washington Star.

The Ex-Transgressor

By GEORGE THELBERT WALSH

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KID DILWORTH was an unusual man. Without attempting to analyze him I should say that he was unusual because of certain mixed qualities that might have made him famous outside of Rountree. It is true he was conspicuous in Rountree, but not of the kind that spells fame. One thing, his ambition didn't turn in the right direction, and he was too much obscured by certain inherited traits that you couldn't hold him responsible for. He was unassuming, too, and you couldn't help liking him for that.

Budd Brainard said that Dilworth was a lazy, good for nothing horse thief before he was reformed. But Budd had a grudge against him which didn't have a chance to cool in that Arizona temperature.

Dilworth reformed when he struck the trail of a miserable little preacher sent down there to save himself from an early consumptive's grave. The Kid took a fancy to him and helped him to keep order when he tried to preach, and when he died he made all Rountree turn out to his funeral. It was the greatest funeral you ever saw in that region. It just made one think that we were all in love with the dead chap. But we weren't. We were sort of hypnotized by Dilworth. Somehow the mantle of Elijah had fallen on the Kid's shoulders.

Leastwise he assumed that it had, and he made us believe it. We couldn't deny it, and we couldn't affirm it, and what you can't affirm or deny you'd better leave alone. So we accepted it while under the spell of the moment. Budd Brainard said "Amen!" and the Kid took it right and pretended not to see the mockery in Budd's tone and added:

"Amen and amen!"

Budd looked kind of confused and asked:

"Does the Kid take it earnest? Ain't he got brains enough to see the p'int of the joke?"

Dilworth overheard, but he chose to assume not, and he dispersed the funeral procession with a wave of his hand and a highfaluting sort of announcement that he'd hold meeting next Sabbath morning at 11 in the back part of the Yellow Coyote saloon.

Coyote Mike gave the Kid the use of his back room for service, knowing that he would profit by the crowd that would assemble in the front room. All Rountree was there, every one burning with thirst and curiosity. Dilworth held the service alone; we didn't interrupt him. It was none of our business if he wanted to play preacher.

Now, an ordinary man would have been scared to death by the popping of guns and corks in the Yellow Coyote saloon that morning, but the Kid only prayed and sang the louder behind his closed doors. When the meeting was over he came out looking sorrowful and downcast.

"Why didn't some of you boys come in?" he asked, pleading-like. "I know you would have enjoyed it. Next Sabbath morning we'll have a large audience."

Some of us tried to snicker, but somehow we couldn't. We just felt that hypnotizing spell come over us again. Budd Brainard started the procession from the saloon. Dilworth stood and eyed us sadly. He didn't seize upon any one until it came Buck

BUDD BRAINARD SAID "AMEN!"

Grey's turn to scoot out of the door. Then he just stretched forth a hand and said:

"Buck, the Lord wants you."

Ordinarily Buck could handle a six shooter quick enough and could laugh at death in almost any form, but he just trembled all over now and wilted. We saw him draw back into the shadow of the saloon with the Kid and listen.

Coyote Mike's back room had an audience of two the following Sabbath, and the popping of corks and guns in front was not so frisky as usual. There was an atmosphere of quietness about the place which oppressed us. Budd Brainard finally said:

"I'm going to leave this place before that horse thief provokes me into shooting him. I'll do it if he"—

Budd couldn't finish, for the Kid was in our midst and at the door ahead of any one. He just looked over Budd's shoulder and said:

"We've decided to raise funds to build a meeting house in Rountree. We need it bad, boys, for the back room of the Yellow Coyote is small, and it won't hold our audience much longer."

This naturally provoked Coyote Mike to anger, for he would lose trade. But before he could speak up his opinion the Kid had him by the hand.

"You'll help, for you have profited more than anybody in Rountree over the sinfulness of man. We'll let you off with $500 now, but we'll come back for more later. Next!"

Coyote Mike never protested, for the Kid had him down for the full amount, with his signature at the foot, before he could recover from his astonishment. Budd Brainard once more started for the door, saying under his breath: "Hang him! He'll befuddle me next with his tomfoolery!"

The Kid replied sorrowfully enough, holding open the door for Budd: "We'll take your subscription for the new meeting house another time. The Lord can bide his time."

"So can I!" snapped Budd. "And when my time comes we'll settle all past scores. Understand?"

After that the Kid had opposition in building his new meeting house. Rountree didn't need such an institution, for it hadn't thrown off its swaddling clothes, and it was in need of more saloons than churches. But the Kid showed his peculiar inherited traits by not being downhearted over the failure of his scheme to save the souls of the Rountree citizens in a real, genuine church. There were, of course, some who followed him and believed in him, but not many.

When things didn't come fast enough his way Dilworth said something about "buckling on the armor of the Lord and fighting for the right." We took this sort of talking figuratively until one day he waylaid Mexican Pete and toted him off to his house to convert him. Pete was a sinner if there ever was one—horse thief, drunkard and gambler. If the Kid could convert him, along with Buck Grey, he would prove a better man than any of his predecessors in the ministry.

Pete didn't show up again for a week. Some said he was dead drunk, and others hinted that the Kid had made way with him. But he was all right, except that he looked scared and pale when he appeared at the Yellow Coyote bar again.

"Have one, Pete?" said Budd. "Make it anything."

Mexican Pete shook his head and whispered, "I—do you mind if we call it sarsaparilla?"

I thought Budd would fall to the floor, but he just gasped and turned to Coyote Mike. "You hear?"

Then when Coyote Mike gurgled out an inarticulate reply Budd added wrathfully: "This is going too far! What's the matter with us, anyway, to let that little reformed horse thief come here and henpeck us? Why don't you close up his mouth, Mike? If you don't he'll close up your saloon. Well, you're the finest lot of blasted, idiotic dummies that I ever see! I'll be hanged if I don't shake off the dust of Rountree for good! It's too preachy here for me. I'm stifling, asphyxiating. Sarsaparilla for Mexican Pete! Huh! Take him home and give him the nursing bottle! I'll go camping on the trail of that Kid. He's a horse thief, a self confessed one, and ought to die."

Usually Budd lived up to his word, and we expected developments. But in Rountree you can never tell where lightning will strike. It was an even gamble on Budd and the Kid.

Considering everything, I was a little confused when both turned up as serenely unconcerned as ever. Budd said nothing about the Kid, and the Kid always purposely avoided speaking of his old side partner of the days before the measly little preacher chap brought trouble to Rountree.

Then the best citizens began to lose horses, stolen from right under their noses. A horse thief hadn't been hung in Rountree for six months. Every one felt himself a self constituted committee to run the thief to ground, but somehow he was too wary for us, and we just bucked our heads against a stone wall in vain.

Budd Brainard swore over the bar of the Yellow Coyote that if the thief touched his horse he'd run him to ground within forty-eight hours. Then, just to show how little he cared for Budd's threat, the thief trailed behind him that night and led his horse off to parts unknown.

"We'll have the noose around him this time," some one says, knowing Budd for a bad man when outraged.

But the excitement didn't come off. About half the horses of Rountree were stolen before the citizens organized. Then they held a meeting to consider things. It was the Kid who first let light in on the subject. After all the others had had their say he put up a clincher in this wise:

"Seems to me we need to stimulate our civic pride a little by offering a money reward for the horse thief, dead or alive, but mostly alive. A little reward will do wonders sometimes. Remember once when I was nearly corralled by— But that was in the days before I was converted, and it makes me sad to think of it. I won't recall it."

The Kid had a sorrowful way of looking out of his mournful eyes which affected us so that we all hastened to agree with him.

"I'll put up a hundred on that reward," said Budd Brainard.

"And I'll cover it with the same,' added Coyote Mike.

"Just double the amounts, gentlemen, and I'll cover them both," the Kid said, being game to the core.

In half an hour a purse of $2,000 was handed over to Coyote Mike to hold for the successful man. The Kid eyed the money with wistful eyes.

"Seeing that I started the fund growing," he said slowly, "I might have the privilege of modifying the terms of the reward."

There were some grunts of disapproval, but the Kid continued:

"I don't think you'll object to giving the captor of the horse thief a chance to say what shall be done with him or the opportunity to pull the rope first if he's hung."

"No objection," said Budd, with an oath. "A good idea! I want that reward and the first pull on the rope."

"Or the first shot if you decide to shoot him?" added the Kid.

"Yes, the first shot or the first pull. But it will be a pull."

"But if you decide to let him go scot free we can't interfere; that's a part of the bargain."

"Yes, a part of the bargain!" roared Budd at the joke. "I'll let him go scot free, but he won't go far."

"Well, gentlemen, we understand each other," the Kid announced. "The one who claims the reward has all to say about what shall be done with the thief. Then I'll have him here tomorrow noon."

A sudden suspicion of the truth dawned on us. The Kid was going to save the thief's life. It was another one of his freaks. After exacting a promise from us to let the captor decide the man's fate he was ready to expose the thief.

"No, you don't!" shouted Budd Brainard. "I'll camp on your trail every minute of the day and night, and I'll be in at the end. I'll have half the reward and half the say."

True to his word, Budd followed the Kid around like a shadow. They ate and slept together. The Kid didn't resent Budd's presence, but sought mightily to work upon his spiritual nature. I think if the watch had been extended to a fortnight Budd would either have been converted or stampeded for new grounds without half the reward.

The Kid appeared to make no unusual efforts to hunt down the thief. He talked religion to Budd most of the time and prayed for him the rest. Budd looked pretty pale and haggard the next morning; he was wild eyed and desperate. But when it came time for the Kid to redeem his promise a look of hope entered Budd's eyes. His vigil would soon end.

The Kid was the only collected one of the crowd assembled at Coyote Mike's saloon at five minutes past noon. Budd was fierce and anxious, showing the strain in his husky voice.

"Where is he?" he demanded hoarsely. "Where's your horse thief?"

"Don't hurry matters, Budd. I'm coming to that part of it. Does anybody here know who the thief is?"

There was a negative growl, even from Budd.

"Then I stand alone to claim the reward," the Kid added. "Coyote Mike will hold it in trust for the new meeting house. It will be enough to build it right away, and more."

There was no comment. Nobody cared what the Kid did with the money if he could produce the horse thief.

"Understand, I'm to have the only say what shall be done with the man. You can trust me to deal rightly with him. Is there any objection?"

There was none audible, but plenty under the breath. Then the Kid did something to take their breath away. He stood up on a barrel and said:

"I'm him—the horse thief and the claimant of the reward. We needed the meeting house so badly that I had to do something." He paused. "And now we have the money."

There were several menacing movements in the direction of the belt, but the Kid forestalled the action by adding:

"The horses stolen are all in good condition down on Mexican Pete's ranch. He let me keep them there until you wanted them. Now we'll adjourn the meeting until I decide whether to hang or shoot the thief. If it's either one, Budd, I'll surrender my right and give you the first pull or shot."

But Budd had made a break for the door. He was still unconverted, and the Kid looked sorrowful. "But if the Lord can abide his time so can I," he murmured.

CHINESE TRADE GUILDS.

They Pass on All Disputed Questions of Labor and Food.

The laborers in China work long hours, and their meals are supplied by the employer. Their food consists of rice, partaken of twice a day, with now and then a few vegetables or pieces of salt fish or pork as a relish. Tea is also furnished to them in unlimited quantities. They begin work as soon as daylight appears and continue until between 8 and 9 o'clock at night, the recent introduction of kerosene oil lengthening their hours of labor. The workman eats and sleeps in the shop where he is employed.

Not only do the male workers have a trades union or guild of their own, but so also have the employers. To these guilds are referred all disputed questions of labor and food, which, as a rule, are amicably settled. The operatives seem to take it for granted that their employers can properly claim every moment of their time from early morning until night unless about thirty minutes set apart for each meal of rice and vegetables be excepted. When the two guilds fail to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of a dispute the employers simply close up the shops.

Canton boasts of over seventy trades guilds. These guilds have fine halls and spacious courtyards, where their members meet daily and discuss the affairs of their respective trades and other matters.

He Heard the Voice.

This story is told of a well known London surgeon whose heart is said to be as gentle as his manner is rough: He went from his warm bed at 4 o'clock one bitter morning to attend a tiny boy who was in a perilous plight from diphtheria. He hastily performed the operation of tracheotomy and, to his joy, saw the child revive. During the next few days everything passed off beautifully, but the doctor wanted to hear his small friend speak. This so far the patient had not done. "I am sorry he can't speak to me, nurse, because I'm going up to London today and shan't know whether to bring him a horse or a gun." It was the doctor speaking at the little one. A tiny finger stole up to the wounded throat, and the ghost of a baby's voice whispered, "Please, doctor, bwing me a lickle gun." He got the "lickle gun," and the doctor knew that the child's voice was safe.

Keeps Them Aired.

"Mrs. Chatterbox is an incessant talker, isn't she?"

"Yes; she says that a person's opinions get musty if they aren't aired often."—Detroit Free Press.

It Sometimes Fails.

"There's nothing like perseverance. It wins out in the long run."

"Not always. Did you ever see a hen on a porcelain egg?"—Brooklyn Life.

A Bit of Good Advice.

One of the best things to do before we criticise others much is to begin an intelligent study of ourselves.—Chicago Journal.

Gossip Heard In the Greenroom

MAY ROBSON, who is now playing the role of Princess Aline in "It Happened In Nordland," has a pretty level head, and the fact served her in good stead when she made her first stage appearance. She was a young widow in New York, trying to make a living painting menu cards. The fad went out, and, at a loss what to do, she entered a theatrical agency one day. She secured an engagement, but was immediately released when the manager discovered she possessed no experience. Going back to the agency, she was told not to let it be known next time that she was inexperienced.

"But what am I to do when they ask me?" she demanded. "I am not very skilled in telling lies."

"Evade it," was the bland response. "You can manage it somehow."

So it came about that an opportunity arose for an ingenue for a new piece, "The Hoop of Gold," which was to be produced at the Grand Opera House in Brooklyn. Nothing was said about previous experience. When Leon Vincent, the stage manager, said to the amateur, "Take the stage," she looked at him helplessly. If he had told her to reach down the moon she would have had about as much of an idea how to go about the process. She did not move, whereupon the old gentleman walked up to her and said:

MAY ROBSON.

"How long have you been on the stage?"

The crucial moment had come. She twisted her fingers in and out and finally began, "About—about"—

"About twenty minutes," Mr. Vincent answered.

"Well, I was going to say fifteen," she admitted, already seeing herself out on the sidewalk again; but, to her surprise, the good old gentleman simply told her to remain after the rest had gone and then gave her a little private coaching in theatrical parlance. At the next rehearsal she made a respectable showing as an ingenue.

Robert B. Mantell, who is touring in a repertoire of Shakespearean plays this season and winning much praise for his work in this class of drama, won familiarity with a large number of Shakespearean parts during his first years on the stage. He was telling one day of the hard school in which an aspirant for histrionic honors has to learn his task in England. "In the first eight years of my professional career I played not less than 750 parts, in the last six only seven or eight," said Mantell. "When I was knocking about through Great Britain with a little company, playing the legitimate and standard drama, I played as high as a dozen parts in one evening."

ROBERT B. MANTELL.

"Oh-h-h-h-h, Bob, come off four or five at least," pleaded one of his auditors.

"Not even one, my boy; not a single chappie of the dozen will I cut off," replied Mantell, "and if you'll jot 'em down I'll reel 'em off to you. The night I did this sextuple doubling act was somewhere in the south of England, and the bill for the night was 'Richard III.' and 'Robert Macaire.' In the first piece I played Richard, Radcliffe, the jailer, Tessle, Catesby and an officer, and in the last I thrilled 'em with my Cartouch, Caradox, Morrens, and, and, and"—

"That's only nine, quite enough, heaven knows," interrupted he with the pencil and paper, "quite enough, Bob, but we must have the other three, nevertheless, so trot 'em out."

"Well," said Mantell, "just who the other three were I cannot for the moment say, as I haven't the cast handy, but if you put it down as three officers it will fill out the dozen."

George Arliss, the English author and actor who made a hit as Zokkuri in "The Darling of the Gods," had rather an unusual experience one morning a year or two ago, when he picked up a Sunday paper and found in it a criticism by his own wife of his new play. The play was "There and Back," and his wife, known to theater goers as Florence Montgomery, played the leading part in it. In criticising the play she wrote:

"The piece is by George Arliss, whom I am privileged to call husband. This, however, does not deter me from my purpose. Who has a better right to be severe with Mr. Arliss than myself?

GEORGE ARLISS.

"As a husband he is everything he should be.

"As an author—but I will break it gently.

"I know it was just like a man to write 'There and Back' as it is and then call it by that absurd title. No woman would be satisfied with such an indefinite sort of name any more than she would have any patience with such a husband as the two spouses in the play. It mustn't be thought that I wish Mr. A. had let me write his piece. I don't believe I could do it at all. As his critic or collaborator I might be a success. But an author—that is another thing."

In his reply Mr. Arliss re-echoed the last sentiment, intimating it was best there should be but one author in the Arliss family.

Senator Joe Blackburn of Kentucky, who has been indulging in a word fight with Governor Beckham of the same state, is noted for his volubility. At a dinner at which he was to respond to a toast a senatorial colleague told the following story in illustration of his ready flow of language.

"In his younger days," said the speaker, "Mr. Blackburn was very chivalrous. Asked by a friend to second a duel, he readily consented. At sunrise the parties met at the appointed place. It was Mr. Blackburn's duty to say the last words about the terms of the duel. And, gentlemen," continued the speaker, "do you know that duel never took place?"

SENATOR BLACKBURN.

A murmur of "Why not?" went around the table.

"For a very simple reason," said the colleague. "When Joe finished speaking it was too dark for a duel."

It is related that Mr. Blackburn once ordered his tailor to make him a pair of trousers.

"Make them skin tight," he said.

In due time the trousers were sent home and tried on, whereupon the senator sent for the tailor and proceeded to open fire.

"What in the blankety blank blank have you done with these trousers?" he demanded to know.

"You told me to make them skin tight, sir," faltered the tailor.

"Yes, but by the great horn spoon, you overdid it," roared the senator. "I can sit down in my skin, but I can't in these pants."

Robert T. Haines is soon to appear in a new play by his wife, Genevieve G. Haines. It is rather an unusual thing for an actor to have a wife who can write dramas and create roles for her husband to fill. Mr. Haines first had the experience of appearing in a play from his wife's pen when she sprang into fame as a playwright through the production of "Hearts Aflame." This drama, in which he took the leading role, scored an immediate success. Mrs. Haines is a beautiful woman, with a musical voice and charming manners. She does not look especially bookish and is devoted to athletic sports. Mr. Haines secured a release from Minnie Maddern Fiske, whose leading man he then was, in order to interpret the leading role in the drama which made Mrs. Haines' fame.

ROBERT T. HAINES.

Norman Tharp, who plays Lord Dulverton in "The Usurper," is an Englishman who is trying hard to be an American. He often finds the process painful, even expensive. He was complaining recently about being charged $4.75 for a bunch of violets in New York.

"Aha!" an American friend gloated. "They saw you coming and said: 'There's an English lobster. We'll trim him.'"

"Not at all, my dear boy, I assure you," said Tharp. "I talked broad and spat on the floor."

Francis Wilson, who is now playing in "Cousin Billy," is very successful in making others laugh, but sometimes the laugh has been on him. Upon one occasion he was called before the curtain to respond to most enthusiastic applause, and a superb bunch of American Beauty roses was handed to him over the footlights. He bowed his thanks and retired, and as he entered his dressing room opened a note which accompanied the flowers. It was couched in very affectionate terms and invited him to go to supper. It seemed that through the stupidity of a florists' boy he had received a tribute which had been intended for one of the young ladies of his company. Mr. Wilson is quite an accomplished linguist. For some time it was a mystery to his friends how he acquired a knowledge of so many languages. He had never had a French teacher, yet all at once he began to speak French like a native. A year or two later and German was at his finger tips; later again, he began to talk Italian as though to the language born. And then a friend solved the mystery. He had learned the languages from his dressers. It was remembered that for two seasons a French valet who spoke nothing but his native tongue had ministered to his dressing room wants. Then when Mr. Wilson's Parisian accent became thoroughly manicured the Frenchman passed out and was no more seen. His successor was a German, and he, after a couple of seasons, was succeeded by an Italian.

FRANCIS WILSON.

Now the comedian's friends are wondering what sort of a dresser he will engage when he begins the study of Sanskrit.

The presence of mind exhibited by Heinrich Conried, manager of the Metropolitan Opera company, when an accident occurred on the stage of the opera house recently won him much praise. But for the calmness he displayed a panic among the audience might easily have resulted. When Mr. Conried succeeded Maurice Grau as manager of the performances of grand opera at the Metropolitan Opera House there were some who doubted his ability to fill a position of such importance. But his success has shown him equal to the task thrust upon him when the board of directors of the opera house called him away from the German playhouse on Irving place, which he had made the temple of German histrionic art in New York, to assume the management of the leading opera company of America. Mr. Conried is a versatile genius, actor, manager, student, lecturer and business man. His attainments as a student have won him the degree of LL. D. He is a member of the committee on Germanic languages and literature of Harvard university, and he has medals from Germany and Italy for attainments in the arts and sciences.

HEINRICH CONRIED.

Many years ago as a weaver's apprentice Conried sat at his loom in an Alsatian village weaving the fabric in which he was to become a "meister." His bobbins played backward and forward through 3,400 threads in his loom. There were fifteen colors, and as they were blended they grew into a design that was to bear the title of "Faust and Marguerite."

When the last thread was laid in place it was found that not a stitch had been dropped. Thus Conried became a "meister," and the same painstaking care has characterized all his later work.

THE ROMAN ARENAS.

They Were Not Mere Rings, as Those of the Modern Circus.

The arenas of ancient Rome were not, as some people suppose, mere rings or ovals, such as may be seen in the modern circus. They were broken up and varied in character according to the nature of the fighting to be done or to the caprices of those in authority. On one occasion an arena might resemble the Numidian desert, on another the garden of Hesperides, thick set with groves of trees and rising mounds, while again it pictured the great rocks and caves of Thrace.

With these surroundings the combatants advanced, retreated, encircled their adversaries or kept wild beasts at bay as occasion offered or as their courage or fear suggested. Men combated not only with the more common brutes, but with such monsters as elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses and crocodiles. On other occasions flocks of game, such as deer and war ostriches, were abandoned to the multitude, and in some cases the arenas could be turned into lakes, filled with monsters of the deep, and upon the surface of which naval engagements took place.

SENATOR ELECT BULKELEY.

He Has Been Governor of Connecticut and Mayor of Hartford.

Ex-Governor Morgan G. Bulkeley of Connecticut, who was recently chosen to succeed the veteran statesman Joseph R. Hawley in the United States senate, is a member of most of the patriotic societies of the country and is especially proud of his membership

MORGAN G. BULKELEY.

in the G. A. R. and the Society of the Cincinnati. He has been president of the Sons of the Revolution and commander of the G. A. R., department of Connecticut. The senator elect was born sixty-seven years ago at East Haddam, Conn. He was educated in the Hartford schools, has received a degree from Yale, is a banker and is president of a big insurance company.

He was mayor of Hartford from 1880 to 1888 and governor of Connecticut from 1889 to 1893. His ancestors founded the city of Concord, Mass., and his family has been prominent in New England history for generations. Senator Hawley, whom he succeeds, has been a member of the senate since 1881 and retires because of advanced age and ill health. At the completion of his present term Senator Hawley will have served twenty-four years in the senate. He fought in the civil war and left the service a brevet brigadier general.

Flying Powers of the Swallow.

Not only do swallows capture all their insect food while on the wing; they also invariably drink while flying, and they even feed their young on the wing, especially the house martins, although it is very difficult to observe them performing the feat, so quickly is it done. As the young birds arrive at full growth they soon become impatient of confinement and sit all day with their heads out of the entrance to the nest, where the dams, by clinging to the nest, supply them with food from morning till night, and it is during this period that the young are fed on the wing by the parents. Then, again, the house swallow will wash itself by dropping into the water as it flies.

The Gods of Japan.

Japan numbers in its pantheon as many as 80,000,000 gods. All those who have deserved well of their country, from Kobo Daishi, who gave learning its handle (writing), to Hirose, who was blown to pieces in his ship in the jaws of Port Arthur only the other day, are canonized into gods, like the saints of Europe, by the mikados. One of these gods in good standing is or was an Englishman. His name was Will Adams, and he was wrecked on the shores of Japan at the close of the Elizabethan century. He is a god because he built for Japan her first seaworthy navy.

An Oversight.

A glutton once made a bet that he could eat ten apple dumplings at one sitting if the other party would pay for the accompanying wine. After the ninth dumpling, however, he declared himself beaten. Sadly he regarded the tenth dumpling, which still reposed on his plate. Shaking his finger at it, he said: "Ah! If I'd known you'd be left over I'd have eaten you first."—Argonaut.

Younghusband—I dreamed last night that your mother was dying. His Wife—Brute! I heard you laugh in your sleep.—New York Times.