



THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY QUADRILLE EVER DANCED IN NEW YORK.

This Was the Prodigies' Ball Monday Evening at New Irving Mall, and the Artists from the Amusement Palaces of the Bowery Hurried from the Stage as Soon as Their Acts Were Over and All Met on the Ball Room Floor.

THOSE human beings whom Nature has chosen to twist into the strangest conceivable shapes have met for social purposes and danced and made merry, on Monday last the freaks had a ball at No. 214 Broome street, near the Bowery.

It will be a revelation and a pleasure to all to know that freaks can be merry and how they accomplish it. The thought of the Ossified Man unbending in the mazes of the waltz will surely stir the interest of the world weary. To think of his efforts to be easy and graceful must bring a smile to the cheek of the most stiff-necked.

It should be remarked that the freaks' ball is an event without parallel in history. It never before struck the freaks or their friends that they needed such relaxation. The happy idea that politicians might be as amusing to freaks as freaks to politicians had never been entertained. This was the great idea which germinated and developed in several minds more than a week ago.

It was near the hour of midnight when a carriage, loaded with five Circassian girls and one living skeleton, from the Nickelodeon, on Sixth avenue, drew up before New Irving Hall, at No. 214 Broome street. Three Circassian maidens, rescued from the cruel clutches of the Turkish slave merchants for the gentle mercies of a five-cent New York public, sat on one seat. On the other seat were two maturer Circassian ladies, holding between them the gallant, but languid skeleton.

"Say, Chimmy, yer wont get me away from dis as long as me hair stands up," murmured one of the Circassian maidens, as she entered that hall of dazzling light.

From that hour on there was a stream of brilliant and interesting arrivals. The tattooed man came in, bearing on his arm the 300-pound native American beauty, Ollie Yates.

"Parloun me," said the tattooed one, "it seem to excite the scrutiny of the vulgar. There are people here who forget that one may be tattooed and a gentleman."

"Do not fear to embarrass me," said his fair and fat companion. "I, too, have known what it is to excite the curiosity of the vulgar out of business hours."

Following them came a stream of freaks too numerous to mention. There were fat women by the score, two-headed girls, three-legged ladies, eight or nine giants and as many dwarfs, several athletes without arms or legs, a man with an elastic skin, six ossified men, one plebeian man, a

boy with two stomachs, a woman with four feet and six bearded women.

Among the public men present, not marked by eccentric formation of the person, were Robert Stafford, J. J. McDonald, Peter Chieffo, Dennis Gunn, Andy Kelly, Vincent and Tony Monaco, J. V. de Rosa, Charles Lick, Jack Levy, Ed Frank and Pull Berlinger, brother of the Deputy Assistant District Attorney.

One of the most noticeable persons there was Whale Oil Gus, so called from his habit of profuse and oleaginous perspiration. He would, perhaps, have excited adverse comment in a gathering less experienced, reserved and well-bred than this. Some people might have forgotten the respect due to a gentleman, who can only be compared with the goose that laid the golden eggs. But on this occasion Whale Oil Gus was taken at his true worth. He was regarded as an oil producer who had been tried and not found wanting.

The two-headed girl endeavored to make herself agreeable to the Human Boa Constrictor. She, poor thing, found it difficult, as at all times to concentrate her minds on any one subject, and he could hardly restrain his natural propensity to coil himself around pillars and swallow imaginary rats. But in one way they were well-assorted, for he could walk upon one side of her, encircle her waist and whisper sweet nothings into her farther ear.

The Tattooed Man carried on a desperate flirtation with the Circassian girl, and his plebeian associate imitated his example with another. The girls were evidently pleased to have companions who were not plain.

The Georgia Giant twirled the fattest of fat women through a waltz. The correct and well-bred manner in which he held one of her extensive hands and laid another upon her forty-six-inch waist would not have been thrown away on a Parisian.

After the dance the giant did not leave the fat woman lonely in the centre of the floor, but escorted her toward a seat. She sat upon it, but immediately arose. At that moment she could conceal the seat, she could scarcely conceal her embarrassment. It was of considerable size and had arms between which she became wedged when she endeavored to sit down.

"We must learn to rise superior to such small annoyances," she remarked pleasantly to the giant, as he drove the bottom of a chandelier into his head.

The lady snake charmer, having decided to

come without her playthings and means of livelihood, accepted the escort of two dwarfs from the forest of Yuridabl, in Darkest Africa. There the sun never reaches the earth by reason of the thickness of the forest, and daylight can only be reached by climbing to the tops of the trees. The two dwarfs and the lady snake charmer advanced together.

Fannie Herring, the veteran actress of the Bowery, who during her career of seventy years in the legitimate drama has played Topsy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" ten thousand times, was one of the most attractive members of the fair sex present. When Miss Herring plays Topsy she does it six times a day, and when you remember that she has had an opportunity to do this 365 days a year for thirty years, you will easily understand how the total of ten thousand is reached.

Miss Herring was undoubtedly the most perfect example of conventional physical beauty in the gathering. Her well-matched features and symmetrical limbs might have excited the envy of freaks who were not thoroughly satisfied of their own worth and originality. But they held that to be regularly constructed is to be commonplace.

Miss Herring led the grand march preceding the quadrille with Whale Oil Gus. Her dignity, acquired through years of interpretation of tragic roles, and his expression of humid and beaming kindness, made a fitting beginning to this memorable march.

They were followed by fat women, giants, ossified men, two-headed girls, Circassian girls, dwarfs, and so on. The attendance by this time was very large.

"I shall treasure this as one of the pleasantest remembrances of my life," whispered the Georgia Giant gallantly to his fat companion. "Get on to their curves," he added, nodding at the human boa constrictor, and a second fat lady, who immediately preceded them, and were making one another very happy.

"It's the most distinguished gathering I ever saw," said James Delaney, the human skeleton in his cold and courtly way.

"So it is," said Ollie Yates, the very fat

woman. "But you should have seen my sister's wedding. There were six of us and not one that could go through the vestry door. It was a beautiful sight."

The ossified men at the ball were for the most part wall flowers, but there was at least one who mingled with the dancers.

"It will give an idea of the greatness of the occasion," he remarked, "to say that I, the ossified man, went."

There was a momentary unpleasantness between a fat and a bearded lady, the former going so far as to say that the latter was no lady. The bearded lady replied pointedly, but they were separated by the Whale Oil Gus, who cast his oil on the troubled water, so to speak. The little incident was buried in beer.

Altogether it was a most happy, eventful and diversified evening and the freaks hope that there may be another like it.

"PATIENCE" BY AMATEURS.

A Notable Cast of Singers Who Will Produce Gilbert and Sullivan's Favorite Old-Timer.

On Thursday evening, March 19, a performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, "Patience," will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House by the Metropolitan Musical Society, a company of one hundred and fifty amateurs, and an amateur orchestra of sixty pieces. The performance will be a noteworthy one from the magnitude of the undertaking and the high abilities of the chief performers, who are all singers of reputation. Mr. Frank Russak, who has undertaken the management, secured the cast and chorus by application to the leading singing teachers, and the church choirs were also drawn upon. Hundreds of aspirants for a place in the cast came forward, and after a test of their voices and of their ability to act the following cast was selected:

Patience, Miss Mary A. Mansfield, solo soprano of the First Presbyterian Church, Fifth avenue, and also of the Temple Emanuel, Fifth avenue; Lady Jane, Viola Pratt, solo contralto of the First Baptist Church; Lady Angela, Mrs. Josephine S. Jacoby, solo contralto of Temple Emanuel; Lady Ella, Mrs. Pauline Ingre Johnson, a Chicago girl, who has studied in New York with Miss Emma Howson; Lady Saphira, Miss Augusta Schiller; Colonel, Mr. C. J. Bushnell, the leading bass at Calvary Baptist Church; Grosvenor, Mr. W. A. Rowland, director and baritone at the Piedmont Church, Worcester, Mass.; Duke, Mr. Paul Roberts, leading tenor at St. Anne's Church; Major, Mr. Clifford W. Lyon, leading bass at the West Presbyterian Church, New Rochelle.

The role of Bunthorne, a difficult one to play, especially on so large a stage, will be filled by Mr. Edward Bramhall Child, solo bass at the Church of the Disciples, Lenox avenue. He is known as a leader among amateurs and has scored successes in "Patience," "Trial by Jury," "Himself" and "The Mikado." The part of Solicitor will be sung by Mr. Edward Frank.

The chorus of over one hundred and thirty has been recruited from members of the Gracioso Liederkreis, the People's Choral Union, the New York Musical Society and various church choirs, besides the members of the Metropolitan Opera Club. Mr. Edwin J. Lyons is the musical conductor. The performance will be under fashionable patronage.

HOW CYCLISTS ARE HURT.

It's Exhilarating to Ride, But That Doesn't Lessen the Pain When the Mishap Comes.

At least one-half of the 22,000 bicycle riders in New York have to lay up for repairs each year, Consul I. B. Potter, of the New York State Division, L. A. W., says this statement is no exaggeration. Some people might also consider it a point in favor of horseback riding.

The most curious fact is, however, that out of all these injuries comparatively few are attended with fatal result. Consul Potter says that 400 of the persons on the injured list fractured their arms. Eighty per cent of the 400 rode for pleasure, and the balance were professionals. Broken legs lead the broken arms by a cool hundred at least, and probably more. Broken collar bones, wrenched limbs, dislocated arms, fractured fingers, broken tendons, sprained legs, ankles and wrists, strained muscles, scalp wounds, bruised faces and a few other things go to make up the balance of the injuries inflicted. The bicycle path surely bears no resemblance to the plimrose variety.

Of course, people who ride bicycles expect to be hurt; or, if they do not, they are sure to find that it is the unexpected that happens. One fact, however, savors of injustice, and that is that the proportion of feminine riders injured is not as comparatively great as the number of unfortunate males. This is one thing of which the New Woman is not getting her fair share.

How many of these accidents were due to carelessness and how many to the faulty machines ridden it would be impossible to accurately calculate, but men who understand the racing business state that not a few may be traced to the generous indemnity which accident companies give to those insured with them. Mr. G. G. Raynmond, a Class B rider, states that it is a common practice for men who are not in condition to enter a race to meet with a not unexpected accident and draw \$25 a week from an accident company until they are in condition again.

The strangest accident of all the year was that which befell a member of the New York Athletic Club. Riding one day last summer on the Boulevard in company with some club members he made an effort to outstrip them. Suddenly, and with no apparent reason, the front wheel of his machine turned at right angles to the frame, while the handle bars remained as usual. The machine stopped suddenly and the rider went over the handle bars, breaking his right arm and collar bone. When the wheel was examined it was found that the bars had returned to their proper position and it was quite impos-

ible to turn them without the assistance of a wrench. How they became displaced in the first instance remains a mystery.

A race meet at Manhattan Field is always productive of many accidents, both among the competitors and the crowds of wheeling devotees. Eighty-four racing meet with accidents of a more or less serious nature at this place last year. In one race near about four prominent riders broke their collar bones, one Class A man broke a leg, an arm and three ribs, another swift racer received such a severe shaking up that he could not bear the sight of a wheel for many weeks after.

Consul Potter says that there are in New York City at the present time 22,000 riders of bicycles. Of that number about 25 per cent have ridden for many years, buying new wheels each successive year. The average life of the standard high grade wheel is three years, but fully one-half of the 22,000 buy new mounts each year, either to be possessors of the latest in the market or on account of some accident that has befallen themselves or their wheels.

A LAKE OF BOILING MUD.

Bubbles of Slime That Burst with a Loud Explosion Are to Be Seen on the Island of Java.

"Home of the Hot Devils," or Gheko Kaudka Gunko, as the natives of Java say, in their simple way, is the name applied to the greatest natural wonder on the island which is mainly known to the world through its coffee. It is also called "the island of fire," although it is not an island, but a lake of boiling mud.

This geological singularity is situated in the centre of a plain, and is called an island because its terrifying area is surrounded by a great expanse of tropical vegetation. The island is two miles in circumference. Near the centre of the boiling seething mass immense columns of soft mud may be seen rising to a height of fifty feet, and then falling to the level, giving the appearance of great timbers being thrust through the boiling substratum and withdrawn quickly, as if by unseen giant hands.

In addition to the phenomena of the boiling mud columns, there are constantly forming gigantic bubbles of slime which bill to the periphery of a huge hollow and then collapse, with a loud detonation. These explosions follow so closely as to keep up a continuous sound of rumbling and muttering.

The Japanese guides tell a tale of how, long ago, there was off the west side of the island a tall, spire-like column of baked mud from which were thrown a steady volume of pure water or grey columns, but that has long since been obliterated.

WHERE GO THE CORKS?

Like Pins and Needles, They Disappear and New Ones Replace Them.

When a cork pops from a bottle of champagne or soda water, that would seem to be the end of it, for while it is popping a new one is being manufactured to take its place. The amount of money spent annually in corks in the United States is enormous. Imports of cork wood or bark last year amounted to considerably over a million dollars. Much of the bark used in the manufacture of corks comes from Spain or Portugal, and in case of war the price is sure to advance.

The steamer James Brand recently brought from Lisbon to this port the largest cargo of cork bark ever received in one shipment. She discharged 5,401 bales. The same week 149 bales arrived from Liverpool and seventy-two bales from Gibraltar. Patent stoppers have to a large extent superseded the use of cork, but the latter is still an important industry. Where all the corks go is after being used is a mystery, although it is known that many of them go to decorate the "cork" rooms which are adjuncts to certain variety theatres. That the life of a cork is short is certain, but in some instances it may be said to be a merry one.