

DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN.

THE STORY.

DAS RHEINGOLD.

The Rhine-maidens, who guard the gleaming Rhine-gold, are swimming about in the river and teasing Alberich the dwarf. The latter, the gleam of the Rhine-gold, and hearing that anyone who forswears love and forges a Ring out of the gold, will be all-powerful, seizes the gold and disappears. Wotan, chief of the Gods, has employed Fasolt and Fafner, the giants, to build him a castle, Valhalla, promising them, as a reward, Freia, the Goddess of youth. The giants having completed their task demand their reward, but Wotan, who had never meant to keep his word, sends it was Freia who, with her golden apples, gave the Gods their eternal youth, summons the fire-God Loge to his aid, and is told of Alberich's theft. The giants agree to accept the Nibelung's hoard, but take away Freia as a hostage. The Gods immediately become old and wrinkled. Loge and Wotan descend to Nibelheim, and, by inducing Alberich to turn into a dwarf, in order to prove to them the power of the Tarnhelm, a cap which enables the wearer to assume any shape he likes, overpower him, and rob him of his treasure, including the Tarnhelm, and the magic Ring. Alberich curses them, foretelling the approaching doom of the Gods. But Wotan and Loge, undismayed, return to earth with the treasure and the giants bring back Freia; they plant two spears in the ground, and placing Freia between them, declare she must be entirely hidden by the treasure piled up in front of her. To do this it is necessary for both the Tarnhelm and the Ring, which Wotan only yields with great reluctance and after having been warned by Erda, the earth-mother, to be added to the pile. Freia is released, but Alberich's curse begins to work at once. Fafner kills Fasolt to obtain sole possession of the hoard. The Gods joyfully pass over a rainbow bridge to Valhalla, while in the distance are heard the wails of the Rhine-maidens, lamenting the loss of the gold committed to their charge.

DIE WALKÜRE.

Siegmond, one of the Walsungs, protégés of Wotan, flying from his bitter enemies, enters the hut of Hunding, who is one of his deadliest foes, in a state of exhaustion. Sieglinde, Hunding's wife, gives him refreshment. Hunding relates and finding Siegmund tells him that, though he will not harm him while he is under his roof, he will fight him on the next day. Sieglinde, who has fallen in love with Siegmund, gives her husband a sleeping draught and then, in a passionate interview with Siegmund, discovers that he is her brother, and shows him a sword planted in a tree by Wotan. Siegmund pulls out the sword and they flee. Wotan charges Brünnhilde, his daughter by Erda, the earth-mother, one of the Walkyries, or shield-maidens, who convey the bodies of dead heroes to Valhalla, to assist Siegmund in his fight with Hunding, but Fricka, Wotan's wife and the protectress of marriage-laws, intervenes, and Wotan is forced to countermand his orders to Brünnhilde. Siegmund, still flying from Hunding, is warned of his approaching death by Brünnhilde, but he scolds at the idea of being taken to Valhalla if Sieglinde may not accompany him, and Brünnhilde, admiring his courage, determines to disobey Wotan. She stands by Siegmund in the fight, but Wotan breaks Siegmund's sword, and he is killed by Hunding, who also falls dead before Wotan's glance of wrath. Brünnhilde flies on her horse Grane with Sieglinde, and joins her sister Walkyries, imploring them to save Sieglinde. They refuse, fearing Wotan's wrath, but Brünnhilde, telling Sieglinde she will bear a son, sends her to hide in the forest where Fafner, the dragon, in the guise of a dragon, guards the Rhine-gold, after giving her the fragments of Siegmund's sword. Wotan arrives in terrible wrath, and to punish Brünnhilde for her disobedience, deprives her of her immortality, dooming her to a magic sleep and to be the prey of any man who shall awaken her. Deeply moved by the parting with his favourite daughter, he accedes to her last request that none but a hero shall be permitted to awaken her, and summoning Loge, he bids him surround Brünnhilde's rocky couch with a wall of flame.

SIEGFRIED.

Some years have elapsed and Siegfried, the only son of Sieglinde, has been brought up in the forest by the dwarf Mime, Alberich's brother. He questions Mime, whom he instinctively hates, about his mother. The former gives him the fragments of Siegmund's sword, and Siegfried, bidding Mime weld them anew, rushes into the woods. Wotan, disguised as the Wanderer, appears and tells Mime that only he who has never known fear can forge the sword. Mime attempts to forge the sword himself but fails, and Siegfried forges it himself, while Mime promises to teach him what fear is by taking him to the wood where Fafner is guarding the gold; at the same time Mime prepares a poisonous drink which he purposes to give to Siegfried when once the dragon is killed, that he may himself obtain the Ring. Wotan warns Fafner of Siegfried's approach. Siegfried arrives and kills the dragon, and in doing so gets a drop of its blood on his finger. Tasting it, he understands the language of the wood-bird, which tells him to seek for the Tarnhelm and the Ring, and warns him that Mime is going to try to poison him; Siegfried obtains the Ring and kills Mime. The bird then tells him of the sleeping Brünnhilde and he sets out to find her, preceded by the bird. Wotan in vain seeks counsel of Erda, the earth-mother, how to avert the impending doom of the Gods, and attempting to bar Siegfried's way with his spear, Siegfried shatters it with his sword, and Wotan retires to Valhalla to await the "Twilight of the Gods." Siegfried plunges through the fire and awakens Brünnhilde who, discovering that he is Sieglinde's son, yields herself to him.

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.

The Norns are discovered alone weaving the fate of the world. When the cord breaks they fly, as the dawn of another world is upon them. Siegfried, wishing to accomplish great deeds, takes farewell of Brünnhilde, entering her with the Ring. In the hall of the Gibichungs on the Rhine, Hagen, son of Alberich, is scheming to regain the Ring. He suggests to his half brother Günther to give Sieglinde a draught which will make him forget Brünnhilde (of whose existence Günther is ignorant), and set him free to marry Gutrune, Günther's sister. All turns out as Hagen wishes. Siegfried arrives, drinks the poison and promises to win Brünnhilde for Günther. Wotan, the Walkyrie, empowers Brünnhilde to restore the Ring to the Rhine-maidens, and save Wotan and Valhalla. Brünnhilde refuses and soon after, Siegfried arrives in Günther's shape, snatches the Ring, and after keeping vigil all night with his sword between him and her, leads her away to Günther. Alberich appears to Hagen and urges him to kill Siegfried. Siegfried comes back and is welcomed by all, but Brünnhilde recognises the Ring on his finger, and accuses him of having betrayed his friend Günther by offering her violence. Brünnhilde discloses to Hagen that Siegfried has one vulnerable spot, namely in the back. The Rhine-maidens in vain ask Siegfried for the Ring. When resting from hunting, Hagen brings back Siegfried's memory by another poison. Siegfried tells the story of his life. Hagen kills him. The body is brought to Günther's hall where Hagen quarrels with Günther and kills him. Siegfried's body is placed on a pyre, on which, when it is lighted, Brünnhilde, after singing a farewell to her dead lover, and proclaiming the end of the old regime and the dawn of a new world ruled by Love, leaps upon the pyre to perish with her dead lover. The Rhine overflows its banks, washes the pyre away and the Rhine-maidens snatch the Ring. Hagen rushes into the Rhine to get the Ring and is drowned. Valhalla is seen enveloped in flames.

Composer: Richard Wagner, born 1813, died 1883.

THE GENTLE ART OF SWEEDLING.

MR. HENRY ARTHUR JONES'S DISCOVERY.

Mr. Frederick Harrison, who "manages" at the Haymarket Theatre, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, and Miss Ethel Irving have smuggled a new word into the English language. That word is the verb "to sweedle." As a genuine "portmanteau" word it is worthy of Lewis Carroll himself. Further, it is a thing that "every woman knows," so that one is also amazed that Mr. J. M. Barrie has not invented it. To swindle and to wheedle a husband, to make debts and persuade him to pay them—there you have the whole art in perfection, there you have it attaining its supreme point. But to know how much it may mean and to realise its true greatness as a fine art one must see Miss Ethel Irving actually sweedling Mr. Robert Loraine.

Miss Ethel Irving and Mr. Loraine as Mrs. and Mr. Harry Telfer in "Dolly Reforming Herself" give one a somewhat deterrent picture of domestic bliss tempered by high gales. Supposing you have a charming wife, smart, piquant, well-dressed but extravagant, in addition to your own temper, which it is no injustice to call volcanic, you are pretty sure of an equable see-saw of bliss and mortification, siestas and high gales. In real life these things work out a little unpleasantly; in Mr. Henry Jones's comedy they work out not at all unpleasantly. There seems to be a sort of justice in the pendulum. People of volcanic temper have sometimes wonderful periods of amiability, and Mr. Jones sees to it that his Harry Telfer should be the most charming of husbands when he is not the most irascible

:: DRESDEN ::

Italian Lady, who speaks French very well, wishes to have refined home in return for teaching Italian or French, to January 1. Bürgerwiese 26, I.

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Spanish and Port. wines for invalids and table use, imported direct; Dr. Lahmann's Nahrzalt Cocoa and Chocolate, van Nolle's (Holland) teas, Hag's caffeine-free coffees, all at original prices from the speciality store: Lütichau Strasse 23.

Pension Cronheim, Villa: Eisenstuck Strasse 47, corner of Münchner Strasse. Modern style. Garden. Excellent cuisine. Best references. Moderate terms. German conversation.

Brushes, Combs, Perfumery, Max Schiller Articles for Manicure. Schloss Str. 2.

B. A. MÜLLER, by appointment to the Saxon Court, Prager Strasse 32-34. Store for all kinds of Toys. CHRISTMAS TOY EXHIBITION.

HARRY M. FIELD, Pianist, Studio: Reichs Strasse 24, II.

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Pension von Oertzen old established house Reichs Strasse 26, I. II. III. Best situation. Highly recommended, comf. sunny rooms, best cuisine.

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ELECTRIC CURES Summer and Winter Cures. Prospectus gratis and post-free. J. G. Brockmann Dresden-A. 3, Moszczyński Str. 6.

Flowers for Hats, vases, ball dresses; ostrich feathers, heron feathers, stoles, palms, fruits, flower-papers, etc. from H. Hesse, Scheffel Strasse 10-12.

MOVEMENT OF LINERS. NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD S. S. Co. Dresden office. Fr. Bremermann, Prager Strasse 49. YESTERDAY'S REPORTS. "Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm," from Bremen for New York, arrived New York December 8th.

"Yorck," from Bremen for Australia, left Naples December 8th. "Lützow," from Hamburg for Japan, left Antwerp Dec. 8th. "Rhein," from Baltimore for Bremen, arrived Bremerhaven Dec. 9th. "Bremen," from Australia for Bremen, left Fremantle December 8th. "Prinz Ludwig," from Japan for Hamburg, left Penang Dec. 9th. "Prinz Eitel Friedrich," from Bremen for Japan, left Port Said December 8th. "Kaiser Wilhelm II.," from New York for Bremen, left New York December 8th. "Prinzess Alice," from Japan for Hamburg, left Southampton December 8th.

WEATHER FORECAST FOR TODAY of the Royal Saxon Meteorological Institute. Southerly wind, changeable skies, no heavy showers, warmer.

of men. Dolly Telfer makes bills, Harry is sweedled—and Dolly goes on making bills: and that is really and truly all there is in the play. Of course there is a good background and some sort of a plot, but everything hangs on bills, temper, sweedling, and more bills.

The play begins with good resolutions made on the first of January, 1907; it ends with the same good resolutions made on the first January, 1908, by the same people in almost precisely the same circumstances. Nothing happens in the interval that is not the common lot of humanity, or at least of that section of humanity which is foolish enough to make good resolutions and to break them; and Mr. Jones kindly enough prevents anything serious from wrecking the fortune of his characters. But, then, of course, he stops at 1908; and troubles are still brewing when he leaves off. Well, despite all this uncertainty, we are very grateful to Mr. Jones; we are also tremendously grateful to Miss Ethel Irving, who scores a success which seems likely to follow the example of her "Lady Frederick"; we are grateful to Mr. C. M. Lane, Dolly's genial father, and to Mr. Robert Loraine, whose acting is of the cleverest to be seen in London. But indeed we are grateful to everybody at the Haymarket for a bright and vigorous, if quite trivial, comedy, which is only a little marred by the monotony of having no more than one scene. C. M. K.

BRITISH TRADE IN NOVEMBER.

CONTINUED DEPRESSION.

London, December 8.

No evidence of any improvement in trade is to be found in the Board of Trade returns for November and the past eleven months, issued yesterday afternoon. Ominous decreases are again shown both in the imports and exports, and the figures are again more disquieting by reason of the fact that the decline is most marked in British exports of manufactured articles.

The following are the summarised figures for November this year as compared with last:—

Table with 4 columns: Month, Year, Imports, Exports. Data for Nov 1908, Nov 1907, Dec 1908, Dec 1907.

The seriousness of these figures cannot be better emphasised than by comparing at once their respective compositions. On analysis is found the following table:—

Table with 3 columns: Category, Imports, Exports. Data for Dec. in raw materials, Dec. in manufactures.

The balance making up the full total of decreases given above is due to a diminution both in imports and exports of food.

The main decreases in the purchase of raw materials were in cotton (£2,528,319), wool (£525,882), other textiles (£213,159), wood and timber (£541,078), metallic ores other than iron (£273,926), oil seeds, etc. (£473,417). The falling-off of a million and a half in British imports of manufactured articles was most marked in other metal manufactures than iron and steel (£552,910).

British decreased rates of manufactures to other countries was most heavily felt in cotton (£3,283,446), wool (£572,179), and other textiles (£279,278). There was a decrease of £667,412 in the exports of iron and steel manufactures, and of £271,371 in those of machinery. All industries suffered, however, except electrical goods and new ships, which showed slight increases.

The figures for the eleven months form highly unpleasant reading for English people. As compared with the same period last year there has been a total fall in British imports of £53,539,401, and in exports of £45,644,857; but of the first of these two figures only £11,646,246 represents manufactured goods, while out of the second £41,805,196 comes under this head.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE.

During the jubilee of the Austrian Emperor, His Majesty has been bestowing various orders, the most distinguished of which is the Golden Fleece. The order is very rarely conferred, and any one who receives the honour is addressed in writing, should the Emperor have occasion to communicate with him, as "My dear Cousin." The order was founded in 1429 by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, and by the marriage of Marie of Burgundy with Maximilian of Austria it became an Austrian order, and in similar circumstances a Spanish dignity. Both countries continue to confer the order. The Spanish order is only conferred upon sovereigns and statesmen of the highest eminence, and upon members of the aristocracy. In Austria it is never conferred upon a Protestant, and this rule applies to sovereigns. The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to France has just received the Golden Fleece, but the only living Frenchman similarly honoured is the Duke of Orleans, who received the distinction at the time of his marriage.