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A FINE STRUCTURE.

The New Bruce Block and Opera House.

That Canastota is a live, growing and progressive town is a well-established fact. More frequently is this admitted by strangers visiting our village than by our own citizens who are often slow to perceive the advantages of their native place. Especially is this the case with persons who go away from home but little and have not the opportunity to compare the enterprise and public spirit of our citizens with those of other towns about the same size of Canastota or even larger. We notice that visitors to our village generally express surprise at finding Canastota such a lively place. We do not say this with any spirit of adulation, but because we believe it to be the truth and nothing more.

It therefore gives us great pleasure to record the fact that with the completion of the new Bruce block we have another substantial monument to the public spirit and enterprise of our citizens. About a year ago Messrs. E. N. & J. W. Bruce purchased from the legal representatives of Freddie Stebbins the vacant lot on the west of Peterboro street, between the Wilson block and 'Square Northup's block, and announced their intention of building a fine block containing stores, offices and a fine opera house. The lot was 61x125 feet and was formerly occupied by three stores which were burned on the night of Jan. 17, 1884.

Early last spring, the work of clearing up the rubbish on the lot and excavating for the foundations of the building, was commenced.

Messrs. Peckham & Dew, well-known and reliable builders of Canastota, were awarded the contract for erecting the building and as usual they have done their work in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

The building is brick 61x125 feet, and three stories high with front of pressed brick trimmed with gray limestone. The masonry is of a most substantial nature so that the front has a massive solid appearance. In front of the second story, directly over the main entrance is an alcove for the accommodation of a band or orchestra.

The architect who furnished the plans and under whose supervision the work has been done is A. M. Elliot, of Canastota.

cense. The front of the first story is divided into three stores, two of which are 80 feet long and with an average width of 20 feet each, The center store, occupied by Orton's jewelry establishment, is 60 feet long and has an average width of 13 feet. There are two stores, 43x25 feet, facing Spencer alley on the rear.

A broad entrance and stairway in the front leads to three suites of offices in the front of the second story. Each suite consists of two rooms and is furnished with closets, lavatories and city water and are heated by hot air from the basement. Four large Boston Magee hot air furnaces in the basement heat the entire building.

The part of the building that most interests the public and in which every resident in Canastota takes a just and natural pride is the opera house, which occupies the second and third stories except the front which is occupied by the offices. It is pronounced by competent judges to be the best theatre in New York state outside of the large cities. A sloping floor is so arranged as to afford a good view of the stage from every part of the auditorium. There are 702 patent folding seats with hat rack and umbrella holder and there is room besides to put in nearly one hundred extra chairs.

The stage is 60 feet wide and 38 feet deep. It is capable of seating two hundred persons. The opening on the front of the stage is 30 feet wide and 22 feet high. There are twenty sets of scenery and several more are expected to arrive this week. The scenery was made to order by the well-known firm of Sasmon & Landis, of Chicago, and is very pretty and natural. This firm also had the contract for the frescoing and decorating the interior of the building and it has been done in a very artistic manner. Mr. Berlin, of Utica, had the supervision of the work.

The house is lit with a magnificent chandelier holding twenty incandescent electric lights each of twenty-candle power. The foot-lights are also incandescent lamps as are the orchestra lights and the lights over the stage. The opera house and stage is supplied with all the properties and paraphernalia pertaining to a first-class theatre. Beneath the stage is a commodious property room and six large dressing rooms supplied with all necessary conveniences. A fine

set of fine upholstered parlor furniture for the use of the stage has been purchased of J. H. McMahon. The stage carpet, green on one side and red on the other, had to be woven to order and was furnished by Milton S. Prier, of Syracuse. A fine-toned, upright Schubert piano has been purchased for the house from Crandall, of Oneida.

Two broad stairways that lead to the ground floor are arranged so that horses can be brought up and on the stage if needed. Three fire hydrants with hose attached in various parts of the house can be used in case of fire.

The drop curtain has a directory of the business houses of the village painted upon its border.

In the front of the building over the offices is a fine hall 60x22 feet that can be used for parties, church sociables, &c.

All the work possible has been done by Canastota firms. The plumbing and roofing was done by Fari. The heating apparatus has been put in and arranged by Bemiss Bros. The painting has been done by Frank E. Gates.

E. S. Orton, who is the first tenant to occupy a store in the new block, will have charge of the building and look after the interests of Messrs. Bruce.