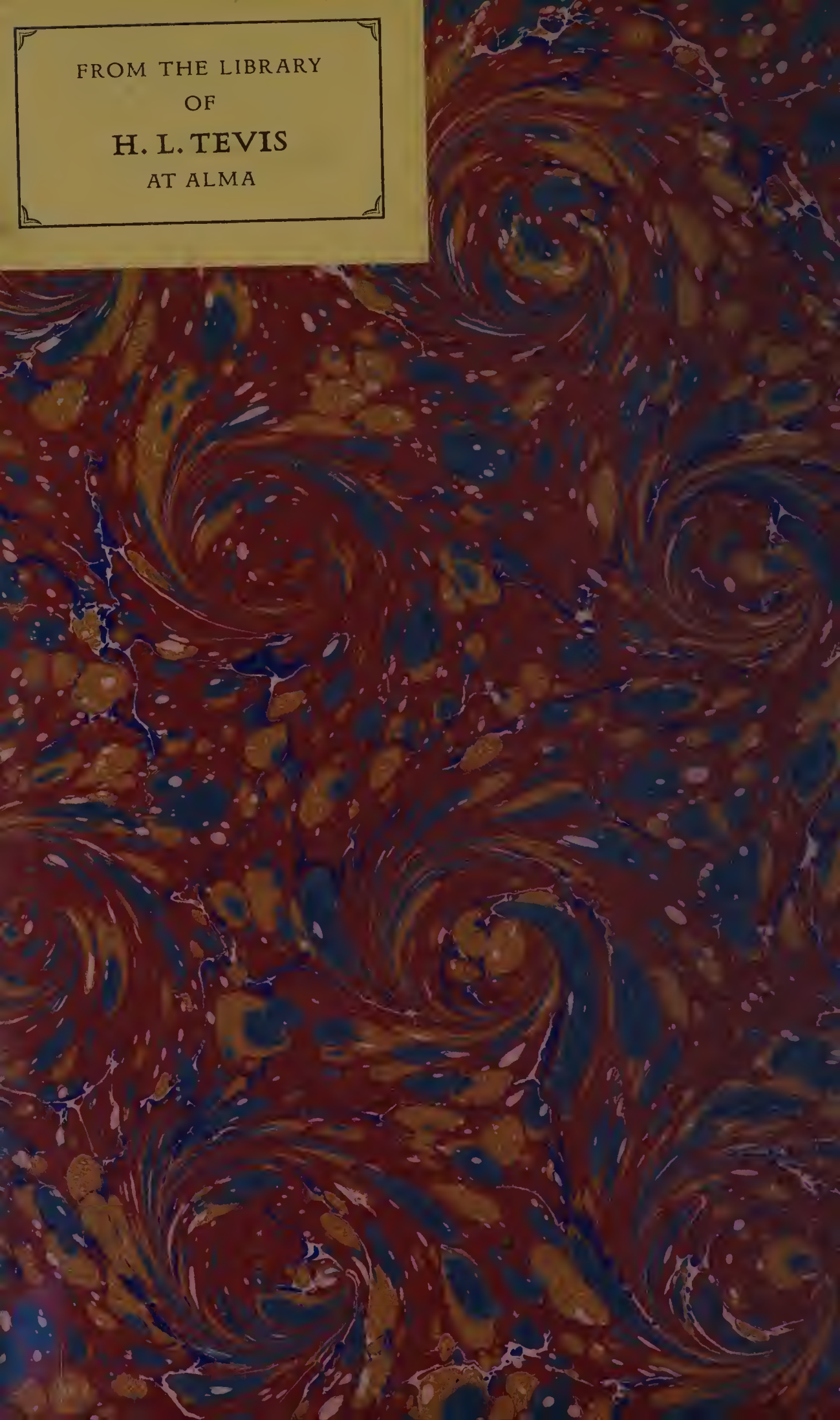
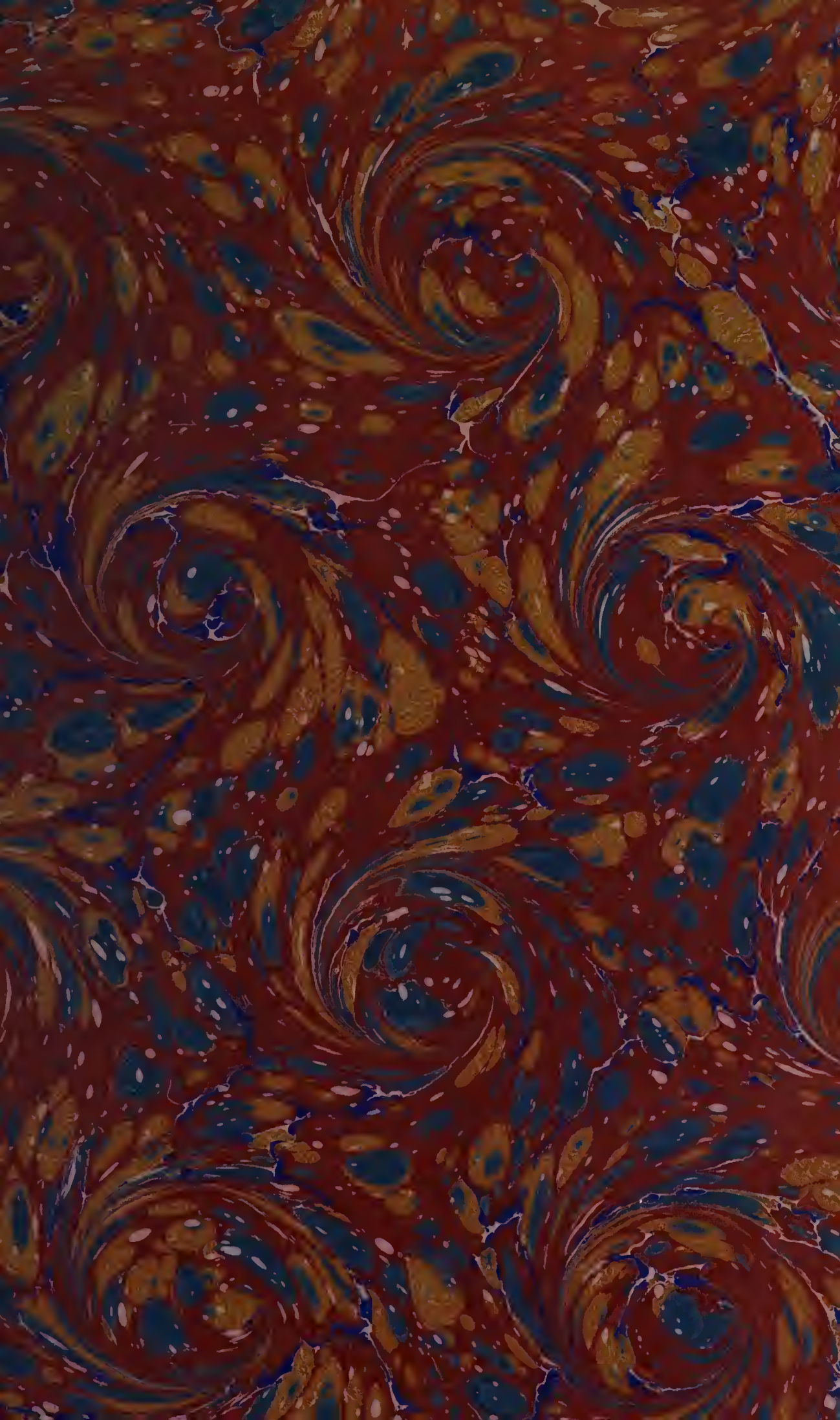




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MISS MAY YOHE.

"(Y)ohé, (Y)ohé, la joie de vivre!"

"SPECTATOR" of *THE STAR*.

THE THEATRE.

A Monthly Review

OF THE

DRAMA, MUSIC, AND THE FINE ARTS.

EDITED BY

ADDISON BRIGHT.

NEW SERIES.

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8



*“And Prompter Time
bids one ‘Depart!’”*

8

and calls another on.”

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THE THEATRE.

JANUARY, 1894.

“Moonlight.”*



HE Abbé Marignan, as soldier of the Church, bore his fighting title well. He was a tall, thin priest, very fanatical, of an ecstatic but upright soul. All his beliefs were fixed, without ever a wavering. He thought that he understood God thoroughly, that he penetrated His designs, His wishes, His intentions.

When he promenaded with great strides in the garden-walk of his little country parsonage, sometimes a question rose in his mind: “Why did God make that?” And in fancy taking the place of God, he searched obstinately, and nearly always he found the reason. It is not he who would have murmured in a transport of pious humility, “O Lord, Thy ways are past finding out!” He said to himself, “I am the servant of God; I ought to know the reason of what He does, or to divine it if I do not.”

Everything in nature seemed to him created with an absolute and admirable logic. The “wherefore” and the “because” were always balanced. The dawns were made to render glad your waking, the days to ripen the harvests, the rains to water them, the evenings to prepare for sleeping, and the nights dark for sleep.

The four seasons corresponded perfectly to all the needs of agriculture; and to him the suspicion could never have come that nature has no intentions; and that all which lives has bent itself, on the contrary, to the hard conditions of different periods, of climates, and of matter.

Only he did hate women; he hated them unconscionably, and

* From “The Odd Number,” by Guy de Maupassant. (Osgood McIlvaine.)

he despised them by instinct. He often repeated the words of Christ, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" and he added, "One would almost say that God Himself was ill-pleased with that particular work of His hands." Woman was indeed for him the "child twelve times unclean" of whom the poet speaks. She was the temptress who had ensnared the first man, and who still continued her work of damnation; she was the being who is feeble, dangerous, mysteriously troubling. And even more than her body of perdition, he hated her loving soul.

He had often felt women's tenderness attach itself to him, and although he knew himself to be unassailable, he grew exasperated at that need of loving which quivered always in their hearts.

God, to his mind, had only created woman to tempt man and to prove him. You should not approach her without those precautions for defence which you would take, and those fears which you would cherish, near a trap. She was, indeed, just like a trap, with her arms extended and her lips open towards a man.

He had indulgence only for nuns, rendered harmless by their vow; but he treated them harshly notwithstanding, because, ever living at the bottom of their chained-up hearts, of their chastened hearts, he perceived that eternal tenderness which constantly went out to him, although he was a priest.

He was conscious of it in their looks more moist with piety than the looks of monks, in their ecstasies, in their transports of love towards the Christ, which angered him because it was women's love; and he was also conscious of it, of that accursed tenderness, in their very docility, in the softness of their voices when they spoke to him, in their lowered eyes, and in the meekness of their tears when he reproved them roughly.

And he shook his cassock on issuing from the doors of the convent, and he went off with long strides, as though he had fled before some danger.

He had a niece who lived with her mother in a little house near by. He was bent on making her a sister of charity.

She was pretty, and hare-brained, and a great tease. When the Abbé sermonized, she laughed; when he was angry at her, she kissed him vehemently, pressing him to her heart, while he would seek involuntarily to free himself from this embrace, which, notwithstanding, made him taste a certain sweet joy, awaking deep within him that sensation of fatherhood which slumbers in every man.

Often he talked to her of God, of his God, walking beside her along the footpaths through the fields. She hardly listened, and looked at the sky, the grass, the flowers, with a joy of living which could be seen in her eyes. Sometimes she rushed forward

to catch some flying creature, and bringing it back, would cry, "Look, my uncle, how pretty it is; I should like to kiss it." And this necessity to "kiss flies" or lilac berries, worried, irritated, and revolted the priest, who saw, even in that, the ineradicable tenderness which ever springs at the hearts of women.

And now one day the sacristan's wife, who kept house for the Abbé Marignan, told him, very cautiously, that his niece had a lover!

He experienced a dreadful emotion, and he stood choked, with the soap all over his face, being in the act of shaving.

When he found himself able to think and speak once more, he cried: "It is not true; you are lying, Mélanie."

But the peasant woman put her hand on her heart: "May our Lord judge me if I am lying, Monsieur le Curé. I tell you she goes to him every evening as soon as your sister is in bed. They meet each other beside the river. You have only to go there between ten o'clock and midnight, and see for yourself."

He ceased scratching his chin, and he commenced to walk the room violently, as he always did in his hours of gravest thought. When he tried to begin his shaving again, he cut himself three times from nose to ear.

All day long he remained silent, swollen with anger and with rage. To his priestly zeal against the mighty power of love was added the moral indignation of a father, of a teacher, of a keeper of souls, who has been deceived, robbed, played with by a child. He had that egotistical choking sensation such as parents feel when their daughter announces that she has chosen a husband without them and in spite of their advice.

After his dinner, he tried to read a little, but he could not bring himself so far; and he grew angrier and angrier. When it struck ten, he took his cane, a formidable oaken club which he always carried when he had to go out at night to visit the sick. And he smilingly regarded the enormous cudgel, holding it in his solid, countryman's fist, and cutting threatening circles with it in the air. Then, suddenly he raised it, and grinding his teeth, he brought it down upon a chair, the back of which, split in two, fell heavily to the ground.

He opened his door to go out; but he stopped upon the threshold, surprised by such a splendour of moonlight as you seldom see.

And since he was endowed with an exalted spirit, such a spirit as must have belonged to those dreamer-poets, the Fathers of the Church, he felt himself suddenly distracted, moved by the grand and serene beauty of the pale-faced night.

In his little garden, quite bathed with the soft brilliance, his

fruit-trees, all arow, were outlining in shadow upon the walk, their slender limbs of wood scarce clothed by verdure ; while the giant honeysuckle climbing on the house wall, exhaled delicious, sugared breaths, and seemed to cause to hover through the warm clear night a perfumed soul.

He began to breathe deep, drinking the air as drunkards drink their wine, and he walked slowly, being ravished, astounded, and almost oblivious of his niece.

As soon as he came into the open country he stopped to contemplate the whole plain, so inundated by this caressing radiance, so drowned in the tender and languishing charm of the serene nights. At every instant the frogs threw into space their short metallic notes, and the distant nightingales mingled with the seduction of the moonlight that fitful music of theirs which brings no thoughts but dreams, that light and vibrant melody of theirs which is composed for kisses.

The Abbé continued his course, his courage failing, he knew not why. He felt, as it were, enfeebled, and suddenly exhausted ; he had a great desire to sit down, to pause here, to praise God in all His works.

Down there, following the bends of the little river, wound a great line of poplars. On and about the banks, wrapping all the tortuous watercourse with a kind of light, transparent wadding, hung suspended a fine mist, a white vapour, which the moon-rays crossed and silvered, and caused to gleam.

The priest paused yet again, penetrated to the bottom of his soul by a strong and growing emotion.

And a doubt, a vague uneasiness, seized on him ; he perceived that one of those questions which he sometimes put to himself, was now being born.

Why had God done this ? Since the night is destined for sleep, for unconsciousness, for repose, for forgetfulness of everything, why, then, make it more charming than the day, sweeter than the dawns and the sunsets ? And this slow seductive star, more poetical than the sun, and so discreet that it seems designed to light up things too delicate, too mysterious, for the great luminary — why was it come to brighten all the shades ?

Why did not the cleverest of all songsters go to rest like the others ? And why did he set himself to singing in the vaguely troubling dark ?

Why this half-veil over the world ? Why these quiverings of the heart, this emotion of the soul, this languor of the body ?

Why this display of seductions which mankind never sees, being asleep in bed ? For whom was intended this sublime spectacle, this flood of poetry poured from heaven to earth ?

And the Abbé did not understand at all.

But now, see, down there along the edge of the field appeared two shadows walking side by side under the arched roof of the trees all soaked in glittering mist.

The man was the taller, and had his arm about his mistress's neck, and from time to time he kissed her on the forehead. They animated suddenly the lifeless landscape, which enveloped them like a divine frame made expressly for this. They seemed, these two, like one being, the being for whom was destined this calm and silent night; and they came on towards the priest like a living answer, the answer vouchsafed by his Master to his question.

He stood stock-still, quite overwhelmed and with a beating heart. And he thought to see here some Bible story, like the loves of Ruth and Boaz, the accomplishment of the will of the Lord in one of those great scenes talked of in the holy book. Through his head began to hum the versicles of the Song of Songs, the ardent cries, the calls of the body, all the passionate poetry of that poem which burns with tenderness and love.

And he said to himself: "God perhaps has made such nights as this to clothe with the ideal the loves of men."

He withdrew before this couple who went ever arm in arm. For all that, it was really his niece; but now he asked himself if he had not been about to disobey God. And does not God indeed permit love, since He surrounds it visibly with splendour such as this?

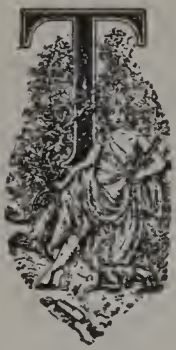
And he fled in amaze, almost ashamed, as if he had penetrated into a temple where he had not the right to go.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT.



Stars of the Stage.

No. VI.—MR. JOHNSTON FORBES ROBERTSON.



HE "Artist," like asparagus in Henry S. Leigh's "Carol of Cockaigne," "is cheap to-day." At a moderate computation there are twenty thousand "artists" on the stage in England at this moment. For, thanks to indiscriminating delegates of the Press who aspire to hurl the critical thunderbolts of Hazlitt or flash the scorching lightnings of Lamb, and whose first step is to label everyone alike, as though actors were a myriad of blacking bottles, and each critic another boy Charles Dickens paid to decorate them attractively at so much a score—every man, woman, and child upon whom the glare of the footlights falls is now an "artist."

Nay, more; "artist" is anybody in the flies above, or upon the stage beneath, or in the deeps that are under the stage. Have not the legislative big-wigs of the United States sat in solemn judgment upon Mr. Irving's limelight men and gravely pronounced them "artists," and has not Miss Letty Lind, a *Portia* "Up to Date," irresistibly impelled by a righteous passion for justice, nobly insisted upon sharing with horny-handed sons of oxy-hydrogen and coloured glass, the glory of her achievements in "the Serpentine?"

But here and there, another kind of "artist" may be found upon the boards; and Mr. Forbes Robertson is the representative of this limited company. He is, *par excellence*, the artist-actor of the stage—as, to point the distinction, Mr. Bernard Gould (Partridge), is *par excellence* the actor-artist—the one man whose skill in portraiture, with palette and canvas, will bear comparison with that he nightly exhibits through the subtler medium of flesh and blood. Consequently, you are not surprised, upon entering his house in Bedford Square, at being ushered into what immediately proclaims itself—despite the absence of top-lights and chilling acreage of glass—a studio.

Anything more unlike the sanctum of a favourite actor could

scarcely be conceived. Photographs of himself are conspicuous by their absence, and the mantelpiece is free from that jostling crowd of affectionate brother and sister "artists" whose portraits, with endearing phrases scribbled in the corners, courting inspection and dust, usually reveal the professional man. A couple of easels, with framed pictures upon them; a screen and a lovely bit of old brocade thrown over one panel of it; a few pieces of armour on the walls; one of Fr derick Hollyer's portraits of George Meredith, with a signature in the curious, gnarled, and cramped hand so characteristic of the master-novelist; the latest "Pseudonym," half cut, and the newest volume of Mr. Heinemann's "Internationals"—rare storehouses of drama, if you care to look for it—upon a little table before the wide old-fashioned open grate;—these are the features you notice before the door opens, and Mr. Forbes Robertson hurriedly enters the room.

"Pray pardon me. I was just busy with a young fellow who wants to go on the stage."

"Are you much troubled in that way?"

"Troubled!" and Mr. Robertson's hands and eyes make answer. "Numbers come to me—one or two a week!—think of it!—wanting me to give them a start. Well-educated, intelligent, clever people! It's terrible, awful. I'm only too glad to do what I can. But what on earth is one to say or to do? It is as much a responsibility to discourage as it is to encourage. And where are all the openings to be found?"

"If I were in your place, I know what I should do."

"What?" Mr. Robertson asks, with some surprise.

"Send them all to Mr. Grein!"

"Mr. Grein?"

"Mr. Grein, the head and front, the founder, the life, and the soul of the Independent Theatre," I explain. "He produces unconventional plays. Unconventional plays mean unconventional parts. And these in turn mean striking successes, if the actors have anything in them. Then all the critics are in front. No one shirks an 'Independent.' So it is quite easy for the unknown to wake next morning and find themselves famous, if they get a chance there."

"Thank you. I shall remember. And now, tell me, what is the *raison d' tre* of this Society?"

"Well, so far as I can see, a resolve to produce plays that no one else wants to produce."

"I ask because I don't quite understand what its objects are," continues Mr. Robertson. "I don't get many opportunities of going to the theatre. Of course I read in the papers about its doings; but I don't gather from them what it aims at achieving."

For example, are its plays superior to what you can see at the best West End theatres?"

"Oh, dear, no! by no means!" I make haste to reply.

"Then, if inferior, why produce them? It is not a commercial speculation, I understand?"

"Emphatically, no! Indeed, from what I hear, the inscription which will—in the dim and distant future, let us hope,—be found graven upon the heart of Mr. Grein, is *l'art pour l'art!*"

"Well, it's a mystery. If there were not managers enough to produce all the good plays in existence, or if managers were unwilling to produce the best that were written, such a Society might be of great service to the Stage, but I see no indication of either misfortune. All the managers I know are always holding out open hands for a good play; and when it comes along they are only too delighted to get it. I don't suppose we should have had this revival of the ingenious and clever 'Diplomacy,' if it had not been for the scarcity of good new plays."

"One feather in the Independent cap, I believe, is the proud boast that its plays have not been written down to the box-office level."

"Well, but surely that's a feather that belongs to several other caps as well. Has Pinero written down to the box-office level—with any of his serious plays? 'The Times,' 'The Profligate,' 'Lady Bountiful,' and this last wonderful piece of work? Has Wilde, with either of his comedies? It seems to me that both men have done the best it was in them to do, and the managers have stood by them, and the public have stood by the managers. By the way, was it the Independents who revived 'The Duchess of Malfi?'"

"They lent their name to the production, but the scheme, the labour, and the risk all were William Poel's, I believe."

"Now, there is a remarkable play. The beauty and grandeur of the language are quite haunting; and I should expect the thunder in the verse to roll over the footlights, as it rarely does even in Shakespeare. *Bosola* is a fascinating character, too. Murray Carson played it with great power, I heard. As to that, I hear he plays everything with power. It's always good news to learn that an actor's coming along like that."

"Then you don't suffer from Macready's complaint?" I ask. "No sighs and groans, no feeling that the end of all things is at end, when you hear the younger generation knocking at the door?"

"Quite the contrary," rejoins Mr. Robertson, with a quiet smile. "I think it is good for all of us to feel the spur of competition. Particularly in these days of 'acting down,' when



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N. W.

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MR. JOHNSTON FORBES-ROBERTSON.

"Dost like the picture?"

LYTTON.

"THE LADY OF LYONS."

one is so often required to hold oneself in check that there arises a temptation to do no acting at all. No. The noise of the younger generation knocking at the door is stimulating. It puts one on one's mettle, and everyone is the gainer by that."

"You feel it a strain to 'act down,' as you describe it?"

"A great strain. If I act in Shakespeare, for instance—*Romeo*, let us say—I feel horribly nervous, and a little frightened by the bigness of the undertaking. But at the same time I feel sustained by a sense of elevation. If it's a high hill to climb, there is encouragement to be got from the simple fact of making the effort to climb it. But in so many modern plays, from the minute you come on and right away through, you must be saying to yourself, 'Quietly, quietly; don't let yourself go; play down, down, down.' It must have been very much like that for the English at Waterloo. Your blood's up and you're longing to charge all the time, but you have to wait for the 'Up Guards and at 'em,' which nine times out of ten never comes. We're all so dreadfully unemotional nowadays, that it becomes terribly difficult to suggest passion without getting out of harmony with the prevailing tone."

"What is such a part as you speak of?"

"Well, I might instance *Julian Beauclerc*, but there's a far better example in *Aubrey Tanqueray*. I should tell you that I've not seen the play, but I've read it. What a play it is! Superb! And superb, I am told, is Mrs. Campbell in it. You agree? Ah! 'A strain of real genius in her?' Really; you make me doubly anxious to see it. Well, look at *Aubrey*, he is just as prominent a figure in the picture as *Paula*. His life is just as much a hell as hers. His tortures are equal to hers, if, indeed, they are not worse. And all this he must show and make the audience see and feel—without once breaking through the well-bred crust of self-restraint. Speaking for myself, I find these self-contained, complex, modern men, who must be central figures without anything in particular to do, and express passion without ever being in one, most difficult and exhausting; and I think you would find Alexander infinitely preferring—let us say *Macduff* to this brilliantly drawn *Mr. Tanqueray*."

"Then you were happier at the Court than you are now?"

"Oh, I won't say that. But the Court was a delightful engagement, for Madame Modjeska was such a charming woman to act with. Such an unselfish creature. The most unselfish actress I ever played with! and such an artist! During my trip to America a little while ago, she passed through New York while I was there, and I called at her hotel. She had left for Canada a quarter of an hour before—no one knew which way she

had gone—and I was left lamenting, like the poor gentleman in the ballad. But my hotel-clerk, a genius in his way, made some abstruse mathematical calculations, decided that she must be travelling by a certain route, and sent me post haste in pursuit. He was right. I found Madame Modjeska on the platform surrounded by a troop of friends—she is idolized out there!—and I had just five minutes' chat before the train started. She was just as young as ever, just as charming, and just as divided in her devotion between her farm and the stage. I never expected to see a more natural, a more truthful *Camille* than she made; but I must confess Eleonora Duse's was a revelation. I was invalided, or I should have missed seeing it. However, if I was too ill to act, I was not too ill to see others acting, so I crept down one evening to the Lyric Theatre and saw certainly a wonderful work of art. The effect was that of nature itself, though anything in reality less spontaneous I never witnessed."

"But this is all the past. What of the future? Do you read any signs of a revival of the romantic drama? Is your influence to be thrown upon that side of the balance?"

"The only revival of interest in the romantic drama which I see is the interest inevitably aroused by anything good. 'Sowing the Wind' is a case in point. Mr. Grundy has compared it to 'Sweet Lavender,' so I can follow suit. You see it doesn't matter in the least that the stories are, in the main, identical; nor that the earlier play ran for 800 nights; nor that the later one deals with a dead and gone age, and manners and fashions regarded nowadays with ridicule. It is good. That is enough. It is true to human nature—as that much-debated piece of common property is understood by the average man. And that is really all you have to be sure of in a play. With that at your back, you can set your story in the middle ages, or the time of the Roman Conquest, or the antediluvian period, with absolute safety. So at least it appears to me."

"Then, when you join the actor-managers, your policy will not be poetical drama, tragedy, romantic drama, or anything in particular, but, speaking broadly, what is good?"

"Certainly, if I went into management, 'anything good' would be my aim. But these are early days to discuss management. I know rumours are about, but nothing is settled yet. Indeed, I may say that the future is quite uncertain, beyond the term for which I have signed with Mr. Hare."

And Mr. Robertson, with an admission that he thinks his speaking portrait—still on the easel—of Mr. Harry Irving a successful one, turns the talk upon that young actor, remarks upon "that distinguished look of his father" which he bears, warmly

praises his acting in a "A Fool's Paradise," predicts success for him now that he has returned to the stage, and, suddenly discovering that he is due at the Garrick, exchanges hurried good-byes and hastens away.



A Dramatic Funeral.*

FOR twenty-five years he had played the rôle of the villain in the Boulevard du Crime,† and his harsh voice, his nose like an eagle's beak, his eye, with its savage glitter, had made him a good player in such parts. For twenty-five years, dressed in the cloak and encircled by the fawn-coloured leather belt of *Mordaunt*, he had retreated, with the step of a wounded scorpion, before the sword of *D'Artagnan*; draped in the dirty Jewish gown of *Rodin*, he had rubbed his dry hands together, muttering the terrible "Patience, patience!" and, curled on the chair of the *Duc D'Este*, he had said to *Lucretia Borgia*, with a sufficiently infernal glance, "Take care, and make no mistake. The flagon of gold, madame." When, preceded by a tremolo, he had made his entry in the scene, the third gallery trembled, and a sigh of relief greeted the moment when the first walking gentleman at last said to him, "Between us two, now," and immolated him for the grand triumph of virtue. But this sort of success, which is only betrayed by murmurs of horror, is not of the kind to make a dramatic career seductive; and, besides, the old actor had always hidden in a corner of his heart the bucolic ideal which is in the heart of almost all artists. He sighed for an old age of leisure, and the comfortable dignity of a retired shopkeeper; the house in the country, where he could live with his family, with melons, under an arbour; cakes and wine in the winter evenings; his daughter a scholar in a convent;

* From "Ten Tales," by François Coppée, published by Messrs. Osgood, McIlvaine and Co.

† A nickname given to the Boulevard du Temple on account of the numerous melodramatic theatres situated there.

his son in the uniform of the Polytechnique, and the Cross of the Legion. Now, when we had occasion to know him, he had already nearly realised his dreams. After the failure of the theatre where he had been for a long time engaged, some capitalists had thought of him to put the enterprise on its feet again. With his systematic habits, his good sense, his thorough and practical knowledge of the business, and a sufficiently correct literary instinct, he became an excellent manager. He was the owner of stocks and a villa at Montmorency; his son was a student at Saint-Barbe, and his daughter had just come out of Les Oiseaux; and if the malice of small newspapers had retarded his nomination in the Legion of Honour by recalling every year, about the first of January, his old ranting on the stage when he played formerly the villain's parts, he could yet hope that it would not be long before the red ribbon would flourish in his button-hole. He had still preserved some of the habits of a strolling player, such as being very familiar with everybody, and dyeing his mustaches; but as he was, on the whole, good, honest, and serviceable, he conquered the esteem and friendship of those with whom he came in contact.

So it was with sincere grief that the whole dramatic world learned one day the terrible sorrow which had smitten that excellent man. His daughter, a girl of seventeen, had died suddenly of brain fever. We knew how he adored the child, how he had brought her up in the strictest principles of family and religion, far from the theatre, something as *Triboulet* hid his daughter *Blanche* in the little house of the cul-de-sac Bucy. We understood that all the hopes and ambitions of the man rested on the head of that charming girl, who, near all the corruption of the theatre, had grown up in innocence and purity, as one sees sometimes in the scanty grass of the faubourgs a field-flower spring up by the door of a hovel.

We were among the first at the funeral, to which we had been summoned by a black-bordered *billet*.

A crowd of the people of the neighbourhood encumbered the street before the house of the dead, attracted by the pomps of the first-class funeral ordered by the old comedian, who had preserved the taste of the *mise en scène* even in his grief. The magnificent hearse and cumbrous mourning-coaches were already drawn up to the side walk, and under the door, and in the shade of the heavy-fringed and silvered draperies, amid the twinkling of burning candles, between two priests reading prayers in their prayer books, the form of the massive coffin could be seen under its white cloth, covered with Parma violets.

As we walked among the crowd we noticed the groups

formed of those who, like us, were awaiting the departure of the cortége. There were almost all the actors, men and women, of Paris, who had come to pay their last respects to the daughter of their comrade. Undoubtedly nothing could be more natural; but we experienced not the less a strange sensation on seeing around the coffin of that pure young girl who had breathed away her last breath in a prayer, the gathering of all those faces marked by the brand of the theatre. They were all there—the stars, the comedians, the lovers, the traitors; nobody was lacking—soubrettes, duennas, coquettes, first walking ladies. Wearing a sack-coat and a felt hat on his long grey hair, the superb adventurer of all the cloak and sword dramas leaned against the shutter of a shop in his familiar attitude, and crossed his arms to show his handsome hands; while a little old fellow with the wrinkled face of a clown spoke to him briskly in the broad, harsh voice which had so often made us explode with laughter. By the side of the aged first young man, who, pinched in his scanty frock coat, and with trousers trailing under foot, twirled in his gloved hands his locks of over-black hair, stood a great handsome fellow, beautiful as a model, who had not been able to renounce even for that day his eccentricities of costume, and strutted in a black velvet cape and the boots of an equerry. Oh, how sad, tired, and old they seemed in the grey light of that winter morning, all those pathetic heads, graceful or laughable, which we were only in the habit of seeing when transfigured by the prestige of the stage. Chins had become blue-black under too frequent shaving; hair thin and dry under the hot iron of the hairdresser; skins rough under the injurious action of unguents and vinegar; eyes dull, burned by the glare of the foot-lights—blinded, almost fixed, like those of an owl in the sunlight.

The women were especially to be pitied. Obligated by the occasion to rise at a very early hour, and not having had the time for a careful and minute toilet, they gathered in groups of four or five, chilled and shivering in their fur mantles, muffs, and triple black veils. Notwithstanding the hasty rouge and powder of the morning, they were unrecognizable, and it required an effort of imagination to find in them a memory of that sublime seraglio of the Parisian theatres, exposed every evening to the desires of several thousand men. On all of these charming types appeared the mark of weariness and age. Some ossified into faded skeletons, others grew dull with an unhealthy weight of fat; wrinkles crossed the foreheads and starred the temples; lips were livid and eyes circled with dark rings; the complexions were particularly frightful—that uniform tint, morbid and sickly,

the work of rouge and grease paints. That heavy woman, with the head and neck of a farmer's wife (one almost sees a basket on her shoulder), is the terrible and fatal queen of grand, romantic dramas; and that small blonde and pale creature, so faded under her laces, and who would have completely filled a music-teacher's carrying roll, was the artless young woman whom all the vaudevillists married at the dénouement of their pieces. There were the dying glances of the lorette in the hospital, the pose of the old copyist of the Louvre, and the theatrical sneer.

Soon the cabs drove up with the functionaries connected with the administration of the theatre, in black hats and coats, with an official air of sadness; young reporters, the outflow of journalism, staring at everybody, and taking notes; dramatic authors, Monday feuilletonists—in short, all of those nocturnal beings, tired and worn out, who are properly called the actives of Paris.

The groups became more compact, and talked animatedly. Old friends found each other, they shook hands, and in view of the circumstances smiled cordially, while the women saluted each other through their veils.

In passing we could catch fragments of conversation like this: "When will the affair begin?"

"Were you at the opening of the Varietés yesterday?"

Theatrical terms were heard—"My talents," "My charms," "My physique." Some business, even, was done. A new manager was quite surrounded; an old actress organized her benefit. Suddenly there was a movement in the crowd. The undertaker's men had just placed the coffin in the hearse, and the young girls of the Sisterhood of the Virgin, to which the dead girl had belonged, arranged themselves in two lines in their white veils at the side of the funeral-car. Preceded by the master of ceremonies, in silk stockings and a wand of office in his hand, the poor father appeared on the pavement in full mourning, with a white cravat, broken down by grief, and sustained by his friends.

The procession set out and came to the parish church, fortunately near.

There was a grand mass, with music which was not finished. It was too warm in the church, stuffed with people, and the inattention was general. Men who recognized each other saluted with a light movement of the head; some young actors struck attitudes for the benefit of the women, and the pious responded to *Dominus Vobiscum* droned by the priest. At the elevation, from behind the altar, rang out a magnificent *Pie Jesu*, sung by a celebrated baritone, who had never put into his voice so much amorous languor. Outside the churchyard the

small boys of the quarter stood on tiptoe, and, hanging on to the railings, pointed out the celebrities with their fingers.

The office finished, the long defile commenced; and everyone went to the entrance of the church to sprinkle some drops of holy water on the bier, and press the hand of the old actor, who, broken by grief, and having hardly strength to hold his hat, leaned against a pillar. That was the most horrible moment.

Carried away by the habit of playing up to the situation, all these theatrical people put into the token of sympathy which they gave to their friend the character of their employment. The star advanced gravely, and with a three-quarter inclination of his head flashed out the "Look of Fate." The old tragedian with a grey beard assumed a stoical expression, and did not forget to "vibrate" in pronouncing a masculine "Courage!" The clown approached with a short, trotting step, and shaking his head until his cheeks trembled, he murmured, "My poor old fellow!" And the fairy queen, with the sensibility of a sensitive female, threw herself impulsively on the neck of the unhappy father, who, with swollen face, bloodshot eyes, and hanging lip, blackened his face and his gloved hands with the dye of his mustache diluted by tears.

And all the time, a few steps from this grotesque and sinister scene, we could see—last word of this antithesis—the white figures of the young girls of the sisterhood, kneeling on the chairs nearest the coffin of their companion, and who undoubtedly were beseeching God, in their naïve and original prayers, to grant her the paradise of their dreams—a pretty paradise in the Jesuitical style, all in carved and gilded wood, and many-coloured marble, where one could see at the end a tableau in a transparent light; the Virgin crowned with stars, with a serpent under her feet, while little cherubs suspended in mid-air over her head an azure streamer flaming with these words: "*Ecce Regina Angelorum.*"

FRANCOIS COPPEE.



Books of the Play.

Theatrical Notes. By Joseph Knight. Illustrated. London: Lawrence and Bullen.

“The outlook is inspiriting,” says Mr. Joseph Knight in his new book about the English stage, and elsewhere he goes to the kernel of the subject: “Such menace as the prophets of evil see in the present unprecedentedly prosperous state of affairs comes from within rather than from without, from the exacting vanity which the exercise of the most dangerous of callings is apt to breed, and from the intolerance of censure and discipline fostered by continuous success. If any external peril seems to be dreaded, it is that the public in its emancipation from restraint and its enjoyment of privilege, should grow disposed to seek amusement at any cost, and to balance the attractions of a well-managed music-hall against those of some ill-managed theatres.” He leaves the subject in a final word: “That the stage is in a more flourishing condition now than any time in the last half of the century few will deny who recognize that London possesses half-a-dozen theatres able to challenge comparison with the subventioned houses of the Continent.” Here, then, is an optimist, and remembering that Mr. Knight’s penetrating eye has been on the stage for a generation or more, we have an opinion that is as encouraging as it is convincing. Mr. Knight is a critic of great intelligence and scholarly attainments, and it is refreshing to find that an observer so well equipped for detecting the tendency of the modern stage should regard the future with such an absence of misgiving.

But not less satisfactory is Mr. Knight’s reply to the query as to whether we have better actors than we had a generation ago. He confesses he does not find the question easily answered, and though happily we have Mr. Irving, Mr. Tree, Mr. Hare, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Terry, Mr. Willard—to make no mention of the ladies who do full justice to their opportunities—the critic seems to hesitate a moment, remembering that a generation ago Benjamin Webster was in his full glory as a melodramatic actor; that Keeley and Wright had quitted

the stage; that Buckstone was the recognized humorist; that Phelps and Charles Kean were the principal tragedians, and that Miss Helen Faucit (Lady Martin) gave occasional revelations of her marvellous powers. Mr. Knight concludes that single actors as good as any of these may be now mentioned, and admitting that superiors to them are not to be found, yet "none the less the acting of to-day is, as a whole, a wonderful advance upon that previously seen."

Whatever advantage lies on our side in the modern theatre, either in acting or *ensemble*—and the progress in the latter direction must be greatest of all—much, perhaps, may be attributable to the altered constitution of the evening's entertainment. A single piece commencing at eight and concluding at eleven is now considered sufficient for all needs, but the appetite of the playgoer was much more voracious not long since, when an opening and closing farce were essential. This requirement, in a slightly modified form, may be said to still survive at some of our less known theatres. But the curtailment of the programme in all West End houses is not due to any sympathetic consideration or artistic sensibility, but to the lateness of our dinner hour, and that such a miserable domestic incident should develop into a serious factor on the stage, is not a little surprising and significant. This concentration of the business of the entertainment has no doubt quenched the art of the actor—his opportunities being fewer—just as stage effects must be rapidly and vividly obtained.

As may be readily understood, the main value of Mr. Knight's volume lies in the fact that it forms an invaluable means of measuring the extent, and observing the character, of the changes of the period which it covers. He places a generation at somewhere over thirty years, a period sufficiently long, as he points out, to constitute a long time as regards human observation and artistic progress, and a period which at the beginning of the acted drama carried us from Ferrex and Porrex or Gammer Gurton's "Needle," to Marlowe's "Edward II.," and from Marlowe to the first folio of Shakespeare. "As civilisation proceeds," says Mr. Knight, "alteration is less evident. None the less, the last thirty years of the English stage have witnessed more than one change, amounting practically to revolution. Public interest in things theatrical, at the outset slumbering and apparently extinct, has flamed out afresh. The dramatist, once the most underpaid of literary craftsmen, has now the ball at his feet, and new theatres in the parts of London suited to their growth, rise like exhalations." This generation has carried us from the breach with the traditions of "an unambitious and irreverent past," signalled by

the production of the early Robertson comedies. Yet Mr. Knight cannot, we fear, point to any stage work that will illuminate the annals of the drama. We had Byron, Albery, and Wills. "Mr. Byron's pieces," says Mr. Knight, "are the delight of the public, and the despair of the critic." Elsewhere he says, "Mr. Byron burnishes conventional and old-fashioned characters until they shine with all the gloss of novelty, and brightens commonplace situations and action with dialogue not less amusing than extravagant and out of place." Albery, he says, makes no pretence of obedience to discipline; but this chronicle of the work of Wills gives the author of "Olivia" full credit for a play which, claiming to be founded on an incident in "The Vicar of Wakefield," was, except at a few points, wholly original in dialogue, retaining more of the atmosphere of the story, than pieces which are avowedly built upon it, and reproduce textually its language. But potent as any, perhaps, was the influence of Mr. Gilbert, and there is now a quaint interest attaching to such criticism as is contained in these words. "Mr. Gilbert aims at shapeliness and regularity of composition, and is eccentric only in the choice of subject, his happiest efforts being those in which his world is ideal, and his characters are fantastic."

The French drama then, as now, exercised a powerful influence on the stage; but out of it all has grown many a strong piece of home production. Taking the successes of the last season we have "Becket," "Hypatia," "A Woman of No Importance," "Liberty Hall," "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," "The Bauble Shop," "The Amazons," "Walker, London," "Niobe," and "Charley's Aunt," a varied and not altogether unpromising collection. Mr. Knight has not failed to notice the new influence—that of Ibsen—which, if it is not as yet far reaching upon the English stage, has perceptibly affected the work of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones only in a less degree than that of Mr. Pinero. Mr. Knight is himself very guarded in his estimate of the Norwegian poet, and so far from treating him with scorn or indifference, very rightly, in our opinion, concludes that a man who can inspire such admiration and call forth such passion, and form the subject of such repeated discussion and recrimination is not a nobody. The critic has been positively impressed with Ibsen, and having seen "A Doll's House" three times, and "Hedda Gabler" twice as often, declares that he would gladly see both again. There he wisely leaves the subject, and fulsome flatterers and scornful detractors may make what they like of it.

Mr. Knight's volume opens with Mr. Irving's production of "Hamlet" in 1874, and the record closes with 1879, a brief span

in the history of a great art, but sufficient to include many an interesting event. It includes Miss Terry's return to the stage; it records the attempts to revive the Restoration comedies; it measures the expedients of Boucicault, and analyses the methods of Salvini, Rossi, and Ristori. It might be said that Mr. Knight's masterly criticism was all available in the files of the *Athenæum*, but in this handsome volume we are spared the pains of reading of ephemeral productions, and have at hand an index which is a model of excellence. Seven portraits are scattered through the book. First comes the genial critic seated in his study chair, and then follow portraits of Mr. Irving, Miss Terry, Mr. John Hare, Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Wyndham, and Mr. J. L. Toole. Mr. Irving's is excellent—admirable as a portrait and striking as a picture.

Let not Mr. Knight delay the supplementary volume. Its interest will be stronger because the period is nearer to our sympathies.

The Life and Art of Edwin Booth. By William Winter. Illustrated. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

In his preface to this charming Memoir of a "gentle-man," Mr. Winter warns us that "the story is that of a dreamer;" and the picture he paints, in the course of the 158 pages of eulogy devoted to the life of his hero, certainly represents such an one. Is a devoted friend the ideal biographer, must always remain an open question. On the one hand, he has seen his sovereign with his crown off, and his feet upon the favourite footstool by the fire. On the other, he is pestered by temptations, from which another would be free, to suppress all that makes against what he would wish his dead friend to appear.

In the case of Edwin Booth, Mr. Winter has consciously or unconsciously achieved a portrait in monotint; and one laments the absence of colouring matter. It could hardly be that a man who exercised such influence over the public at large was merely the gentle, reserved, retiring, melancholy dreamer sympathetically sketched in this fascinating book. If, however, Mr. Winter has elected to show but one side of Booth's character, to that side he has done justice. One might be excused, after witnessing his work upon the English stage, from worshipping the actor; but not, after perusing these pages, from loving the man. And the man, as might be expected, dominates the actor throughout.

Mr. Winter has much to say of Booth's art, no less than 100 pages indeed of graceful and passionate praise, in the luxuriant and vivid style which has won for him the title of "The Clement

Scott of America." But, eloquent and effective as these essays are, he does better service in faithfully recording, than in thus interpreting, the actor's views. It is of little value to learn that in Mr. Winter's judgment something which Booth did in "Macbeth" came "home to the heart with a sense of actual and corrosive agony;" whereas we are brought face to face with the man himself by the statement that "he knew that art is romantic," and that "the moment romance was sacrificed to reality, acting becomes worse than useless and the stage is dead." Booth firmly believed, it appears, that "the contemporary taste for what is called 'nature,' but really is prosaic and spiritless photography, will run its course and expire, and that the community will revert to its old allegiance to romance and beauty."

The Life is punctuated with many admirable and exquisitely reproduced portraits of the famous actor—in "character" and out of it—and a very full and accurate history of his career accompanies the narrative. In this, one mistake and at least one omission have been made. His English season in 1882 is said (p. 116) to have been played at the Princess's Theatre. It was, of course, at the Adelphi. And no mention is made of his acting with Salvini. Perhaps the most potential incident in Booth's life was the proposal of John S. Clarke that the London Lyceum should be run in conjunction with Booth's Theatre in New York. Booth favoured the plan, mapped out a programme, and entered into negotiations which, however, through vacillation, came to nothing; and the theatre immediately fell into the hands of H. L. Bateman, whose rising star was Henry Irving. Had Booth secured it! Here is a field for speculation!

The Homes and Haunts of Shakespeare. By James Leon Williams. With an Introduction by Horace Howard Furness. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

No more magnificent tribute to the genius of Shakespeare ever appeared than this most superb volume. And no volume has issued from the press reflecting greater credit upon all the arts and crafts involved in the making of such a sumptuous book. There are illustrations at every opening—fifteen plates in water colour, forty-five full-page photogravures, and more than one hundred and fifty other illustrations. After looking through this wonderful collection of pictures one may well read the words of the editor when he says, "A deep debt of gratitude is due both to the artists and to the publishers from all of us, not alone from those who have been privileged to look with



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.
(From "The Homes and Haunts of Shakespeare.")

bodily eyes upon these very scenes, but from those also who with the mind's eye only can behold them: memory is refreshed, imagination is quickened, and the culture of both is deepened by works thus thoroughly artistic in design and in execution." But above its artistic beauty there is the value attaching to such a volume, as vividly reflecting the scenes wherein Shakespeare spent his earliest and perhaps most impressionable years. It may be true that Shakespeare would not have been the dramatist he was had he never come into touch with the activity of the capital city, but it is perhaps safe to say that he could never have been the poet he was had he not been nurtured amid homes and haunts so interesting and picturesque.

Sweet Lavender. Comedy in Three Acts. By Arthur W. Pinero. W. Heinemann.

Lady Windermere's Fan. Comedy in Four Acts. By Oscar Wilde. Mathews and Lane.

Nothing could have been happier than the simultaneous appearance in book form of these popular plays. Representative works of our premier dramatist and our premier (stage) wit, they are alike in possessing a literary quality, alike in effecting a clever compromise with realism and romance, alike in being at once eminently readable and supremely actable, and utterly unlike in everything else. Once again it is genius *versus* talent. Judged by the standard of the study, Mr. Pinero frankly selects a theatrical theme and a group of semi-theatrical folk: but his treatment is so naturalistic, his humour so tender, his pathos so bright, that he almost persuades us to accept this fairyland as England. Mr. Wilde, on the contrary, favouring actuality, picks his people from the club and ball room, sets them to work in the actual world of Society, and the result is something as unlike Nature as Academic art. In either case the literary workmanship is fine, but *Lady Windermere* appropriately flashes with the hard brilliance of diamonds, whereas *Sweet Lavender* shines with the soft lustre of a simple string of pearls. One yields fragrance and sunshine, the other gas and the reek of midnight oil. And while Mr. Pinero's comedy, though nearly six years old, is as fresh to-day as when he first got the scent of lavender over the footlights, Mr. Wilde's, *setat* 2, already "dates" and sets one thinking why, a few months since, it was accounted "wit" to credit a woman with a Nonconformist conscience. The internal differences are manifest upon the covers, and the plays betray their mission at a glance. Mr. Wilde's is a sumptuous affair, daintily designed for the dilettante—for the very, very few. Mr. Pinero's wears a workaday look, as though meant for the multitude, which some day, perhaps, it will reach when Mr. Heinemann lowers its price. RALPH HALL CAINE.

A Man's Heart.



JACQUETTE ROUBLOT came to the door of her father's little cottage, and gazed with sad eyes over the sea, ablaze with the glory of the setting sun, and dotted here and there with little fishing boats, preparing for their nightly errand.

The rugged fishing village of Les Bossus, with its mounds of black rock, like hunched backs pushing up through the sands, was a poor and uncanny little place, and the cottage of old Justin Roublot was one of the poorest and smallest in it.

Sixty years spent in his native village, for the most part battling with the sea for a livelihood as persistently as any fisherman along the coast of Brittany, had made him old for his age. Rheumatism had gripped his frame hard now and then, and left its traces in the bowed shoulders; his rugged face was tanned as brown as the sails of his boat, and time and toil and trouble had drawn deep and crooked furrows about his eyes and mouth.

Year after year he had fought on, cheered by the companionship of his daughter, but latterly he had made but a poor thing of it, and now he lay weak and broken, his muscular frame lax and full of pain, and his mind as ill at ease as his body.

All day long his little Jacquette, as old Roublot still called her, although she was nineteen years old, and womanly for her age, and could pull an oar well nigh as hard as he could, had waited upon the sick man hand and foot, and even now the trouble in her eyes was for him.

The worry which bothers careful little women all the world over, in big houses in Paris or London no less than in a two-roomed cottage in a Breton fishing village, the inability to make both ends meet, the sense of helplessness which comes when *le dernier sou* is reached, had come to Jacquette Roublot, and the glory of the sunset was dimmed for her by unshed tears.

All at once her expression changed. The light of hope shone in her bright dark eyes; resolution made her set her red lips

firmly, and the colour came and went as with a quick, impetuous gesture she put up both her plump brown hands to her head, and pushed back the heavy coils of dark hair, the beauty and abundance of which not even her close-fitting linen cap could hide.

The immediate cause of the air of relief which had suddenly revealed itself in her face was a man. Not a young man, not a handsome man, nothing of the lover, be it said. But at the moment it is doubtful whether the smartest young fisherman in Les Bossus would have been as welcome to Jacqueline, although she had all a woman's love of little coquetries and conquests, as the bent and wizen creature who came slowly up the narrow, uneven street, bending under the weight of a pack slung across his narrow shoulders.

"Simon Lazare!" she cried, breathlessly, not intending that he should hear her, but, in her excitement, speaking more loudly than she knew.

"Simon Lazare it is, my pretty Jacqueline," echoed the old Jew, stepping, as he spoke, up the three rough stone steps which led to the door of Justin Roublot's cottage, "and what can I tempt you with this beautiful evening? A new cap, some pretty ribbons such as the ladies are wearing in Brest, and in Boulogne, and even in Paris—Paris, my pretty one! Now tell me, Ma'amselle Jacqueline, can I sell you some earrings, a brooch, a necklace? It is a shame so much beauty should not be set off by even a single bit of jewellery."

"No; I have no money," replied Jacqueline, with a quick little sigh; adding quickly: "And father is ill, very ill, and wants wine and good food and things that cost money—and——" she paused, and put up her hands to her head.

"Well, my little one," said Simon Lazare, with his most benevolent air and a smile which he tried hard not to make cunning, "I have told you many a time that if I had a head of hair like yours I would never be short of pocket-money or money's worth at a pinch. And I have plenty of room for it—look!"

As he spoke he opened his pack, and lifting an inner tray displayed some dozens of long tresses of hair—black, brown, glossy; fine as silk, coarse, smooth, tangled, such a mass of many shades and textures, which he had bought or bartered for cheap jewellery and tawdry finery from the peasant women and girls of the villages through which he had already passed. For Simon Lazare was agent for a big house in the capital, and these shorn locks of the Breton women were destined to adorn the heads of the fashionable ladies of Paris.

"None quite like yours, pretty one," he said, coaxingly; then he hastened to add, lest she should take too much advan-

stage of his admission, "but it is not as if it were gold, my dear, after all. For gold—gold of the right shade and as fine as spun silk, I would give you—ah! I would give you its weight in silver."

"Well, it is no good talking of what you would give if it were what it is not," said the girl a little pettishly.

"Now, now, my dear," returned the old man in wheedling tones, for he had more than once tried to induce Jacquette to make a bargain with him upon previous visits to the village, but without success, "you know I always pay too much, and it is that which keeps me a poor man."

"I should like to be just as poor as you are," retorted the girl with a light laugh. "But tell me what will you give?"

"You mean it?"

"Of course I mean it. My father may die for lack of good things unless something is done. Do you think I am not daughter enough to sacrifice so much for him? But I mean to be paid for it."

"Certainly—and who would pay you better than your old Simon? Come—how much do you want for it?"

"Twenty francs."

The old man almost screamed with affected horror, throwing up his hands into the air as he cried: "Twenty francs! twenty francs! You women have no conscience! Twenty francs! It is madness, nothing else!"

"Fifteen, then."

"Fifteen—just as bad, all but five; and what is five francs?" retorted Simon with unconscious inconsistency.

"I will have fifteen or nothing," said Jacquette, with a stamp of her little foot.

"Very well, then. Nothing it will be," and the Jew shut up his pack and moved away. But after going a few paces he turned and said: "Come, I will give you five francs—because your father is ill; but it will be a loss to me—two francs out of my own pocket at the least."

But Jacquette made as though she heard nothing.

"Five francs, and a good price too," persisted the agent.

"Fifteen."

"Bah! It is no use talking business to a bit of a girl. Come, six francs and not a centime more."

"Fifteen."

"Well, well, of all the hard bargains give me a girl in her teens. And who would have thought it of such a pretty one as Jacquette Roublot. Eh, well! I suppose I shall have to give in. I shall have to give up the business. I have too much heart for it. A

woman can just twist me round her little finger. Seven francs fifty is my last word."

And at last, after haggling almost centime by centime, a bargain was struck at ten francs, and ten minutes later Simon Lazare went his way with two superb tresses of hair, soft as silk and black as night, and Jacquette Roublot put on her cap—not her usual Breton headgear, but a more showy affair such as the women of Boulogne wear, which had been given to her on her



last fête-day by Rodolphe Linotte, from whom she was every moment expecting a visit.

A little square of looking-glass hung upon the wall within the door of the cottage, and she had just time to give a hasty glance at the reflection of her pretty face and one rumpling tug at the soft vagrant curls which strayed from under the frilled cap and fell upon her forehead, as she heard a man whistling a cheerful tune as he came in the direction of the cottage.

"Good evening, Jacquette," he said, as he sat down by the side of the steps, with his basket in front of him. "You are wearing my little present, I see. That is very good of you."

"No; it was good of you to think of me when you were in Boulogne—so gay, with numbers of girls after you without doubt."

"You flatter me, my little one," said the young fellow, laughing, and showing strong white teeth and a mouth that looked hard and cruel beneath his thin fair moustache. "But you know I have eyes for no one but Jacquette Roublot, ever since——"

"Hush, here is Pierre Leblanc," said the girl, hastily, as a lad

in fisherman's garb, and carrying a bunch of flowers, came in sight down the narrow street.

The lad's frame was sturdy and well-knit, his complexion and hair dark, and in his eyes something at once firm, gentle, trustable, like those of some honest, faithful dog.

"Confound him! I wonder you care what a boy like that hears or sees or thinks," said Rodolphe, irritably. "I wanted to have a good talk with you to-night. Can you come out again presently?"

"My father is so ill——"

"There is always something."

"Oh, Rodolphe, you know I would come if I could."

"Well, I am not going to stay now, with this young lout here. I shall see you to-morrow at the Pardon. And after—we will get a dance together. Till to-morrow, then." And without more ado the young fellow just pressed her hand and went away, apparently very unwilling to meet the lad whom he affected to despise.

When Pierre Leblanc had noticed who was with Jacquette, his first instinct had been to turn back; but then his dogged resolution conquered, and he came steadily on, reaching the steps within a few seconds of Rodolphe's departure.

"I have brought you a few flowers, Jacquette," he blurted out in his boyish, rugged way. "I thought you might like them for the Pardon to-morrow. How is your father to-night?"

"No better, Pierre. Thank you for the flowers. It was very nice of you to think of me," and the girl took the bunch and nodded pleasantly to him in her bright way.

"No better. It is hard work for you to nurse him, Jacquette, and to——I wish I could help you," said Pierre, with a wistful look in his dog-like eyes.

"You are a good, kind boy, Pierre——"

"Boy—boy!" he interrupted, a little hotly; "you

always treat me as a boy, Jacquette. If I am almost a boy in years, I have a man's strength—and a man's heart," he added, sturdily.



“ I meant nothing, Pierre. It seems so natural to think of you as a boy. You see I have known you since we went stumbling, hand-in-hand, over the rocks when the tide was out—two little ones together.”

“ Yet you think more now of that Rodolphe Linotte, whom you have not known six months, than you do of me, whom you have known all your life. I wish you would not wear that cap, *Jacquette*. It does not suit you as well as our simple Breton ones.”

She smiled at his little burst of jealousy, and said mischievously: “ You are not very polite, Pierre. Fortunately, my glass tells me differently.”

“ Forgive me, *Jacquette*. I did not mean to be rude. You know there is no one so beautiful in my eyes, whatever you wear.”

“ Silly boy! But I shall wear it if I like. There is no harm——”

“ You wear it to please him. That is the harm.”

“ I wear it to please myself. Now, Pierre, do not be stupid, or I will not dance with you to-morrow.”

“ You will then, if I let you wear——”

“ Let?”

“ Oh, *Jacquette*! I know I have no right to speak to you like that; but will you not give me the right?” blurted out the lad in his honest, blundering way.

“ The right to tyrannize over me? I think not, thank you, M. Pierre Leblanc,” and *Jacquette* made a mock curtsy, and laughed merrily.

But the lad was in earnest now, and, having broken the ice, his words poured out in a flood of simple appeal.

“ Let me take care of you, dear! If I am young, I am nearly as old as you are; and last season I earned a hundred and fifty francs a month, and this year I am to have a share of the seine-fishing, and shall make two hundred or more; and I love you so, *Jacquette*. No one could love you as I do; and your father is getting old, and if he should die, you will be all alone in the world. Oh, *Jacquette*, tell me you will be my wife——”

The girl listened, and her colour came and went. Presently she put up her hands to her ears, with a pretty gesture, and said, “ No, no, Pierre, do not ask me—not now—not now—I will not listen. See—do not think of me like that. Good-bye now, till to-morrow.”

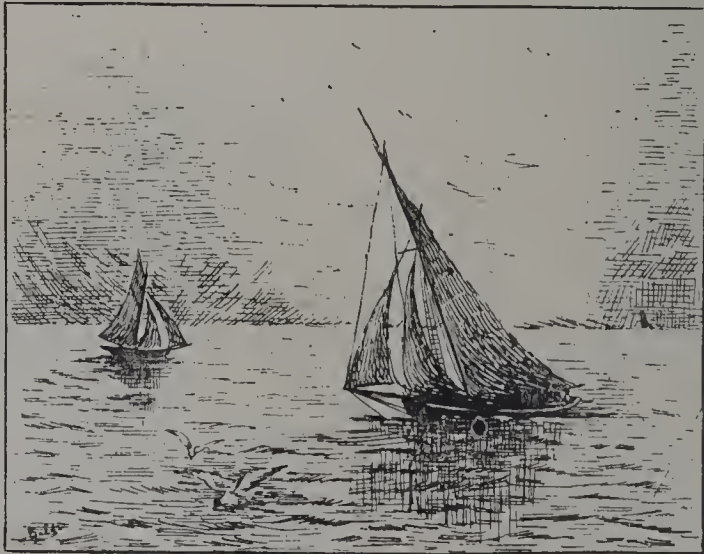
And before the lad could stop her, *Jacquette* had run away into the cottage and closed the door. Pierre noticed, though, that she took his flowers with her, and that, despite her words,

she had not seemed ill pleased. So he went away, not hopeless, and telling himself that now at least she knew the truth.

Presently, with two francs of the money for which she had sacrificed her hair, Jacquette went down to the one little shop where she could buy some small comforts for her father. Her two lovers were constantly in her mind, and the strife of feelings which the thought of them set up made her depressed. It was with a superstitious dread that she noticed as she returned that the beautiful sunset was fast being superseded by a stormy night, and when, an hour later, darkness had fallen, and with it a storm, she stood at the window looking out over the stretch of waters, almost invisible save just near the shore, with a miserable foreboding of evil to come.

Born and bred by the sea, the sight of it yet often made her sad, and in her heart she repeated unwittingly and wordlessly the sad chant of the great poet of the sea:—

“Here still, though the wave and the wind seem lovers
Lulled half asleep by their own soft words,
A dream as of death in the sunlight hovers,
And a sign in the motions and cries of the birds.
Dark auguries and keen from the sweet sea-swallows
Strike noon with a sense as of midnight’s breath,
And the wing that flies and the wing that follows
Are as types of the wings of death.”



And it was of death that the sea seemed to speak to Jacquette Roublot to-night. And within the inner room her father lay grievously sick. Her soul was burdened and sad, and torn with conflicting thoughts. She stood an hour looking over the sea and listening dully to its dirge-like chant. Then, remembering, woman-like, that she ought to look her best on the morrow, she went into her father’s room, saw that he was sleep-

ing, undressed, said a prayer to the Virgin, and lay down to sleep. She prayed for Rodolphe, but she prayed for Pierre, too; and, before putting out her light, she looked at the flowers he had bought for her, and by a sudden impulse raised them to her lips.

The morrow was the great day of the year at Les Bossus, and, happily, it broke fair and calm.

From early morning the good Curé of the quaint little Chapelle de Saint Dominique du Pouce had been astir and busy with preparations for the ceremony of the Pardon des Oiseaux, and the children of the village had been hard at work for many days making little cages, in which on the great day the birds should be placed and sold.

Happily, too, old Justin Roublot took a turn for the better in the night, and would not hear of Jacquette losing her share of the fête.

“Go, my little one. I shall do very well, and the fresh air will bring back the colour to your cheeks. You have got quite pale, dear, nursing me. Go, and be very happy.”

So Jacquette donned her best clothes, and, out of coquetry, her Boulognaise cap which Rodolphe had given her, and, with Pierre's bouquet in the bosom of her dress, went out to join the stream of pilgrims to the little chapel on the hill.

Presently she met the procession, and with it went her way. Cripples, hoping for alms or for relief from their ailments could they but get the luck of touching the Holy Thumb of the Saint in its crystal case; children, bearing offerings of birds and flowers; men and women, gaily dressed and chattering glibly while they awaited the coming of the good Curé, Père Sébastien, and his fellow-clergy from neighbouring villages; ballad singers chanting their simple staves and selling copies for a few centimes to those who would buy. And presently the priests, with acolytes and censers, banners and reliquaries, and, prime attraction of all, the Holy Thumb of Saint Dominique, to touch which the crowd pressed round in a surging mass.

At last the chapel was reached, the short service performed, not much to the edification of Jacquette, whose thoughts were with Rodolphe and Pierre, neither of whom she had yet seen. But she felt pretty sure that the promise of a dance would bring both of them by-and-bye. Nor was she mistaken.

The religious part of the Pardon being finished to the satisfaction of everyone, groups made their way to various centres, chiefly small farmhouses and inns near the village, where singing, dancing, and drinking took the place of devotion, and were indulged in with at least as much enthusiasm.

Jacquette Roublot, having first looked in at the cottage to see

that her father was comfortable, and finding him better and eager not to rob her of her little pleasuring, returned to the *auberge* of Madame Vintras, the "Red Boot," where, as she had anticipated, she found both Rodolphe and Pierre eager to claim the fulfilment of her promise.

Her arrival was the signal for a general movement of interest, for she was by far the prettiest girl in the place, and Rodolphe Linotte promptly left Toinette Pommardon, a showy, fair girl, with a lot of twisted yellow hair, with whom he had been talking, and with whom, too, gossip had coupled his name very closely for some time past.

His sudden defection was noticed, and two or three women glanced at Toinette with a sneering laugh which roused the spirit of jealousy in her in a moment.

She crossed to where Rodolphe and Jacquette were standing, and said in her high, nasal tones: "These may be Les Bossus manners, M. Rodolphe, but let me tell you that in Paris no gentleman would think of leaving a lady for the first fisher-girl that crossed his path."

Jacquette flushed scarlet, and then turned deadly pale. In the hard voice of this brazen woman she seemed to read threat of judgment upon her for leaving her father for her own pleasure.

But she said nothing, and Rodolphe only gave a rather forced laugh, and said: "All right, Toinette. You need not grudge me just one dance," and in another moment he had caught Jacquette

round the waist and was whirling her round in the midst of a circle of laughing, sometimes malicious faces. And Pierre Leblanc, who had heard and seen it all, watched them with pain and anger in his eyes.

Not so lightly would *he* have treated the faintest approach to insult of one for whom he would gladly

give his life if need were.

Not one but three dances Rodolphe danced with Jacquette before he would release her, and with each moment the rage of



Toinette Pommardon became more ungovernable. At last, breathless and laughing recklessly, for he was a little tipsy, Rodolphe led his partner to a seat and sat down beside her.

This was the last straw, and Toinette, her hard, blue eyes glittering with passion, stalked up to the couple, and with a brutal cry: "See the beggarly girl he leaves me for," tore the cap from Jacquette's head, showing her cropped hair.

The vile insult caused Jacquette to spring to her feet in terror, but Rodolphe only threw his arm round her waist, and, with a tipsy laugh, cried: "Come, little ones, do not be silly. Come, kiss, and be friends!"

With a look of horror in her eyes, Jacquette tore herself from his grasp, and would have rushed away, but she felt her wrist seized, and she saw at her side, with set face and breast heaving with passion, Pierre Leblanc.

"Wait a moment, I will take you home. It is not safe to go alone with that woman about," he muttered, suddenly assuming the air of manly strength which brave, honest souls develop without effort in time of need.

She sank down upon a seat, too frightened to oppose his will, and secretly thankful that she had found such a champion.

Then Pierre Leblanc strode to where Rodolphe Linotte sat chuckling stupidly, and said hoarsely: "Come and beg Mademoiselle Roublot's pardon."

Rodolphe took no notice, beyond giving the lad an impudent stare.

Then Pierre struck him full in the face with the one word, "Coward!" and left him.

But even Rodolphe Linotte, poltroon as he was, could not suffer this humiliation without some show of resentment, and he started up to follow Leblanc. The others urged him on, and soon Pierre and Jacquette found themselves the centre of a surging crowd, while Rodolphe, blustering and using foul language about them both, pressed on him with uplifted hand.

"You *will* have it, then?" said Pierre; adding quickly to Jacquette, "Go away now, this is not fit for you;" and then he set himself to read Linotte a lesson he would not speedily forget.

Toinette Pommardon, who, in her erratic fashion, really cared for Rodolphe, now threw herself upon Pierre, endeavouring to drag him away from her lover, when suddenly Leblanc gave a sharp cry and fell to the ground with a knife thrust into his side.

Swiftly and silently Rodolphe slid through the crowd in the tumult which followed, and made his escape, and scarcely had he done so when the Curé made his appearance.

“What is this, my children? Profaning the fête-day of our Saint with brawling?”

“Worse than that, Père Sébastien. It is murder!” said a woman’s voice.

“Murder!” and in another moment the good priest was on his knees by the wounded man.

“Air—give him air. Now then, some of you. Here, George, Victor, Alexandre, come, give a hand. We must carry him within.”

A dozen pairs of hands were quickly at the good priest’s disposal, for with all their rough ways the Breton folk were good-hearted, and Pierre Leblanc was carried tenderly into the *auberge* and laid upon the best bed in the house.

For a week he lay between life and death, nursed with unwearying devotion by Madame Vintras, by Jacquette, by Père Sébastien, who was as skilful as a doctor and as gentle as a woman.

Upon the eighth day after he had proved that a man’s heart was in his boy breast, he spoke:

“Jacquette!”

“I am here, Pierre.”

“Jacquette—are you safe?”

The days were all blotted out in his memory.

“Quite safe, dear Pierre. And you?”

“I think I have been ill. Ah! I remember. But—Jacquette—I am well now, with you by my side.”

The landlady and the good priest stole from the room.

Then, with a sudden cry in which sorrow for the past, promise for the future, and a great love for the lad who had so nearly given his life for her, seemed to speak, Jacquette threw her arms round the boy’s neck and kissed him once on the lips.

* * * * *

Nothing more was ever heard of Rodolphe Linotte and Toinette Pommard, save vague rumours that they had been seen in Paris in one of the worst of the *auberges* in the thieves’ quarter. But the life of Paris was of small concern to the quiet dwellers in Les Bossus, and as for Pierre and Jacquette, nothing in the wide world could trouble them any more or rob them of their joy and their love, for had not the good Curé, within six months of the *affaire Linotte*, as it is still spoken of in Les Bossus, breathed upon them the benison of the Church, and at his dearly-loved little Chapelle de Saint Dominique du Pouce, made them man and wife?

ARTHUR GODDARD.

Condensed Dramas.

No. VI.—“A CRITIC'S CHRISTMAS NIGHTMARE.”

ACT I.

SCENE—A Butcher's Shop in Bloomsbury.

Aubrey Tanqueray, Junr. (clothed in butcherial blue, is calculating the cost of joints in a corner). And now to solve the daily enigma of my life— $9\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. of mutton at $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pound. Ah, me! What can it be, I wonder!

Lord Illingworth (strolls in): My dear Aubrey, it is the Uneatable expressed in terms of the Unknowable.

Aubrey: Thank you! That epigram, entered in the money column, shall add a literary flavour to Mrs. Jones's weekly account (*rises*). And now, Lord Illingworth, a word with you. I have invited you to the purlieus of a Meat Emporium in order that you may hear from my own lips that——

Lord Ill.: Aubrey, I know all. Fired with that chivalrous devotion, which is the glory of the domestic drama, you have quitted the Patrician Home of your Ancestors; and, all for the love of the lady in the two-pair back, are making the welkin ring with the “Buy! buy! buy!” of the humble butcher.

Aubrey: Yes, I love her with the honest manly love of a hero, but—she has a Past.

Lord Ill.: My dear Aubrey, there is nothing more charming in a heroine than a Past—for so endowed she palpitates with Potentialities. She is the *paté-de-foie-gras* of the Matrimonial Banquet—unwholesome, but exceedingly appetising.

Aubrey: You know the lady, I think?

Lord Ill.: I do.

Aubrey: You knew her first as *Esther* in “Caste”?

Lord Ill. (*hesitatingly*): Well I——

Aubrey (*struggling with emotion*): Tell me. I insist.

Lord Ill. (*with an effort*): It is true.

Aubrey (*sighs*): Ah! There is something also about a milk jug in “School”? (*Pause.*) Answer me!

Lord Ill. (*unwillingly*): There is. She held it.

Aubrey: And was assisted in her love-sick feelings by one *Beaufoy*?

Lord Ill.: Alas! that also is too true.

Aubrey: She now goes by the name of *Grace Chilworth*; but she has no right even to that appellation; her real name is *Heroine Romantick*. I tell you all this in order that you may not imagine that I have been lured into an alliance with one who has led me to believe that she is a dramatic novelty. I know her to be, what she really is, an ordinary theatrical convention. (*A pause. Then Aubrey grasps a shin of beef convulsively, and Lord Illingworth smokes a cigarette.*)

Todman (a master butcher, enters): Lord Hillingworth, I am proud to welcome you to my 'umble 'ome; but things with me is queer. I've got rheumatics in my fore quarters, lumbago in my brisket, and Fate is now a sharpenin' of her steel previous to conductin' me to the slaughter 'ouse. I would say more, but my stock of appropriate professional similes is exhausted. In that respect a low comedy butcher, compared with a similar book-seller, is at a decided disadvantage.

Lord Ill. (politely): Pray don't apologise. Besides there is no necessity for comic relief when I am on, for I can always be relied upon with safety to brighten the dialogue with polished epigram. And now, *Aubrey*, a word with you about my own affairs. I have come here in search of my long-lost son. I don't particularly want him; but he is certain to turn up sooner or later, so it is as well to get it over and have done with it. Let us see if he is perambulating the contiguous street. (*They open the shop door and walk out.*)

Mr. Stoach, M.P. (enters): Now, *Todman*, it is twelve o'clock, and you have not paid the mortgage: so you will be so good as to consider yourself foreclosed.

Todman (weeping): Oh, dear! oh, dear! It's all up with me. I, wot was once South Down am now reduced to inferior New Zealand, and will very soon become block ornaments and cat's meat.

Mr. S.: You will, unless you tell me why Lord Clivebrooke comes to your shop nightly at a late hour.

Todman: Never!

(*Grace Chilworth enters.*)

Grace (proudly): Then I will. He comes here to pay his addresses to me. We are keeping company. See where he approaches even now, proudly penetrating a labyrinth of carcasses.

(*Stoach and Todman hide behind joints.*)

Lord Clivebrooke (enters; in a light comedy manner): Ah, my sweet floweret, fair blossom of the bower of beef and mutton,

whose eyes so brightly shine, that at their burning glance the chops and steaks begin to frizzle ! Let us philander ! (*They do so. Then Clivebrooke takes up a leg of mutton, toys with it playfully, and apostrophises it.*) Ah ! my fine fellow, and what do you think of the world ? One gigantic Table d'Hôte at three and six a head, eh ? (*More gravely*) After all, what are we politicians, every one of us, but so many legs of mutton ? We are first carefully cut and trimmed at Eton and Christchurch ; then we are selected by the housewife—our constituency, and placed in the oven—the House of Commons. Next we are cooked by the fire of press criticism, until we are in a fit state for the Opposition to get their knives into us ; and finally we are reduced to an Irish Stew and the bare bones of out-of-office.

Mr. Stoach, M.P. (emerges) : So, Lord Clivebrooke, I have at last found you out. You, who will to-morrow introduce a Bill to make Vegetarian Diet compulsory, are actually philandering with a leg of mutton and a butcher's niece. I will at once go down to the House and denounce you to the door-keeper.

Lord Clivebrooke (grovels on the floor) : Spare me, spare me, I entreat of you, and I will pair with you for ever.

Mr. Stoach (contemptuously) : Minion ! I would spurn you, if I only knew how to do it.

Todman (comes forward) : Then be it mine to reveal everything !

Mrs. Arbuthnot (enters from the street with Lord Illingworth and Aubrey) : Wait ! First let me reveal a thing or two. Lord Illingworth, you wish to meet your long-lost son : there he stands ! (*points to Lord Clivebrooke*).

Lord Ill. (affected to tears) : My boy ! My boy ! And you will always love me and adopt my political opinions ?

Lord Clive : Of course (*they embrace*) (*aside*). But what an awful nuisance ! The Radicals will be sure to ask a question about it in the House.

Mrs. Arb. : And now, Lord Illingworth, I have something more to tell you, you have yet another long-lost son.

Lord Ill. : Oh, I say, don't overdo it.

Mrs. Arb. : Listen ! After I became your discarded toy, your cast-aside soiled glove, I married Blank Cortelyon, Esq., of the House with the Chimney ; I already had a son, who always changes his name to that of my husband of the moment. Consequently, when I married Mr. Tanqueray——

Lord Ill. (surprised) : You ! Then you are the third Mrs. Tanqueray ?

Mrs. Arb. (astounded) : Ah ! you have guessed the Secret of my Life ! Great Heavens !

Lord Ill. (complacently) : Yes. I am rather good at that sort of thing. A stage secret, my dear Mrs. Arbuthnot, is the Soulful revealed to the House-full.

Mrs. Arb. : A truce to these platitudes (*points to Aubrey, Junr.*) There stands your second son !

Lord Ill. (blandly) : Many thanks. Can you furnish me with any more relatives ?

Mrs. Arb. (solemnly) : I can, and I will. Todman, the time has come when everybody must know everything.

Todman : Then be it known to all by these presents that I, the *pseudo* Todman, am no humble butcher, but (*taking off his blue blouse and make-up, and disclosing his stars and garters*) the Duke of Guisebury ! (*Chord in the band.*) (*To Lord Illingworth*), And your long-lost uncle !

Lord Ill. (recoils with horror) : Gracious powers ! And Debrett has just gone to press ; so the middle classes must wait for twelve weary months before these family details can be made known to them.

Aubrey, Junr. : I also will throw off the mask. No Journeyman Butcher I, but a bold baronet, and apparently the offspring of an Earl. Be mine, fair Grace !

Grace (disdainfully) : What, marry a younger son ! No, thank you.

Lord Clivebrooke : Of course not, for you are my affianced wife.

Grace : Pardon me. Prime Ministers under clouds are not in my line at all. (*To Todman*) : Duke, now that you have declared your true character, I can no longer be your niece by adoption ; but let me, I pray you, be your Dancing Girl.

Duke Todman : You shall. Come to my arms. (*She comes.*)

Capt. Chandos (a polished villain) : Stop ! I have found the will.

Omnes : The will ! Great Scott ! Then all is lost.

(*Striking Curtain.*)

ACT II.

The Grounds of Liberty Hall, the Seat of the Duke of Guisebury, during the progress of an Omnium Gatherum Garden Party.

Some of the guests are strolling about aimlessly ; others, arranged in picturesque groups, are gazing into space and looking unutterably bored.

Duke : As this is my last appearance in public before committing suicide, I would fain be dismal ; so let us talk about the Drama.

Messrs. Bowman and Irish (dramatic critics) brighten up and produce from their pockets innumerable manuscript articles and press cuttings ; the other guests weep silently.

Mr. Bowman: The Drama of the Day before Yesterday was plunged in a pleonasm of sentimental silliness; but a whiff of a freshening breeze has been wafted hither from the North; and the tonic is bracing up the Drama's feeble fibres.

Mr. Irish: Nonsense! the public want no such whiffs. I ought to know, for the People, *c'est moi!* It is I alone who can put my hand upon their pulses, and feel the hot blood gurgling in their veins. Look at their—I mean our—circulation! (*rising emphatically*) These new-fangled actualities must be put down, and I am the man to do it.

Mr. Bowman: One moment, Irish. Let me ask you a few questions. In the first place, do you still indulge in the habit of lying on a sofa, smoking a choice Havana, and lazily cutting open the leaves of a new play, just received from a foreign land; secondly, have you been driving down St. John's Wood Road lately, in order to refresh your mind as to the names of the dwellers in that thoroughfare; thirdly, have you a great many lady friends, who are deeply versed in German dramatic literature; and, fourthly, is Ely Place a pleasant spot on a fine afternoon, and what price apologies?

Servant (enters): Mr. Comminatory Sunday wishes to see Mr. Irish.

(*Voice heard off*: Bring me to him! Let me bait him! Let me curse him—for I hate him. Hate him, hate him, hate him, hate him.)

Mr. Irish (much agitated, with a sob rising in his throat): And you can ask me such questions as these at a moment like this! Oh, cruel Scandinavian? (*Bursts into tears and is led away in hysterics.*)

Duke: Many thanks. I am now sufficiently miserable. Let the play proceed.

Lord Illingworth (accompanied by Lady Illingworth (née Arbutnot) (enters): My dear Arby, where are you going to draw the line? Do you really mean to tell me that I have yet another long-lost son?

Lady Ill.: You have. See where he swoons beneath an umbrageous elm. Heretofore he has been known as Mark Cross.

Lord Ill.: She's getting me such a nice little family. (*Sighs.*) Ah, me! I have no heart now for epigram. (*Strolls off disconsolately with her Ladyship.*)

Grace (musing in a corner): My husband must never know that I am the Duke's Dancing Girl, or it would ruin all; for in that case he would lose his election, and consequently decrease my dress allowance.

Mark Cross (walks up to her, and pulls her hair, in order to attract her attention): I have returned from my Ranche in Lordannerley, but only to find you faithless.

Grace (agitated): No, no; not faithless—merely forgetful. You see I have been engaged so often, that, in the absence of memoranda, I am apt to muddle my matrimonial appointments. For one brief hour you faded from my memory, and during that unfortunate period I became the wife of Sir John Harding.

Mark: Then fly with me to the Sunny South.

Grace: No, I can't stand a relaxing climate; but I will allow you to compromise me temporarily. Let that content you.

Mark: Then there is no time like the present. I see Sir John bounding over the flower-beds; it may therefore be assumed that he is in a state of jealous rage; so deposit your powder-puff on yonder rustic seat, and hide behind the garden roller. (*She does so.*)

Sir John Harding (enters, he is boiling with indignation): Where is my wife? She received an invitation from the Duke, which proves that she must be here alone with you—Mark Cross. I ignore the other guests, for they are not speaking parts, and so don't count.

Mark: Be calm, impulsive politician, she is not here.

Sir John: You lie! (*Catches sight of puff.*) Ah! What's that I see? Her powder-puff! Then, of course, she is concealed somewhere in the grounds. I will search every bush and shrub, aye, and uproot each individual geranium, until I find that faithless female. (*Glances round casually.*) No sign of her! Baffled, but unconvinced! (*Suddenly.*) Ah! that garden roller.

Mark (hastily intercepts him, and says sternly): Stay, rash baronet, your sacrilegious hand! That is my mother's roller! You must not, shall not, look behind it.

Sir John: A truce to these prudish trivialities! Stand back! (*Disappears behind roller and instantly emerges, dragging Grace by the wrist in the approved fashion.*) So, woman, you have deceived me!

Grace (impulsively): I will now explain all.

Sir John (below his breath to her): For goodness sake don't do that, or you'll spoil the situation.

Grace: Of course, I had forgotten. Then I will faint, like a good wife, until I am wanted. (*Does so.*)

Sir John (to Mark): Now, sir, be ours a duel to [the death. I have in my coat-tail pockets the usual weapons—Maxim guns (*produces them*). We will stand but one short inch apart; the Duke will no doubt oblige us by giving the word, whereupon we will simultaneously turn our respective handles.

Duke (comes forward): Forbear! and I will explain everything. Lady Harding declined my invitation, therefore she cannot possibly be here. As for the Puff, it belongs to one of my guests, a dramatic critic, who keeps it by him for the use of his friends.

Sir John (to Grace): So you are not here, after all; then of course you are innocent. Wake from your faint, sweet love, and come to your Johnny's arms! (*She wakes and comes.*)

Grace (aside, over Sir John's shoulder): There are only 340 people present, and I have sworn them all to secrecy; so he will never know that I am the Duke's Dancing Girl.

Duke: I will now go and build a breakwater; no grounds are complete without one.

Lady Henry Fairfax (enters): But first tell me, did you ever hear the clock at Berne?

Duke: No, and I don't want to.

Omnes: D—— the clock at Berne!

Lady Henry: Really, you know, you mustn't. I wrote it in myself; besides, it brings down the curtain.

Omnes: Oh, heavens! Will no one save us?

Capt. Chandos (more polished and more villainous than ever, enters): Yes; I will.

Omnes (start).

Capt. C.: I observe that you all shudder, likewise tremble, and well you may. (*Laughs in the good old sardonic way, and lights a cigarette.*) You doubtless imagined that my long silence was due to a premature detective and consequent handcuffs. Ha! ha! I hate you all. Every man among you is my virtuous elder brother, whose death I desire in order that I may succeed to, and dissipate, the family mortgages. Every woman of you is the heiress to untold gold, of which I alone possess the secret; and I have annoyed you one and all with my sinister love-making, only to be spurned by each with what is generally known as "contumely." But now is the moment of my vengeance. You, Duke, first. I have discovered the missing title-deeds to Liberty Hall; they were hidden in the lining of the rate collector's hat; and as, of course, the title goes with the deeds, I am now the Duke of Guisebury!! (*Sensation.*)

Duke: Take it, and be happy. Thank goodness. I need not now commit suicide at the end of the act.

Capt. C.: Ha! ha! That shall not save you. I have discovered the secret of your life. You are, in point of fact, the notorious Captain Swift, so you will merely substitute a pistol for the poison bottle.

Duke (sighs): Ah me! And I did so want to build that breakwater—whatever it may be.

Capt. C. : And now to polish off the rest of you. I have here a bag of assorted properties—forged bills, marriage lines, certificates of birth, intercepted letters, and so forth, collected with infinite villainy and lavish expenditure of current coin. These, more or less, purloined documents place you all in my power. So sort yourselves in sexes: ladies to the right, gentlemen to the left. (*They sort themselves accordingly. Captain Chandos takes the centre of the stage, and motions to the limelight man to turn full on in order to emphasise his—the Captain's—hour of triumph.*) Ladies and gentlemen, know ye all, the whole 340 of you, that I am no half-hearted villain, but a regular out-and-out bad 'un; and consequently it is my fell purpose to ruin you all and marry you all respectively. (*The curtain is about to descend, when all of a sudden the Captain starts, turns pale, covers to the ground, waves to the prompter to stop the curtain, and exclaims*) Once more, once more they jingle in mine ears! Harps in the air!

Hilda Wangel (*is heard outside, singing a Scandinavian folk song*):

“Thor und Olaf, letti lind!
 Hier mann spricht Herr Ibsen;
 Greygërs poudër, rudolf blind,
 Archër ist ein”—

Excuse my local colour (*knocks at a tree*); I am youth personified, with the assistance of a hair restorer. May I come in? (*without waiting for a reply she bounds on, roaring with laughter, and dances up to Captain Chandos*). At last we meet, my bonny, my bright-eyed Master Builder (*regards him with admiration*)! What a large shirt front, and what an immaculate evening suit!

Capt. C. : (*hoarsely*) Go away. I have made other arrangements. I have 170 potential spouses distributed in these grounds.

Hilda : So I am spurned! Ha! ha! ha! How ripping! what a lark—I should say a wild duck—(the Scandinavian idiom)! I understand: these ladies and gentlemen, to judge from their several attitudes, are in your power. Then it is I, Hilda Wangel, who will turn the tables upon you. Duke, will you kindly improvise the usual, irregular last-act Law Court? (*Characters group themselves accordingly.*) My Lord Duke, my Lady Windermere, Mr. Clement Scott, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen, this so-called Captain is none other than Halvard Solness, the well known Master Jerry Builder and a fugitive from justice. You have all doubtless heard (for it was much talked of at the time) that many years ago, this idiotic man took it into his idiotic head to build an idiotic tower, an observatory for the study of Harps in the Air. One day, however, ha! ha! (*laughing heartily*)—it was such fun, I

never shall forget it—he thought he would like to turn acrobat, and so he jumped from the top of the tower; and didn't he just damage himself! Fancy that now! Ha! ha! ha! But not content with that amount of mischief, black-hearted scoundrel that he is, he elected to alight upon a laurel bush—a gentle shrub that had never harmed a soul—and (*sobbing*) crushed it to the earth, where it lay dull, motionless, shuddering and trembling in every branch. Happily, however, this outraged vegetable did not go unavenged. (*Dries her eyes.*) It was the property of the Corporation; and that body, with a single-hearted patriotism characteristic of the North, imposed upon the miscreant a fine of 20 thalers (excuse once more the local colour). That fine is still unpaid, and consequently (believe me I have consulted the most trustworthy of the Scandinavian jurists) the penalty is immediate execution.

Duke: I am a Justice of the Peace for the next county but two, and so have ample power to declare anyone guilty of anything anywhere. Let the law and the man alike be executed!

(*Detectives who are in waiting seize Captain Chandos, and forthwith hang him to the handle of the garden roller, and the Duke marries Hilda on the spot. Those of the 340 guests who are unmarried pair off very much to their surprise, the curtain falls—and the Critic wakes up and regrets his indiscretions on Christmas Day.*)

W. R. W.



Plays of the Month.

“GOOD-BYE.”

A play, in one act, by Seymour Hicks; the first item of a “triple bill,” first produced at the Court Theatre, on Saturday evening, Nov. 25th, 1893.

Edward Winter ..	Mr. WILLIAM HERBERT.	Smith	Mr. ROBERT NAINBY.
Second Licut. Percy } Winter }	Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS.	Roberts	Mr. E. H. KELLY.
Alec Strangeways ..	Mr. WILFRED DRAYCOTT.	Mary Winter	Miss ELLALINE TERRISS.

“A VENETIAN SINGER.”

A Comedy-Opera, in one act, by B. C. Stephenson. Music by Edward Jakobowski.

Bianca	Miss AGNES GIGLIO.	Ma'teo	Mr. HERBERT THORNDIKE.
Paolina	Miss WALDECK-HALL.	Gregorio	Mr. JACK ROBERTSON.

“UNDER THE CLOCK.”

An Extravaganza, in one act, by C. H. E. Brookfield and Seymour Hicks. Music by Edward Jones.

Sherlock Holmes ..	Mr. C. H. E. BROOKFIELD.	Second Forester ..	Mr. CHARLES SIMSON.
Dr. Watson	Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS.	The Third Mrs. Tan-	} MISS E. LYALL.
M. Emile Nana ..	Mr. R. NAINBY.	queray	
Master of Ceremonies	Mr. W. WYES.	Statue of Niobe ..	Miss MAUDE WILMOT.
Plaque of Goethe ..	Mr. H. PAULO.	Hannah	Miss LOTTIE VENNE.
First Forester ..	Mr. HUGH GWYNNE.		

In one respect at least triple bills are like Ibsen plays—they make reputations every time. As authors and actors, Mr. Brandon Thomas and Mr. Weedon Grossmith were “made” by the first of the race.

This time it is the turn of Mr. Seymour Hicks. He is the hero of the new Court bill. But it is as actor rather than as author that he shines. “Good-bye” is a disappointment after the fresh and vigorous “New Sub.” As a piece of stage-sentiment it is conventional, and the commonplaceness of the characters and theme is hardly atoned for by a brightly-written part of a merry, garrulous, noisy young lieutenant, who thinks it the finest lark in the world to be off to Burmah, and whose departure with his regiment, colours flying and drums and fifes in full play—as in “Ours” and “The Lady of Lyons,” and a dozen other dramas—furnishes one misleading reason for the title.

This character certainly is good. It has nothing to do with the play, but it smacks of life. And not unnaturally it gives occasion for a tearful parting between the young soldier and his brother, which Mr. Hicks—though not yet a Charles Kelly in these man-and-man passages of pathos—attacks with a courage that ensures respect.

But all this amounts to nothing more than a side-issue. The play really has to do with the love made to the pretty but shamefully neglected young wife of a moody fellow by his best friend. The moody fellow has heart disease, so of course we smell a tragedy. Lothario is breathing his poison into the half-frightened, half-flattered little ears, when there comes the sound of a fall from Moody's room. Has he dropped down dead? Is this his "good-bye"? Are Eve and the smooth-tongued serpent parted by a corpse? Not a bit of it. So dramatic a story does not enter into Mr. Hicks's head; or if it does, it enters only to be kicked out again. What Moody dropped was probably *Dick Phenyl's* waistcoat; what we scent is merely one of several red herrings which the perverse author has dragged across the plot; and what this aimless farrago of half-hearted temptation and lukewarm faithlessness does is to trickle on until Moody has a letter which makes his fortune, which makes him call his wife "darling," which brings that love-famished angel to his feet with a sob and a cry for forgiveness, which ends the disjointed piece.

But for Mr. Hicks being so bright and boyish and impulsive—albeit a little too loud—as the high-spirited young soldier, and Mrs. Hicks—Miss Ellaline Terriss—so plaintive and winning as the loving but listening wife, the play could scarcely have won a hearing. As it proved, however, the author was greeted with enthusiasm. But "Under the Clock" brought Mr. Hicks his best opportunity. For this burlesque, *revue*, extravaganza, or what not, London has been thirsting for weeks. And now that London has it, I am not sure that London will know how to take it. Mr. Brookfield has a pretty wit to look at, but the sting of a scorpion lies in its tail, and this sting he has here brought over much into play. It is announced that every care has been taken to avoid hurting anyone's feelings in the course of the satire. But if this be the authors' view, their feelings must be as hard to hurt as a rhinoceros, for merciless are the lashings they "carefully" inflict upon their unhappy victims.

Burlesque of this kind has never been divorced from a certain geniality in tone. Harmless foibles have been exaggerated to awaken good-natured laughter. Mr. Toole for instance has put on a Roman nose, struck ridiculous pseudo-classic attitudes, and called himself Wilson Barrett. "Adonis" Dixey has represented Mr. Irving as *Hamlet* pumping water from a well. Miss Eastlake's crow's nest *coif*, her jerky ways and emotional explosions were comically magnified by Miss Marie and Miss Laura Linden. And even in Mr. Brookfield's "Poet and Puppets" at the Comedy, scarce more than legitimate chaff was levelled at the "foolishly fertile" Mr. Wilde. But at the Court it is quite another matter.

True the jester's sounding bladder is not discarded altogether; but as often as not it is vitriol that is used, and the very bitterness of the attack defeats the object in view. What does the public know or care about the tiffs and enmities, the envy and the spleen of actors! It will laugh when Mr. Hicks, a brilliant mimic and a dancer light as air, appears now as the Lyceum *Mephistopheles*, and anon as Wilson Barrett's eager, impulsive *Hamlet* to chide the Haymarket lessee for trespassing upon sacred ground. But in sneers at Mr. Tree's undoubted versatility, his alleged fondness for the centre of the stage, and his unwavering belief in himself as an heroic actor it takes no interest at all. The first night stalls titter because, perhaps, they have heard rumours of strained relations, a quarrel, or a grudge, and this pursuit in public of a private feud appeals to them as something "smart"; but the rest of the house sits mute. Taunts like these, levelled at Mr. Tree and others, are as cheap as they certainly are nasty, and send one away with a very different taste in one's mouth from that which "A Pantomime Rehearsal" left. Sharp and acid as the flavour of Mr. Brookfield's fooling is, however, it is often very clever. But the worst of it is that it only makes you acknowledge its cleverness. It doesn't make you laugh your appreciation out! and people who want fun instead of wit, a laugh instead of a malicious chuckle, will find "Under the Clock" not exactly to their taste.

The personal success is that of Mr. Seymour Hicks. He mimics Irving, Barrett, Fred Terry, Wyndham, Tree, and Miss Rose Leclerq, and in every case the imitation is above the average. Imitations are indeed the backbone of the piece. We have a Zola, whom the house scarcely recognised; Daly's Foresters, and *Cœur de Lion*—with New York accent complete; Mrs. Bancroft, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and Miss Julia Neilson—the last a brilliant piece of mimicry by Miss Lottie Venne; and from Mr. Brookfield his familiar study of Bancroft and passable representations of Penley and Tree. But imitations make up a very thin meal; and the curious jumble which, without rhyme or reason, mixes up Sherlock Holmes and his grovelling adorer Dr. Watson, Emile Zola, and his reception by the Lord Mayor, and the notable stage characters of the year, affords little more than a meagre laugh here and there, unless the chief mimics—Miss Venne and Mr. Hicks—are at their very best.

"A Venetian Singer," a melodious triviality, had strayed from the Back Drawing Room, and served only to remind us how good an actor and charming a singer Mr. Jack Robertson can be, and how inconsiderate it is to waste talent like his upon what—if the attitude of the audience denotes anything—might be merely a novel form of *entr'acte*.

“CAPTAIN SWIFT.”

A Drama, in five acts, by C. HADDON CHAMBERS.

Revived at the Haymarket, on Saturday evening, December 2nd, 1893.

Mr. Wilding	Mr. TREE.	Bates	Mr. MONTAGU.
Mr. Seabrook	Mr. H. KEMBLE.	Servant.. .. .	Mr. ASHBY.
Harry Seabrook	Mr. C. M. HALLARD.	Mrs. Seabrook	Miss CARLOTTA ADDISON.
Mr. Gardiner.. .. .	Mr. F. H. MACKLIN.	Lady Staunton	Miss FANNY COLEMAN.
Marshall.. .. .	Mr. HOLMAN CLARK.	Mabel Seabrook	Miss IRENE VANBRUGH.
Michael Ryan	Mr. CHARLES ALLAN.	Stella Darbisher	Mrs. TREE.

On the last night of Mr. Jones’s mediæval romance Mr. Tree, in a happy little speech, pronounced a cheery epitaph upon “The Tempter.” “It is satisfactory to me to find that a serious poetical play can attract large audiences for seventy-three nights; for it is, of course, much easier,” said he, “and more profitable, in art, to stand on one’s head than on one’s heels.” Having thus with grave deliberation spelt “w-i-n-d-e-r” on the Friday night, Mr. Tree, emulating *Mr. Squeers’s* pupils at Dotheboys Hall, on the Saturday went and cleaned it—by reproducing “Captain Swift.”

This wonderful story of a nameless child who is shipped to Australia to clear his mother’s name, who becomes the *Dick Turpin* of the Colony, grows enamoured of respectability, returns to England, and is dropped by “the long arm of coincidence” plump into the bosom of his unknown mother’s family, where are the only squatter whom he has “stuck up” in the bush, and the only playmate who could identify his boyhood’s companion by the strawberry mark upon his left arm; this story is, perhaps, the best illustration Mr. Tree could find of the preference shown for standing on one’s head in art. So palpable, so glaring, is the topsy-turvydom, that Mr. Haddon Chambers, in self-defence, entrenched himself behind that “long arm” of his, and from this vantage ground apologised, so to speak, in every act for the manifold audacities and improbabilities of his plot. His action was quite superfluous. Mr. Tree in that brief sentence takes our measure to an inch. We enjoy standing on our heads. That is, we enjoy seeing the Haymarket Company doing it for us. And if the author never breathed that “blessed word—coincidence,” we should be perfectly content to take his Gentleman Bushranger as we find him.

The truth is that the Knight of the Road exercises a fascination over all of us. A spirit of adventure fires the ladies and “gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease,” to active sympathy with the soldier of fortune. Let his name be *Alan Breck* or *Claude Duval*, *Captain Starlight* or *The Spider*, if he’s plucky he is sure of some sneaking admiration from all sorts and conditions of men. “The legion of the lost ones, the cohort of the damned,” as Mr. Kipling sings, are so much more interesting than their betters. Compared with the one sheep that has gone

astray, what is the rest of the flock? Merely ninety-nine of no importance. And this feeling is stronger still if the lost one hail from Eton—in Mr. Kipling's words, "Cleanly-bred, machinely-crammed"—and mask his wolfishness in (lost) sheep's clothing.

This particular Knight of the Road, moreover, has so many points in his favour. He had no mother—a strong plea for an angel who has fallen; his hankering after Society has its roots in blood and breeding; he fights hard for his own hand; and finally, making a swan-like end, pulls out the Renunciation stop with a fine feeling for the harmonies of humanity.

Of course, he's a very shocking character, lifting cattle and stealing gold, giving a worthy family grounds for great uneasiness, and, by means of the confidence trick, creeping into an innocent girl's heart. As bad, in some ways, as Lord Lytton's *Paul Clifford* or Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*. Then he is shamefully unscrupulous, appealing to us first by pathetically prowling round Covent Garden at dead of night, to eat, as *Chatterton* did, the garbage in the gutter; by bidding for sympathy in this beggarly way, and, having got it, dying in the odour of sanctity, and cheating us of tears, without giving us time to think. In fact, his combination of the prodigal son and the burglar is quite indefensible. But no one thinks of calling it in question—that is, so long as *Captain Swift* is played by Mr. Tree. For the actor deserves more credit than the author. It requires talent of a high order to stand on your head and make people believe that you are all the time on your heels. But this Mr. Tree does. In other words, he applies so many touches of nature, that you are led to think the whole composition simply a transcript from nature; and so the contraband unrealities are smuggled through.

Mr. Tree has done many brilliantly clever things, but never, I think, a cleverer thing than this. For *Captain Swift* really carries the play. True, there are excellent scenes for others, for his remorseful mother, now played with infinite sensibility by Miss Carlotta Addison; for *Stella* the gentle and forgiving, happily in Mrs. Tree's dainty and delicate hands again—*Swift* and *Stella*! why did not Mr. Chambers advance a claim for a literary drama by throwing a *Vanessa* in?—for the cur of a butler, played with hang-dog malevolence by Mr. Clark, though hardly with such sinister purpose and vicious grip as Mr. Brookfield's; and for the burly, good-hearted squatter of Mr. Macklin. But in every case the effect depends on *Swift*. If he did not ring absolutely true, the staginess of the whole thing would flash out like lightning. And it says much for the power of Mr. Tree's personality, and for the finesse and resource of which he is master, that he can arrest,

rivet, and sustain attention through four acts of dexterous but very simple dramatic mechanism, and keep one's eyes practically closed to everything but the pathetic figure of this hunted robber, desperately striving to break from his old evil life and attain the desired haven of love and peace.

“ THE BLACK CAT.”

A Play, in three acts, by Dr. JOHN TODHUNTER.

First produced, by the Independent Theatre Society, at the Opera Comique Theatre, on Friday evening, December 8th, 1893.

Arthur Denham.. ..	Mr. BUCKLAW.	Blanche Tremaine..	Miss MARY KEEGAN.
Cyril Vane	Mr. ORLANDO BARNETT.	Miss Macfarlane ..	Miss GLADYS HOMFREY.
Fitzgerald	Mr. NEVILLE DOONE.	Undine	Miss DORA BARTON.
Constance Denham ..	Miss HALL CAINE.	Jane	Miss MABEL FORRESTER.

“ Remember, my dear,” says one of the characters in this piece, “ we're not acting in an Ibsen play.” But that is just where *Miss Macfarlane*, the massive, the prosaic and precise, makes a mistake. For “The Black Cat” is nothing more nor less than an Ibsen play “ up to date.” It is just the story of *Beata*, *Rebecca West*, and *Rosmer* of “Rosmersholm,” adapted, modernised, and very appropriately “ framed ” in a studio in, say, the Melbury Road. In almost every particular the stories tally. Allowance must be made for the migration from “ suburban ” Norway, to what Mr. Buchanan, with brutal veracity, calls “ Imperial Cockneydom,” and for the inevitable weakening of principles and motives occasioned thereby; but otherwise “The Black Cat” jumps with the “ White Horses ” of Rosmersholm, and when the tragic end arrives, we find ourselves groping in a similar mist of bewilderment.

Arthur Denham is an amateur artist and professional cynic, with a literary range from Michelet to Herbert Spencer, and a Satanic capacity for citing Scripture for his purpose. He is married to a woman whom he does not understand and who does not understand him; and they have one girl child who understands both so well that she plays off the indulgent, easy-going father against her grizzling, discontented, nagging mother, and thus widens the gulf between them. Both have sharp tongues, and neither is diffident about speaking to the point. The result is not sunshine, and when *Mrs. Tremaine*—an old schoolfellow of *Constance Denham*—appears, the domestic forecast is stormy.

Blanche Tremaine, as luck will have it, is the last person in the world who should set foot in this divided household. She is a lady of “ experience ”—indeed it should be plural, for, having suffered divorce, and marriage with the co-respondent, she is still ready to “ go through fire ” for some one else. Who that some one is may be guessed when it is said that this lady has lovely eyes, a musical voice, seductive ways, and sits to *Denham* as a model.

Mrs. Denham happens to enter when they have, after playing with fire for some little time, just burned their fingers, and finds them locked in a passionate embrace. Her considerate offer to depart "for ever" is rejected. The *fin-de-siècle* culprits volunteer to meet no more, and there seemingly is the end of the "comedy," as *Mrs. Tremaine* terms it. But *Constance* of the rigid, frigid principles declines to see it in this light. She is a "self-tormentor," "too anxious about life to live," and although "hungering for love," predestined to adopt an unloveable attitude at the critical time. *Denham* is—for the moment—sincerely contrite. His windy chatter about "the divine mistress," "the divine matron," and "the divine virgin," is only so much gas. Like "my lady's page," he must "evermore be tattling." This fleshly paddling with the seductive *divorcée* has satisfied his artistic needs. He is prepared to listen to "the ghost that haunts him—duty." He hasn't really the courage of his convictions, that a man may be happy with three wives—"more, verges on polygamy"—and if his wife cared a jot for this shambling, shifty creature—this *Tomlinson* of the studio, "a stook of print and book," but without a soul of his own—she would allow the child to unite them. But, no! Though anything further removed from tragedy than this model flirtation could scarcely be conceived, it must be prussic acid from the cheffonier or nothing. And over her dead body the remorseful *Denham* and the horror-stricken *Blanche* part, he in a feeble passion of regret for his dead wife, she with a last hot whisper of passion for him.

The tragedy lends a stagy look to the whole play, which without this binding of crape would be unstagy to a degree. Very brightly, at points brilliantly, written—in the manner of Mr. Oscar Wilde—the earlier acts are clever and amusing in the extreme. Two characters in particular, an art-critic and a minor poet, have, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, nothing to do with the case, but they provide rare entertainment. While they were on the stage, the comedy dialogue was brilliant. Indeed the poet who has "seen life" once, and does not wish to be asked to see it again, and whose last volume consists of "Three Quatrains," for poetry is impossible at any length—is the most amusing figure seen for many a day; and had Mr. Barnett played with more variety, the comical effect would have been immense. Mr. Bucklaw, too, representing the painter soaked in cynicism, was too consistently heavy and depressed, and thus weakened the impression due to his rough, strong, effective acting. Mr. Doone's Irish art-critic was a faithful study of Mr. Leonard Boyne in his quieter moods, and Miss Dora Barton proved herself a child-actress so clever and natural as to be

infinitely touching in her naturalness. Miss Caine, though unequal to the tragedy of the part, which required a Sarah Bernhardt or Jane Hading, played with so surprising and pathetic a power of reality that her work, as usual, challenged admiration by its truthfulness and restrained force and charm; and Miss Keegan presented an equally actual study of the insidious and fascinating lady who is "fond of men." Indeed, were it only for the sake of these two actresses, Dr. Todhunter's witty and interesting if inconsistent play (cleansed of its tragedy blot) should be seen again.

"MEASURE FOR MEASURE."

As a matter of stage history it must be recorded that the Shakespeare Reading Society, inspired and directed by Mr. William Poel, at great cost and with infinite trouble, revived this comedy at the Royalty Theatre, on Thursday evening, 9th of November, and on several subsequent nights, under the conditions which presumably were imposed upon the play in its author's lifetime. A stage had been erected within the Royalty proscenium, after the model of the old Swan playhouse, as it appears in the rude sketch discovered not long since in the University Library at Utrecht. Spectators in Elizabethan costume lounged upon the stage during the *entr'acte*, and watched the progress of the play from either side, while others, similarly dressed, filled the private-boxes which replaced the modern "wings." Elizabethan dress was worn also by the actors. Scenery was dispensed with, and the comedy was acted through without break or pause, save for one brief interval at the close of the third act.

This attempt to get at the real value of a Shakesperean comedy, regarded simply and solely as an acting play, ought certainly to have aroused great interest; and a large number of distinguished people did come forward in support of the undertaking, and subscribe their names. Poets—blue-blooded and red, major, minor, and mimimus—dramatists, novelists, literary critics, and noble patrons of the Drama, appeared in force upon the front page of the programme. But in most instances they appeared nowhere else. A beggarly array of empty benches on the opening night made the worst possible impression upon the dramatic critics—always highly impressionable men, unless "impressionist" by repute. Tame acting during the first half of the piece deepened their despondency and disappointment. And before the comedy was half over, many of them had disappeared, and the fate of the enterprise was sealed. All praise was sternly withheld, even though richly deserved—as by the *Duke* and *Isabella*, for some

spirited and clever acting; and by Mr. Poel for his masterly stage management of the concluding scenes—and condemnation, utter and complete, was the portion of every soul concerned. It was a venture which deserved a very different fate; an artistic experiment of which the novelty, at least, to say nothing of the possibilities it might have opened up of acting for acting's sake, should have commended it to a large and influential section of the public.



Some Amateur Performances.

“DANDY DICK,” BY THE VAUDEVILLE CLUB.

The play of the season made itself known betimes. In this respect—amongst others—it differed from the dog of the season. Autumn is the time, and the lawn at Brighton the stage usually selected by the latter for his *début*. This season, however, the votaries of fashion were kept on the rack of suspense by his unwonted delay in putting in an appearance. Nay, for ought I know, he has not yet declared himself, and society is convulsed to its foundations by his tardiness. No such period of anxiety, however, was in store for those who waited in breathless anticipation for the coming play. The minds of those who looked forward (!) to sitting through it twice a week on an average, and consequently felt the selection to be almost a personal question, were speedily set at rest. At the close of last season 'twas whispered by amateurs, 'twas muttered in the press, and the public caught faintly the sound as it fell. “Dandy Dick” was the favourite. It was heavy odds on the *Dean's* fancy. Well, if I needs must get a play by heart, I had as lief it were “Dandy Dick.” More than that, I would as lief take my farcical comedy at the hands of the Vaudeville Club as at the hands of any body of amateurs, for they are a capable set of cooks, and not the most dyspeptic need dread an attack of indigestion as the result of trusting himself to their tender mercies. *The Dean* has the game in his own hands, and, Mr. Frank Hole being an actor with a store of humour as unfailling as the legendary cruse of oil, the audience return thanks for the same. It's only by a head that he wins though, for Mr. Frank Moore, with his capital sketch of *Blore*, runs him neck and neck for the first place. And then there were the ladies holding their own, as behoves every daughter of the nineteenth century—Miss Pattie Bell, with experience writ in largest capitals over her rendering of *George Tid*, Miss Jennie Risley filling out *Hannah Topping* in really excellent style, Miss Mary Jocelyn a very *Queen of Sheba*, and Miss Miard, at least intelligent and painstaking as *Salome*. And the tale is yet to run, for there was subject for praise, and, plenty of it, in Mr. Arthur Read's *Baronet*: in the lovers, liverish and otherwise, of Mr. Dean and Mr. Fenton, and in Mr. Quennell's groom, Mr. Ralph Moore alone being adrift from his moorings.

“SWEETHEARTS,” BY THE CLAPHAM STROLLERS.

And, by the way, should not Strollers be in the singular? Were my life at stake, I could not swear to more than one Stroller—Mr. Marshall, the

Poo-h-Bah of the club. It has, of course, a "star"—Mr. Marshall. It has a stage-manager—Mr. Marshall. It has a secretary—Mr. Marshall. It has a treasurer—Mr. Marshall. It has a committee—or says it has, though, between ourselves, I am rather disposed to regard this as a Mrs. Harris fiction, and incline to the belief that Mr. Marshall is chairman and committee rolled into one. I am only filled with amazement that he does not dress and wig the play, in place of calling in the efficient aid of Mr. Fox; and I firmly believe that, did we but bide a wee, he would be appointed dramatist in ordinary to the club. But that time will never come, for Mr. Marshall's days as a Stroller—or is it *the* Stroller?—are numbered. And where will the club be then? What would have been the state of affairs in Mikadoland, had *Poo-h-Bah* applied for the Japanese equivalent for the Chiltern Hundreds? I can only recommend you to follow the poet's prescription, and "ask of the winds." Seriously, however, Mr. Marshall's secession will be a grave blow to the club—though not, let us hope, its death below. Up to now its performances might be almost warranted to cure an attack of neuralgia, instead of guaranteed to produce it. It is to be hoped that, in the future, it will be able to sustain this reputation. The last performance was quite up to their usual form. The programme was light, but what of that? Mr. Le Gallienne, referring to Miss Schreiner's newly-published collection of tales, tells us that it is the tiniest things that are the most burdened with the pathos of eternity. This may or may not be, but I am well assured that it's from the slightest of programmes that the audience often reaps the richest crop of enjoyment. It was so, at any rate, with those who journeyed in search of amusement to the Queen's Theatre, which is down Battersea way, and, ere promotion came to it, was known as the Park Town Hall. Mr. Gilbert's seemingly trivial little play was in the highest favour. Not that the author may claim more than a third of the credit, the remainder being fairly divided between Miss Kate Gordon and Mr. Marshall. Miss Gordon played very daintily, and with some pretty touches of pathos as gentle *Miss Jenny*, who watches and waits through thirty years. (Lucky that Mr. Gilbert placed her back in the fifties. Had she been of our day, she would have been a Pioneer and death on female franchise.) Mr. Marshall, as the fervent lover who doffs romance with his picturesque beaver, and develops a crust of cynicism to match the more prosaic "topper" and trousers, took the earlier scene a trifle deliberately, but the later one, with its admirably artistic finish, made ample amends. The humour of the old gardener was not strongly apparent in the hands of Mr. Levitt. "Chiselling" followed, and discovered most of the actors in touch with farce. Mr. Morten Henry was the most amusing, and kept things going briskly as *Trotter*, and Mr. Walther was nimble, tuneful, and coquettish as the landlady. Mr. Rowse filled the part of the critical guardian. Mr. Tallis was at least active as the sculptor, and Miss Addison, like most lady amateurs, showed herself a little frightened of farce.

"OUR REGIMENT," BY THE BANCROFT CLUB.

There are two ways of making progress, according to Mr. Gilbert. You can begin at the bottom and climb up, or you can begin at the top and slide down. The Bancroft Club prefers the latter method. They started with Goldsmith and old comedy. Thence they ranged to old comedy Buchananised, and sucked the sweets of "Sophia." Then came Mr. Hamilton's "Harvest"—and a highly creditable one they reaped. And now, with the rapidity of the water-chute they suddenly descend to "Our Regiment." Why amateurs should hope to shine where a strong cast failed to score more than a partial success is one of those questions which it is not given to the soul of critic to answer. But if the Bancrofts did not exactly shine, they made a very fair show, thanks, in the first place, to the general smoothness, and, in the second, to the individual efforts of Mr. Morris Ward, Mr. Cliff Keane, and Mr. A. G. Brown. Neither in face nor manner is Mr. Ward especially diverting, but he is brisk and speaks his lines well, and, after all, nothing short of a heaven-sent genius can keep a play going on the slender foundations of a roomy suit and persistent proposals. Mr. Sid Haw-

kins as *Ellaby* did not count for much on the winning side, and Mr. Wellesley Forbes counted for less. Mrs. Thouless put some spirit into her work; Miss Towle was bright and animated; and Miss Braithwaite pretty and graceful. Not the combined exertions of the cast, however, could make aught of the third act, but linked dulness long drawn out. Mr. Scott's weepy little drama "The Cape Mail" discovered in Miss Rachel Fowler that *rara avis* amongst amateurs, an actress equal to grappling with an emotional scene. She has yet, however, to learn the value of light and shade. Mr. David Davies was effective as the doctor, and Mr. Cyril Kenyon duly perturbed as the lawyer. Miss St. Aubyn was not well suited with the blind mother, and Miss Herts, though she has much to learn, promises well.

"THE OLD LOVE AND THE NEW," BY THE COMEDY CLUB.

Let me begin by saying—just as if I were a member of the Playgoers' Club—that I entirely disagree with everything connected with this production. First and foremost the Club must be censured for selecting this play at all. They cannot number amongst their members a Mr. Arthur Ayers, a Mr. Gordon Taylor, a Mr. Frankish, or a Mr. Marshall, and therefore Bronson Howard's drama should have been forbidden fruit to them. In his own line Mr. George Leonard is of value, but that line has nothing at all in common with *Stratton*. He is lacking in weight, dignity, distinction, pathos, sincerity—in fact, it would be hard to say what he does not lack that the part demands. Where was the judgment of the Committee? But their offending hath more extent than this. One or two strong cards they did hold—and they forebore to play them. Time and again Mr. Colley Salter has played the American soundly and well, and yet for this part Mr. Bourne (whose humour is conscientious but stodgy) is cast. Then again we have Mr. Cahill, with all the possibilities of a capital *Westbrook*; thrown away upon the Doctor, whilst Mr. Clark, who should have been deaf to the voice of the committee, charmed them never so wisely, struggles hopelessly with the scheming Merchant. Out upon that committee, say I, for a wilful waste of opportunities. And was there nought that called for praise? Yes, one or two performances called for commendation, and one or two for honourable mention. Amongst the former ranks Mrs. Renton's pathetic *Lilian*, and with it Mr. David Davies' manly *Kenyon*, and Mr. Robert Gilligan's discreetly played *Carojac*. And, under the latter heading, comes Miss Arnold's *Florence*, and Mr. Hughes' Art Critic.

"DANDY DICK," BY THE CRYSTAL PALACE ATHENÆUM.

The "Dandy Dick" placed in the field by the Crystal Palace Athenæum should have proved a formidable rival to that put forward by the Vaudeville Club, and it would have done so with a carefully-picked cast. But, as the poet has remarked, the highest hopes we cherish here are doomed to disappointment, and reality came far short of expectations. The casting, save in one or two instances, was not especially happy, the pace was anything but racing form, and the production as a whole was not by any means up to the Athenæum standard. A lame, dispirited "Dandy Dick," this—a drugged "Dandy Dick," quite incapable of putting his best leg foremost, despite the powerful restorative influence of Miss Isabel Maude's unflagging spirits, despite the gallant support lent her by Mr. Bathurst, despite Mr. Colley Salter's capital rendering of *Blore*; despite, too, the prettily-played *Sheba* of Miss Ethel Norton, and Mr. Butler's finished sketch of *Tarver*. The unremitting efforts of these four or five actors occasionally galvanised the play into a canter; but at such times as the author has decreed their absence from the stage, all was weariness and vexation of spirit. And yet this club owns Mr. Groust, marked out surely by the finger of destiny for the part of the *Dean*. Of a truth, club committees move in a mysterious way!

New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from November 17th to
December 26th, 1893 :—

(*Revivals are marked thus **)

- Nov. 18 “Twixt Cup and Lip,” piece in one act, by W. Sapte, jun.
Strand.
- „ 25 “Gabriella,” opera, in one act, libretto by C. A. Byrne and
Fulvio Fulgonio, English version by Mowbray Marras.
For copyright purposes. St. George’s Hall.
- „ 25 “Good-bye,” play, in one act, by Seymour Hicks. Court.
- „ 25 “A Venetian Singer,” comedy-opera, in one act, by B. C.
Stephenson, composed by E. Jakobowski. Court.
- „ 25 “Under the Clock,” extravaganza, in one act, by C. H. E.
Brookfield and Seymour Hicks, with music by Edward
Jones. Court.
- Dec. 2* “Captain Swift,” play, in four acts, by C. Haddon Chambers.
Haymarket.
- „ 7 “An Easter Egg,” operetta, in one act, by Walter Maynard,
the orchestral score arranged by Sidney Ward. *Matinée*.
Terry’s.
- „ 8 “The Black Cat,” play, in three acts, by John Todhunter.
For the Independent Theatre Society. Opera Comique.
- „ 11 “Anthony’s Legacy,” comedietta, in one act, by A. G.
Charleson. First time in London. Parkhurst.
- „ 20 “The Piper of Hamelin,” fantastic opera, in two acts, by
Robert Buchanan, music by F. W. Allwood. Comedy.
- „ 21 “The Headless Man,” comedy, in three acts, by F. C. Burnand.
Criterion.
- „ 21 “Beauty’s Toils,” farcical comedy, in three acts, by Chas. S.
Fawcett. Strand.
- „ 23 “Jack and the Beanstalk,” pantomime, by Horace Lennard.
Crystal Palace.
- „ 26 “Robinson Crusoe,” pantomime, by H. Nicholls and Augustus
Harris. Drury Lane.
- „ 26 “Cinderella,” pantomime, by Horace Lennard. Lyceum.

In the Provinces, from November 5th to December 11th, 1893 :—

- Nov. 16 “Feminine Strategy,” operetta, in one act, by Catherine
Adams, composed by F. G. Hollis. Drill Hall, Basing-
stoke.
- „ 16 “Fettered Lives,” drama, in four acts, by Harold Whyte.
Alhambra, Barrow-in-Furness.
- „ 16 “Sin’s Angel,” drama, in four acts, by Hugh Moss. Lyceum,
Ipswich.

- Nov. 20 "A Breeze from New York," farce, in one act, by Francis Raphael. Prince's Hall, Kew Bridge.
- „ 27 "The Old Sport," comedy-drama, in four acts, by Charles Riminton and J. Pryce-Clairemont. Pier, Folkestone.
- „ 27 "A Ring Fence," comedietta, in one act, by John Strange Winter. Theatre Royal, Portsmouth.
- „ 29 "A Glimpse of Paradise," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Joseph Dilley. Town Hall, Fulham.
- „ 30 "Jones and Co.," farcical comedy, translated from the French by Adeline Wetton. Myddelton Hall, Islington.
- Dec. 1 "Jezebel's Husband," drama, in one act, by Bernard Dale. Theatre Royal, Middleton.
- „ 2 "Such is Life," drama, in a prologue and three acts, by Harry H. Rignold. Queen's, Longton.
- „ 5 "Love and Dentistry," duologue, by Herbert Swears. For copyright purposes. Lecture Hall, Greenwich.
- „ 11 "Mona, the Bride of Glen Maye," comedy-opera, in three acts, by Albert Slater, composed by James Broadbent. Theatre Royal, Hyde.
- „ 11 "Turkington's Talisman," comedy, in three acts, by Barnwell Banks, with music by Charles Krall. Leinster Hall, Dublin.
- „ 11 "Raymond Remington," drama, in one act, by W. Ashdowne. County Hall, St. Albans.
- „ 11 "No. 72," comedietta, in one act, by W. J. Patmore. Theatre Royal, Bath.

In Paris, from Nov. 10th to Dec. 19th, 1893 :—

- Nov. 18 "Mon Prince," piece, in three acts, by MM. Clairville and Sylvane, music by Audran. Nouveautés.
- „ 23 "L'Attaque du Moulin," lyrical drama, in four acts, by Louis Gallet, adapted from the novel of Emile Zola. Opéra Comique.
- „ 25 "Gigolette," drama, in five acts, by Pierre Decourcelle and E. Tarbé. Ambigu.
- Dec. 2 "La Servante," piece in four acts, by H. La Fontaine. Gymnase.
- „ 8 "Les Six Femmes de Paul," farcical comedy, in three acts, by I. La Rode and Georges Rolle. Déjazet.
- „ 19 "La Duchesse de Montelimar," comedy, in three acts, by Albin Valabrègue. Gymnase.





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MISS ISABEL IRVING.

"Where is the use of the lips' red charm,
The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,
And the blood that blues the inside arm,
Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
The earthly gift to an end divine!"

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE THEATRE.

FEBRUARY, 1894.

A Day with Mr. Willard, IN THE STATES.



AFTER following for some time upon the trail of our long-lost actor, whose name heads this article, I caught up with him at Washington, and induced him to tell me something of his American wanderings for the benefit of readers of the THEATRE. As soon as he said, "How do you do?" I congratulated him.

"Upon what?" he asked.

"Upon your accent! It is unchanged!"

He laughed at this, and assured me, in that rich, melodious voice of his, that, in spite of all temptations, he remained an Englishman.

"I asked at the office for Mr. *Wil-lard*," I said; "and the clerk told me that Mr. *Will-ard* was in."

He laughed again. "I was born *Will-ard*," he said, "but there is a growing tendency in England to accentuate words on the last syllable, and so before I knew it I was *Wil-lard*. When I came over here, I found the American Willards a numerous and important family; and members of its various branches, when the echoes of the *Wil-lard* got about, wrote and asked me if the English or the American pronunciation was the correct one. I could only answer 'You pays your money and you takes your choice.' Which I am glad to say they did!"

Leaving this important matter in this unsettled state, I put the screws of direct enquiry upon the distinguished actor; whereupon he lighted a cigarette, and assumed an air of resignation.

"Where have I been? Say, rather, where have I *not* been! All over this wonderful New World, from Maine to California!

For the best part of three years, travelling; it's wonderful what ground you can cover!"

"And you're not tired yet?"

"Oh, it's not so bad as some of them make out in the old country. The trips which involve rushing from the train to the theatre, and from the theatre to the train, and going to bed once a week, haven't come my way. Nor do I want them to! Then I get my long rests, you know. Why, during my first season here in 1890-91, I spent twenty-four weeks in New York."

"Surely," I interjected, "the longest engagement ever played there in one season by an English star?"

"Why, certainly," said Mr. Willard with appropriate accent, "but every city is not New York, and as it happens I *am* feeling just a little worn out at the moment. 'Hamlet'—you have heard that I had that audacity lately?—well, preparing for 'Hamlet' taxed my strength. The work was endless, and more exhausting than I had reckoned on. Taking one consideration with another, the actor-managerial lot, at such times, is not a happy one."

"And what is this I hear about 'Othello' and 'Richard III'?"

"H'm, that is another story—if a quotation from Kipling is allowed! You know we all turn to Shakespeare as naturally as the flowers to the sun. How does it go? 'We needs must love the highest when we see it; not Lancelot nor another.' There you have it, though in my case a little revision is required, for, as a matter of fact, I am keeping one eye on the highest and one on Lancelot, for Louis Parker is writing on this subject for me, and I have great hopes of the play. However, that has nothing to do with your question. But really I don't know how to answer it—unless it be with a 'perhaps' and a meaning smile that may be interpreted either way. Sufficient unto the day is the tragedy thereof. Seek not to know the sorrows Time hath in store for thee!"

"Well, then, abandoning the future for the present, what of Mr. Barrie and 'The Professor'?"

"Ah, that's an easier one! Well, New York first looked upon 'The Love Story' and—I have every reason to believe—saw that it was good.

"It was an immediate success, notwithstanding it was produced in the worst theatrical week of the season—the week before Christmas; and the theatre was crammed every night. It has been a great success everywhere I have played, except at Cincinnati. There its delicacy and finesse were swallowed up in a theatre far too large to admit of the adequate rendering of its finer points. The play is a most valuable addition to my repertoire; and I prize it not only for its merit, but also because

it is so entirely different from all the other plays I am engaged in. It was much appreciated in all the towns and cities I played in during this tour, and even drew the Philadelphians to the theatre in Mid-Lent—something of a feat, I can assure you. I ended this third tour at Boston, and there I played ‘The Professor’ for four out of my eight weeks.”

“I am glad to have these particulars as to ‘The Professor,’” I interrupted, “for we are all much interested in England in it, and hope to see it some near day over there.”

“The play reached me from Mr. Barrie,” continued Mr. Willard, “on the 18th November, 1892, and was produced by me on the 19th December. You will agree with me that there was none of that delay here which is usually thought to intervene between the writing and the production of a play; and I produced the comedy in the most complete manner possible, with special new scenery and accessories as elaborate as it required.”

“Did you make many alterations in dialogue or situations?”

“Well, some such alterations are nearly always necessary, and I had the full consent of Mr. Barrie to deal with the play as I would; but when Mr. Barrie comes to see the piece, it won’t be a case of he must be ‘a wise father that knows his own child,’ for there have been no radical changes.”

“And what of ‘Hamlet’?” I enquired.

“It was at Boston that I first played the *Prince*. All the critics differed from me, and all differed from each other, in the views they presented of this complex and intricate character; and I must honestly confess that I felt myself obliged to refrain from reading the great mass of critical comment, lest my own ideas and views should become absolutely confused. The opinion of the public was, however, evidenced in the practical box-office way, and each night drew a larger number than its predecessor, and my Hamlet week was the most successful financial week of my engagement.”

“And having got now to ‘Time—to-day; Place—Washington;’ what are you going to do in the future?”

“What, again! My time is all arranged for up to next May. I go as far West as Chicago on this tour, and include the principal cities in my route.”

“And are you coming back to London to play next season?” I asked.

“My plans,” answered Mr. Willard, “are not yet arranged for the season of 1894-5, and I do not know on which side of the Atlantic I shall be.”

“We do not forget you over there,” I said on rising, “and we hope to see your *Hamlet* and your *Professor* as soon as

may be. By the way," I added, suddenly remembering, "are you going to produce Mr. Hall Caine's 'Mahomet' soon?"

"I have it in contemplation," returned Mr. Willard. "A most interesting and original drama—a noble spiritual tragedy—breathing the very spirit of the East—but nothing definite is yet decided upon."

Whereupon I parted from the actor; but returned in an hour to see "The Professor."

That this last play of Mr. Barrie's is charming everyone knows—at any rate by hearsay; but it is possible that no one in England quite understands how charming it is, how full of odd turns, and ingenious situations, and quaint expressions. It is to the stage what Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem, "The Last Leaf," is to literature. I would like to call it "serio-comic," if that expression had not been hopelessly vulgarized. It is pathetic and tender, yet always funny. It never strikes deep—it does not pretend to; but is as sweet, and fresh, and pure as an April shower falling through sunshine.

When the dear old Professor sits at his table in his study, consumed with unwonted fires of love for his *chic* little secretary, all unconscious of the nature of his ailment; his vain efforts to struggle on with his mental labours, his agitation, his aberrations, are indicated in a highly diverting way. A touch of the pen, a hitch of the chair, the loss of his ink, the swallowing of a pill—all these commonplaces of stage business are so utilized and combined by Willard, that in five minutes, though no word is uttered, the audience is in sympathy with the tortured Professor and *en rapport* with the bonnie secretary; whom we are led to suspect, notwithstanding her demure manner, of having more than a touch of that strange mental malady which is afflicting the distinguished scientist by her side. When the doctor arrives and, after consultation, cogitation, and hilarious dialogue, solemnly announces to the Professor that the latter is in love, the patient, in horrified tone and melodramatic manner, asks: "Who is the woman?" and the audience collapses. Flight, instant flight to that maiden sister in Scotland—this the unhappy Professor decides is his only mode of escape from the unknown woman who has entangled his heart; and the doctor—the old schoolboy friend—is delighted at his friend's retreat. But the secretary—she must go too. "I never go anywhere without my secretary," says the Professor, and the doctor and the audience again collapse as the terrified *savant* flees from wrath—with the wrath on his arm.

In the second act come old friends from "Auld Licht Idylls." *Lang Tammas* and his love affair make fine comedy, and Mr. F. H. Tyler and Mr. Royce Carleton and Miss Emma Rivers are

entitled to high praise for their presentment of those quaint and "pawky" people out of Thrums. The little underplot is threaded into the warp of the story with fine art; and the delicacies and refinements of love-making among well-bred people are delightfully and naturally and amusingly contrasted at every turn with the frankness and the caution of the sweethearting among the rustics.

The setting of this second act is very effective. The stage is crowded with sheaves of tall wheat, and the player folk have all sorts of opportunities to get "on" and "off." The Professor, rejuvenated by Scotch air and rest, looks only the forty he is, and plays bo-peep among the sheaves with the secretary, with a naïveté that delights the audience, amuses the doctor, and horrifies the maiden sister. By what ingenious pleasantry the Professor is awakened to a knowledge of whom he loves, I have not space to tell; but there is crowded into this act such a lot of highly ingenious stage business and bright talk that the audience must be on the alert, lest it lose any of the numberless good things.

The opposition of the maiden sister to the marriage, and the unsettled love matters of the Thrums people give excuse for the third act, which maintains adequately the interest of the play; and when the curtain falls finally, it is upon a unanimous verdict from the front of satisfaction at an evening in which no moment has flagged, in which unforced merriment has been continuous and universal; yet never once has the daintiest sense of delicacy been for an instant shocked.

LORIN A. LATHROP.



Free List Vagaries.



PERSONALLY, I am of opinion that the free list ought to pay for their places. Critics especially ought to have their seats booked beforehand, drive to the theatre in a well-hung brougham with their eyes bandaged and cotton wool in their ears; then they should be allowed to sustain themselves during the performance with coffee and cigarettes, that they might be able to study the play under the best possible circumstances and write of it unharassed and unfatigued.

Suppose an averagely human critic to go to one of those theatres in London where the atmosphere of good breeding and courtesy in the *foyer* make him feel as if he were visiting at a country house where the host is exceedingly pleased to see him; where the neat damsels who hand him his programme with a smile, and whisper to him to “mind the step,” have so caught the tone of the place that their manner imparts a pleasing sense of rest, and induces forgetfulness of the noise and hurry outside, the slamming of doors on the Underground, and the draught that cut through that crack in the cab-window. And then suppose the play to be very bad. Imagine the sufferings of that critic if he is to write what he conceives to be truth. He feels as if he were ignobly violating the laws of hospitality. It seems the lowest depth of ill-breeding to sneer at an entertainment provided for him gratis in a house where he has been welcomed. It is incidents such as this which turn the critic’s hair grey.

Or suppose him to be in a house of another sort. He has been given a bad seat grudgingly, and his nerves are all ajar; he vexes his soul with little questions in mental arithmetic—suppose he paid for all his seats, how much—counting cab-fares, train fares, and wear and tear of his dress clothes—would he lose weekly on his work? And the answer depresses him. Then, supposing the play is bad, how on earth is he to resist the terrible temptation to magnanimity?

“Though you have made me feel myself an intruder, and have insinuated that you think lightly of my sacred calling; though I am not at all sure you believe in your heart I really write

for the paper I profess to represent, yet I can be generous. I will speak gently of your play.”

How is any man's vanity to withstand temptation when it takes such a form as this?

Of course, I am not speaking of the great and well-known critics who walk into a theatre as naturally as a churchwarden into his church, and as sure of their right there, but of the vast legion of younger and lesser men—whose names, and faces, and papers no acting manager on earth can be expected to remember—whose opinion is not of much moment to the theatre proprietors, but is required by their editor for the benefit of his readers.

Naturally, their editors should pay for their places; because, to a great extent, it is the people who are not going to the theatre who want to know all about the play, rather than the habitual theatre-goer, who, as a rule, prefers to form his own opinion unbiassed. Of course, there are the few great critics before alluded to, whose taste and judgment is so well known that they each have a large following which goes to the theatre or stays away, according to their advice; but these are exceptions. As a rule, the most diligent reader of critiques is the man who has not time or cannot afford to go to the play. These people take the paper where the notices are fullest or wittiest, or most in accordance with their own taste—dwellers in the country or extreme suburbs for the most part, some few of whom in the course of the year come up to town and go to the theatre recommended by their favourite paper, but the greater part of whom stay at home and talk about the play with the knowledge gathered from notices.

Of course, all this amounts to an admission that there ought not to be any free list at all. Well, in a perfect state of society, there would not be a free list. Everyone would have enough money to go to the theatre at least three times a week, and the plays would all be so good, and the audiences so cultured, that there would be no need for critics. But meanwhile we have a free list, and a most bewildering thing it is—harder to understand than Browning or Bradshaw, and more capricious than a woman or the weather. The people who get orders are a standing mystery; and the people who do not are in a perpetual state of bewildered injury. I am not alluding to the private friends of the management—we have no more to do with them than with the people the manager chooses to ask to dinner—but to the large army of junior pressmen—and presswomen—one must not forget them—who, through custom, hold the belief that they receive their free seats “of right, and not of grace.” It is to them that the vagaries of the free list present themselves in the most puzzling form.

These stand outside—less in wrath that they themselves are not admitted than in wonder at the unqualified people—people who couldn't write a notice, nor place it if they could, and who certainly are not going to try, people who have borrowed their friends' cards, or written a note from some newspaper office where they have been calling—light-hearted impostors, who pass in gaily before them.

We all know that when a piece is not drawing, managements litter the Strand with paper, that the artists may not suffer the discouragement of an empty house. They go out into the highways and hedgerows, as it were, "and compel them to come in," that the play may be furnished with an audience. One knows, too, there are houses which have their own distinct *clientèle*—play solely for them—and therefore care nothing for promiscuous notices, and naturally will not give seats to obtain them. There are theatres, too, where the manager knows his business so well that the real pressman has no difficulty and the impostor no chance. At the Lyceum or Haymarket, for instance, no one ever heard of anyone who, under the existing state of affairs, had a right to expect a place being refused it, or anyone who had none, to succeed in deceiving the officials.

But at the average theatre, very strange things are done. It is not so much the refusals as the concessions that are puzzling. A critic of my acquaintance—she is a lady, but may fairly be called a critic since she is doing a man's work, and, even in her own office, only the editor and the printer have read her sex in her articles—who writes for a big northern paper, always has critiques written palpably from her own observation, and not cribbed from the London press. Now, naturally, managers are not very ready to give away seats for the benefit of dwellers in far-off towns, where they are not likely to go on tour, and I asked my friend how she managed about tickets. "We have a large London circulation," she said at first, "larger than that of many London papers." "Do you print the number of your London circulation on your card?" I asked. "No," she said, "a manager generally knows whether a paper is big enough for a notice in it to be worth having; and if he doesn't—well, if he doesn't, I have a friend who was going to be editor of a little London paper if it had ever been started—but it wasn't. He only got as far as having his cards printed; but when I can't get seats he comes to the theatre with me, and presents one of those cards, and gets the places. He wouldn't do it alone, or if we were bent on mere pleasure; but since the theatre people get a notice that is read by many more Londoners than would have read his little paper, it is fair enough. Unfortunately, we can't do it any more, because his cards have given out."

Then she told me the names of the theatres where this had been done, but that was in confidence.

“Better be a doorkeeper in a London office than write leaders in the tents of Kedar,” or anywhere else in the provinces. I am not at all sure the provincial has a grievance; but surely the doorkeeper is unduly fortunate.

Again, there were two young men—one did serious dramatic criticism for a moderately important paper, the other some two years previously had done work, not dramatic criticism, for an important paper. By way of experiment, they both wrote for seats—the one stating what he wrote and where his work would be found; the other simply enclosing his last business card. The real writer was refused: the non-writer got seats by return of post, and the two went to the play together.

Here the grievance was not that the one was refused, but that the other obtained seats to which he had no right, and for which he could make no return, and these instances might be multiplied *ad infinitum* but for the risk of betraying confidences. I have heard of one light-hearted young gentleman who says he always gets tickets when he wants them, by enclosing a stamped directed envelope, addressing the acting manager by his Christian name: “Dear Tom,—This is for the tickets you promised me the other night.” I do not know him, or I would betray his confidence with a very easy conscience; though possibly a person incapable of seeing any discredit in such an action was not to be trusted, even when he accused, himself of committing it.

Still it is fraud such as his—or boasts such as his—that bewilder the free-list, and bring discredit on the applicant for free seats. Only a certain number of seats can be given away, and if the people who can make no return get them, the people who could make a return can't have them. Unfortunately in all ages the impostor has been more plausible, and, in consequence, more successful, than the honest man; and always the next comer after the impostor has to pay the penalty. The next comer is pretty sure to be refused—politely or the reverse—according to the tone of the theatre.

This is the worst of it. The misdoings of the light-hearted impostor make such as are predisposed to incivility more uncivil still. The lately deceived acting manager is not only suspicious, but contemptuous, and the honest people suffer. Men, most of them, are indifferent to this, but women wince under it, and a good deal of theatre work is done by women. “He makes me feel as if he knew I was respectable, and was very sorry for it,” one hard-working woman said to me of a certain manager. “If only he knew how

I disliked having to speak to him at all, he would be quite sorry for me when I have to come here." I have heard of one manager tearing up a lady's card and throwing it—not exactly at her—but on the ground before her face. There are one or two theatres to which women dread to go as much as they dread a visit to the dentist's—but only one or two, and these the less important. No one needs to be told of the well-deserved popularity of Mr. Bram Stoker or Mr. Hurst at the Lyceum, or Mr. Harrison at the Haymarket. This is an old story. I have heard, too, very pleasant things of Mr. Alwyn Lewis at the St. James's. [*This sentence was written before Mr. Lewis's death, but I see no reason why it should not stand.*] At the Shaftesbury, I once saw a tired lady enter, and, showing her card, ask—politely certainly—but with the fretfulness of intense fatigue in her voice, if she could have a seat, and if they would choose her one well out of sight, as she was not in evening dress. Perhaps the request was a little tiresome; but if she had been asking in the house of an intimate friend for leave to rest herself a little before presenting herself in the full light of the drawing-room, she could not have been answered more courteously. Mr. Harris found her just such a seat as she wanted—that may have been a mere matter of business—but the manner in which the thing was done implied that it was quite a pleasure to him to oblige her in a trifle; and this sort of thing is much more the rule than incivility. I only hope for morality's sake the incident did not induce the lady to write a better notice than the piece deserved.

I have mentioned these few names, because it stands to reason that the man to whom politeness is preferable to rudeness, even when he is in a hurry, will naturally feel pleasure in the knowledge that his courtesy is a pleasure to others; and I do not mention the names of the uncivil people less from fear of libel actions than because it stands equally to reason that the man who likes to be rude will be pleased to hear that he has hurt a fellow-creature by his rudeness. As for those who are only rude because they are tired or overworked or out of health, a journalist should be the last to revile them—we have all "been there" ourselves.

All this gets us back to the starting-point. There ought not to be any free-list. We should all get on much better without it. The smaller journalist would be relieved from the unpleasantness of applying for seats and not getting them, and the acting manager from the necessity of telling an applicant in some form or other that neither he nor his paper are sufficiently important to justify the management in presenting him with a stall. But since there is a free-list, all real workers had better

join with the managers in making things as unpleasant as possible for the light-hearted impostor.

At the Lyric, some little while ago, in answer to my first application for seats, I received a circular stating that if I would apply personally on the evening I had named, they would have pleasure in supplying me with seats. This was excellent. There was an air of officialdom—a remember-you-are-on-your-oath tone about it—that would tend to scare the light-hearted impostor, and encourage the real worker. At the Court, where some time since they suffered from the worst sort of impostors, those who applied for tickets in the names of important papers and then sold the tickets they received, I am told, though I never experienced them, that stringent precautions are still taken. After an applicant has received his seat and forgotten all about it, some one comes up suddenly and asks for his card. This is also good. The more precautions the better. If every theatre were to set up a commissioner of oaths of its own, and require every applicant for seats to kiss the book and swear that they were the person they represented themselves to be, and intended to write a notice in the paper they named, and, further, that such a paper really existed, I for one should not complain. No honest worker would object to swearing everything required of him; but the worst of it is—neither would the light-hearted impostors.

C. D.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have heard of such fantastic tricks played by the light-hearted impostors on unsuspecting and courteous managements that I am inclined to desert my own side altogether and take that of the managers?—the systematic trickery against which they have to contend would excuse anything. Why will not some enterprising manager carefully trap some unqualified person and prosecute him for obtaining money's worth under false pretences and get him convicted—a man is as much a thief when he steals a theatre ticket as if he stole beef or boots or furniture. Such a conviction, though it might be a trifle hard on the individual impostor, who had sinned no worse than a hundred of his fellows, would be a good thing for the theatres, and a good thing for us, who, as I have said, indirectly suffer equally with the theatre from a system which makes imposture easy.

Apologia pro Vita Mea.

BY W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.



THE Editor of this Magazine has suggested that, as a counterfeit presentment of me is to appear in this issue, it might well be accompanied by an Apology, from my pen, for my life as a writer about the Theatre. Till he made the proposal, it had not occurred to me that such an Apology was necessary. But now I see that it is. There is an immense amount of writing about the Stage. Not only the daily, but the weekly, the monthly, and even the quarterly press is full of it. The periodical which has no theatrical criticisms indulges in theatrical gossip. The number of men—and women—entitled (I suppose) to call themselves “theatrical critics” because they discuss things theatrical in print, must be considerable. Is there any real demand for all this stage talk? Does the public call for it? It is impossible to say. All one knows for certain is that the editors think there is such a call. It is upon them that one must put the blame, if blame there be. The editors not only print matter about the Theatre, but invite it. That, I think, is a sufficient Apology for the existence of “theatrical critics” as a class. They are the outcome of the growth of interest in the Stage. That their name is Legion is not at all their fault. The demand exists, or is thought to exist, and must be complied with.

For my own part, I *drifted* into writing about the Theatre, and I did so through the channel of Literature. I was interested in the Drama before I was interested in Acting. I have no childish recollections or enthusiasms about “the Play.” I did not, as a boy, steal furtively to the playhouse, and expend my pocket-money upon seats in pit or gallery. I have vague reminiscences of visits, under the parental care, to the pantomime at Astley’s; but that is about all. My first love was—my last love will be—Books. It was through them that I approached the footlights. Before I became anything like a regular playgoer, I had acquired (if I may say so) a knowledge tolerably wide



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MR. W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

"This is the way that boys begin—
Wait till you come to forty year!"

THACKERAY ;

"REBECCA & ROWENA."

and deep of Plays and the history of Playing. I had been a student of Shakespeare and his play-writing contemporaries, of Restoration and eighteenth-century comedy, of eighteenth-century tragedy (alas!), of nineteenth-century printed drama, and generally of French and German dramatic literature, before I took to playgoing as a habit. It was the desire to see the great English dramatic classics represented that first drew me to the Theatre—and kept me there. Goldsmith and Sheridan were the magnets which brought me to Buckstone and Compton; and, when fairly under the Players' spell, I was held and retained by it. The fascination of the Theatre, once felt, can hardly be thrown off. And so, after all these years—after so many nights and afternoons spent at the playhouse—I am a playgoer still, and likely to be one so long as I have the physical strength to move, see, and hear.

It is, as nearly as possible, twenty years since I first wrote regularly about the Stage. I had written about it fitfully before—had written a good deal about Plays and Playwrights of the past. But it was in 1873, or thereabouts, that I began to pass judgment upon public performances, in the character of a representative of public opinion. I was young then—just twenty-two or three, and had all the impetuosity and cocksureness of my years. I had a high ideal, both of the Play and of Playing. I fear I was, at first, a stringent censor, and not disposed to make allowances. I remember that, one fine day, a well-known actress drove down to the office of my paper, to complain to my editor of the severity of his employé. I forget what I had said about her impersonation, and so, I hope, has she, for she is now one of the heartiest of my friends. I know that the managers of the local playhouses would sometimes glare at me as I entered their respective buildings; and I fancy at least one effort was made to exclude me from one of those temples of the Drama, so uncomfortably pointed was my pen or pencil. On the other hand, I recollect that my "appreciation" of a certain tragedian's Hamlet struck that tragedian (who is not an English subject) as so agreeably sympathetic that he insisted upon my editor's taking me to lunch with him and his *Ophelia*.

The fact is, I was fond of the Drama, to begin with, and I grew to be fond of the Theatre; and if, in one respect, I was unbending, in another I was only too ready to unbend. That is to say, if I could blow very cold when displeased, I could blow very hot when delighted. It is the old, old story—the story of the self-sufficiency of youth. The young men of to-day also seem to think that they have but to walk into a theatre and write

about the performance, and that then the thing is not only done, but done well. It may be done well from a literary point of view, and yet very ill from the point of view of duty and justice. It is not enough that a man shall have read a good deal about the Stage, and write cleverly about it. Book knowledge and literary skill are not sufficient; experience is wanted also. And it is wanted, not only in order that the writer may be in a position to compare the old plays or the old actors with the new—and if he cannot do this how can he have any standard by which to judge?—but in order that he may be able to deal temperately and fairly with his subject. Certain of our “new” critics write very brightly and amusingly, but nevertheless do an immense amount of harm. They forget that plays are produced, not for their delectation, but for the public’s, and that their business is to appraise those plays from the public’s standpoint. In those cases in which a censor signs his work he makes himself personally responsible therefor; but where he writes editorially, as representing a newspaper, he should write with a sympathy and a moderation which experience alone supplies.*

One learns as time goes on that it is easier to be egotistical and flippant than to be fair and trustworthy. One comes to know—what the beginner or the novice is necessarily ignorant of—the attitude of playgoers towards the Play, the different classes of theatre-lovers and their different wants. One comes to recognise the fact that, because a play or an actor is antipathetic to a “critic,” it does not follow that that actor or that play should be condemned. The complaint I have to make concerning so much of the “dramatic criticism” of to-day is that it is inspired solely by personal likings or dislikings, without consideration of the intrinsic merit of plays or players, or of their possible suitability to certain audiences. It appears to be thought by some that a play, its producer, its author, and its exponents, are fair game for the censure or the ridicule of the indolent, irresponsible reviewer. Of course, the anonymous writer has to do his “duty to the public” which (possibly) looks to him for guidance; he must speak the truth as he sees it. But he should take care that he does see it—that he sees it steadily and sees it whole. He does not do this when he registers a mere personal impression as a decisive judgment. He does not do this when he permits individual “faddism” to control his pen.

The “new” men would probably retort that the elder critics

* Of course, experience is not, in itself, a sufficient equipment for a professional censor; knowledge and insight, judgment and sympathy, are also essential. A man may be a playgoer for fifty years, and yet be a very bad critic at the end of that period.

also have their weaknesses—that they are prone to be too lenient and complacent, that they are fond of the “old ways” and unwilling to leave them. No doubt there is force in the contention. When a “critic” has come to fifty year or more, he seems loth to admit new ideas, loth to acknowledge the worth of new writers and new players, loth to adopt new stand-points and new methods. And undoubtedly this is a danger to be guarded against. Writers about the Theatre have to take care that they never grow old in thought and feeling. Let them cherish their memories of the past, but let them be kindly towards the present and indulgent in their outlook upon the future. Directly a public writer feels himself out of touch with the times, he should retire from the field, and make way for someone more sympathetic. In the meantime, the “old guard” may be looked upon as successfully and usefully counteracting the influence of the “young recruits.” On the whole, I believe, the balance is pretty well preserved, though perhaps it inclines too much towards reaction. If we cannot have fair and moderate criticism everywhere, it is something to know that the intolerance and flippancy of the young is mitigated by the tolerance and *bonhomie* of their elders. Tolerance and *bonhomie* form, at any rate, the better extreme of the two.

Talking of “influence,” I am inclined to think that, as regards the Stage, the Press is less powerful than is supposed. It can, of course, give to things theatrical a very wide and valuable publicity. A theatrical “paragraph” or “notice” is an advertisement of whose great utility actors and managers are quite conscious. But has theatrical criticism, as such, much real effect upon the public? Can a few great newspapers, for instance, “float” a piece or establish an actor? I doubt it. And I doubt it for these reasons:—First, the enormous growth in the number of theatrical “notices.” Every new theatrical censor detracts somewhat from the authority (if any) exercised by his brethren. “Notices” are now so common, so nearly universal, that no playgoer is likely to permit himself to be swayed by one, or even two. If the Press is practically unanimous in condemning a play or a player, then, no doubt, it passes sentence of death. But in those much more numerous cases in which there are differences of opinion, I believe that the public no longer follows one authority blindly, but sets one against the other, and either strikes an average or proceeds to judge for itself.

This is not only because of the multitude of counsellors, but because also of the public’s familiarity with their *personnel*. There is now but little secrecy in anonymous criticism. The names of the writers about the Theatre in all the leading organs

of opinion are perfectly well known to those who take an intimate interest in the Stage. The record and the foibles of those writers are to thousands of theatre-goers as an open book. There is no longer any mystery as to the leaders in theatrical comment. They have come out into the street and revealed their identity. Many of them habitually sign their work, or portions of it. Playgoers, consequently, not only count heads, but weigh utterances. They read, and are amused by, a clever diatribe, but remain of their own opinion still. They read, and perhaps admire, a column of eloquent praise, but know it is "only pretty Fanny's way." They are aware of a writer's peculiarities, and discount his pronouncements accordingly.

For my own part, I am very glad that this is so. Anonymous criticism has had too long an innings. It is indefensible, and should be abolished. Where the judgment given is necessarily that of an individual, not of a group or corporation, the judged ought to know who is their judge. I do not say that this applies to minor publications—it cannot matter very much to anyone what is said of him in the "Eatanswill Gazette." But unquestionably the principle holds good in the case of all those organs which have large or important circulations. Very many judgments impress simply because they *are* anonymous; were the wielders of the thunder known, the thunder would not frighten in the least. Most writers about the Theatre—or, at any rate, those who have any reputation to lose—would much rather sign their work than print it anonymously. With their name it would gain in market value; and, moreover, they would be relieved by this means from the annoyance of having their work attributed to others, or others' work attributed to them. There are few newspapers which do not employ at least two "dramatic critics," if not more; yet if one man's name becomes associated in the public mind with a particular newspaper, anything that that newspaper may say on theatrical subjects is apt to be ascribed to the one man. I myself contribute "notices" to a daily and a weekly paper; but as my contributions to those papers are not signed, and as other writers contribute to those papers work of the same kind, obviously nobody has a right to fix upon any one "notice" and attribute it specifically to me.

I have said that a writer about the Theatre ought never to grow old in thought or feeling. He ought at least to try not to grow old in that way. When pronouncing upon a performance he should remember that, though he has witnessed it in a professional capacity, the rest of the audience has come to it simply to be interested or amused. In that respect, as in others, a

“critic” should endeavour to put himself in the place of the average playgoer. He has no right to go to the playhouse otherwise than with a desire or a willingness to be pleased. If he feels tired or “bored” he should stay away. A blasé “critic” is a contradiction in terms, an insult to playwrights and players, a misleader of the public. I am thankful to know that, after twenty years of constant theatre-going in town and country, my fondness for the Play is as fresh and keen as at first. Whenever, if ever, it loses that freshness and keenness, I shall lay down my pen, and leave the discussion of theatrical matters to other hands.



Mr. and Mrs. Tree at the Haymarket.

THE fight for the reversion of Mr. Irving's leadership in English dramatic art continues to prove but moderately exciting—so unexciting, indeed, that it must be difficult for most people to detect any traces of a struggle. You can hardly contest the position of the Heir-Apparent, and if Mr. Tree be not the destined successor to Mr. Irving's honours, it can at least be safely said that no one else seems likely to lay better claim to the distinction. Mr. Willard dropped out of the race more than three years ago, when he took the fatal step of leaving London for America. Mr. Forbes Robertson, “that hard-bound genius *in posse*,” seems content to adapt himself to Mr. Hare's varying requirements at the Garrick; and Mr. Alexander alone among our prominent actors seems likely to compete with Mr. Tree for premier honours.

There is one other, who, under favourable conditions, might seriously threaten Mr. Tree's easily-won position, and that man is Mr. Brandon Thomas. Mr. Brabazon, of Barchester, adds a fifth, perhaps, to the little group of actors who seem destined to mould the future of the English stage. But for all practical purposes Mr. Tree's position is assured. Unless something like

a miracle happens, he seems the man from whom we have most to expect in the future. The majority of playgoers recognise this already, and even the Haymarket manager himself must feel convinced that the goal of his ambition is at last within reach. How else can his determination to visit the States this year be interpreted? And, the future being thus far settled, the present seems a suitable opportunity for considering anew the actor's work as player and manager during the six or seven years he has been connected with the Haymarket Theatre. Mr. Tree was always an interesting figure—a man of his rare gifts could hardly fail to be otherwise—and his career of late years has been peculiarly interesting and instructive. During the early years of his management Mr. Tree, we may say, was feeling his way. He tried all manner of parts, and naturally enough achieved different degrees of success. In fact, no one but a plucky and enterprising manager would have made so many bold throws for fortune as were made by Mr. Tree. It might almost be said that the new manager of the Haymarket was “a young man in a hurry.” He seemed almost too eager to prove his mettle. Known previously merely as an eccentric comedian, Mr. Tree was seen to pose now as lover, now as romantic hero, and now as *Falstaff*. Sometimes he would be an old man, passionate or pathetic. Anon he would return to his old love, and play a character part. He was everything by turn and nothing long, and he had every excuse for pursuing such a policy. An actor cannot tell what he can or can't play till he has played everything, and Mr. Tree, in the versatility of his art, has gone as near as any man living to boxing the compass. Fortunately, the experience thus bought does not seem to have been lost on the Haymarket manager. He appears—histrionically speaking—to have sown his wild oats, and now gives promise of settling down into suitable grooves. He has only to forswear conventional tragedy and romance, and then he will not go far wrong.

And, indeed, recent events go far to prove that Mr. Tree has at last recognized his limitations and ascertained his *métier*. In modern plays he has rarely acted the conventional lead. The youthful lovers and husbands, so often allotted to Mr. Alexander and Mr. Forbes Robertson, he usually avoids. This, with the Haymarket manager, is partly the result of policy, partly a matter of necessity. Above all things, he would avoid monotony in his choice of rôles; moreover, for the last three or four years Mr. Fred Terry has had to be provided with a part. Then, too, though reserves of pathos and power are his, fervour and passion have been denied him. So that a hero has to be very care-

fully drawn and very narrowly circumscribed—must partake, indeed, more or less of the nature of a “character part” before Mr. Tree ventures to attack him. “Captain Swift” and “A Man’s Shadow” illustrate what I have said. In Mr. Chambers’ play *Mr. Wilding* is practically a character part; while in Mr. Buchanan’s adaptation *Laroque* is a quite colourless rôle, which owes any importance it may possess to its effective contrast with the part of the spy, *Luversan*. In picturesque plays, again, Mr. Tree’s recent change of front has been very noticeable. In those early days, when Mr. Brookfield played French kings or philosophers, his manager essayed such ultra-romantic rôles as *Gringoire* and *Narcisse Rameau*; but of late the truth seems to have dawned on Mr. Tree, and, barring the pardonable experiment with *Hamlet*, we have been spared further attempts with perfervid romance. Mr. Fred Terry has played hero, and Mr. Tree has given himself a more or less written-up (or shall we say written-in?) old man or character part. So much for the general principles which have guided the Haymarket manager’s course of action within recent years.

Now for a more critical and detailed examination of Mr. Tree’s work. The actor’s repertoire may be divided into three groups of parts. I exclude, of course, characters of an eccentric cast and such rôles as *Falstaff*.

First, naturally, are the heroes of romance—the lean, picturesque *Gringoire*, *Narcisse* in search of his wife, and *Hamlet* in search of his wits. Then comes another and a much more important division, which gives the actor-manager opportunity for slipping gradually down the primrose path till he becomes a



souteneur, or his Infernal Majesty himself. This group splits up into heroes (more or less) and villains. The heroes are gentlemen of picturesque appearance, charmingly insolent manners, and easy morality. Their ages vary between twenty-five and fifty, and they may be classed according as they are young or middle-aged men. In the first list you meet *Captain Swift*, *Joseph Surface*, and the *Duke of Guisebury*, in the second you find *The Tempter*,

Lord Illingworth, and *Beau Austin*. The villains are often gentlemen of foreign nationality—Germans, Poles, Italians, Frenchmen (why doesn't Mr. Tree give us an English Anarchist?)—*Macari*, *Luversan*, *Borowski*, and *Stephen Cudlip* all figure in this list.

Whatever may be thought of Mr. Tree's powers—and his versatility cannot for one moment be called into question—it will, I think, be generally admitted that it is as a comedian that he will eventually base his surest title to fame. It is in the delineation of the many varied types of everyday modern life that confront us at every turn, especially when those types belong to society proper, that he seems most thoroughly at home. At the Haymarket he has performed the same office for modern plays that Mr. Irving has already done for tragedy at the Lyceum. Joining hands with the naturalists, he has helped to expel theatricalism from its last lurking-place—the modern play. Himself an actor who has won distinguished success in characters of a poetic cast, he has resolutely opposed the natural tendency to intrude romance into representations of modern life.

In presenting us with the nineteenth-century man as he is—often cynical, and generally cool, a strange compound of clashing sympathies, moribund beliefs, and atrophied emotions—Mr. Tree has given to our stage an entirely new kind of character. First in this gallery of “modern men”—the artist's undoubted *chef d'œuvre*—hangs *Lord Illingworth*. The character is so firmly outlined and so exquisitely finished, so absolutely characteristic in every detail, as to become absolutely convincing. Next in importance comes *Captain Swift*, closely followed by *Guisebury* and *Beau Austin*—the last-named really a character of similar *genre*. But in these two latter portraits Mr. Tree's outline is somewhat blurred, his touch is hesitating, and seems to suggest an emotional treatment of the parts never actually accorded them. A certain lack of grip and firmness is apparent.

Far different is the case with *Captain Swift* and *Lord Illingworth*. It is in his skilful treatment of the emotional side of these two rôles that Mr. Tree's art is best displayed.

To the superficial observer, *Mr. Wilding* seems an easy enough part. An air of jaunty assurance and nonchalance, varied by occasional flashes of ferocity and notes of pathos, seems all the treatment the character requires. Yet there are pitfalls which none but the true artist could avoid. How nicely Mr. Tree trims the balance in the scene where *Mrs. Seabrook* reveals the secret of *Swift's* parentage! The ordinary emotional actor would go for this scene and spoil it. Not so Mr. Tree. In his hands the bushranger seems half to regret, half surprised at, his own inability

to rise to the emotional stress of the situation. How human, too, is the actor's playing throughout the last act. *Wilding* enters more than half demoralized; for though every now and then some glimpse of the old dare-devilry returns, the jauntiness and cool intrepidity of the man seem to have almost disappeared. He seems to feel that the game is up, that he's at the end of his tether. His nervous collapse is everywhere apparent; you see it in his fidgety movements, in his desperate attempts to maintain self-control, in the trembling of his fingers as he clutches the glass and drains off its contents. Just contrast Mr. Alexander's treatment of a rather similar scene in "The Idler," and you will realise the difference between exquisite care and nice regard in acting, and skill which falls little short of inspiration.

Of course Mr. Tree has vastly improved his reading of *Swift*. So much so, indeed, that I should like to see him play another and different kind of adventurer. In the hero of Mr. Gilbert Parker's latest book—that powerful and original study he calls "The Trespasser"—Mr. Tree would surely find a most congenial rôle. Only two actors could play *Gaston Belward*, and Mr. Tree is certainly one of the two.

Lord Illingworth is a far showier, far more difficult rôle than *Captain Swift*, for the author had already done so much for the part. But despite this, Mr. Tree made of it one of his greatest successes. Not even Mr. Hare, in "Lady Bountiful," gave us anything more clear-cut and vivid than Mr. Tree's absolute realisation of Mr. Wilde's hero, and hardly less admirable than the actor's filling in of the general outlines of the part and his delivery of his author's sparkling epigrams was his handling of the few passages wherein the polished cad he represented showed any signs of feeling. In the concluding act of "A Woman of No Importance"—surely the most brilliantly-written, the most impressive, and most moving play of recent times—Mr. Tree's success rivalled that of Mrs. Bernard Beere, and no more emphatic praise could be given.

"The Tempter" marks a very distinct advance for actor as well as author. In Mr. Jones's fine play the increase in power and breadth of style first notable in "Hypatia," and still more evident in Mr. Wilde's comedy, had then first opportunity for powerful expression. Of course Mr. Tree made a picturesque figure of the Haymarket *Mephisto*, for in these romantic and semi-romantic parts the actor can always achieve this measure of success. True, too, that the mediæval Devil was no colourless drawing-room villain, but a full-blooded fiend, with something of the lusty vigour of the men and women he ensnared. But the most remarkable feature of Mr. Tree's last

creation was the evidence it furnished of the actor's wonderful improvement in elocution. The Haymarket chief has no natural talent in this direction, so progress can be due only to constant practice and perseverance. On former occasions, when declamation was called for (notably in "A Village Priest" and "Hamlet") Mr. Tree has indulged in an uncomfortable trick of shouting the first part of a sentence and whispering the remaining words. In "The Tempter," for the first time, his delivery of poetical lines entitled him to praise. Such bravura passages as the Devil's description of *Prince Leon's* charms were declaimed with a freedom and vigour worthy of all recognition. On Mr. Tree's old men studies I have no intention of dwelling at length. Of such rôles as *Borgfeldt* and *Triplet*, where comedy and pathos are chiefly called into play, I have spoken in previous articles, and unfortunately cannot altogether commend Mr. Tree's *Dr. Stockman*. But in old men parts which are more properly speaking leading rôles, Mr. Tree's success has been much more marked. And though I have deplored the actor's *Mat Ruddock*, I have already borne emphatic testimony to the great merits of his *Abbé Dubois*. *Issachar* in "Hypatia" was in many respects an even more brilliant piece of work than his "Village Priest." It was a very detailed, very imaginative, and very powerful creation—perhaps the most picturesque and striking impersonation the Haymarket manager has given us.

In such romantic parts as these Mr. Tree's acting is always vivid, and has more than once been inspired by some deft touch of weirdness or diablerie. When *Hamlet* prays in the oratory before his interview with the *Queen*, when the *Abbé* wrestles with his conscience in the moonlit cell, when the *Tempter*, with irresistible verve and malignity, trolls the ballad of "The Racketty Crew," and in "Hypatia," when the old Jew swears his young countryman by the *Teraph* and curses his daughter's seducer, Mr. Tree's acting was instinct with the same strange eerie charm.

All this time we have been forgetting the courteous maxim—*place aux dames*. The fair lady who shares Mr. Tree's hopes and fears at the Haymarket has been long claiming our attention.

Mrs. Tree has never been content to figure merely as Mr. Tree's wife. The mistake at the St. James's, which so long delayed Mr. Kendal's general recognition as an artist, has not been repeated at the Haymarket. "Undue domesticity" may be appreciated in the States; but, thank goodness, we don't care for it in London. The vice, at any rate, has never characterized Mr. Tree's arrangements.

When her husband started his management at the Comedy,

April 20th, 1887, Mrs. Tree was playing at the St. James's under the Hare-Kendal management, repeating in the misnamed "Lady Clancarty" the comedy successes she had scored previously in "The Millionaire," "Engaged," and "The Hobby Horse." She did not appear as a member of her husband's company till the autumn, when, on the transference of Mr. Tristram's play to the Haymarket, she succeeded Lady Monckton in the part of the *Princess Claudia Morakoff*. These were the days when Mr. Tree's policy was in great measure a hand-to-mouth one; when a one-part piece was the ordinary rule; when the leading lady's parts were so very unconventional as to vary between elderly women and ingénues; when the leading man was now a character actor like Mr. Brookfield, anon a representative of virile Englishmen like Mr. Macklin, and sometimes a jeune premier like Mr. Cautley or Mr. Fuller Mellish.

In "Captain Swift" and "The Red Lamp" the heroine is a mature woman, and Lady Monckton created both parts. In Mr. Tree's other productions at this period, with the noteworthy exceptions of "The Pompadour" and "Partners," the female rôles are very attenuated. So that, all things considered, it is scarce matter for surprise that Mrs. Tree was sometimes overweighted at the Haymarket. Since "A Village Priest," and the accession of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Terry to the company, the cast of the Haymarket productions has been fairly settled, and Mrs. Tree has been given suitable parts. Her special line restricts her to three distinct kinds of part. Like her husband, she has a strain of *nevrosité* in her, and this explains the strange ease with which she can pass from *Hester Gould* to *Stella Darbisher*, from *Mrs. Allenby* to *Lady Avis*, from *Marguerite* in "A Village Priest" to *Ophelia*.

She is the ideal ingénue of the English stage. Not even Reichenberg is so angelically innocent as Mrs. Tree. She represents all that is sweet, good, gentle, &c.—perhaps in rather too exalted wise. Miss Maud Millett is the ordinary English girl—rather too pert and "missy" for ingénue rôles. Mrs. Tree must be awarded the palm. She has a unique style for this kind of heroine, and in such rôles as *Marguerite*, *Stella*, *Anne Page* in "The Merry Wives," and *Loyse* in "Gringoire," she is unrivalled.

A class of part closely allied to those I have just named is the pallid, intense, anæmic girl; and here again Mrs. Tree is seen at her best. Her musical intonation and thrilling utterance in such rôles as *Ophelia* and *Lady Avis* almost entitle her to claim the creation of a new kind of part.

Yet beneath all this surface idealism, Mrs. Tree, histrionically speaking, has some very feline characteristics. You almost expect

them to appear when the *Lady Avis* is embracing the *Lady Isobel*, and they find most potent expression in certain light comedy rôles she has played. Ablest of all those creations certainly was the actress's part in Mr. Wilde's comedy. Mrs. Tree's delivery of the "credo" of the fashionable woman was masterly. No other actress could have spoken so long a passage with anything like the ease and success that characterized her utterance. Still, though a stingless sort of malice lurks in *Mrs. Allenby's* airy sentences, the real venom of a weak woman, who is a false friend and a treacherous enemy, was most skilfully conveyed by the actress in such parts as *Hester Gould* in "The Millionaire" and in "The Hobby Horse." There is no tyranny so intolerable as the tyranny of the weak over the strong, no spite so keen and cruel as that of a woman. Mrs. Tree knows this, and her touch is sure, and her cleverness unerring, in the representation of the envious, disappointed girl—Mr. Gissing's "cold woman." And this being so, it seems all the more pity that she should go out of the way to play leading parts. In *Dorothy Musgrave*, *Henriette Laroque*, *Princess Claudia*, and *The Pompadour*, undeniable charm, intellectual force, style, and grace avail little. These are not parts in which Mrs. Tree's light, musical soprano voice can stand her in good stead. Rather is it a positive hindrance to her success, for these characters are all contralto heroines.

The actress could not depict the horror of *Laroque's* wife at the murder of the banker for sheer lack of lung power. Miss Marion Terry and Miss Maud Milton created a thrilling effect in this scene. Nor is *Dorothy Musgrave* a slim, elegant, dreamy, larmoyant girl. She is a *Diana*, not an *Ophelia*. Mrs. Tree was delightfully picturesque and charming in the part, but Mr. Stevenson's heroine wants more than this. Passion and physique are required, and passion and physique Mrs. Tree has not got.

And for such parts as *The Pompadour* and *Princess Claudia* the actress is even less suited. Lady Monckton was hardly satisfactory in the last-named rôle, but she got nearer to it than her successor.

In conclusion, just a few words on Mr. Tree's managerial policy. I had intended to devote rather more space to this side of the actor-manager's talent, but I find I have nearly run my allotted span.

Fortunately the main lines of Mr. Tree's régime are easily determined. The actor from the first has aimed at variety. He has avoided monotony, both in his choice of rôles and of plays. Take his pieces this last year. A classical play opened the season, then came a modern comedy, then a mediæval romance, finally Mr. Chambers' clever but preposterous drawing-room melodrama. The

Haymarket manager recognizes facts. He knows that the bill of fare must be varied, that a theatre for exclusively classical plays cannot be kept open. Mr. Irving is the last of the old, though the first of the new school, and only he can run a Shakespeare theatre. Of Mr. Tree's policy in respect of *ensemble* and encouragement of new authors and plays of unconventional *motif*, I have spoken in "Wit and Wisdom."

It is surely not too much to say that the truest guarantee for the continued prosperity of our Stage is the presence in the front ranks of our managers of an actor of the power, the versatility, and the great intellectual gifts of Mr. Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

W. A. LEWIS BETTANY.



The Theatrical Revolution :

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY.

1st Player : I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.
Hamlet : O, reform it altogether.

IV.

SUDDENLY transplanted into the very heart of a reformed civilisation, old Roscius Daggerwood felt like one who, but half awakened, finds every object encountered by his blurred vision startlingly unfamiliar. The world itself seemed to him newly-born and full of new promises, for the past third of a century had merely introduced a better mode of living which was not yet fully established, but for which the mind of the people was growing daily better prepared. Chief among the reforming influences of the time—outvying Press and Platform and Pulpit by reason of a popular craving for object-lessons—arose unquestionably the Theatre. No blazoning of plays and players in the

streets or newspapers testified to this ; there were no vainglorious announcements of

TERRIFIC SUCCESS!!

THOUSANDS TURNED AWAY NIGHTLY!

there were no melancholy processions of sandwich-men ; but in hotels, clubs, stores, public conveyances—everywhere—Roscius heard stage performances referred to as an authority or exemplification, no matter what might be the question discussed.

A fire of enthusiasm burned in the old man, such as might have been kindled in the days of war by the spectacle of a great army in battle.

“ I must introduce myself to one of this new race of managers,” he said to Kenneth, “ and have a talk with him about the practical operation of the theatres.”

They called at one or two houses before finding a manager at leisure to grant them an interview, but in each case they were promptly and courteously received by a secretary, who explained and apologised for his chief's engagements, bearing himself, Roscius remarked, in a very different fashion from the Jacks-in-office of 1893.

They soon obtained an introduction to Manager Huntingdon, a gentleman of dignity and breeding, contrasting favourably with the type that lingered in the veteran actor's recollection.

Rising as they entered his plainly-furnished business-room, Mr. Huntingdon put them at their ease with few words. He was unaffectedly pleased to welcome an actor of the olden time, and took a cordial interest in the fact that Roscius Daggerwood's grandchildren were likely to shed that lustre upon the stage of the present day which he declared his visitor had given to that of the past.

Manager Huntingdon was an elderly man who had served his apprenticeship under various stage-directors, learning how plays should be put upon the stage ; also in the literary department acquiring a capacity to adapt plays for representation ; and with the accountants, too, studying the cost of production ; adding to those labours the training and subsequent duties of a dramatic critic. He had worked hard in his younger days, and this highly esteemed and lucrative appointment was his reward, won not by favour, but by proved fitness for the post.

“ You are doubtless aware,” said Mr. Huntingdon, “ that the work of each theatre is nowadays strictly confined to its specialty. Tragedy or plays of passion, Drama or plays of action, and Comedy or plays of character, have each sub-divisions into classes or periods, and the advantage of restricting our scope to one of

these consists in extending to the utmost our knowledge of that which we deal with, and consequently perfecting the work we turn out. Each theatre, too, is exactly adapted to the work done in it. The largest stages are devoted to plays in which broad action takes the place of finesse. Take, for example, the History Theatre, which is used for the illustration of the great events of the past. The tremendous drama unfolded at that house takes over a year in representation, and young and old derive great profit from reviewing alike the errors and the high examples of earlier times. The dull pages of the world's story are attractively illuminated. Famous men and women live once more, and the circumstances under which those celebrities had their being are vividly realised. For work that depends upon the subtle expression of tone and feature a smaller stage is preferable, and the mechanical arrangements are, of course, quite different."

"Will you give me an idea of the modern system of government in the theatres? The abuses of my day converted them into mere sinks for capital. No moneyed idiot had completed his course of folly until he had made himself responsible for the expenses of a West-end playhouse."

"I am aware," said Mr. Huntingdon, "that towards the end of the nineteenth century few of the West-end theatres had a legitimate hold upon the public."

"Too true," declared his visitor. "A meritorious production by no means assured a return of the money invested. And yet rents were charged for those theatres upon the assumption that they were veritable gold mines. It was customary for managers to get financial support—a backer was the term used for the capitalist who staked an indefinite probable loss against an usurious improbable profit."

"I thought such a one was called Juggins," remarked Manager Huntingdon.

"By that term was denoted the avaricious speculator, who, being rich, desired to amass more riches, and was easily persuaded that to open the doors of a theatre would command a rush of playgoers, money in hand, no matter how poor the attraction might be. These and the *bonâ fide* patrons of the drama who took a genuine interest in promoting the fortunes of clever players, found backing theatres a very costly enterprise. Profits were seldom made except by the manager, who charged his financial friend a huge salary for making away with his money. Another class of backers consisted of wealthy idlers with an inclination for profligacy, which they disguised under the pretence of being fascinated with dramatic art. Certain privileges accorded and facilities contrived by the accommodating adventurer whose

name appeared as lessee and manager, were the consideration for thousands of pounds squandered in running the show. Managers of the genuine sort—popular actors, who, having put by some little savings, tried to succeed on a proper business basis—commonly drifted into the Bankruptcy Court. In default of the luck of hitting the popular fancy with a play, there was no alternative but such scurvy and degrading tricks as that of enticing an audience into the house with free invitations, and fleecing them with unforeseen impositions, or the suicidal practice of selling to vain amateurs the privilege of ‘going on for parts’; or engaging for the company only persons with a ‘following’ that insured profits independent of the general public. It was notorious that chorus and ballet girls were expected to allure rich admirers for this purpose. I understand that the State now subsidizes the theatres, and it would interest me to know how you arrange for working capital, and what are your restrictions as to expenditure.”

“Our working capital is inconsiderable—a mere matter of petty cash, in fact. We have no rent to pay, and no rates and taxes; house and ground are the property of the Academy. We have the same relief as regards authors’ fees, the salaries of actors, band, and working staff. Scenery, costumes, properties, &c., are made in the Academy’s shops, or lent from the Academy’s stores free of all cost to the theatre. The bills for consumables go to the Academy also, after being checked and recorded in our books. It is my business to prevent wastefulness, and to run the establishment in good order. Cases of incompetency or contumacy are referred to me. Mere differences of opinion I decide upon, but breaches of discipline I report to the Associates of the Academy, who have power to inflict fines, or, in grave matters, to degrade the delinquent for varying periods, inflicting thereby a loss of income. Persons ‘degraded’ have a right of appeal to the Governors, a body of five Associates elevated by rotation to the control of the managers and the whole policy of our national stage. Three of these Governors constitute a quorum. Above them is only the President of the National Academy of Art. I have no responsibility in connection with the profit or loss question. The Associates send me plays, and I have those plays produced without regard to their chance of pleasing the public.”

“What is the qualification of these Associates?” inquired Daggerwood, Senior.

“They are Academicians who have graduated in various departments of the stage—as actors, as playwrights, as critics, as managers; and, having retired from practice, have offered themselves for election to the various committees which govern theatrical work.”

“ Who elect them ? ”

“ The Governors.”

“ And the Reading Committee discover plays of merit, and forward them to the suitable theatres, with an imperative order for their production ? ”

“ Yes ; I have five now awaiting their turn.”

“ Some of those authors will have to wait for their royalties a long time ? ”

“ Royalties are not paid now. The Academy buy the pieces right out—the property in them for Great Britain, I mean—paying cash on acceptance of the play.”

“ Without regard to their success when produced ? That must operate unfairly.”

“ Why ? Merit is what deserves reward, not the caprice of the public, or the luck of getting the play well done. In the eighteen-nineties high-class plays were often profitless, while those which pandered to the lowest intelligence ‘ coined money.’ Was that just ? Authors do not now run the risk of throwing away months of industry. We announce the market price for plays at each theatre—a price fluctuating according to supply and demand. The author competes, knowing exactly what he will get if the judges award a prize to the play he sends in. If he gains the first prize he will receive the top quotation of the day, and his piece will have the earliest possible production. If he only takes a second or third, there is a certain reduction and delay ; but at least he receives fair value, and may rely upon seeing his work properly staged before long.”

“ But if on production one play holds the stage for years—has a long run, and is again and again revived—while another fails and is withdrawn, surely it is not fair that the Academy should pay as much for a ‘ frost ’ as for a success ? ”

“ On the contrary, it is but just that the author of the ‘ frost ’ should get *more*. Plays that please the multitude, and accordingly hold the stage longest in England, find the readiest market abroad ; and as the foreign rights remain at the author’s disposal, there is a tendency to write plays with this object. The comparative scarcity of purely artistic pieces raises them to a premium at the Academy, where the aim is to equalize rewards as far as possible, and to encourage dramatic illustration of every phase of life and thought.”

“ I am glad to perceive,” said old Roscius, “ that it is recognized to be the duty of the State to protect from sacrifice those who devote themselves to the elevation of public taste. Now, as to the author’s security of being justly treated in the competition : I would like you to tell me whether personal knowledge of, and

intimacy with, the writers of plays does not of necessity influence the Associates in awarding the prizes?"

"The names of the Reading Committee are not known to the author," replied Mr. Huntingdon, "nor is that of the author known to them. Every precaution is taken to prevent corrupt influences and to secure a strictly impartial judgment. Expulsion from the Academy would be the penalty for violating those rules; and, moreover, the difficulties of prospering by tricks rather than by honest work are almost insuperable."

"Then, as to casting; the amount of your salary list not being an object, I suppose you keep up the credit of your theatre by grabbing all the best talent—say the Masters and Fellows—leaving other managers only actors of inferior grade?"

"Impossible! The Associates mark the parts 'Master,' or 'Fellow,' or 'Member,' according to the exactions of each rôle, and with an eye to distributing equitably the available talent. The stage-director, having read the piece, gives me a selection of names for each part, and I get for him those players who are available. We managers co-operate in groups of five, the representatives of the corresponding theatre in each division. If you look in the circular, you will observe an asterisk against the name of the play we are running here. The same sign appears at the West and South theatres that are playing the same piece. That means a falling off of business in the South, West, and Central quarters, and invites the surplus patronage of the North and East to visit the other divisions. This sign has pulled business up for a week or two, but now the falling off necessitates a double asterisk, which implies imminent withdrawal. When the total returns of the five theatres drop to a certain figure we all show three asterisks, and change the bill simultaneously as soon as the next production is ready. I have known pieces finish to full houses. That would be a reason for an early revival if we ran short of new plays."

"I take it that pieces are selected for revival simply upon the indications of the box-office?"

"Not altogether. The reviews often declare that the public should have taken a greater interest in a piece than has been manifested by the money returns. Upon that ground the Academy may instruct us to revive a play which has had but a short run; and it often happens that a change in popular taste will upon revival make a success of a piece which has been a box-office failure."

"I see you have no occasion to pretend that the theatre is doing good business when the contrary is the case," remarked Roscius. "Formerly that was the main line of a manager's policy."

Bragging advertisements and 'paper' houses were resorted to for the coercion of patronage. It usually meant throwing good money after bad."

"Certainly it is best to replace pieces that do not please the public. Our critics are now qualified to put the blame upon the right shoulders, and they do so without fear or favour, condemning the play itself, our production of it, the acting, or the lack of appreciation."

"To those managers and directors who play in their theatres a 'fat' part is, I suppose, still an inducement to keep the play on as long as possible? Many ruined themselves for the sake of this vanity in former days; and now that the State 'pays the piper' they are not less likely to sacrifice at the altar of self."

"The Actor-Manager is a mongrel of the past. Business and Art have conflicting interests. Acting is considered quite enough nowadays to engross a man's attention, without the responsibilities of production and management which were undertaken by Irving, Alexander, Barrett, Tree, Hare, and the other marvellous men of your time."

"How do you account for their being able to do so much?"

"They are said to have reduced their performances to a stereotype. Having once produced a piece, they let it run on mechanically, giving it the least part of their attention; whereas we never cease to do our utmost to elaborate, strengthen, and beautify. Before every performance there is a run through to improve details; we make important alterations every week, and recast the play every month. One performance every twenty-five hours (an hour later each day) is enough, coupled with rehearsals and study, to tax the strength of Members and Fellows. The Masters only play every fifty hours—that is to say, at alternate performances. I take exclusive charge of business matters; stage affairs are the sole concern of my Director; and the Academy attends to the providing of future attractions and the money to produce them. Thus actors are able to bear the strain of close devotion to their special work which under the old conditions was too great for both mind and body."

"Your modern actor has other grand advantages," observed Roscius. "He has no burden of anxiety concerning the blankness that lies beyond a 'fortnight's notice.' It is no longer imperative that he devote his hours of restoration to boon-companionship, stage-door, club, tavern and agency loafing, public dinners, private suppers, and other foolish functions that empty his pocket and fill his brain with nicotine and alcohol. To keep in touch with the profession, and so cherish his chance of employment, he must needs in the bad old days destroy his nerves and his voice, and neglect the cultivation of his talent."

“That was a vile system,” exclaimed Manager Huntingdon. “No wonder that the best interests of the theatre went to rack and ruin.”

With a shrug old Daggerwood changed the subject.

“You have mentioned a Stage-Director. Is that the modern designation of the officer we used to call ‘stage-manager’?”

“The Stage-Manager controls the scenes, machinery, properties, lighting and costuming; each department, of course, having its own head. His duties are administrative. He is but the foreman and superintendent of the working staff, receiving instructions from the Director for certain effects, and producing them accordingly. The Director has supreme dictatorship behind the curtain. He is assisted by a Sub-Director, who has charge of ‘the book,’ and at rehearsals takes notes of his chief’s decisions, and can depute for him if required. This official has graduated as an actor, and having relinquished practice of that vocation aspires to the office of Director—the master-mind from which the whole production emanates.”

At this moment there entered the room, with an apology for disturbing them, a tall, dark man, whose broad retreating forehead, full eyes of greenish grey, large and penetrating, conveyed an impression of strong imaginative capacity.

The Manager introduced him as Julian Cornwallis, the Stage-Director of the theatre.

“Here, gentlemen, is a much cleverer man than I—one with whom I am proud to be associated, and who has added more to the reputation of this house than I could ever hope to do. He would not change his work for mine, although, in an official sense, I have the honour to be his chief.”

Director Cornwallis learnt the object of the Daggerwoods’ visit with courteous interest, and offered to unfold to them the methods of that magic world behind the scenes if they would return to the theatre on the morrow.

PERSEUS.

(*To be continued*)



Mrs. Kendal versus the American Public.

(From *Harper's Weekly*.)

SOME of those Americans who were in London last summer brought back with them to this country the story of a remarkable play—the most remarkable play, so they said, that had been written in this decade. And with their enthusiasm for this production was mingled admiration for a Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who had played the title rôle, that of *Paula*, a woman of the half-world, who had married a widower, and who had by so doing become *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*.

It was not until these same Americans had seen Mrs. Kendal in the same part here that they appreciated it was not their own intuition, but Mrs. Patrick Campbell, that had made them understand how great Mr. Pinero's play really was.

Very few people in an audience are able to divide the credit justly between the performer and the writer of the play. It is not until they have seen different players in the same rôle that they can tell whether it is a bad play that is being helped by good acting, or that worthy lines have been given to one who is incapable of interpreting them.

A piece of music is only a matter of printer's ink and paper until someone places it on the music-rack and interprets the composer's meaning. The part of *Mrs. Tanqueray* is as subtle and intricate and moving as is any great piece of music, and Mrs. Campbell was able to understand its meaning, and to make her audience understand it too, and to show them how great a composer of plays Mr. Pinero is. The fact that the New York critics agreed unanimously—which is a thing they seldom do—that Mr. Pinero's play was clever but disagreeable, shows that the woman who interpreted it here blinded them to its real greatness by her bad playing; that her fingers faltered on the keys and her feet on the pedals, and that she was counting the time with her lips as she played, and not beating time with her pulses and her heart.

As Mrs. Campbell played the part, the play was a possible one for any young girl to see; as Mrs. Kendal plays it, it is not. It was terrible, but the terrible truths of life are not harmful, and the picture was no more contaminating than is the one of want and poverty in a sweeter's garret of which we catch a glimpse as we rush by on the elevated road.

Mrs. Campbell's *Mrs. Tanqueray* was a young and beautiful woman, without any moral responsibility; she was as unconscious of good as a child, and you could no more blame her than you could blame the dog who runs to meet you and who destroys a flower-bed on his way. You forgive him for breaking the flowers because he comes leaping to welcome you, and you forgave Mrs. Campbell's *Paula* for her mistakes because she loved her husband and wanted to please him, and did not know what social laws and conventions and principles of conduct she was breaking while she was trying to do so.

You felt pity for her as you would feel pity for any inconsequent and foolish woman who stands in her own light, and who is her own worst enemy. You sympathized with her in her misery, not because she was a bad woman, but because she did not know how to be a good one; you disliked intensely the little girl who refused to kiss her, and you wanted to box her ears; and you blamed her husband, who took her out of a life for which she was unfortunately exactly suited, for placing her in an impossible position, in which, owing to her past, she unwillingly brought trouble to the very people she most wanted to satisfy. Mrs. Campbell made *Paula* a feminine *Donatello* before the knowledge of good and evil came to him; she was an English *Manon Lescaut*, as irresponsible as a kitten, and as unhappy in her results as people who "mean well" generally are.

When she forgot herself and referred to the "other men" for whom she had "kept house," when she sighed like an imprisoned animal for Algiers and the yacht, and when, confronted by her former lover, she stopped in the midst of her tears to ask what became of the flat, you were not so much shocked at the vulgarity of it as you were filled with sorrow that she did not know better, and that she had not the light to see how dreadful and low and hopeless it all was.

The hopelessness of the leopard's ever changing his spots was the lesson Mrs. Campbell told, and when she said, "Why, it is written in my face; every one can see it," you felt no repulsion, but rather an awful pity for the young girl who had so soon discovered and accepted her own destiny. I do not wish to be understood as one who is sympathizing with this woman merely because she is what the world calls "fallen" or "unfortunate,"

and who is growing maudlin over that fact. The women who have trouble in their lives, and who have not fallen, and have no mind to do so, have possibly a prior claim. But it is because *Paula* is wicked and unfortunate through not knowing any better that she deserves pity. But Mrs. Kendal's *Paula* does not excite our pity. She is, as Mrs. Kendal presents her, a loud-voiced, unfeeling scold, with a vixenish temper, and the assured manners of the Empire Music Hall. The part does not suit Mrs. Kendal, and Mrs. Kendal does not understand the part. That Mrs. Kendal is older than *Paula* possibly was is not a matter of so much importance as that she does not know what sort of a woman *Paula* was at any age. She makes her masculine, noisy, and vulgar; and when she, in the moment of her greatest sorrow, cries, "What shall we do? what are we to do?" you feel like replying: "You certainly ought to know better than anyone else. You're the only person we have seen yet who seems to be able to take care of herself." When Mrs. Campbell read those lines in the helpless, bewildered tones of a little child who has hurt its finger, you wanted to go upon the stage and help her out of her difficulty. But you feel a grim satisfaction when Mrs. Kendal comes to grief, and rejoice that you are rid of as disagreeable and unpleasant a woman as you have ever met.

When *Mr. Tanqueray* sends his daughter away to see the world, under the care of some woman other than his wife, and she cries that he has insulted her, Mrs. Campbell made you feel that he had; but when Mrs. Kendal made the same charge, and emphasized it by jabbing her hat-pin into her bonnet like a vixenish fishwife, the audience laughed. In fact, the audience laughed at a great many things Mrs. Kendal said, where Mrs. Campbell had made them gasp with regret that she should not have known better than to say them. The audience here laugh because they feel that *Tanqueray* has done a very foolish thing, and that he has caught a Tartar; and when she hurts his feelings and shocks his sense of what is right, they only see in it another evidence of the fact that he was a fool to marry such a creature.

Mrs. Kendal has been so unwise as to answer the critics through a newspaper. What Mrs. Kendal chooses to say in this interview off the boards does not concern us, but she makes one explanation of her ill success here, which she is pleased to call the ill success of the play, which is worth considering. She says that we are too new and innocent to understand the play and the character of *Mrs. Tanqueray*, and that in London the people understood the play much better because they knew that such women as *Mrs. Tanqueray* existed; and, indeed, Mrs. Kendal even went so far as to mention these ladies' names. It would be pleasant to

think that this is so, and to accept Mrs. Kendal's unintentional compliment to our innocence of evil and our youthful horror of all that is bad; but the American people cannot accept this excuse for their failure to like Mrs. Kendal in Mr. Pinero's play. We have seen *Mrs. Tanquerays* over here, but they have not been the sort of *Mrs. Tanquerays* that Mrs. Kendal shows us. They have been more like the ladies whose names Mrs. Kendal mentioned, and less like the women of Piccadilly and the St. James's Restaurant. Such a woman as Mrs. Kendal plays would not have remained in the house of such a gentleman, gentle, chivalric, and earnest, as Mr. Kendal shows *Mr. Tanqueray* to be, for over a week. He would not have allowed her to stay as a cook, still less as his wife. Mrs. Kendal has not given us the woman of Monte Carlo and of the Mediterranean yacht squadron, but of an entirely different class. It is not a difficult character to imagine, and it seems strange that it has not suggested itself to Mrs. Kendal that women like *Paula* must have something attractive about them in order to lead the lives they lead. This is speaking quite plainly, but it is quite obvious that women do not win men to them by a loud voice and vulgar manners, and nothing else.

There is no one who has seen Mrs. Kendal in "The Squire" and in "The Ironmaster" who has enjoyed her work in those two plays more than has the writer of this article; but good work in the past, no matter how excellent, is no excuse for destroying the good work of someone else in the present. And that is what Mrs. Kendal is doing now with the good work of Mr. Pinero. She has robbed the American people of the pleasure of seeing the greatest play written in the last ten years properly played, and she is not to be excused for not knowing that the part she has attempted was unsuited to her and beyond her powers. The criticisms that have been made upon Mrs. Kendal because she is now playing the part of a bad woman, after having been held up for so many years as the exponent of the domestic virtues, is unworthy of those who make them. What Mrs. Kendal's life is off the stage, or what her advance agent chooses to tell of it, has no possible bearing on this question. We are only asked to consider a great play, and how it is played. The case is not between the American people and Mrs. Kendal as a mother and a wife, but as an actress, and as an actress Mrs. Kendal has cheapened and vulgarized a great play. And that is the case as it stands between Mrs. Kendal and the theatre-going public.

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS.

Condensed Dramas.

No. VII.—“AN OLD JEW.”

“ ’Tis ten short years since our first meeting,
 When ‘Glass of Fashion’s’ broken pane
 Made me squirming swear that one day
 Ye should have it hot again.
 Time has brought my chance—I’ll snatch it.
 Down with those who damned my show!
 With a ‘Whoop!’ I raise the hatchet
 Of the long ago.
 Across the tears of recent years,
 Smite hip and thigh,
 Give ’em one in the eye!
 Though they slate me for ever and ever,
 I’ll give ’em, at least, just one in the eye.”

ACT I.

The Abode of Virtue. (Mrs. Venables’ Furnished Apartments.)

Ruth (a virtuous heroine, who is not really a heroine, but an ingénue, is reading a tattered manuscript. She calls off): Mother dear, come and talk; I can study a new part so much better when I am assisting to explain the plot.

Mrs. Venables (a respectable grass widow, who is not really respectable, but, in point of fact, no better than she ought to be, enters): Then let us tell each other what is already known to both of us, in order that we may enlighten the audience. (They do so.)

Paul (a virtuous hero, who is not really a hero, but an amateur dramatist, enters): The fact is irrelevant, and you are already acquainted with it; but for the information of our kind friends in front, I will casually remark that my long-lost father is a scoundrel, who deserted his family many years ago.

Mrs. Ven.: But he made provision—which failed.

Ruth: Mother, what does that mean exactly?

Mrs. Ven.: Upon my word, dear, I don’t know; but it’s a favourite phrase of the author’s, and occurs repeatedly throughout the play.

Paul (catches sight of a parcel) : Ah ! my masterpiece returned once more. Managers are all hard-hearted villains. Yet, to do them justice, they are endowed with amazing penetration.

Mrs. Ven : How so, dear ?

Paul : Not one of them has ever opened this parcel ; yet in every case they have divined the name and address of the sender, and returned it with unerring accuracy to its rightful owner. But nevertheless, woe is me ! For four-and-twenty years I have earned a precarious living by writing an unaccepted drama. There is no room for me anywhere ; such genius as mine needs a world to itself (*declaiming*). I walk down Oxford Street ; same old Oxford Street ! I walk down the Strand ; same old Strand ! Exasperating thoroughfares ! Why don't they turn into Cheapside and Piccadilly, and so make me a successful dramatist ! (*More quietly.*) My logic may seem a little defective, but that is the artistic temperament.

Mr. Burnside (a journalist, who is not really a journalist, but a light comedy villain, enters) : Good morning, everybody ! Let me give you an exposition of the art and mystery of gutter journalism. You are a virtuous family, so the shocking details will delight you. What chiefly differentiates the gutter from the ordinary journalist is that he first invents his news, and then proceeds to make it come to pass. For instance, if we inform the public of a forgery, we have no alternative but to invent the incriminating document ; or, again, if we announce a murder, we are compelled to produce the necessary corpse. You will not therefore be surprised to hear that a gutter journalist is an extremely busy man.

Servant (announces) : Mr. Sterne !

Mr. Burn. : By Jove, the management ! He'll want the stage. What plausible excuse can we invent for getting off, and where can we go ?

Ruth : This, apparently, is our only sitting-room.

Mr. Burn. : But surely in a house like this there is a backstairs landing furnished with the usual piano ?

Ruth : There is.

Mr. Burn. : Then let us go and stand in it.

Ruth : But our excuse ?

Mr. Burn. : Happy thought ! I'll give you a music lesson.

Ruth : But that will make a noise, and drown the dialogue.

Mr. Burn. : Then I'll whisper it. (*They leave hurriedly.*)

Mr. Daniel de Rondamonte Cristo Sterne (an old Jew, who is not really a Jew, but a benevolent Christian with a Hebrew nose and an erring wife, enters. To himself) : How very awkward it would be if my long-lost wife—who is probably waiting outside—were to walk in. It would play the very dickens with the plot.

Paul : Who are you ?

Mr. Sterne : I am an old Jew, and spend most of my time hanging about bookstalls to pick up bargains. I have little technical knowledge myself; but whenever I catch sight of a poverty-stricken student who has made a find which he is too poor to purchase, I step in and secure the bargain. I occupy my hard-earned leisure in tripping gracefully over dunghills in South America.

Paul : What an arcadian existence !

Mr. Sterne : By the way, I've a bargain here; the entire British Drama, with the exception of the present play, in seven volumes. Accept them—from a perfect stranger.

Paul : Certainly not.

Mr. Sterne (chuckles) : I knew you wouldn't. Then what will you swop? Any old clothes, rabbit-skins, or bottles? (*Sees parcel.*) Ah, a play! I'll take that.

Paul : If there is one thing above all others which the unacted author regards as priceless, it is his latest play; for in spite of repeated rejections he believes it to be a potential gold mine; so, of course, I cheerfully accept your offer. (*Mr. Sterne pockets the play, and chuckles over his bargain.*)

Mr. Burnside (re-enters) : Ah, Mr. Sterne, you are a great capitalist, so I am most anxious to stand well with you. Permit me then to prove to you that I am a low, conscienceless gutter journalist. (*Does so.*)

Mr. Sterne : Thank you; your revelations are most interesting

Mr. Burn. : Then come with me to-night to the Moonlight Club, and hear more.

Mr. Sterne : With pleasure. (*Paul and Mr. Burnside go out.*)
A strange voice is heard singing a plaintive song in the passage.

Mr. Sterne pretends that it is the voice of his long-lost wife—which it isn't—and expresses much emotion accordingly.

Curtain.

ACT II.

The Haunts of Vice. (*The Smoking Room of the Moonlight Club.*)

Various Bohemians in evening dress, and out of it, are scattered about the room.

1st Bohemian : Brother playwrights, we have all been slated and sat upon; so let us pretend to be dramatic critics, managers, and pressmen, and say nasty things about modern journalism. It will make the real newspaper men "sit up."

Other Bohemians : We will. (*They proceed to do so.*)

Fritz (a waiter, to himself): There will be an awful row over this, but I am all right—my uncle is in front.

Mr. Burnside, Mr. Sterne, and Paul enter.

Mr. Burn.: Gentlemen, I am introducing strangers to the club. Let us therefore adopt the procedure usual on such occasions. In the first place I will present them by name to the assembled members. (*Does so. Then confidentially to members*): Sterne is a capitalist, who will be very useful to us if we can only make a good impression; so let us prove to him without delay that we are a set of blackmailing, log-rolling scoundrels.

Omnes: We will. (*They do so.*)

Mr. Burn.: Now, gentlemen, for the next ceremony peculiar to this extremely unconventional assembly. As you are aware, whenever we succeed in beguiling a stranger into our club, we immediately hold a general meeting and elect him on the spot; so I will now vote myself into the chair. (*Raps upon table with a hammer.*) Order! order! I beg to propose the health and immediate membership of Messrs. Sterne and Venables. (*Carried by acclamation.*)

Mr. Sterne (returns thanks in the usual manner): Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I cannot let this occasion pass without remarking that this is the proudest moment of my life, and so forth. (*Loud cheers.*)

Paul (who has been waiting for his chance, takes it, and the centre of the stage): It is true that I am your guest, and that you have just conferred upon me what you esteem a great honour. I am also supposed to be a gentleman, and, as such, acquainted with a few of the elementary principles of politeness and good breeding; nevertheless it is my deliberate intention to insult you all.

Mr. Burn.: May one ask why?

Paul: The reason is obvious—that I may make an effective exit. (*Makes it.*)

Mr. Sterne (to himself, with intense satisfaction and pride): My son!

Curtain.

ACT III.

The Abode of Virtue again.

Mrs. Ven.: Let me tell you the secret of my life; one that I have kept for twenty years.

Ruth: Then why tell it now?

Mrs. Ven.: Because we are at the beginning of the third act, and so it is about time for the action of the piece to begin.

Ruth (with resignation) : Go on.

Mrs. Ven. : Your father loved me, but neglected me for his business; so I did what any wife—with a couple of babies requiring incessant care, and to whom she was devoted—would have done, I fell in love with Another. I may remark parenthetically that Another was a dashing roysterer, who has now ceased to dash and merely roysters, and having taken to drink has gone off, so I have ceased to care for him. However, to return. Your father, having discovered the intrigue, did what every loving, sensible husband would have done—he immediately went abroad, leaving his weak, foolish wife absolutely alone and unprotected, in the hope, presumably, that she would become the easy prey of Another aforesaid. But she knew a trick worth two of that; she wasn't going to land herself in the Divorce Court. Oh! dear no! Before leaving England, your father made that provision we've heard so much about, and, with the business-like caution of a City man, handed it over, without legal formalities of any kind, to a solicitor; and then for twenty years ceased to bother himself about either wife or family. Well, as you've already heard, the provision failed.

Ruth : Then how did we manage to exist till a short time since, when I went upon the stage?

Mrs. Ven. : Goodness only knows, my dear! You must ask the author.

Ruth (thoughtfully) : Mother, do you think that this is the kind of story a good woman should tell to an innocent young girl?

Mrs. Ven. : Good gracious, Ruth, how dreadfully unconventional you are! Think what an opportunity it gives for a most theatrically effective situation: Confession wrung from heart of erring mother—loving daughter shocked—sob from mother—then revulsion of feeling on part of loving daughter—dazed glance—cry of love—erring mother pardoned—chord—picture. It's your great chance. You haven't many in this piece; so take it!

Ruth (wakes up) : To be sure! I am not a professional actress for nothing. I'll move 'em—deeply! *(She does; they go.)*

Paul (enters carrying the familiar parcel, which, as it is now the property of Mr. Sterne, he must have obtained by false pretences) : Here's my wretched old drama back again!

Mr. Sterne (enters) : Don't despair. I will get your piece produced at once.

Paul : You?

Mr. Sterne : Yes, with the help of my pocket-book, which always contains an odd dozen or so of millions. I have already

taken a few preliminary steps. I have bought the theatre, secured the actors, painted the scenery, engaged Mr. Irving to produce the play and Mr. Pinero to write it up; I have also nobbled the press, and bribed the first night audience to a man. So I think we may assume that the gigantic success which always attends the first crude efforts of a budding dramatist—on the stage—will be yours.

Paul: Oh, how can I repay your kindness?

Mr. Sterne: By leaving me alone in this room.

Paul: But my people may get tired of listening at the door, and walk in.

Mr. Sterne: Exactly; that's just what I want. It's my whim. I desire to enjoy their very natural embarrassment.

(Paul goes out.)

Mr. Sterne: I hope, by the way, that the old lady will not appear prematurely. I don't feel quite comfortable about her; she always was such a tactless person.

Ruth (steals in and sees Mr. Sterne; she starts). *(To herself)*: Dear me, an elderly gentleman! *(Calculates breathlessly)*. Let me see; my father was forty when he left us—he has been away for twenty years—this gentleman is apparently ninety-five—then he must be, he is, my long lost father. *(To Mr. Sterne)*: Sir, may I kiss you?

Mr. Sterne: Eh? Oh yes, certainly. *(Presents his forehead to her.)*

Ruth (although a little surprised at being butted at, salutes it).

Mr. Sterne: Dear me, I beg your pardon—fact is I have not been kissed for twenty years; so I inadvertently presented that portion of the human frame not ordinarily devoted to osculation. *(Indicates by facial expression each individual heart-throb of the last twenty years and then departs.)*

Mr. Burn. (enters): Miss Venables: I have never, as yet, led you to believe that I have the slightest feeling of regard for you—or, indeed, for anyone but myself; you will not, therefore, be surprised to learn that I love you. I tell you this in a casual, off-hand way, in the hope that my manner may carry conviction.

Ruth (recoils from him): I cannot become your wife.

Mr. Burn. (blandly): Of course you can't; nor can I become your husband. I have a wife already, that's where the laugh comes in. Ha! Ha! Ha!

Ruth (surprised): Then what do you ——?

Mr. Burn. You are an innocent, pure-minded girl; so I ask you in the most cold-blooded manner possible, and with a perfect conviction that you will consent, to become my mistress.

Ruth (shrinks from him—as well as she may—with a cry of horror): Oh!

Paul (enters)

Ruth (flying to him for protection) : Paul, this man has grossly insulted me.

Paul (after a glance at Mr. Burnside's superior stature and better developed biceps) : If I were only the hero of the piece, I would kick you out of the house ; but as I am merely an unacted dramatist, I will content myself with pointing to the door, and sternly suggesting that it is a convenient means of egress. (*Does so.*)

(*Almost a "Striking" Curtain.*)

ACT IV.

The Abode of Vice again.

Mr. Sterne (enters) : I have crammed my pocket-book with notes for a few more millions. I have also drawn out of the Bank of England all its available bullion ; it is waiting outside in forty four-wheelers ; so I think I may assume that I am the master of this or any other situation.

Dramatic critics of important journals, who have mistaken the Moonlight Club for the Garrick, enter, writing their notices on the backs of their programmes.

Mr. Sterne : What are you writing there ?

1st Critic : A notice of Paul's play for the "Times."

Mr. Sterne : It won't appear. I've bought the "Times."
(*Tears up MS. To 2nd Critic.*) And you ?

2nd Critic : A notice for the "Telegraph."

Mr. Sterne : I have also bought the "Telegraph." (*Tears up MS.*) And you others ? I presume, from your appearance, that you represent the "Daily News," "Chronicle," "Standard," "Pall Mall," "Spectator," "Fortnightly," "Guardian," "Green-grocers' Gazette," "War Cry," and dozens of other journals, London and provincial ?

Other Critics : We do.

Mr. Sterne : Then allow me to inform you that I've bought them all. To-morrow every newspaper in the kingdom will contain nothing but advertisements and a twenty-column notice of Paul's play ; and next month's number of each magazine and review throughout the land will consist of six articles on the same subject, written by myself.

Mr. Burn. (to himself) : If [he's not very careful, *he* will be accused of nobbling the press.

Mr. Sterne : It may also interest you to know that I have bought up all the London and provincial theatres, and that Paul's play will be produced at every one of them to-morrow, and run for ever.

Archbishop of Canterbury (who has mistaken the Moonlight Club for the Athenæum) enters.

Mr. Sterne: And what may your Grace be doing?

A. of C. (politely): Composing a sermon on Paul's play.

Mr. Sterne: It won't be preached. (*Tears up MS.*) I've bought the Church of England; and next Sunday every pulpit in the country will resound with nothing but eulogy of Paul's play.

Prime Minister (having blindly followed the Archbishop) enters; he also is making notes.

Mr. Sterne: And pray what are you writing?

P. M.: Notes of a speech I shall make in introducing a Bill relating to Paul's play.

Mr. Sterne: Useless! I've bought the House of Commons; (*Tears up MS.*) and I've just got the refusal of the Queen and Constitution. Until the next election, when I alone will return everybody, Parliament will spend its time in passing votes of confidence in Paul's play.

Mr. Burn. (to himself): I shouldn't be at all surprised if uncharitable people called this log-rolling.

Omnes (furious): Turn him out! Turn him out!

Mr. Sterne (takes the centre of the Club): Turn *me* out! Ye are all my slaves, my minions, or you will be to-morrow; for know ye that I have just sent an order to Nature in the following terms:—"Please supply, by bearer, one Universe complete. Enclosed find cheque in payment, less five per cent. discount for cash, for a million millions." Such is the Power of Gold!!!!

Curtain.

ACT V.

(The Abode of Virtue once more.)

Mr. Sterne (enters, examining his bankers' pass book): Dear me! my balance is rather low—down to twelve figures; I shall be compelled to pawn a planet—for there's one little purchase I've quite forgotten to make. I wonder if I can afford a long-lost wife!

Paul (enters with a cartload of newspapers): Such splendid notices!

Mr. Sterne (complacently): Yes; for once I broke through my rule of never puffing anyone but myself, and wrote 'em all. I was anxious to polish off a few dozen more, but even a millionaire's newspapers must go to press some time. I must apologise for not being present at the performance, but I was busy—shopping.

Paul: Don't mention it. By the way—in the excitement of the

moment it had almost escaped me—you are my generous benefactor, also long-lost father, but I hate you.

Mr. Sterne abases himself with the customary meekness of the Semitic millionaire.

Ruth (enters at back, to herself; looks at her watch): Eleven o'clock! Then the time has come when everybody in the play must know what the audience has been aware of for hours.

Mrs. Venables (enters, and, for reasons best known to the author, affects not to see Mr. Sterne): I am tired of sitting in my bedroom—with occasional intervals at the keyhole—whenever Mr. Sterne is here; moreover, we are approaching the end of the play, so I must insist upon an introduction. (*Ruth introduces her.*) Thank you. And now, to show that I am not unreasonable, I will stifle my natural curiosity as to the personal appearance of your much-discussed friend, and will refrain from even glancing at Mr. Sterne's expressive features until the proper dramatic moment for recognition shall arrive. (*Averts her face from the Stranger and wanders aimlessly to the other side of the room.*)

Paul: As a young and struggling dramatist, it goes to my heart to quarrel with the owner of untold gold; nevertheless, the exigencies of the situation compel me to remark that I hold you in contempt; also, that I spurn you.

Mrs. Venables (comes forward and strikes an attitude): 'Tis he, my long-lost husband! Let us all tell the Stories of our Lives. (*They do so, and at considerable length.*)

Paul: Your stories are preposterous, and obviously untrue; but as we have arrived at what is most unusual in a comedy—a fifth act, and it is getting late (*magnanimously*), I will forgive everybody. (*Retires up with Ruth, and talks about his future percentages.*)

Mr. Sterne: Mrs. Venables—I forget your Christian name for the moment—you are just as much an erring wife as ever you were; and if, twenty years ago, when you were young and beautiful, I loved you so little that I could calmly leave you alone in the world with nothing but a vague and indefinite “provision that failed,” it stands to reason that now, when you are middle-aged and decidedly “gone off,” I cannot possibly care twopence about you. But, as the Author has omitted to provide the usual love interest, there is only one way of bringing about a happy ending to the play—our reconciliation. So, long-lost wife, come to your long-lost husband's long-lost arms, and nurse him for the rest of his life! (*She comes.*)

Curtain.

W. R. W.

Plays of the Month.

“CINDERELLA.”

A fairy pantomime, by HORACE LENNARD.

First produced at the Lyceum Theatre, on Tuesday evening, December 26th, 1893.

Cinderella.. ..	Miss ELLALINE TERRISS.	Dandini	Miss ALICE BROOKES.
Thisbe	Mr. VICTOR STEVENS.	The Grand Chamberlain..	Mr. DEANE BRAND.
Clorinda	Mr. FRED EMNEY.	The Minister of War.. ..	Mr. WILLIAM LUGG.
Baron Fumpolino	Mr. HARRY PARKER.	The Minister of Marine ..	Mr. T. TERRISS.
Baroness	Miss CLARA JECKS.	The Black Cat	Mr. CHARLES LAURI.
Pedro	Mr. CHARLES WALLACE.	The Sylph Coquette	Miss MINNIE TERRY.
Prince Felix ..	Miss KATE CHARD.	The Fairy Godmother ..	Miss SUSIE VAUGHAN.

With “Cinderella,” Mr. Oscar Barrett has rescued pantomime from the Slough of Vulgarity in which it was sunk, and “Cinderella” the play, and *Cinderella* the lovable heroine, will long remain a memory. From a dozen gems one selects an exquisite dance of autumn leaves, a fluttering maze of rustling silks in russet browns, and russet reds, and tender greens, and faint blush pinks; a toilet dance of fairy fans, gloves, flowers, powder-puffs, pin-cushions, jewels, and all the mysterious items necessary for a fairy godchild’s irresistible toilette; and a “history of dance,” in which a stately measure, stepped by Antony and the “Serpent of old Nile,” heralds the immortal lovers, Juliet and Romeo, moving hand in hand through some slow-paced Florentine steps, who make way for a charming minuet, a rollicking Tudor revel, a Mikado fantasy tripped and nodded by tiny Japs, and a sensuous nautch dance dreamily swayed by Mdlle. Zanfretta. But the captain jewel of the Carcanet outshines these ecstasies of colour and melody and motion.

And *Cinderella*, the real, the ideal, holds one captive to the end. Slapped and bullied and starved, sitting in rags by the kitchen fire, with never a friend but *Puss*—such a cat! the trickiest and most feline that even Mr. Lauri has ever played—dancing with *Puss* and the monster fire-irons, to keep her tears from brimming over, moving a little goddess and looking a little queen in a priceless rainbow-tinted fairy gown which took mere mortals months to make, or driving away to the ball behind a team of diminutive ponies and in a wee chariot of ivory studded with golden stars, and—most important of all—a pair of lustrous, glowing, sparkling crystal shoes, this *Cinderella* is a maiden not less enchanting than enchanted. All the actors are allowed to

act, and several of them take full advantage of their opportunity. Mr. Victor Stevens is the life and soul of the play as the elder ugly sister, a lady of austere aspect, who has been to Girton, but can yet descend to frivolous joys. The rich and racy comedy of Mr. Harry Parker and Miss Clara Jecks should be termed "high," if it were not something of a contradiction to call clever little Miss Jecks a "high" *comédienne*. Of Mr. Lauri's wonderful cat mention has been made. And in addition there are a nimble dandy valet to the Prince in the shapely and sprightly person of Miss Alice Brookes; pretty Miss Minnie Terry with the Terry grace of speech as the *Sylph Coquette*; clever Miss Susie Vaughan, to endow the *Fairy Godmother* with fairy qualities, which, it may be hinted, include distinction and admirable elocution; and Miss Kate Chard for a handsome *Prince*, who usually conducts his conversation in a very tuneful song. Furthermore, through the arts of Mr. Barrett's chief designer, Mr. Wilhelm, whose arrangements of colour are lovely in the extreme, and of his scenic artists, Mr. Hawes Craven and Mr. Henry Emden, who provide some delicious peeps at wood and hill and dale, the eye is fed with pictures delicate in the extreme. But better than all is the poetical *Cinderella* of Miss Ellaline Terriss, the most bewitching little heroine of pantomime ever seen, a heroine worthy of the Lyceum, worthy of the boards on which Miss Terry has so long ruled supreme.

[Other Notices of Pantomimes are unavoidably crowded out.]

"THE PIPER OF HAMELIN."

A Fantastic Opera, by Robert Buchanan, with Music by F. W. Allwood.

First Produced at the Comedy Theatre, on Wednesday afternoon, December 20th, 1893.

The Pied Piper	Mr. FRANK WYATT.	Deborah Meerschaum	Miss MILLICENT PYNE.
Conrad the Cooper ..	Mr. LEONARD RUSSELL.	Annechen	Miss ETTIE WILLIAMS.
The Mayor of Hamelin	Mr. E. M. ROBSON.	Frau Hasenfuss ..	Miss A. O'BRIAN.
Citizen Sauerkraut ..	Mr. CLARENCE HUNT.	Frau Pumpernickel	Miss NEVA BOND.
Citizen Bummelzug ..	Mr. W. J. JOYCE.	Frau Nussknaecker	Miss GERTRUDE TURNER.
The Town Crier	Mr. H. LONGDEN.	Fraulein Schmetter-	} Miss BLANCHE WHITE.
The Town Clerk	Mr. F. WALSH.	ling	
Liza	Miss LENA ASHWELL.	Fraulein Donner-	} Miss MAUD JACKSON.
Martha	Mrs. CAMPBELL BRADLEY	wetter	
Hans	Miss GLADYS DOREE.		

followed by

SANDFORD AND MERTON,

By F. C. Burnand, with Music by Edward Solomon.

Mr. William Barlow,	} Mr. LIONEL BROUGH.	Sambo	Mr. LEONARD RUSSELL.
M.A., D.C.L.		Mdlle. Aurelie ..	Madame ADA DOREE.
Tommy Merton	Mr. E. M. ROBSON.	Katie	Miss OLGA GARLAND.
Harry Sandford	Mr. CLARENCE HUNT.	Nellie	Miss ETHEL NORTON.

What Carlyle did for *Cromwell*, Mr. Buchanan has done for the *Piper*, that weird musician who charmed the rats of Hamelin into the Weser, and when the *Mayor* withheld his fee, with a malicious chuckle piped the children into the mountain, and the

result is a pleasing picture of a much misunderstood man. Outwardly the *Piper* is just what he was. Very tall, and very thin, he wears a cynical smile on his handsome face. A diabolic atmosphere surrounds him. When he charms the rats the lights grow dim, thunder rumbles, and a lurid haze enfolds him. He mutters and mumbles magic words, his eyeballs roll, his long arms wave in awful incantations. And still more terrible does he appear when piping the children away from their homes. The mothers' sobs and tears, the prayers of *Liza*, avail nothing. He will spare not even the wee cripple *Hans*, who hobbles along on his little crutch—a second *Tiny Tim*—spellbound by the magic music. But the *Piper* is really a kindly man. He will restore the little ones if the *Mayor* will give him the fee and his daughter in marriage, and no sooner is *Liza* his than he makes her and his thousand guilders over to *Conrad*, whose suit the *Mayor* has rejected. Then forth comes the magic pipe again, and out from the gloomy rock the children dance, laden with roses, shining with gladness, little *Hans* at their head without his crutch, for in the fairy world his lameness has been cured, and he can leap and run. The piece is just what it should be—a fairy tale in action—a fairy tale that the pictures tell, and that children, little and big, are glad to be told. The pretty story is prettily told. Mr. Buchanan's verse flows freely, and makes music as it ripples along. It is prettily acted also. Mr. Wyatt is the *Piper*, and looks him to perfection. Miss Lena Ashwell, a pretty young actress with a pretty style and a gift of pathos, is *Liza* the self-sacrificing. And clever Mr. E. M. Robson and Mr. Leonard Russell are at their best as the *Mayor* and the *Cooper*. But a child is the hero, as it should be in a child's play. The little lame boy, played by Gladys Dorée, makes a wonderfully touching little figure, and one hardly knows which to admire the most, the touch of poetry due to Mr. Buchanan or the little one's irresistible charm.

Mr. Burnand's "Sandford and Merton" is intended for all who have been, are, or will be boys. The heroes bear dishonoured names, as does their bilious tutor; but in this instance there is nothing in a name. These boys are boys—real live boys—and their antics keep one merry, at their reverend tutor's expense. They put squibs in his eggs, make porridge in his mortar-board, plant darning-needles in his chair, and press slimy reptiles into his hands. As long as they do this sort of thing one feels happy, for war waged upon masters is always entitled to sympathy. But when they "sweetheart" with exceedingly attractive young ladies in the muslin frocks and frilled trouserettes of forty years since, they grow dull, and Mr. Barlow's love affair with a French

lady engenders yawns. Mr. Robson and Mr. Clarence Hunt are delightful boys, and pretty Miss Ethel Norton and Miss Olga Garland still more delightful girls, while Mr. Russell is invaluable as a "coloured person," *Sambo*. As for Mr. Lionel Brough, his *Tutor* is a monument of ludicrous pedagogy—a monument frequently shaken to its foundations by the scientific experiments of his ingenious scholars.

“SIX PERSONS.”

A Duologue by I. ZANGWILL.

First produced at the Haymarket Theatre, on Friday Evening, 22nd December, 1893.

“Until a man can be found who knows himself as others see him, or who sees himself as others see him, there must be at least six persons engaged in every dialogue between two. It is natural enough that among the six there should be more or less confusion and misapprehension.”

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.

Eugenia—as she is	}	Miss IRENE VANBRUGH
Eugenia—as she thinks she is		
Eugenia—as she thinks Charles thinks she is		
Charles—as he is	}	Mr. FREDERICK KERR
Charles—as he thinks he is		
Charles—as he thinks Eugenia thinks he is		

Eugenia and *Charles* have, the previous evening, skated upon rather thin ice in the conservatory at Mrs. Lyon Hunter’s ball, and fallen in. This morning they are sorry, and want to back out of the engagement which the Strauss valse, the scent of the orange-blossoms, and the languorous delights of “drifting,” have had a good deal to do with their contracting. But neither will say openly it was a mistake. They therefore shirk the subject and try to bamboozle each and force a release, and in the course of their manœuvrings to this end reveal their several identities. Briefly, Mr. Zangwill has written a highly original, a very “actual” and witty duologue, which he has had the cleverness to tack on to Oliver Wendell Holmes’s interesting idea, and he has shown that in one thing, as a duologue-roller, he differs from Mr. Theyre Smith and Mr. W. R. Walkes and other witty triflers, and that is in his truth to nature—of a certain kind. He is horribly true. There is bitterness and mocking irony in every line. And *Eugenia* and *Charles* only renounce their wish to separate when he learns that she has £300 a year of her own, and she reflects that after all he isn’t bad, husbands are scarce, and she might do worse—very cynical, but very true, of dwellers in a certain small part of the world. Mr. Fred Kerr and Miss Irene Vanbrugh play very quietly and effectively, if without the variety and finish one has enjoyed in similar pieces acted by Mr. and Mr. Kendal and Mr. and Mrs. Tree before the days of their greatness.

"THE COUNTRY GIRL."

A Comedy in three acts, adapted by David Garrick from William Wycherley's "Country Wife."

Revived at Daly's Theatre, on Monday evening, January 1st, 1894.

Peggy Thrift	Miss ADA REHAN.	Old Will	Mr. BRIDGLAND.
Squire Moody	Mr. WILLIAM FARREN.	Servant.. ..	Mr. POWELL.
Sparkish	Mr. GEORGE CLARKE.	Alitheia	Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH.
Harcourt	Mr. HERBERT GRESHAM.	Lucy	Miss CATHERINE LEWIS.
Belleville	Mr. ALLAN AYNESWORTH.		

Miss Rehan has ere this worn "the lovely garnish of a boy," for has she not wooed *Orlando* in Arden as no *Rosalind* of the past, the present, or the future ever did or—as we happy ones believe—ever could! But not even the witchery of *Rosalind* outdoes the charm of roguish *Peggy*. There are pictures which, once seen, are seen for ever; perfumes which, breathed a moment, remain as fragrant memories. Such a picture is Miss Rehan's "Country Girl," and such a fragrance does it exhale.

Lovable, entirely and supremely lovable, is this rustic innocent, whom her boorish old guardian, avaricious of her wealth and jealous for her charms, entrenches behind laced hat and dainty coat and breeches. We laugh—yes, because in guileless *Peggy's* shoes stands the mistress of comedy, and *Peggy* is meant to cut the quaintest of figures, and art like Miss Rehan's enchains us, and we follow perforce wherever it leads. But, mingled with the laugh is such tenderness that merriment is not the true feeling this *Peggy* inspires, although its claim to immediate and continuous expression proves irresistible.

The whole play, in truth, takes the colour of her personality, and becomes a mere background for the winsomest comedy mind could conceive. This is as well, for Wycherley, even Daly-fied, might possibly jar here and there—as he did when Miss Litton was the lively *Peggy* at the old Imperial Theatre a dozen years and more ago. But Miss Rehan could make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and "The Country Girl" in her hands assumes a virtue it (in the original) has not. Indeed, *Peggy* the romp, the mischievous imp, the child of nature, and *Peggy*, ripe for love and feminine to the finger-tips through all her masquerading as a boy, make quite the prettiest and most captivating creature that even Miss Rehan has given to the stage.

By lovers of acting the comedy is to be seen also for the *Moody* of Mr. Farren. This grand "old man" of the stage, in parts like these, shows us what acting used to be, and the peep is very enjoyable. There is a roundness, a robustness about everything he does which the modern trifler hardly understands, and the obvious relish of the player compels a corresponding relish in his hearers. There is genuine art, moreover, in the *Sparkish* of Mr. George Clarke, though it hardly compares in suavity and polish with the finished performance of Mr. Everill in Miss Litton's revival. And Mr.

Allan Aynesworth proves that he knows a little more about "the nice conduct of a clouded cane" than a long course of modern farce would lead one to expect. Miss Violet Vanbrugh looks charming as *Alithea*, and Miss Lewis, with her demonstrative method, is quite in her element as *Lucy*. Indeed, the comedy is so briskly played that, even if Mr. W. S. Gilbert be right in terming it "preposterous rubbish," it would deserve a run, though its chief glory, is, of course, the enchanting *Peggy* of Miss Rehan.

"AN OLD JEW."

A New and Original Comedy in Five Acts, by SYDNEY GRUNDY.

First produced at the Garrick Theatre, on Saturday Evening, 6th January, 1894.

Julius Sterne	Mr. JOHN HARE.	Hon. & Rev. Adolphus	
Paul Venables	Mr. GILBERT HARE.	Finucane	Mr. GILBERT FARQUHAR.
Bertie Burnside	Mr. W. L. ABINGDON.	Mr. Polak	Mr. H. DE LANGE.
Douglas Craik	Mr. EUGENE MAYEUR.	Franconi	Mr. GILBERT TRENT.
Wybrow Walsingham	Mr. CHARLES ROCK.	Old Actor	Mr. ROBB HARWOOD.
John Slater, M.A.,		Fritz	Mr. G. DU MAURIER.
LL.D.	Mr. G. W. ANSON.	Mrs. Venables	Mrs. THEODORE WRIGHT.
James Brewster	Mr. WILLIAM H. DAY.	Eliza	Miss CONTI.
Willie Wandle	Mr. SCOTT BUIST.	Ruth Venables	Miss KATE RORKE.

'Tis twenty years since our last meeting ;
 Hushed is anger, numbed is pain ;
 Dead is love, and friendship's greeting
 We shall ne'er exchange again.
 Time has sped, and time effaces ;
 Mem'ries faint and fainter grow
 Faster and faster fade the traces
 Of the long ago.
 Across the tears of twenty years,
 Far or nigh,
 Bid me good-bye !
 Though fate sever us for ever,
 Bid me at least good-bye !

Oh, was my folly past forgiving ?
 Was the sequel joy or woe ?
 Art thou dead, or art thou living ?
 Even this I do not know.
 Often still I sit and wonder
 Thou could'st ever leave me so !
 Silent still, though torn asunder,
 Twenty years ago.
 Across the tears of twenty years,
 Far or nigh,
 Bid me good-bye !
 E'en if living, unforgetting,
 Bid me at least good-bye !

Wrapped in a voluminous Inverness—the nineteenth century gaberdine—Mr. Grundy's *Old Jew*, with his keen grey face, his piercing eyes, his long white hair and black velvet skull-cap, is a picturesque old fellow. Moreover, he does 'picturesque things. Twenty years before the play begins he discovered that his wife had "deceived" him. What did he do? Extract consolation according to the Mosaic law—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"? No. Like Kotzebue's "Stranger," he left his two children with their erring mother, since her shame, if known, would light on them, made ample provision for them all, and disappeared. The world, of course, said he had deserted them. Presently a fraudulent trustee brought them to poverty, and forced the pretty daughter, *Ruth*, upon the stage. And times are hard with them, and a friend is sorely needed, when *Mr. Paul Venables*, like another *Silver King*, comes back to England.

The name he adopted when he disappeared he still bears. He is called *Julius Sterne*, a name which stands for a Rothschild, a man of millions. It is not a cheerful home to which he tracks his unsuspecting boy. His girl is an actress, his son an unplayed

playwright, his wife a remorseful, miserable woman. Their visitors are chiefly journalists. Some of these are of the jog-trot steady old school, and would as soon think of spreading small-pox as of circulating rumours. Some are of the flashy new school, and "invent their news and make it come to pass." Amongst these small fry the mysterious millionaire, with a fine taste for the picturesque, settles down to play *Providence, en amateur*. Nothing could be easier. Log-rollers obstruct his boy's progress. The Jew's cheque-book mows them down. A whole clubful of them—"Moonlighters" by name and nature—having been gratuitously insulted by fastidious young hopeful, are leagued against him. But what can they do against millions? The cheque-book is irresistible. *Mr. Sterne* acquires a mortgage on a theatre, and thus forces the lessee to produce his boy's play. He buys up the *Vultures* and the *Tape Worms*, and similar unsavoury organs of scurrility, and thus reduces the Moonlighters to impotence. He buys up the very club itself. Finally, he pensions off the brilliant fellow of twenty years ago, now a broken-down drunkard, who ruined his peace and broke his heart; and, revealing his identity to his children and his wife, at last forgives the woman who wronged him.

All this gives *Mr. Sterne* plenty to do, but unfortunately one feels that it is hardly worth the doing. Absorbing interest in a battle can hardly be worked up unless the combatants are well matched, or the cause inspires enthusiasm. Now, *Mr. Sterne* is more than a match for a thousand such rascals as he checkmates and puts to flight. He is a Triton among minnows. He plays with cogged dice. Every trick is in his hands. He has but to blow upon his golden trumpet, and the walls of this Moonlit Jericho must crumble before him. These gutter journalists, tipping parsons, and geniuses run to seed, whom *Mr. Grundy* lashes with merciless wit, are not fighting-men at all; but blades of grass, which fall at the touch of the gilt-edged scythe of this millionaire mower in the skull-cap. Nor does the cause revive one's waning interest. *Paul Venables, jun.*, for whom death and dismay are carried into fifth-rate Bohemia, is a mannerless prig, a moping, moody, pig-headed person, whom the drunken *Slaters* and venal *Burnsides* and fraudulent *Brewsters* and inane *Wandles* might maim and mutilate like good Moonlighters without kindling a spark of compassion in any breast. How should interest be excited and sustained by such a hero, or plan of campaign. Why, the very machinery against which this young St. Paul inveighs is the very means of his advancement. Log-rolling by an impecunious crowd of unscrupulous blackguards, or log-rolling by a venerable Hebrew of untold wealth—where is the difference? It is log-rolling all the same.

But for this terrible weakness these Moonlight Club scenes would be dramatic as well as amusing. However, there is one moment of genuine drama, which, thanks to Mr. G. W. Anson, is not allowed to fizzle out like a damp squib. It comes when *Sterne* confronts the broken wretch who laid waste his home, and heaps coals of fire upon his head. Here Mr. Anson, admirable actor that he is, wakes up the play, and with five minutes of intense and vivid acting redeems a whole dull act. The man's despair, remorse, humiliation, and shame-faced gratitude were pictured with striking truth, and secured the one enthusiastic outburst of the evening. After Mr. Anson, the hit of these club scenes was made by Mr. Robb Harwood as a tragedian of the old school, who had played with Char-r-les Kean. This whimsical study of the "veterans," with their rolling r's and eyeballs, their portentous manner and tragic gait, quite took the house by storm, and served the useful purpose of carrying a good deal of irrelevant matter. Another club man who attracted attention was the Polak of Mr. De Lange, who, as an advanced dramatist—ranking with Euripides, in his own estimation—talked like Mr. Archer, Mr. Walkley, and Mr. Grein rolled into one, and incidentally cast much ridicule upon the methods and principles of the Independent Theatre Society, of which Mr. De Lange is curiously enough a very pillar and prop.

Among the actors, however, Mr. Hare easily held first place. He and the play are one. So far as personal prominence is concerned, it is *Benjamin Goldfinch* over again, with a pathetic past and a Jewish nose. But, unlike the genial *Goldfinch*, the old Jew has no moods. He is always the same—dignified, courteous, inflexible. *Sterne* by name and stern by nature, he hardly ever relaxes, and the consequence is that Mr. Hare is not seen at his best. Traces of weakness, too, appeared when a heavy demand was made upon him in the defiance and passionate rebuke of the Moonlighters, in a fiery speech of some eloquence and power. And, picturesque as the performance is, it does not, as it should—as it must, for success—carry the play.

Sad is the waste of rich material. The tenderness and truth and power of Miss Kate Rorke are flung away upon a miserable little part, of which one longs for more. Mrs. Theodore Wright is once again fettered in the ponderous chain of a guilty secret, which puts her beyond the pale of sympathy. Miss Italia Conti, a young actress of great promise, is relegated to the part of a waiting-maid. And Mr. W. L. Abingdon is condemned to the thankless and impossible task of making a colossal cad pass muster as a friend of two refined and intelligent women. Of the

production as a whole it may be said that there are many amusing moments, overlaid with much superfluous and undramatic matter; and that everything was received with more than friendly approval on the first night.



Some Amateur Performances.

“HARVEST,” BY THE RANDOLPH CLUB.

To see the Randolph Club attempt Mr. Hamilton's drama was to be reminded of the Yankee's comment on the buffalo bull, who, resenting the intrusion of a locomotive upon his solitude, butted furiously at the offender “Wal,” murmured the Yank, as the engine scattered the fragments of the bull broadcast, “I reckon to admire your courage; but I despise your judgment.” The finest acting to be had will scarcely carry us past yawning-point when Mr. Hamilton grows tedious—which happens every other minute—and with one exception the Randolphians can put forward nothing that even their warmest friends could class in that category. The club has not outgrown its infancy, which, being but feeble and rickety, promises to be indefinitely prolonged. Here is a prescription gratis. If it has any craving for a lusty and vigorous youth, let it lose no time in taking unto itself a stage manager competent to fan a flickering spark of dramatic talent into life, and, perchance in time, into a flame. As I have said, there was just one exception, and a notable one, to the general level of incompetency—just one instance of talent bursting the bonds of inexperience and soaring, hampered of course, in its progress, but still compelling attention. That exception was Miss Rachel Fowler. This lady has almost everything to learn that experience can teach her; but she can attack a stong scene in a fashion quite surprising in an amateur. Her touch in the prologue was uncertain, and she is apt to play the spendthrift with her strength, but her grip of the second act was strong and unfaltering. She saved the play from utter collapse, and was the means of preventing an early retreat on the part of at least one of the audience. For the rest all that can be said is that it was a display of good intentions and inaudibility.

“STOLEN KISSES,” BY THE HAMPSTEAD CLUB.

To appreciate the last performance given by the Hampstead Club two things were necessary—a Lenten fast from modern comedy, on the one hand, and little or no acquaintance with the work of the actors on the other. If long abstinence has dulled our recollection of the delights of pointed dialogue, clever character drawing, and sustained interest, then we can sit content in our stall at St. George's Hall, and possibly see merit (no jest implied) even in “Stolen Kisses” (meaning Mr. Merritt's comedy, and not what Mrs. Jawkins would mispronounce “oscillation”). But to those at all up to date in things dramatic, “Stolen Kisses” will prove but cloying fare. So, too, with the actors, or the two principal ones. To pronounce their performances passable, it was essential that impertinently obtrusive memories should not thrust themselves forward, whispering of

past exploits ; and since the names of Mr. Salter and Mr. Cahill are something more than familiar to them, that must have been a sheer impossibility to two-thirds of the audience, who, like the writer of these lines, in their heart of hearts probably waxed wroth and (in spirit) kicked at their disappointment. *Tom Sperrit* is not exactly a rollicking dog, but there was no sort of occasion for Mr. Salter to make him so absolutely dejected and, if I may be pardoned the expression, sperritless a being. One or two scenes were natural and moving, but a prevailing atmosphere of limpness and lachrymosity is not provocative of sympathy, and, taken all round, it was a depressing performance. And Mr. Cahill was on anything but good terms with *Temple*. Mr. Brown was pompous and starchy as *Trangmar*, and Mr. Carvill, succumbing to the general epidemic of seriousness, was strongly disposed to take the cornet-loving medical student seriously. Mr. Fred Barton, however, playing with simple sincerity and earnestness, did a lot to strengthen the play ; and Mrs. Evans made a sweet and womanly heroine out of the colourless materials to hand. Mrs. Chamberlin, too, worked bravely and well, and got a laugh for every one of *Mrs. Jawkins's* lines ; but Miss Lucy Churchill, though a graceful and intelligent actress, is a trifle dignified and reserved for *Jenny Temple*. The proceedings were opened by *Funnibone's Fir*, with Mr. Morten Henry properly diverting as the resourceful and poetic *Funnibone*, whom Mr. Dagonet would assuredly wish to see transferred to the staff of "the largest circulation." And Mr. Feis and Miss Muriel Clifford lent support that was commendably conscientious.

"THE SERIOUS FAMILY," BY THE MOMUS CLUB.

For their seventy-third performance the Momus went a-hunting for a play. Like the huntsman in the nursery lay, they hunted all the day, and no better luck than his had they, for, despite their efforts, nothing did they find but just a fossilized specimen which, not sharing the wisdom of the huntsman, they did *not* leave behind. They bore it home in triumph and called together their neighbours and friends to rejoice with them over their treasure—a difficult matter to one at least of the latter. But if the play gave little cause for rejoicing, not so, the players. Here there was little amiss ; Mr. Colley Salter gallantly retrieving, with his broadly effective portrait of the smugly self-satisfied *Steek*, the step he had momentarily lost ; Mr. John Raphael, shaky in words but firm in execution, spurring on the play finely as the blarneying Irishman ; Mr. Philip Deane playing with buoyancy and spirit as the down-trodden husband ; Miss Ellie Chester, as *Lady Creamly*, presenting a worthy companion picture to Mr. Salter's ; Mrs. Renton, light and vivacious, as the *Widow* ; and the Misses Maude and Adeline Lankester, graceful and pretty heroines. In "Lot 49," too, which prepared the way for Mr. Barnett's so-called comedy, the actors were indefatigable in their efforts to outbid each other for the popular vote, secured by Mr. John Raphael, but not without a tough struggle, for Miss Pepler, Miss Stone, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Bathurst were immensely popular with the audience.

THE WINDSOR STROLLERS.

Farce is the only wear for the Windsor Strollers. Occasionally, but very occasionally, their feet will stray into other paths, but the merry mask of comedy is more to their taste than the grave face of her sombre sister, and they lose little time in harking back to the laugh and the jest. And that's a pity, for what the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table would consider a sheer impossibility, that the Strollers contrive to be, viz., what their audience thinks them, and what in all probability they (since they are but human) think themselves—capital actors, and quite as equal to one branch of work as another. Like *Perdita*, what they do still betters what is done. When they play farce, we would have them do nothing but that ; and when they take sterner stuff in hand we would they did it ever, and bewail ourselves that they touch aught else, so robust and telling is their work. This season they confined themselves to what

they love best, and farce was the fare provided on each of the three evenings that Windsor and its neighbourhood swarmed in their hundreds to the Theatre Royal to welcome for the thirty-second time old favourites, or, to be more strictly correct, some of the old favourites, for many a regrettable gap in the ranks was visible, and not even the interest of exploiting fresh talent could atone for the absence of such actors as Captain Gooch and Mr. Colnaghi, since, after all, old friends are best. Be we never so radically inclined, we are all of one mind on that point. Regrets, however, being firmly cast to the winds, nought remained but satisfaction. In "A Night Off" and "The Guardsman," the Strollers have just the materials to hand from which to concoct the delicate, frothy, puff paste for which they are noted—none of your stodgy suet crust from their light hand—and it would be a nice point to decide which dish turns out the more successfully. In Mr. Daly's farce the race was to the swift, in the shape of Miss Lizzie Henderson, most redoubtable of Xantippes; Captain Liddell, not easy to rival and impossible to beat as *Snap*, and Mr. W. Elliott, a new recruit, whose quaintly humorous rendering of *Babbit* placed him straightway in the front rank of the Strollers. And if the others come in a step behind it is the fault of their author and not of themselves, for Miss May Whitty and Miss Ethel Norton padded the skinny outlines of *Nisbe* and *Angelica* in a manner that would have surprised Mr. Daly himself, and Miss Annie Webster was fitted like a glove with *Susan* the sympathetic. Mr. Drummond, with meagre opportunity for distinction, earned much; Mr. Nugent, with two minutes' work, left behind an abiding impression; and notable success was achieved by Mr. Cowley Lambert and Mr. Ernest Lawford, both new brooms, and both sweeping uncommonly clean—not so invariable a characteristic of the dramatic as of the domestic implement. In "The Guardsman" Mr. Quintin Twiss (luckily not one of the absentees) took the lead and bore away the lion's share of the laurels with his quaint drolleries as the ex-judge. Not but what there were substantial claims from other members of the cast, Mr. George Nugent as the matrimonially-disposed nephew proving a most substantial prop to the last two acts, Mr. Du Maurier distinguishing himself capitably as the horsey *Hakes*, and Mr. Drummond providing a fresh example of his conjuring skill in dispensing with straw in his manufacture of bricks; and the bare recital of the names of the ladies, Miss Annie Webster, Miss May Whitty, Miss Beatrice Ferrar, and Miss Emily Cross, being ample guarantee that in that direction there was nothing lacking. Preceding "The Guardsman" came "The Dancing Master," the daintiest tit-bit in the way of a curtain-raiser to be found, and receiving the daintiest of treatment at the hands of Mr. Fladgate, Mr. Mackinnon, and charming little Miss Beatrice Ferrar.

"LOVE AND DENTISTRY" AT THE LECTURE HALL, GREENWICH.

Unskilful in the diagnosis of their symptoms are the hero and heroine of the duologue which formed the novelty of the triple bill produced at Greenwich. They fall into the same error as the well-intentioned old gentleman who proffered sympathy to the suffering maiden in what he judged to be a violent attack of toothache. "Toothache, you old fool," flashed out the sufferer in indignant scorn; "don't you know the difference between true love and the toothache?" The young people in Mr. Swears' duologue parted in anger in the ball-room, and meet repentant at the dentist's. Explanations and reconciliation ensue. Toothache disappears with the disagreement. So do the young people; their teeth (wisdom, presumably) escape examination and the dentist is cheated of his fee. As regards the plot, why, as *Walker* may be heard repeating nightly, 'tis nothing; but there are one or two amusing incidents, and the dialogue is not destitute of smartness, nothing of which was missed in the hands of Miss Florence Draper and the author. The familiar items of the bill were "Bubbles," and Mr. Wynn Miller's haunting *Dream Faces*, an estimable, if not an especially high level of acting being attained by those concerned in them—Messrs. Robinson, McCawder, Combe, Hazell, and Nairn, and Misses Draper and Daniell, and Mrs. Scarvell.

Notes of the Month.

By the death of Mr. Henry Pettitt on the 24th December, 1893, the English stage lost—not, certainly, a great dramatist, but beyond doubt a very clever one. He was at once the prop and ornament of melodrama, and, robbed of his talents, the art of the Adelphi and Drury Lane is robbed of its effulgence. Himself the architect of his imposing fortune, Mr. Pettitt was pre-eminently the right man in the right place as painter of middle-class romance, for his own had been a strange, eventful history.

Born in 1848, the son of a civil engineer, he was thrown upon the world at the age of thirteen, and, after a brief and inglorious career as an actor, and such poverty as acquaints one with strange playfellows, drifted into writing. Contributing (*gratis*) to boys' papers proving rather unremunerative, he entered the service of Pickford's, the carriers, but, at the end of two years of clerkly drudgery, became a master in the North London Collegiate School. During his six years of teaching, his eyes were again bent upon the stage, no longer as actor, but as dramatist, and having secured a hearing at the Pavilion Theatre, where his first piece, "Golden Fruit," brought him five pounds, Mr. Pettitt began his association with the Grecian Theatre and Mr. George Conquest. In this thoroughly practical school he studied and mastered the technique of stagecraft, and developed his powers of invention. In what good stead these accomplishments stood him a mere catalogue of his plays would show, for his successes were many, his failures few. Most of his work was written in collaboration with Mr. Paul Merritt, Mr. G. R. Sims, Mr. Sydney Grundy, and Sir Augustus Harris, but by far the best was done single-handed. "Hands Across the Sea" and "A Woman's Revenge" are exactly what plays of their class should be, simple, interesting, amusing, exciting.

Mr. Pettitt had no eyes for a drab-coloured world draped with dingy remnants of philosophy. To him everything was as full of colour as the East. And the charge might justly be preferred against him that if his constructive powers were unusual, and his dramatic faculty remarkable, in the matter of colouring he

was prone to be too lavish with the tints of the tropics. Among those who knew him best he was considered far more than a prolific and phenomenally successful maker of melodrama, and one—the most scholarly of his fellow-workers—writes of him “A much abler man than the critics ever knew—crushed by them—his best work never done. How much good work do they prevent !”

MISS ISABEL IRVING, whose portrait appears in this number, made her first appearance six years ago, when she played with Miss Rosina Vokes, at the Standard Theatre, New York, such parts as *Gwendoline* in “The Schoolmistress,” and *Rose* in “In Honour Bound.” The following year, Mr. Daly enlisted her for his company, of which she has been a member ever since. Among the characters assumed by Miss Irving during this engagement are *Helen* in “The Hunchback,” *Audrey* in “As You Like It,” *Oberon*, and comedy parts in “Nancy and Co.,” “The Cabinet Minister,” “The Last Word,” “The Railroad of Love,” “A Night Off,” “The Orient Express,” “The Lottery of Love,” &c., &c. Winsome is the epithet Miss Irving invariably deserves and almost invariably earns. Winsome in manner and of winsome beauty, Miss Irving possesses also a winsome personality which always peeps through and often transforms the character she is playing. Her *Audrey* was a notable instance of this. That uncouth wench, faultlessly witless, brilliantly dull, was by this radiant winsomeness invested with such femininity that for the first time *Audrey* became a possible mate for *Touchstone*, and no mere turnip-munching, cherry-checked clod. In addition there is an exquisite fragility in Miss Irving’s style, the touch, so to speak, of a miniature painter, which brings to one’s lips directly she appears the immortal Clara Middleton and the immortal phrase, “A dainty rogue in porcelain.”

THE “Curious Impertinent” is of course a reprehensible fellow, but he may be a bad means to a good end. One such has done good service lately. It struck him that in “Sowing the Wind” it was difficult to see how *Rosamund*, aged apparently two or three-and-twenty, could be the child of the man who deserted her mother in very early manhood, inasmuch as that man is represented as a tottery old gentleman, with one gouty foot in bandages and the other in the grave. So he addressed Mr. Sydney Grundy on the subject, pointing out that 22 plus 23 do not make up 75, and asking what becomes of the play when so

essential a link in the chain is not properly forged. Mr. Grundy was good enough to answer to some purpose, and inasmuch as several important points are touched upon in his letter, room is found for it in extenso here.

“It’s chiefly a matter of ‘make-up.’ In the MS., *Brabazon* is described as 55, and *Rosamond* as 26. I don’t myself think Thomas looks as much too old as Brough looks too young. Maude looks anything up to 100. What of it? Actors will always go for picturesque make-ups; and quite right too. Until the idea struck you (and it took 50 nights to strike even you) it had not occurred to anybody in the world, so far as I am aware, except myself. The critic with an arithmetical table is as bad as the critic with a stop-watch or a Lindley Murray. You must be aware that almost every play that is written is open to similar objection.

“Apart from make-up, the chronology of the play is a trifle strained. That is the ‘kink’ in the piece. But I pointed out, years ago, that every play has a kink in it, and *must* have, or it would not be a play. The kink is the alloy which enables the playwright to mould his material. It is the kink which makes a good play so much more interesting than life. Eliminate the kink, and you come back to real life; and art has no *raison d’être*. In fact, the kink *is* the art. Professional critics will never understand this. They always think, when they have found the kink, they have discovered a blemish, and rejoice with an exceeding great joy. But they have only found a mare’s nest. Of course, the kink ought not to be obtrusive; but it is always to be discovered by analysis.

“Of course, I am speaking of *real* plays; not the charades of the Independent Theatre. I am aware that it is the ambition of the new school to extirpate the kink and destroy the drama. But they will fail. The old playwrights used too much alloy, and a reaction was inevitable. But when the yet newer school arrives, it will perceive that what was wrong was not the kink, but the maladroit management of the kink. In future, it must be reduced in dimensions and made much less obvious; but it will be recognized as a necessity.

“The ‘kink’ in the screen-scene of the ‘School for Scandal’ is the exit of *Joseph*. In real life, he would not have left the room, and the glorious situation would not have occurred. To the kink we owe the finest situation in comedy.

“With the maniacs who would abolish ‘situations,’ there is no argument. To the asylum with them!”

New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from December 27th 1893, to January 18th, 1894.

(*Revivals are marked thus **)

- Dec. 27. "Weatherwise," "unreality," in one act, by H. Chance Newton, music by Ernest Ford. Lyric.
- Jan. 1.* "The Country Girl," comedy, in three acts, by David Garrick. Daly's.
- „ 6. "An Old Jew," comedy, in five acts, by Sydney Grundy. Garrick.
- „ 6. "Sir Reginald; or, An Ancestral Incubus," operetta, in one act, by J. M. Taylor and Leslie Ray, music by Vivian Phillips. Produced by amateurs. St. George's Hall.
- „ 8.* "Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's comedy. Daly's.
- „ 17. "Uncle's Ghost," farce, in three acts, by W. Sapte, jun. Opera Comique.
- „ 18. "The Charlatan," play, in four acts, by Robert Buchanan. Haymarket.

In the Provinces, from December 12th, 1893, to January 12th, 1894:—

- Dec. 18. "Uncle's Blunder," musical sketch, in one act, by Frank Silvester and Milton Wellings. Town Hall, St. Alban's.
- „ 26. "When George III. was King," comic opera, in two acts, by Charles Riminton and Robert Forsyth. Pier, Folkestone.
- „ 28. "Tom," comedy, in one act, by Herbert Dalroy and Arthur Bearn. Lecture Hall, Derby.
- „ 28. "Sisters," comedy-drama, in four acts, by Edith Courtenay. Jubilee Hall, Addlestone.
- Jan. 1. "An Englishwoman," drama, in five acts, by St. Aubyn Miller. Opera House, Chatham.
- „ 4. "Wapping Old Stairs," comedy-opera, in two acts, by Stuart Robinson, music by Howard Talbot. T. R., King's Lynn.
- „ 5. "The Shadow Hand," drama, in four acts, by Cyril Austen-Lee. T. R., Macclesfield.
- „ 8. "A Guilty Mother," drama, in five acts, by Benjamin Landeck. T. R., Hull.
- „ 12. "Fetters of Passion," drama, in a prologue and five acts, by H. S. Warwick and T. C. Holderness. Eden, Bishop Auckland.

In Paris, from December 20th, 1893, to January 8th, 1894:—

- Dec. 23. "Cousin-Cousine," operetta, in three acts, by M. Ordonneau and M. Keroul, music by Gaston Serpette. Folies Dramatiques.
- „ 27. "Gwendoline," opera, in three acts, libretto by Catulle Mendès, composed by Emanuel Chabrier. Grand Opera House.
- „ 30. "L'Inquiétude," piece, in three acts, by Jules Perrin and Claude Couturier. For the Théâtre Libre. Menus-Plaisirs.
- Jan. 8, 1894. "Un Fil à la Patte," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Georges Feydeau. Palais Royal.



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

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MISS ELLALINE TERRISS,
IN "CINDERELLA."

"Life's path to me seems very rough and steep."

"CINDERELLA."

THE THEATRE.

MARCH, 1894.

New Views of Mr. Oscar Wilde.



RAMBLING fishing village on the western shores of Torbay, with a rugged range of cliffs sloping down to the water's edge—such is Babbacombe.

An old-world place, with its cluster of decaying cottages at the cliff's foot, the thresholds of which are washed by the incoming tides; with its deeply indented harbour, its tiny fleet of boats, its chaos of tattered nets and broken oars, its everlasting odour of ozone and fish and tar—an old-world place it is—or *was*. For that ubiquitous spirit, *Modernity*, has found Babbacombe out, and in its dilettante attempts to improve, has already more than half destroyed the air of quaintness that so long brooded over the little village, and Babbacombe the quaint is fallen—is fallen.

But still it is a lovely spot. Nothing can destroy the beauty of its situation—the grandeur of its coasts—the placid azure of its bay. It is a dwelling place for a poet still, and it was here that I sought and found the poet Oscar Wilde.

He was spending a few weeks at “Babbacombe Cliff,” a picturesque old manor house of 16th century date, whose mullioned windows glance down across a wooded slope within murmuring distance of the sea.

I found him seated at an open window, for although the month was December, the air of this delightful place is mild as that of the Riviera.

Luxuriously ensconced in a deep armchair, with eyes slightly elevated, and head thrown carelessly back, his appearance

suggested the idea of indolence or ennui; but it was the abstraction of a thoughtful mind, rather than the inertia of a vacant one that produced this result. Poetry is from within; it is produced by the action of external scenes and circumstances on the sensitive plate of a poet's soul. Hence the most important action of a poetic mind consists of absolute passivity—a complete abandonment of the soul to the inspiration of chance or surrounding influences. It was in such a mood that Oscar Wilde seemed to be indulging at the moment of my entry; he was as one who waited for inspirations. He rose as I approached, and I had an opportunity of making a mental note of his chief personal characteristic. I never saw a face so garrulous of the inner mind; it is such as is best described as a “speaking countenance”—one that cannot keep a secret. In manner he is refined, not without a suspicion of æstheticism, and there is an engaging charm in his personality that would win him many friends and not a few disciples.

He plunged at once into poets and poetry. “A glorious passion is poetry.” Keats is his favourite; “he is the greatest artist of them all.” He is prepared to admit, however, that there is “often more colour than congruity in the creations of that remarkable genius; with ability so great and judgment so immature, this is naturally to be expected.” I find, although he did not mention the fact, that the celebrated letter from Keats to Fanny Brawne, in which the poet recants his late rhapsodies with regard to the sex, was, in 1885, purchased by Mr. Wilde for £18.

Shelley is “a magnificent genius,” but as far as his own personal taste is concerned he prefers Keats. He likes a poet that “walks on the ground;” Shelley is “too ethereal.”

He has no great regard for the Brownings—there is too much effort with them. Mrs. Browning is “a dear good soul,” but he allots her a very secondary place. Her rhymes are shocking. “She rhymes ‘moon’ with ‘table’!” he exclaimed. He wishes “Aurora Leigh” had been written in prose.

Robert Browning is too diffuse. It is a pity he did not concentrate more. “I can revel in four of the closely compressed lines of Herrick,” Mr. Wilde observed, “but I cannot tolerate dross in poetry.” Poetry should be absolutely without a moral. “That is a great thing in its favour,” Mr. Wilde writes, in a letter now before me, of a poem of which it had been stated that it did not strive to inculcate any particular moral. “A poet should not think.” “Poetry is not the place for thought; we must have beauty, and beauty and thought are incoalescent.” He recalled that passage in “The Excursion,” in which the poet,

discoursing of the effects of natural beauty on the soul of the youthful herdsman, says:—

“ They were his life ;
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.”

Thought and Beauty cannot occupy the mind at the same time.

Mr. Wilde is not a great Shakespearean ; he likes Ford and Marlowe, and Jonson and Massinger, and the Elizabethan dramatists generally, but he does not rave over Shakespeare.

“ Lady Windermere’s Fan ” has sometimes been paralleled with “ The School for Scandal ; ” it is, therefore, interesting to know what are Mr. Wilde’s opinions of Sheridan. He is by no means enthusiastic over the author of “ The Rivals.” “ I do not rate Sheridan very high,” he writes in another letter ; “ I consider Congreve far beyond him.”

Milton is sometimes heavy ; but “ Paradise Lost ” is “ undoubtedly the grandest organ-music we have.” “ Very sober ” is Thomson. There is one line in “ The Seasons,” however, that he greatly admires—that in which the poet compares the colour of the wallflower to iron-rust ; “ the simile is perfect.”

The life and fate of Chatterton is “ the most tremendous tragedy in history.” Wordsworth is sometimes fine ; but, as a whole, “ The Excursion ” is “ decidedly tedious.” Tennyson is “ a supreme artist.” “ The music of Swinburne is perfect.” “ What all-seeing eyes William Morris has ! ” Austin Dobson is “ very delightful ”—“ you *must* get Austin Dobson.” “ The other Austin is vulgar—‘ The Season ’ execrable.” “ There is not enough fire in William Watson’s poetry to boil a tea-kettle.”

He wishes that it were always possible to convey poetry to the mind by some means other than print. “ Print is by no means the proper purple for Poetry to show herself in,” he says.

The conversation turned to prose writers. He is a great novel reader. Amongst English novelists, he prefers George Meredith. “ The Egoist ” is “ a terrible book for human nature. Every sentence tells—every line is an arrow in one’s own soul.” R. L. Stevenson is very fine. Some people would rather have Rider Haggard ; “ that is because they are insane.” The two are not to be compared. “ Rider Haggard writes like a man playing football, and as long as he confines himself to blood and bruises he does well ; but immediately he begins to moralise, he gets outside his natural sphere and becomes absurd.” He is not enthusiastic over Scott. He is able to read Thackeray’s “ Esmond.” Charlotte Brontë is “ often quite charming.” “ Robert Elsmere ” “ everyone should read.”

He is thoroughly steeped in French literature. Indeed, he is more conversant with French than with English, and spends some months of each year in France. The French novel is "a miracle." "They have brought the art of fiction to a point beyond which human genius cannot go."

The English stage is in "a shocking condition;" this is rather the fault of the public; "nothing but comedy and farcical comedy go down with an English house; the French are far ahead of us in matters theatrical."

On matters of English History he discoursed much and curiously.

He likes the Puritans "for their thoroughness;" they are the only people he would burn—"they really deserve burning—it is a great honour to a man to burn him." But "when the faith of the Puritan begins to broaden, that which constituted his greatest charm is gone; he is no longer a Puritan, and forthwith he becomes unworthy of the honours of faggot and stake." There is much in the character of the Stuart Kings that he admires. William III. he detests. "Kings ought not to be 'ower gude.'" His ideal King is "a man of high artistic sensibilities; one who can write beautiful poetry; who can appreciate good music; who is charmed with the beauties of painting and sculpture." "Not one who goes about with a swallow-tail coat on, laying foundation stoues and doing little goodnesses." "In matters of taste" our present Royal Family is "shockingly deficient."

Theology was the next subject touched upon. He reads Theology every day; "the history of Theology is the history of madness." He much laments that religious literature is of so poor a quality. Daute is the only Christian writer of supreme merit. Wordsworth's was the religion of nature rather than the religion of Christ; he is pantheistic rather than Christian. "I do not altogether believe in bringing children up on the Bible," Mr. Wilde observed. By the time they arrive at an age to appreciate the Book, it has lost, to them, much of its charm. Anyone taking up the Gospels for the first time at or about the age of 18 would be enchanted. "What a marvellous personality!" they would exclaim, "what a remarkable story!" "But when their infancy has been surfeited with it, their manhood revolts at it. Their eyes have become blind by gazing at the sun before their minds are strong enough to comprehend and appreciate its vastness and its meaning." He has a profound admiration for the character and personality of Christ, but he cannot accept the doctrine of his Divinity; "it would place too broad a gulf between Him and the human soul." I suggested that the

humanity of Christ bridges over the gulf that his Divinity creates, but in his opinion such bridgement is not adequate for the purpose. It is in the milder aspects of the Christ character that he most delights: teaching the poor, tending the sick, discoursing of a marvellous and ideal Faith with a few uncultured fishermen on the margin of Galilee. "In His utmost humanity, He approaches nearest the Divine." Those scathing words that He uttered at Jerusalem on the eve of His betrayal—in which, in the divine consciousness of innocence and right, He hurls anathema and defiance in the teeth of the Pharisees who were clamouring for His blood, Mr. Wilde considers rather as an outburst of spleen consequent upon the disappointment of cherished hopes and the defeat of a high and generous ambition. He discovered a certain partiality for the Pharisees; "they were the repositories of all the learning and culture of their times."

"Creeds are very personal things," continued Mr. Wilde. "Most of us believe in the great cardinal religious doctrines. That God made the Heaven and the Earth, and is the preserver and ruler of all things, few of us are prepared to deny: but when it gets beyond that, it becomes a merely personal matter." "The same reasoning applies to matters of secular history: Henry VIII. reigned, granted; but if we proceed further, if we commence to tell how he reigned and to pass judgment on his commissions, omissions, and permissions, as a King, we get out of history into personal opinion." "History ends with a few bare facts; Religion with a few undeniable Doctrines—beyond that all is invention."

"Prayer is a splendid privilege, but it is the utmost presumption for a man to expect or suppose that his petition will be granted." "What a funny world it would be, to be sure, if the Almighty answered every prayer that is offered up to him! As though the All-Father does not know what is best for us!"

From Theology to Thieves is a long leap. But it is like the man to take it. He feels "considerable sympathy" with Burglars. "In nine cases out of ten they only take what we really do not want." "That only may be accounted a loss that is something gone from our own persons, or that it is impossible to do without." "The loss of a finger is a loss; the loss of our last guinea is a loss; but the loss of a thousand pounds when we have a hundred thousand in the bank is *not* a loss." Burglars broke into the house of a friend of his and made off with all they could lay their hands to. Mr. Wilde called; everybody was in hysterics. He administered to them the consolations of this unique philosophy; he assured them that inasmuch as human nature is so constituted as to be capable, in certain contingencies,

of dispensing with silver spoons and Japanese curiosities, a visitation of burglars is really a matter of very small moment indeed. "Now, had someone fallen downstairs and broken a limb, it would have been a reasonable cause for distress; but really, silver spoons! Japanese curiosities! what good are they?"

He is "very sorry Smugglers have gone out of fashion." "What glorious places the creeks and caves of Babbacombe would be for smuggling enterprise, and what a pity it is that such fine natural advantages have to be disregarded." Adam Smith (he believes it is) somewhere says that "if it had not been for Smugglers in the last century, the commercial prosperity of this country would have become extinct!"

Pirates, too, are "very fine fellows." It was they who established the maritime reputation of England. What was his friend Sir Francis Drake, but a pirate? "Every profession in which a man is in constant danger of losing his life has something rather fine about it." He would "infinitely rather" see one of his boys a smuggler "than a grocer serving up sugar, or a stock-broker baiting traps for people, and keeping himself secure beyond the reach of law."

Beggars are remarkable people. He greatly wonders that no one has undertaken to write the history of beggars. He is sure the subject is full of capabilities. "The life of an Italian beggar is one of the jolliest that can be imagined." "They have no need of homes who can live in the open air; their only requirement is food." "The climate of England is a great hardship to the poor of this country."

He likes Jews. He has many friends among the Hebrews. He thinks Spinoza a very fine character. He seems to have some doubt as to whether Spinoza was really the founder of the Pantheistic sect.

The conversation drifted into politics. "We are all of us more or less Socialists now-a-days," he remarked. "Our system of government is largely socialistic." "What is the House of Commons but a socialistic assembly?" "I think I am rather more than a Socialist," he added, laughingly; "I am something of an Anarchist, I believe; but, of course, the dynamite policy is very absurd indeed."

"What a perfect fiasco is our system of penal administration!" "To punish a man for wrong-doing, with a view to his reformation, is the most lamentable mistake it is possible to commit." "If he has any soul at all, such procedure is calculated to make him ten times worse than he was before." "It is a sign of a noble nature to refuse to be broken by force." "Never attempt to reform a man," he said; "men never repent."

He loves true ignorance. He has not much faith in our modern system of educating everybody. "A truly ignorant and unsophisticated man is the noblest work of God."

And so he reasoned on; the range of subjects, the diversity of interests, that his conversation represented was truly surprising. He does not weary with profundity, nor bore with unnecessary detail. No arm-chair lecturer he. Like a bee, he flits from flower to flower, just tastes the sweets and passes on. His style is fluent and animated, with a sort of gentle insistence not infrequently found in men of strong mind. He avoids hackneyed terms and commonplace phrases; his words are choice and ready; he takes the lead in all topics of discussion, and initiates all new departures in the conversation. His opinions are convincingly expressed, but not oracularly delivered. His conversation is entirely free from that ipse-dixitical "cocksurishness" so often assumed by people on pedestals. I noticed one peculiarity: he makes very frequent use of one or two select words—"artist" is one, "culture" another, "fascinating" another, and so on.

To accurately gauge the character of the man is a task for which I feel myself incompetent. Words are to him a means whereby he may disguise his own personality. He never allows us to see the real emotions of his heart; his object seems to be to cast a glamour over us with the brilliance of his mind; he appears to sacrifice sentiment on the altar of analysis. He is a moral acrobat of a most extraordinary description. He stands before us a sane, plain gentleman of the nineteenth century, but in a moment, "*Eia äγe!*" he is on his head, gazing up at us solemn as a Sphinx, declaring that up to this moment humanity has been labouring under a ridiculous delusion, that *this* is the natural gait of a man, and that God Almighty never ordained that he should go otherwise. He is so solemn, so composed, so self-possessed, wonder seizes us—is the man schooling us in a great fact, or fooling us with a great farce!

To deny everything that is generally credited, and credit everything that is generally denied, seems to be the first article of his literary faith. The world has long enough been dominated by a parcel of shaky old moralities. There is a proverb—so Trench would assure us—for every emergency in life.

These proverbs have assumed oracular pretensions. They usurp the place of argument, they override precedent, they hold philosophy in scorn. To the vulgar they are invincible, indisputable, final. How can they be combated? Logic and learning are alike powerless. There is one way, and one way only; it is this: set a proverb to overthrow a proverb—meet maxim with maxim—combat saw with saw. It is a trick of the tongue. Set up a

counter-glitter of words ; out-sophisticate sophistry. Truth lies between the two extremes of falsehood. Oscar Wilde has found his vocation. It is his to restore the balance of Truth disturbed by the falsely-named "philosophy" of proverbs. He does it well. His veracity is terrible—and all the more terrible because it is implied rather than direct. He leaves us not a lie to cover us. He strips our vices of their last concealing falsehood. He tears the rags from the gangrene we had been so careful to disguise, and beholds, with a malicious laugh, our consternation at the rude discovery. Oh, he is a grim physician ! He applies no soothing emollient to the wound he has so ruthlessly unwrapped. Exposure is the only remedy he prescribes ; let others find a better. Hence—because of the terrible truthfulness of the man—he is called a Satirist—"satire" being the name we have given to truths that are not pleasant to hear. By those who do not take him seriously—who regard his truths as jokes—he is called Humourist.

It appears somewhat strange that a writer of this description should be so largely popular ; but the cause is not far to seek. His admirers are divided into two classes : first, those who do not believe a word he says—who call him humourist ; and secondly, those who are perfectly satisfied with the truthfulness of his statements as applied to their neighbours—who call him Satirist ; and as these two classes constitute a very large proportion of Society, the secret of Mr. Wilde's popularity as a writer is at once proclaimed.

But Mr. Wilde is not a moralist in the highest sense of the word. There are two sorts of morality ; or rather, morality has two sources. There is the morality of the taste, which is inspired by imagination ; and there is the morality of the soul, which is dictated and governed by the Decalogue. Mr. Wilde's morality is of the first order. I never knew a man whose actions and beliefs are so controlled by taste as in his case. Taste, it may be said, is the conscience of the æsthetic nature ; and a well-regulated taste is as sensitive in artistic matters as a well-balanced conscience in matters of morality. But in the case of Mr. Wilde the moral conscience is merged and extinguished in the æsthetic conscience. He attacks the vices—they are so out of taste ; he extols the virtues—they have so picturesque an effect.

Finally, the New Humour of which Mr. Wilde is said to be the great exponent, consists, I think, not in saying funny things, but in making funny discoveries. Dickens was a great humourist ; he was constantly discovering and proclaiming some little idiosyncrasy in human nature that, by an inexplicable oversight, had never been observed by us before. In this respect, Oscar Wilde

is the Dickens of the moral character. He is ever discovering some peculiarity in our moral constitution that, strange as it seems, had never occurred to ourselves. The new light that these discoveries let in upon the soul strikes us with a strange sense of humour. It is not the sort of humour to keep an audience screaming. It fills us with a singular elation that often breaks into a chuckle, but never into a roar. This is the new humour.

PERCIVAL H. W. ALMY.



Condensed Dramas.

No. VIII.—“DICK SHERIDAN.”

[*Note.*—This Condensed Drama, although it has no pretensions to accuracy, is founded upon incidents in a play of the illustrious (part) author of “The Black Domino” and other classics. The motives which led the hero to elope with Miss Linley and to keep the marriage a secret are not exactly those indicated in the play, but they appear to the author of the present work to be more than possible. The extraordinary duel occurred in the grounds of Durrisdeer, and has been admirably described by Robert Louis Stevenson in “The Master of Ballantrae.” The fact that Tom Jones and Roderick Random had followers named respectively Partridge and Strap is my only warrant for creating the character of O’Leary. The episode of Abednego, the money-lender, was suggested by a passage in Congreve, and may with advantage be omitted in representation.]

W. R. W.

ACT I.—The Assembly Rooms at Bath.

Mr. Wade, the Master of the Ceremonies, is engaged in receiving the Company, who, strange to say, after exchanging a few words with their official host, appear to have had enough of it, for they immediately hurry away, leaving the M.C. in sole possession.

(Dr. O’Leary enters.)

Mr. Wade: Pray, who are you?

O’Leary: Sure now, there ye puzzle me. ’Tis meself that’s a deeficult character to descroibe. I’m a graduate of Trinity, Doooblin, an ex-tutor, and a servant out of place; also, for the

sake of the situation at the end of the act, and for comic relief jinerally, I'm temporarily a sheriff's officer.

Mr. W.: Then it's clear you have no business here. Get out—or, I should say, quit these precincts, sirrah!

O'Leary (aside): Faith, I'll give him a bit of the blarney. (*Aloud*): Sorr, 'tis yerself that's a handsome jintleman entoirely.

Mr. Wade (who is apparently a simple soul): You really think so? Then you may remain.

O'Leary: Thank ye, sorr. You see, I've a troifle of assorted writs I must be afther serving. Those issued against the frinds of my ould pupil, Dick Sheridan, I shall, regardless of the legal consequences, tear up; but those mint for his inimies I shall kape for service at the critical moment. So Oirish, you know. (*Retires with Wade.*)

Dick Sheridan (enters): I'm supposed to be a dashing blade and a brilliant wit, but (*sighs*) ah! there's not much dash left in me; and as for wit—oh, why did Buchanan discard that book of Sheridaniana and substitute his own *bons-mots*!

Lady Miller (enters): Oh, brilliant but fickle one! so you love Miss Linley?

Dick (sadly): Alas! I do. (*Wipes away a manly tear.*)

Lady M.: Faithless creature! Fascinated by your sparkle, your vivacity, I gave you my heart, and now you throw me over.

Dick (with a sigh): Ah, yes! Woe is me! I'm a devil with the girls, although I'll be hanged if I know how I do it.

Lady M.: But I will be revenged. Ha, ha! (*Leaves.*)

(*Miss Linley enters.*)

Dick (to himself): Here's another of them. They won't let me alone. (*Checks a rising sob.*)

Miss Lin. (with much sprightliness): Ah, Mr. Sheridan, I observe that your rippling stream of witty repartee is still bubbling and sparkling.

Dick (with a groan): Yes; I can't help it. 'Tis my bright and sunny nature. (*Aside.*) I had better propose at once—she, like the rest of them, expects it—and get it over. (*Aloud.*) Miss Linley, will you be mine?

Miss Lin. (joyfully): Oh, Mr. Sheridan, I——

Dick (interrupting quickly): Ah! you hesitate, and you are right. Still, I have prospects. In the intervals of merriment and roystering I have dashed off a poem or two, veritable gems—posterity will find them in “The Duenna”—and have begun a play; so I think I may assume that in the course of twenty years or so the doors of the Temple of Fame will yawn to receive me. Will you wait?

Miss Lin. (making the best of a bad job): Richard, I will.

Dick: Thank you. (*Aside.*) Got well out of that, I think. (*Aloud.*) And now, in order to show my devotion to my darling Betsy, I will retire to the passage and flirt with the other one. (*Does so.*)

Lord Dazzleton (an elderly but agile nobleman) trips on singing: Tol-de-lol-de-liddle-ol-de-lay. Pardon my somewhat irrelevant capering, but as I illustrate the manners of the period, I am expected to dance before company. It amuses the audience hugely, and is an excellent substitute for witty dialogue. (*To Miss Linley*): Lovely Betsy, you are a great singer; I am a prolific but unappreciated composer; be mine, and you shall spend the rest of your days in warbling my unpublished melodies.

Miss Lin. (firmly): Certainly not.

Lord Daz. (with effusion): Many thanks, most ravishing female; I will go and order the wedding-ring. Tol-de-rol!

Miss Lin.: You misunderstand me. I decline to marry you.

Lord Daz. (in the playful manner of the elderly nobleman of the past): Ah! coy little popsy; how she does adore me! (*Sings with appropriate action*): "You should see me dance the polka." You should, rum-ti-tum-ti-tay. (*Turns a "Catherine wheel" through the open door, and so leaves.*)

Capt. Matthews (enters): Miss Linley, I am the villain of the piece; be mine.

Miss Lin. (aside): Dear me! Everyone seems bent on proposing to me to-day. (*Aloud.*) Thank you, I decline,

Capt. M.: I understand; you love another—the hero.

Miss Lin.: Of course I do; am I not the heroine?

Capt. M.: But he is untrue to you.

Miss Lin. (proudly): That I will never believe, come what may.

Capt. M. (produces a society journal of the period): Then cast your eye over this paragraph. I don't exactly know what it is all about—that is the author's secret—but I am certain that it is indisputable evidence of Dick's infidelity.

Miss Lin. (casts her eye accordingly. Starts): What do I see? Then he is faithless. Oh, what shall I do?

Capt. M.: Elope with me, your rejected lover.

Miss Lin.: That seems a reasonable proposition, and just the sort of thing a nice, well-brought-up young lady would do. I consent.

Capt. M.: Then I will go and order the carriage.

Miss Lin.: Do. (*Capt. M. leaves.*)

Dick re-enters.

Miss Lin.: Away, Mr. Sheridan! You are faithless.

Dick (aside) : Now how the dickens did she discover that?
(*Aloud.*) Your evidence?

Miss Lin. : An ordinary paragraph in a newspaper. Disprove it!

Dick : Alas ! I cannot. For as the author has omitted to give any information on the subject, none of us will ever know the true inwardness of that paragraph. But, if it will help you out of the difficulty, I am prepared to state that I still love you.
(*Heaves a sigh.*)

Miss Lin. (joyfully) : That is quite sufficient. (*Clasps him to her arms ; he submits limply.*) But, dear me, I was about to elope with Captain Matthews !

Dick : You were ! (*Aside.*) Oh, why did I enter and interrupt ! Just my luck !

Miss Lin. (archly) : Wouldn't it be rather a pity to waste the carriage?

Dick (starts) : Eh ? Oh, yes, of course ! (*Aside, in despair.*) Ah, me ! there's no help for it. (*Hesitatingly.*) Shall—shall I take his place ?

Miss Lin. (very effusively) : You must—you shall ! (*Throws herself into the arms of Dick, who weeps silently.*)

Mr. Linley—a very heavy father—(enters) : Odsbodkins, rappee, and grammercy ! But thou'rt a saucy wench. I tell thee, 'tis my firm intent that thou shouldst marry my Lord Dazzleton.

Miss Lin. (firmly) : That I will never do.

Lord Daz. (who has just skipped on) : Oh, tol-de-rol. Carry me out—I'm fainting. (*Is restored by a vinaigrette, and cuts a languid caper.*)

Mr. Wade, the M.C., and the rest of the company enter.

Mr. Wade : I must apologise for interrupting the serious interest of the play, but the company decline to wait any longer in the passages in order that the Assembly Rooms may be devoted exclusively to Miss Linley and her love affairs. Moreover, I must remind you that the work we are now interpreting is a powder piece, and this is the only opportunity in the play for introducing the usual local colour in the shape of a gavotte.

Omnes (with the customary unanimity of a crowd) : A dance ! a dance !

Miss Linley and others dance, Dick Sheridan sobs on a sofa.

Capt. M. enters, and Miss Linley, for reasons best known to herself, staggers and falls into her partner's arms, and the dance ceases.

Dick (aside) : Bless my soul, it's the end of the act ; I must dry my tears and wake up. (*Does so.*)

Capt. M.: I have come to escort Miss Linley home.

Dick (*comes forward, defiantly*): No, sir; I will see that lady home.

Capt. M.: Then you shall do it over my dead body. (*Sensation.*)

Dick: Or mine. (*Still more sensation.*) So let us at once show our breeding by brawling before ladies.

Capt. M.: We will. (*They prepare for combat.*)

O'Leary (*aside*): Begorra! now's my chance. (*Aloud.*) Shtop! In the King's name I arrest Captain Matthews.

(*Curtain.*)

ACT II.—Sheridan's Lodgings in London.

Dick (*discovered contemplating a bust of Shakespeare; he is still suffering from intense melancholia.*): I came home, I understand, at six o'clock this morning, drunk and incapable—though how I acquired strength of mind enough to do it, I don't know—and I am suffering from what they will call in the next century "hot coppers," that is to say, a burning headache and a raging thirst, so I feel just in the humour for writing comedy. (*Proceeds with enviable ease to write "The School for Scandal."*)

O'Leary (*enters*): Sure now, I've just bought the materials for an Oirish stew, and will now cook it in this apartment. In your prisint condition ye'll find the smill consoling. (*Prepares a barbaric dish in the background.*)

Dick: I say, O'Leary, I got well out of that elopement, didn't I? It is true that I was obliged to marry the girl, but I was too proud to claim her until I had achieved Fame and so forth. Good idea, wasn't it? (*Smiles a sickly smile.*)

O'Leary: Oh, 'tis yerself's the broth of a bhoy. But, faith, she won't let ye alone. She wants ye to disgoise yerself as a hackney coachman, and droive her from the opera to-noight.

Dick: Preposterous! I'll see her—whatever is the eighteenth-century equivalent for "blowed" first?

(*Sir Harry Chase and Lady Pamela enter.*)

Dick: Oh, here come the comic lovers, bursting with those Buchananiana which the author found so superior to Sheridan. What a nuisance! (*Sighs.*) But I suppose we must go through with it. (*Aloud.*) Let us now endeavour to convulse the audience.

(*They make the attempt.*)

Dick: By the way, before you go, I'll give you a little comic

relief myself. 'Tis true it's not much in my line, but the author thinks it will lighten the part. It's a charming little interlude, entitled "A New Way to Repudiate Old Debts," or "Cracking a Bottle and Bouncing a Jew." 'Tis a pleasant jape, reeking with refinement, or, as posterity will say, "funny without being vulgar." (*Enacts it gloomily, then moans*) Ah! humorous, isn't it?

Sir H. and Lady P. : Oh, excruciating! (*They hurry away.*)

Capt. Matthews (enters) : I have just looked in to mention that I have bought up all your bills from a gentleman I met by accident on the stairs, and that I shall shortly consign you to a debtor's prison.

Dick : Many thanks, good morning! (*Capt. M. leaves.*)

Dick (brightens up a little) : Ah! A ray of hope! Happy asylum! There at least I shall be free from the persecution of that pertinacious wife of mine.

O'Leary (who had gone out to answer the bell, re-enters) : Oh, Dick, me bhoy! Here's the great Davy Garrick, looking altogether unloike his porthraits, coming upstairs.

Dick : Then I will retire to my bedroom.

O'Leary : Sure, now, why?

Dick : Goodness only knows, unless it be to weep in solitude, and give you a chance.

O'Leary : Thank ye, kindly. (*Dick goes out*)

(*Garrick enters, and, with the aid of O'Leary, tries hard to amuse the audience.*)

Lord Dazzleton (enters, skipping feebly) : Tol-de-rol. I have found it most fatiguing to dance upstairs.

Garrick : My lord, it is, I believe, your lordship's opinion that the new comedy called "The Rivals" is a fine play.

Lord Daz. : A mighty masterpiece.

Garrick : Just so. (*Dick re-enters, drying his eyes.*) Well, here is the author, so kindly retire to the window.

Lord Daz. : Why, tol-de-rol?

Garrick : In order that you may not recognise him till the right moment.

(*Lord Daz. retires up.*)

Garrick (to Dick) : You are a great genius. Your play has been accepted by the Drury Lane Syndicate. Let me introduce you to the Chairman. (*Indicates Lord D.*)

Lord Daz. (starts) : The puppy who eloped with my inamorata! His play is trash! I don't know if it is a word in general use in the eighteenth century, but I repeat it—trash! The play shall not be produced. And so annoyed am I, that I will leave

off skipping for the rest of the piece, and seriously consider the desirability of turning over a new leaf in the next act. (*Goes out.*)

Dick : Mr. Garrick, if you really wished my comedy to be produced, why did you play a practical joke upon a person whose influence could ensure its rejection ?

Garrick : That's my little joke—so characteristic. Davy was always a wag. Besides, I had to be introduced into the play—the great Garrick, you know, such a picturesque figure, and there was no other way of doing it. (*Leaves.*)

Dick : Thank goodness that the rejection of the comedy will ward off Fame and Betsey for a short time longer.

(*Miss Linley enters.*)

Dick (*trembles and turns paler, aside*) : Oh lor ! here she is !

Miss Lin. : I have carefully examined the lineaments of every hackney coachman on the rank, but all in vain ; so I have come here to tell my Dicky that his play has been accepted at Covent Garden. Of course it will be a great success, and now all the world will soon know that I am his own little Tootsicum.

Dick (*whose gloom has deepened into that of midnight, aside*) : D—n ! Oh why am I so fatally attractive ! Confound my sparkle and vivacity ! (*Bursts into tears.*)

Curtain.

ACT III.

Miss Linley's Boudoir, a room devoted by her father to the reception of his own guests.

(*Mr. Linley and Lady Miller enter.*)

Lady Miller : Your daughter still loves this Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. Lin. (*who is clearly a man of the world*) : What, madam ! After eloping with him to France, and spending several days in his company ! Odzooks, madam ! Impossible !

Lady Mill. : It is nevertheless true ; and if the play succeeds to-night—

Captain Matthews (*who apparently has the entrée to the boudoir, for he enters unannounced*) : But the play will not succeed, for I have reduced an important actor therein to intoxication. I may also add that, consequently, Miss Linley will be mine.

Mr. Linley (*aside*) : Grammercy ! it is amazing how all the

rank and fashion of London are ready to sell their souls in order to marry my daughter—a mere concert singer, with a reputation that has decidedly gone off.

Miss Linley (enters and stops suddenly): Oh! As my maid had informed me that Lady Miller was with you, I naturally concluded that you were alone.

Mr. Lin.: So, saucy wench, you love this Richard Sheridan?

Miss Lin. (proudly): I do. And to-morrow he will be famous, for his play will be a great success.

Captain M.: Then come with me and see it.

Miss Lin. (scornfully): I understand. You invite me in order that I may witness its complete failure.

Captain M.: I cannot quite follow your line of reasoning; so I will leave you.

Others: We all will. (*They do.*)

Lord Dazzleton (enters): Come with me, sweet dame, to the play.

Miss Lin.: Thank you, I am engaged.

Lord Daz.: Then, by the living Rum-ti-iddity, I will transform myself into a sympathetic character. Know you then that it is my intention to pay your lover's debts, and gain your father's consent to the marriage. At this point I would fain drop into pathos; but, on reflection, I think I had better not. (*Leaves with the air of a hero.*)

Miss Lin. (to her maid): Turn down the lights.

Maid: Why, madam?

Miss Lin.: I am going off into a trance, and see things; and I want a red glow and moonlight effects—they do help one so. (*The lights are adjusted.*)

Miss Lin. (dreamily, but ecstatically): Why should I take the trouble to go to the play when I can see everything here? I see the crowded theatre. I hear the preliminary demonstration in the gallery against the charge for programmes. I see the critics, all so calm and unimpassioned, writing their notices on their knees between the acts. I hear the voice of the prompter, also the hiss of the defective limelight. I see the manager come before the curtain, and say a good word for everybody and everything that is his, from the actor, who is the son of his old friend, to the liquor at the refreshment-bar supplied by his own wine merchant. I see—I see——

(*Dick staggers in.*)

Miss Lin. (sees him): He reels! Then all is wrong. Speak!

Dick (with an air of melancholy, which on this occasion is manifestly assumed): It's all up with us. The "booes" of the

audience are ringing in mine ears. The Temple of Fame is closed to me for ever, and the Fleet alone is ready to receive me; so I have come to say farewell for aye.

Miss Lin. (passionately): No, no. I will never leave you. (*Embraces him.*)

Dick (aside, with the old, real, convincing gloom): I knew it. She sticks like a limpet. (*In wild despair.*) Oh, charm! Oh sparkling persiflage! Oh sprightly wit! Would that I had never possessed ye!

(*Mr. Linley, Lady Miller, and Captain Matthews re-enter.*)

Mr. Linley (with arms uplifted): Zounds! What do I behold? My daughter in her lover's arms! What an unprecedented circumstance!

Dick: I only came to say farewell.

Miss Lin. (aside): Not if I know it. (*Aloud.*) Father, Woer, Rival, let me now tell you what I might just as well have told you long ago—Dick Sheridan is my husband.

(*Clings to Dick, who stares blankly into space, with immediate suicide in his eye.*)

Curtain.

ACT IV.

Sheridan's Lodgings again. The Bust of Shakespeare has been put in the corner to indicate Dick's disgust with the Drama.

Dick (if possible more wretched than ever): Everything is going as wrong as it possibly can. There was no rest for me, even in a debtors' prison. I had enjoyed its welcome peace but a few short hours, when some meddling idiot paid my debts and set me free.

Sir Harry Chase (enters): News, Dick, news! "The Rivals" will be repeated to-night, and by a slight change in the cast a dead failure will be transformed into a triumphant success.

Dick (with a moan): Although historical it sounds preposterous; but as it would ruin my chance of happiness, it will most certainly come to pass.

Captain Matthews (enters): Will you fight?

Dick: I will, and that immediately.

Captain M.: Not here. It is too dark.

Dick: Nonsense! O'Leary, you have read the "Master of Ballantrae"?

O'Leary: Ivery loine of it, sorr.

Dick: Then repeat the business of the duel; and we will fight, with apologies to Stevenson, by the light of a couple of candles.

Captain M.: But that will not be sufficient; the audience will not see that which they so much admire, my marvellous facial expression.

Dick: What an unreasonable creature you are—and with a limelight all to yourself full on. Will nothing rouse you to action? Take that. (*Strikes him with the flat of his sword.*)

Captain M. (*furious, exclaims in Welsh*): Bur-ur-ur-ur-roo!!

(*They fight for a short time, then a pause.*)

Captain M.: I must change my position; the light is in my eyes.

Dick (*aside*): Just as if the lime light man won't follow him everywhere! Artful beggar! Wants the centre of the stage.

(*The fight is resumed, and Captain M. stabs Dick in the shoulder, and so wounds him in the wrist. There is another pause for bandages.*)

Dick (*aside*): I'm getting the worst of this. (*Suddenly.*) Ha! "The Master of Ballantrae" again! Good old Stevenson! I'll grasp the Captain's sword and so disable him. 'Tis true that, in the novel, it is a trick of the villain, but the audience will think it all right; for they will never expect villainy in a character which, though a trifle dull, is wholly sympathetic.

(*The fight is again resumed and Dick seizes the Captain's sword and so brings him to the ground.*)

Dick: Beg, beg for your life.

(*Captain M., feeling that, although he has been played a scummy trick, he has no chance of sympathy, begs for his life with a fine manly dignity, and leaves without a stain on his character—a result due in a great measure to his admirable acting.*)

Miss Linley (*enters*): Pardon my intrusion, but "The Rivals" is this time a great success. Oh joy! oh rapture! And now you are mine—mine for ever! (*Hugs Dick to her heart.*)

Dick (*aside, over her shoulder*): Alas and alack! Woe is me! My worst fears are realized; and it is now all up with poor Dick Sheridan. (*Swoons.*)

Curtain.

W. R. W.

The Theatrical Revolution :

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY.

V.

1st Player : I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.
Hamlet : O, reform it altogether.



HE next afternoon at five, Roscius and Kenneth Daggerwood repaired to the theatre, where they had an appointment with Stage-Director Cornwallis.

The day's rehearsal was over, but they found that gentleman still immersed in business. He was instructing his assistant, officially known as Sub-Director West.

"At one to-morrow," said Mr. Cornwallis, "you will run through with the understudies. Miss Tenterden, by the way, leaves us to go to the 'Comedy No. 2'; you must replace her."

Sub-Director West ran his finger down a list of actresses against whose names were certain indications.

"There is Ida Carbury," said he, "now finishing at Glasgow. Travelling Inspector Murray says she has a fine bold method, and will go up for 'Master' at the end of the year."

"Send for her to understudy 'Drusilla' in Miss Tenterden's place," said Mr. Cornwallis.

"Pardon me," interrupted the elder Daggerwood. "Is it not considered an affront to a lady of talent and position to propose that she should understudy?"

"We shall not *propose* it to her," the Director replied. "She will be summoned to undertake the duty. Were we to be hampered with the fancies and prejudices of ladies in this profession we could not properly cast our plays. Actors, like soldiers, must go where they are sent, and do what they have allotted to them."

"Dear me! That must be very distasteful," Roscius exclaimed. "How can they have any home-life or any love for their work under such conditions?"

“There is a certain hardship in our system, I admit,” answered the Director, “but it is important that actors should not bury themselves amid distracting private interests. If they prefer domesticity they can retire from the ranks of actors. There are many occupations in connection with the stage that admit of permanent residence in one city. One advantage of our system is that the old-time corruption by means of which some artistes got ahead of others can no longer operate. We look out for the best talent; and ability is an actor’s best means of advancement.”

“But here you snap up an actress of exceptional qualities only to bury her among your understudies.”

“The understudy company is every whit as high-standing as the acting one, so there is no degradation, as you seem to infer. And as for *burying* her, any other manager can take her from us at a week’s notice, so long as her name appears in the circular as not actually playing or rehearsing to play. Moreover, she will take her place in our acting company, if it chance that she is attached to this theatre when our monthly change of cast occurs. No one can be lost sight of, and according to artistic achievement all must rise, stagnate, or decline. We do not permit ourselves to be influenced by the weight of the amateur’s purse or the lightness of her virtue.”

Having received further instructions, Mr. West retired, and the Director turned to his visitors.

“I promised you a look round this theatre,” said he, “but you had better come to-night, and Mr. Charker, our Stage-Manager, will show you all at work. I am tired with a rehearsal that has kept me three hours on my legs, and if you don’t mind a glass of wine and a cigar, I would prefer to sit here and chat with you.”

“In the year of my retirement, 1893,” said Roscius, “the fortunes of our theatres were in a very unsatisfactory condition. One or two houses were filled to overflowing—others barely paid expenses—and several could get no patronage at all. It was said that attractive plays were scarce, and yet authors lay in wait for managers day and night. But the work of writers who had not won their spurs was so invariably worthless that managers turned a deaf ear. They lacked sympathetic imagination, and let slip many good things which, after being rejected on every hand, —achieved a lucrative success.”

“Distrusting their own judgment, managers would blindly commission established authors rather than experiment with an untried man; and this excessive demand upon some two or three caused the production of some very slovenly, ill-considered stuff—a *réchauffé* of old ideas being preferred to original matter.”

“However, when a dramatist had won a fair hold upon public

favour by his skill in redressing hackneyed combinations, his ambition led him to write something new and bold; and it was such courage on the part of men of ability like Gilbert, Pinero, Jones, and Grundy that saved the drama from absolutely dying of inanition. Capable dramatists were miserably few; for, success being an antecedent condition of the opportunity to achieve success, the new-coming playwright only got his chance at his own expense, or at that of his friends, and consequently the poor and uninfluential found the stage-door almost impregnable."

"No one has the least title to consideration who has not trained his abilities," said Director Cornwallis. "Playwriting is a special form of literary art, and there is a complete educational course prescribed for it at the Academy. Students learn the rudiments of their art methodically, and compete with each other for prizes and honours—the best productions remunerating their author without any trouble on his part to negotiate the work."

"Then dramatists have no longer to cadge about with the essence of their brains rolled up in brown paper? They have not to sound upon their 'own trumpet' the merits of their work? Drinks and dinners, and diplomatic contrivance are not necessary for the securing of the managerial ear?"

"Oh dear, no! The cleverest artificer is often the least successful huckster; and the time spent in negotiating a play had better be devoted to the making of a new one. All we ask of the dramatist is that he shall turn out work that is up to the standard of value; and whether it be likely to please the public or not, he is assured of having it produced to the best advantage, and of being handsomely paid for his labour."

"I see; he must be a student at the Academy to have a right to compete. If he competes, he secures a fair judgment. If his work be meritorious, he may rely upon a just reward?"

"That is so. Compositions devoid of merit never go to the examiners at all, for the literary doctors who instruct aspirants in the necessary qualities, sift the competing work, and would advise pupils of manifest incapacity to retire from a hopeless fight; but any sound fruit of industry and talent is sure of recognition, and may gain either the first, second, or third prize, to each of which is attached a bonus; or it may take honours in various degrees—commended, highly commended, or very highly commended. The prize plays are forwarded to the theatres for which they are suitable. The plays that simply take honours are remitted for substantial improvement, and generally are rewritten in collaboration with another author, who possesses some special quality which the first lacks. As many as four

authors frequently combine in the production of a single play, each being unequal to executing the work alone."

"It used to be found very difficult for *two* writers to reconcile their ideas," remarked Roscius. "What a wrangle there must be when a group of clever men, each with a secret contempt for all the rest, and idolatrously worshipping his own fancies, hurl together heterogeneous material!"

"Not a bit of it! One master-mind guides the rest and edits the contributions."

"In the eighteen-nineties bankruptcy shadowed high-class plays, whereas those that pandered to the lowest intelligence rejoiced in golden sunshine. How are profits regulated now?"

"The Academy purchases the English rights at a price determined by supply and demand, and on the first, second, or third scale, according to the prize which the judges have awarded."

"The authors get a royalty, I presume?"

"No; they sell for a lump sum, on acceptance of the play."

"But if one play holds the stage for years—has a long run—and is again and again revived, while another fails and is withdrawn, surely it is not fair that the Academy should pay as much for a 'frost' as for a 'success?'"

"The author of the 'frost' would very likely get *more*. Reward is given to merit; not superadded to popular favour. Plays that please the multitude, and accordingly hold the stage longest here, find the readiest market abroad; and as the foreign rights remain at the author's disposal, there is a tendency to write plays with this object. The comparative scarcity of purely artistic pieces raises them to a premium at the Academy, where the aim is to equalize rewards as far as possible, and to encourage dramatic illustration of every phase of life and thought."

"I am glad that it is recognized to be the duty of the stage to elevate public taste, and that those who devote themselves to this mission deserve to be protected from ruinous sacrifice. But, now, tell me what are the qualifications of those who teach playwriting, and what training is supposed to qualify the Associates to judge plays."

"The Doctors," replied Mr. Cornwallis, "are successful playwrights. The Judges are those who have tried and failed."

"Humph! Does that work well? Successful men increase the number of their rivals by communicating the secret of their success. And he who has failed is apt to see no merit in the work of others."

"The objection you raise to our choice for Doctors might be urged against the teachers of all arts and professions. The best

instructor is he who has learnt his lesson best. And with regard to Judges, I may tell you that narrow-minded, splenetic persons are not elected to that Committee. The examination of plays is severe, but just. The Judges are not expected to find perfect plays, but simply to select the best."

"Is Good Old Melodrama dead and buried?"

"The hotch-potch of timeworn situations, sickly sentiment, and fustian phrases, formerly so-called, has given place to the order of play to which this theatre is devoted—dramas of action, romances of vivid picturesqueness and exciting interest, which appeal to the emotions rather than to the brains. We deal in improbabilities, it is true; but we do not outrage common-sense. Our work is roughly poetical, and limns boldly aspects of nature which often call for tragic powers of interpretation of a very high order. Volcanic eruptions, floods, earthquakes, shipwrecks, balloon catastrophes, railway collisions, cyclones, mining disasters, and similar spectacles are treated with faithful realism, and are productive of acting scenes of heroism and pathos which none but actors of emotional strength can adequately compass."

"Here, then, I may find what is left of the old 'robustious' method?"

"Here, if anywhere; but we have no blatant, frothy declamation—no substitution of artifice for art. Our performances are as much above those of thirty years ago, as our mechanical effects excel the clumsy contrivances that drew jeers from the insulted audience in those days."

"Now that, owing to the variation of the hours of performance, playgoers do not have to rush to the theatre straight from exhausting labour, or torpid with heavy dining, it is probable that they are not so bent upon frivolous amusements as formerly, and they may find pleasure as well as profit in contemplating the serious questions of life, so that the ambition of dramatists who write plays 'with a purpose' is no longer deplored."

"Your surmise is correct, Mr. Daggerwood, and indeed a 'purpose' is now regarded as essential to every dramatic performance."

"Whereas in my time it was an offence to accredit an audience with intellect. 'More fit for the study than the stage' was the cant reproach levelled at any problem of social life."

"It was that which reduced dramatic art to such low esteem, and by limiting the scope for good actors and the appreciating of their power let in a flood of incompetents to justify that contempt. Plays appear to have been written in the tawdry style of cheap fiction, as if shop-boys and servant-maids were the only class they were designed to please."

“Not always,” protested Roscius, who retained an instinctive affection for old times, which made him inclined to champion their institutions when others began to abuse them. “Some of our dramatists would bear *reading*: Pinero, for instance.”

“But then authors of the calibre of Pinero could not find actors to realise their conceptions. The imaginations so laboriously put into form and language fell to commonplace in the hands of even the best actors of that time. Pinero had a morbid reluctance to witness his own plays in performance, feeling as a father would feel to see his dear offspring debased, mutilated, slaughtered. Ah! it is very different now, for although modern plays have a far higher and purer tone than formerly, the actors now use them as a mere foundation upon which to erect a fabric greater than the authors had conceived.”

“Worthless stuff may be worked up into the likeness of diamonds, or an unskilled lapidary may spoil a priceless gem,” remarked Roscius. “Assuming that your judges send you real jewels, what is your process of polishing?”

“We have pieces read aloud to us by members of our company, selected as appropriately as possible for the various parts.”

“I understand that the identity of the authors is kept secret until after the critics have dealt with the play.”

“Certainly, for the sake of securing strict impartiality. We are put into confidential communication with the authors by the Academy Registrar in order that their intentions may be done justice to, and that we may arrange with them whatever alterations are advisable. We overhaul the piece thoroughly, cutting, transposing, writing up, under their supervision, until every opportunity is made the most of. After this it is cast to the best possible advantage, and when the actors bring to bear upon each part their individual expertness a hundred new lights break in.”

“Is the proportion of good plays greater now?”

“Unquestionably, in spite of the very much higher standard of merit which now obtains. Writers for the stage are taught their ‘technique’ as exactly and comprehensively as an engineer learns how to make and put together a machine. Every man who can write at all writes for the stage, in addition to his special line of work. It is the popular medium now, and the very essence of all argument flies to the theatre for its most potent and far-reaching expression. Those who have not the dramatic gift collaborate with those who possess it, and send forth their message to the world with a certainty of being heard beyond the compass of books and newspapers.”

“With so large an army of authors, and such a multiplicity of plays, it seems to me that either the nation must be heavily taxed to

pay for this luxury, or the authors must be content with a scale of remuneration that compensates them inadequately for the time they withdraw from other occupations."

"We certainly do not assign a huge fortune to the composer of a hundred pages of dialogue. That was part of the general disproportion of things thirty years ago. But we pay very sufficiently for acceptable work. The economy effected in respect of interest on the national debt, army and navy expenditure, the maintenance of prisons and of certain useless offices of State, provides the Government with ample resources for educating and recreating the people as well as for redeeming them from pauperism."

"None of your actors seem to be out of work," remarked Mr. Daggerwood, senior, digressively. He had taken up the muster-roll of the profession that lay near his hand. This was a stout pamphlet, issued weekly, and containing all information necessary for the working of the theatres. Its main feature was a classified list of all persons employed in connection with the stage. Actors and actresses were registered under the headings of Students, Members, Fellows, Doctors, and Masters of Histrionics; Music, Literature, Æsthetics, &c., having each a corps of devotees similarly assorted; and against every name was that of the theatre to which the artist temporarily belonged. "In my time, the majority announced themselves 'at liberty;' now among thousands there does not seem to be one idle. Have you a separate list of the unemployed?"

"No. Every Academician is in that list, and we can tell at a glance those that are available."

"I see some are marked 'Retired.'"

"But those are incapacitated from service, or temporarily withdrawn under leave of absence. All certified players are attached to one or other of the theatres—understudying parts when there is nothing else for them to do. They draw regular pay all the year round, and are at call for any service compatible with their rank in the profession. This list will tell me where those actors are, and when they will be free to rehearse for me."

"It must very often happen that you have to take people who are strangers to you, and whose style does not exactly match your idea of the way in which the part should be played. Is there any difficulty in cancelling the engagement if your selection does not shape well at rehearsal?"

"None whatever. Actors are glad to relinquish a task which is not likely to result satisfactorily, for their resignation entails no monetary sacrifice—an interest which in the old days made them insist upon playing to the prejudice of the piece, and left

the manager who had erred in engaging them no power to rectify his mistake, although the success of the play might be in jeopardy. So absolute is my voice in this matter that if a part be misread the blame is laid upon my shoulders by the critics, who hold the actor responsible only for the *execution* of his work."

"You seem to have a plentiful supply of talent."

"In London alone there are close upon three thousand certified players."

"And yet you reject all whom Nature has not qualified for the stage. Surely this extension of talent is out of proportion to the increase of population during the past thirty years?"

"The admixture of races may have had something to do with it; but indeed the histrionic gift was always widely spread, and only cultivation was needed to produce fruit instead of poison-berries. Now that the theatre is no longer a refuge for rogues and vagabonds, the very flower of our youth is given to it—ennobling itself and serving as an example for others. The stage is recognized as an exalted vocation, and players train themselves as rigorously as a priest for his holy office or an athlete for the arena, recognizing that they have to become models of what men and women ought to be."

"I must become acquainted with this new generation of players," exclaimed old Roscius.

"Come to-night," answered the Director, "and I will introduce you to the bees in their hive. The curtain rises at eleven."

PERSEUS.

(*To be continued.*)



“Greek and Greek,”*

A Duologue, by Nora Vynne.

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Characters :

Lois.

Woodhill.

SCENE.

Lois' Sitting-Room.

Lois and Woodhill seated at a table, on which are several learned-looking books, an inkstand, papers, &c.

Woodhill: Well, I think you may be called a pretty fair Greek scholar by now.

Lois: Oh, what a shocking thing to say of a woman.

Woodhill: I mean for a girl—no, not exactly that—I mean you have done wonders in the time. Of course you have still a great deal to learn in the way of Greek prose, and Thucydides will stump you for many a long day yet; but anything else, from Herodotus to Sophocles, you ought to manage with the help of a lexicon. You have got the start; you can get on as far as you like now.

Lois: It has been so good of you to teach me.

Woodhill: Better than you would have expected, eh?

Lois: Very much better.

(*They both laugh—she, frankly and pleasantly; he, nervously and uneasily.*)

Woodhill: You didn't like me, you know, when we met at Marlow.

Lois: I didn't.

Woodhill: And you showed your dislike pretty freely.

Lois: Yes; that's my way. I know it's a very horrid way; but then I show now that I do like you, just as freely; and that makes up—doesn't it?

Woodhill (aside): Why yes, it does; after all it does. That is pretty much what I want her to say. That's why I am giving her Greek lessons—to teach her another lesson (*with compunction*), and yet (*aloud*), did you know I was in the punt? Not

* Adapted from a story which appeared in the *Speaker* of November 5, 1892.

asleep when you and your friend—Mrs. Heron she is now—were talking of me. I heard what you said.

Lois : Were you very angry ?

Woodhill : You said enough to make any man angry. You said you could only believe that seven years ago I left Oxford an athlete and a scholar, by the assumption that I had spent the intervening years keeping a beershop in the City ; that I was an exaggerated example of how completely a man may lose the God in him and be left alone with the brute by giving himself up to idleness and self-indulgence.

Lois (quietly) : Well, it was all true, you know.

Woodhill : It was none the more pleasant to hear. You said that though you knew I was younger than Heron, he looked a young man, straight and clean-built, and I looked a bloated old fogey of forty. Bloated is a very ugly word.

Lois : And the thing is even more ugly than the word. But why should you recall all this, now you are quite changed ? I should not speak of you so now—no one would, but what I said was true when I said it. You had quite lost the dignity of manhood in your ill manners.

Woodhill : Was it good manners in a lady to say so ?

Lois : What right had you to expect the manners of a lady from me, when your own were not those of a— . No, that's too strong. I won't say it ; for if you had listened longer you might have heard me say that the pathos of the thing was that crushed under the animal one could still see the dead body of a gentleman—not quite dead either, for I touched it once or twice and it winced. You must remember that I did not say all these hard things to you.

Woodhill : You said several very sharp things—you were by no means gracious to me.

Lois : I was horrid. But there were excuses for me which you do not know. I did not care then that you should hear them ; but I do care, now that you are so different, and have taken such pains to give me pleasure.

Woodhill (gives a little grunt of satisfaction. Aside) : This is as it should be. I said I'd make her—she's defending herself. Well, I'll listen. (*Aloud.*) What excuses ?

Lois : I was so lonely and dreary and—well, the fact is, you were such a disappointment to me. It had been arranged all the year that Celia and I and another girl should go to Marlow together. We knew that Mr. Heron would be staying there too, and we knew that if he was not already engaged to Celia, he would be within five minutes of their first meeting ; but that did not matter, because the other girl and I could have amused

ourselves together and left the lovers alone, but at the last moment the third girl could not come.

Woodhill (holding fast on to his resentment): You went into the thing with your eyes open.

Lois: Why, yes. Celia and Mr. Heron had always behaved so reasonably up till then. Besides, it would have been mean of me to back out of the arrangement then, for of course Celia couldn't have gone alone. I had such a dreadful holiday—left out in the cold doesn't half express it. It was like sitting in a thorough draught.

Woodhill (forgetting his resentment in sympathy): Heron should have asked someone down for the whole time to amuse you.

Lois: To amuse me! Why, the dear man only considered me as something created for the convenience of the girl he loved, and a dead failure at that; and he was shocked at my selfish egotism in being discontented with my part; he couldn't realise that I wanted to have a good time myself. He reminded me daily of my immense inferiority to Celia. He would ask me questions about my faults, and when in sheer dreariness I had admitted anything he wanted—lying on the floor and kicking in fits of hysteria, for instance—he would turn to Celia with an adoring glance, and say, "Ah, you don't do that, do you?"

Woodhill (bursting into a laugh of amusement): I don't wonder you were angry.

Lois: Angry! I wasn't angry—I was only miserable. You see, I am a weak, fluid sort of person. I am so apt to take form and colour from my surroundings. When I am with people who like me, I can be quite nice, really; but then at Marlow I was convinced not only that no one ever had, but that no one ever would, like me. There really are people who do, you know; and I tried to find some excuse for my existence by thinking and talking of them; but he soon convinced me that any friends I might have only liked me because they didn't know Celia. Oh, it was dreadful! I felt so ashamed of myself. I used to walk along six feet in front of them, feeling like a leper.

Woodhill (sympathetically): What a thundering shame!

Lois: It was so depressing—I grew so dull, that when people came down to see us, I hadn't a civil word for them.

Woodhill: Poor girl! I don't wonder. (*Aside.*) So this was what was the matter with her—half-dead of *ennui*, and I thought her dull and ill-tempered, and laughed at her for pretending to want to learn Greek. Well, she hasn't been dull as a pupil. I've enjoyed these lessons; and she has proved the genuineness of her wish to learn Greek by her quickness in learning. I wish she hadn't

learnt so quickly, for now the time's come for this other lesson. (*To Lois, who has been trifling with the books on the table, pretending not to watch him.*) Your friends treated you rather shabbily, I think.

Lois: Not at all. They are dear people—I love them. All proper lovers are like that; they had no idea but what they were most considerate. When I was dull and cross, he only thought it was because I was of so much less amiable a disposition than Celia, and Celia thought I wasn't well. I am not telling all this to scold them, but to excuse my conduct to you.

Woodhill: Yes? How does it excuse it?

Lois: Why, directly it occurred to them that I was not exactly enjoying my holiday, Mr. Heron began to talk about inviting you. He dangled you before my eyes, to comfort me; he told me delightful things of you.

Woodhill: Delightful things?

Lois: Yes—he told me you were good-looking, good-natured, an athlete, a scholar—everything I most admire. When we knew you were coming, I said: Now, at least, I shall cease to be a mean interruption to other people's pleasure; perhaps I shall even have a little pleasure myself. I thought: He will know that these lovers want to be alone, so he will take me away from them. He will talk to me about the things I care for. I shall enjoy myself. And when you came——

Woodhill (*with a mixture of compunction and resentment*): When I came you thought me an ill-conditioned lout.

Lois: Yes, I did. So you were, you know.

Woodhill: What did I do?

Lois: You went away in a canoe by yourself for the sake of "practice," leaving me still playing third to two people who were both disappointed because they thought they had got nicely rid of the third for once. You met a City friend and giggled with him in undertones, leaving me with no one to talk to. You went to sleep after lunch, leaving me to wander about by myself, as if I was not deadly tired of myself! In fact, I had counted on you to restore me to some sort of good opinion of myself, and instead of that you confirmed the miserable self-contempt the lovers had raised up in me. (*Losing control of herself for a moment.*) You were the only man who had ever been rude to me in all my life. I don't count the unpleasant people one has to meet sometimes in the way of business—servants when one has to screw up one's courage and tell them of horrid faults, or tipsy cabmen who swear because you only give them three-and-six for a half-crown fare; but the only person I was ever forced to meet as a friend, on equal terms—remember that I was

in part your hostess—the only person from whom I had an absolute right to expect courtesy, who ever was rude to me. No wonder I felt bitter against you, no wonder I said I would never forgive you until (*recovering herself*). Ah, well, I'm appeased now but I was very angry with you then.

Woodhill: I don't wonder. (*Aside.*) But I wonder at myself. Why, she's a nice girl. I've learned that while I've been teaching her Greek, and she's grateful to me for teaching her Greek, when all the while——. I wish I'd not begun it.

Lois: You are quite different now. You have got back to what nature meant you to be. You do not look old or slovenly or—that horrid word. I can believe now the stories of your rowing at Oxford, and you have taught me Greek. I wonder what has changed you so.

Woodhill: I wanted to change your opinion of me.

Lois (pleasantly and frankly): Well, you have changed it.

Woodhill stands looking at her. She plays with the books, seeming not to notice his embarrassment.

Woodhill (aside): And she says that so sweetly. And my motive—well, it won't bear looking into—it won't bear putting into words. I've been ashamed of it all the time. "Teach her a wholesome lesson." Why, it is revenge—revenge—no less. Revenge on a kind, friendly girl who has put aside her dislike, and grown fond of me—and even when she disliked me most was not unjust. What must I do—it's too late to stop. I feel as if I had launched a thunderbolt, and feel now it's too late to recall it—that it will crush something I'd much rather spare. Why can't I think of a way out of this mess? (*Aloud, as if involuntarily*): Then you like me now?

Lois gives him her hand.

Woodhill (still aside): Poor, weak little hand—poor, soft, kind, friendly little hand—why can't I stop the bolt, why can't I think of something else to say? (*Aloud*): Well I am glad to hear you say I have been of some use to you, because this will be our last lesson. I am going to California to-morrow. (*Aside*): There's the bolt fallen now.

Lois (with pleasant interest): To California? What a dreadfully long way to go! Are you going for long?

Woodhill: I am never coming back.

Lois: Oh, what a pity! Are not all your friends dreadfully sorry? Why did not you tell me of this before?

Woodhill (aside): She doesn't care! She doesn't care a bit. The bolt has missed fire.

Lois (with friendly regret): Well, of course you want to go, or you wouldn't be going, so I must not grumble, but I shall really

miss you. I shall have to write and tell you how my Greek goes on. It was so good of you to go on teaching me all this while, when your mind must have been full of your journey.

Woodhill (aside): A weak hand! Why, she's volleying my thunderbolt like a tennis ball!

Lois: Does your friend Mr. Heron know you are going.

Woodhill (aside): Heron! Heron's an idiot. Introduced me to this girl and never said a word of warning. He knew of these Greek lessons and what I meant by them, and thought it a joke.

Lois: And is this really good-bye?

Woodhill (with a sudden laugh): Good-bye? Absurd! (*Lois straightens her eyebrows and appears surprised.*) Good-bye? No, of course it's not good-bye. I won't go; I never meant to go. I never meant to hurt you—I couldn't hurt you. Don't you see I love you.

Lois: Oh! (*With much surprise and regret.*) Oh, I'm so sorry. I thought you understood. The reason why I was tolerant of those lovers was because I knew the time might come when I was as foolish. It has. Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it to go as far as this, but—but——. Why, you ought to have known. As if a girl ever cared for Greek and things except to please someone else who cared for them. It was to please someone else. (*Pushes the books aside contemptuously and with emphasis. He looks at her bewildered for a moment, collects his books slowly, and blunders out of the room with them. She, left alone, gives a little gesture of triumph, then slowly changes a big diamond ring from her right hand to her left.*)

NORA VYNNE.



"Fame and Fate."



HE poet toiled in his garret high,
 'Mid the roar of London town.
 A dull grey pall hung over the sky
 Where the light fell dimly down.
 The poet sigh'd in his lonely room,
 "How long? How long? Oh, Fame,
 Wilt thou come when the cypress shadows my tomb,
 And trumpet aloud my name?
 For years have I sought thee in vain, yet now
 Art thou coming too late to wreathe my brow?"

The poet slept as the morning light
 Crept out of her cloudy bed;
 His song was sung, and into the night
 His toilworn soul had sped!
 And Fame pass'd in at the open door,
 Where stood Death's warder, Fate;
 But the singer is silent for evermore
 And Fame pass'd out—too late!

* * * *

And the World's applause, like a pent-up wave,
 Broke vainly over a humble grave!

OTWAY THORPE.

Plays of the Month.

“TWELFTH NIGHT.”

Comedy, by William Shakespeare, arranged in four acts by AUGUSTIN DALY.

Revived at Daly's Theatre, on Monday evening, 8th January, 1894.

Orsino	Mr. JOHN CRAIG.	Malvolio	Mr. GEORGE CLARKE.
Sebastian	Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT.	Fabian	Mr. WILLIAM SAMPSON.
Antonio	Mr. THOS. BRIDGLAND.	Feste	Mr. LLOYD DAUBIGNY.
A Sea Captain	Mr. HOBART BOSWORTH.	Priest	Mr. POWELL.
Valentine	Mr. ALFRED HICKMAN.	Officer	Mr. GOLLAN.
Curio	Mr. LOWNDES.	The Countess Olivia	Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH
Sir Toby Belch	Mr. JAMES LEWIS.	Maria	Miss CATHERINE LEWIS
Sir Andrew Aguecheek	Mr. HERBERT GRESHAM.	Viola	Miss ADA REHAN.

There is just one scene in this revival to be recalled with unalloyed delight. In the *Countess Olivia's* garden, *Viola* drops upon a bench and falls asleep. Twilight fades into gloomy night. The purple sky grows bright with stars. The moon rises behind great leafy trees and sheds a silver path across the sea. Soft voices sound, chanting a lover's lullaby. And the love-sick *Duke*, with twenty lovely maidens in his train, steals on to serenade his lady fair, who, oblivious of him and his passion, bends longingly above the sleeping youth.

The unfathomable deep blue of the heavens, the silver stars, the shimmering sea, *Viola's* beauty, the gracious lady hovering near, the palely loitering singers in their gossamer gauzes and sumptuous brocades—in short, the sensuous atmosphere of luxury and love, and the wealth of physical loveliness—take one completely captive. So beautiful a scene has never been devised even at the Lyceum.

It has nothing to do with Shakespeare. There is nothing of all this in “*Twelfth Night*.” Not even is the haunting, “*Who is Sylvia*”—here transformed (oh, Reverence, thy name is not Augustin Daly!) into “*Who is Olivia!*”—not even this is germane to the matter. But then, perhaps, here is one reason why the scene is so delicious, and can be drunk in like wine. For the comedy is a dull play, of mechanical make-believe, of practical jokes, of misunderstandings thinner even than those the author of “*Tom, Dick, and Harry*” has conceived, and a comedy, moreover, in which women make love to men, and in the doing it forfeit a very considerable portion of their woman's charms.

What could be done with the play, however, Mr. Daly has done. He has not succeeded, as Mr. Irving did, in giving a dramatic tone to many of the scenes. His mind is cast in a different mould. Whereas the lessee of the Lyceum looks upon the play and sees that it is good for a few effects dramatic, weird, and grotesque; he of Daly's perceives no more than many opportunities for, in Mr. Gilbert's phrase, "lapping" the characters "in a lazy luxury of love." Exquisite damsels, beautiful dukes, soft twilights, heavenly moons, ravishing melodies, these are the things one remembers. Only a small portion of the comedy, indeed, is in a fair state of preservation. The rest of the entertainment—to adapt *Mr. Dick Phenyl*—has been attending comic operas for years.

Such old comedy as is played in an old comedy spirit, however, is very capitally done. Mr. Lewis is not born for such riotous, robustious revellers as *Sir Toby Belch*, but he acts what he cannot be with wondrous breadth and drollery. Mr. Gresham, too, though he be not funny by nature, yet by thinking makes himself so, and presents a *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* of many excellent qualities, restraint and naturalness being among them. The humours of *Maria*, *Malvolio*, and the *Clown* seemed on the first night very forced. But the latter made atonement by singing charmingly. As for the sentiment of the play, that was in safe hands. Miss Violet Vanbrugh's stately *Countess* is quite the best thing she has done. There is artistic balance, a meaning, an expressiveness, in tone and gesture, of which her *Lady Sneerwell* gave no hint. *Olivia* has evidently been made the subject of careful study, and the gracious figure made of her betters Miss Vanbrugh's reputation.

The one word for Miss Rehan's *Viola* is bewitching. Analyse her acting, and there would be much to take exception to. Her habit of playing to the house is destructive of illusion in fairy plays like this. Her tendency to recite speeches, in preference to speaking them, her undue deliberation and apparent resolve to get more emotional value out of a line than there is in it, would have to be urged against her reading of *Viola*. But who cares to analyse so delightful a creation? One's instinct is to enjoy it and be glad, and it is good to indulge that instinct and enjoy its overmastering charm to the full. Her *Viola* is not her *Rosalind*, but it is very gentle, winning, and supremely lovable; and whether she be living on her effeminate beloved's smile, or suffering the extremes of comic terror, pitted against *Sir Andrew*, at all times she provides a delightful foreground—and, moreover, a poetical!—in the exquisite pictures which Mr. Daly in "Twelfth Night" has happily discovered an excuse to compose.

“UNCLE’S GHOST.”

A new and original farce, in three acts, by W. Sapte.

Revived at the Opera Comique, on Wednesday evening, 17th January, 1894.

John Smithson Mr. JOHN TRESAHAR. Cecil Crawley Mr. CHARLES BURLEIGH. Professor Erasmus } Pipjaw.. } Mr. ALFRED MALTBY. Professor Sharp Mr. LIONEL WALLACE. Professor Noodlechump } Doctor Howe } Mr. E. DAGNALL. Doctor Watt Mr. BRANDON HURST.		Nobbs Mr. H. NORTON. Uncle Josiah Turbot } Mrs. Bartholomew .. } Miss EMILY THORNE ? ? ? ? ? ? } Miss CARRIE COOTE. Ravinia Pipjaw } Miss E. BRINSLEY SHER Jane } IDAN. Miss NOLON.
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One of the prettiest things which the inexhaustible Mrs. Oliphant ever wrote was a story which might have been called “Aunt’s Ghost,” but wasn’t. The motive in this case and that in Mr. Sapte’s are identical—the return to the earth for a limited time of a spirit anxious to put right something which in its fleshier days it had put wrong. Lady Margaret’s efforts to show her poor little niece where her hidden fortune lay moved one to tears. Mr. Sapte’s manipulation of his “Uncle’s Ghost” does not, which perhaps is as well, seeing that his play is a fantastical farce, and a ludicrous piece of fantasy too.

Ghosts generally are introduced upon the stage to inspire respect and induce a feeling of awe. Witness the shade of Hamlet’s Father, and the *Hermit* in “Claudian.” But the other thing has been known. So Mr. Sapte is not beating up against that terrible current, popular tradition. Even if he were, however, I doubt if the ingenuous—not to say childlike—humours of his farce would not reconcile the million to his innovation. For when Mr. Fred Thorne, a spirit of good sound body, appears to vex the disappointed soul of his impecunious nephew, Mr. John Tresahar, simple absurdities follow as the night the day, and even a *Malvolio* would see the joke. A neat solution of the problem, how to restore to the nephew the fortune left away from him, is arrived at by introducing the beneficiary as a very lively American girl, of whose liveliness Miss Carrie Coote makes the very most, and leaving it in the ghost’s hands to bring his nephew and the young heiress together in matrimonial bonds. Great capital is made of an old professor and an elderly widow by Mr. Alfred Maltby and Miss Emily Thorne. Indeed, the whole thing is carried through with irresistible energy and spirits. But to Mr. Tresahar falls the laurel. Were there a second Criterion, the premier place in the company would fall to this impulsive, alert, and far too seldom seen comedian.

Mr. Jerome’s “Sunset” precedes the farce. Its reappearance is notable by reason—not only of its immense superiority to the

usual first piece, but—of Miss Mary Kingsley's assumption of *Joan*. The part is pathetic enough to stand out in clear relief with little or no art behind it; but Miss Kingsley's pathos is so true, so nicely graduated, so artistically controlled, that for once the author's cleverness is overshadowed by the player's.

“ THE CHARLATAN.”

A New Play of Modern Life, in four acts, by ROBERT BUCHANAN.

First produced at the Haymarket Theatre on Thursday Evening, January 18th, 1894.

Philip Woodville Mr. TREE. The Earl of Wanborough Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD. Lord Dewsbury Mr. FRED TERRY. The Hon. Mervyn Darrell Mr. FREDK. KERR. Mr. Darnley Mr. C. ALLAN. Professor Marrables Mr. HOLMAN CLARK. Butler Mr. HAY.		Footman Mr. MONTAGU. Lady Carlotta Deepdale Miss LILY HANBURY. Mrs. Darnley Mrs. E. H. BROCKE. Olive Darnley Miss I. VANBRUGH. Madame Obnoskin Miss G. KINGSTON. Isabel Arlington Mrs. TREE.
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“Give me a good mystery: one as puzzles judge and jury, and pretty nigh 'angs the wrong man.” That was the special weakness of the parish clerk in “The Silver King”—the village Nestor who averred “The Psalms is one thing and the *Daily Telegraph* is another”—and the weakness of *Mr. Binks* (if the vogue of *Mr. Sherlock Holmes* means aught) is common to us all. Wise, therefore, with the wisdom of the serpent has *Mr. Buchanan* been to weave into his story of “The Charlatan” an impalpable web of mystery. Glamour and mystery, mystery and glamour—with these potent charms the magician playwright had worked, and with these on the first night he brought the vast majority of his audience under his spell.

All is plain sailing at first. From the brisk rallies which ensue between *Lady Carlotta Deepdale* and the *Hon. Mervyn Darrell*, one divines merely that Theosophy has insinuated its bewildering and fascinating presence into the country seat of old *Lord Wanborough*, and that the tastes of the young cousins are the whole world apart. He lives the “higher life,” inhales with languid delight “the aroma of decay,” finds “the only enjoyment in life in the spasm of artistic agony which arises from social decay, out of which springs literature, which is life,” and is in brief an extremely egotistical, pessimistic and over-cultured young man. *Lady Carlotta*, on the other hand, is all spring and sunshine. She revels in “plum-pudding and Dickens,” is a “vulgar optimist,” irradiates the castle with her glorious beauty and sunny smile, and doubtless holds the championship medal of the *Wanborough Golf Club*. But the reach for plain sailing is

soon traversed. With the entrance of *Miss Arlington*, the *Earl's* ward, a note of mystery is struck.

Miss Arlington is fragile, pallid, and intense. She lives in the clouds, has premonitions, and can feel no happiness in the loyal affection, handsome rent-roll, title, and political celebrity of *Lord Dewsbury*, her robustious *fiancé*. Moreover, she suffers from disturbing memories. One is of her father, an adventurous explorer in Thibet, good news of whom is now almost past praying for. The other is of a love passage in Calcutta years ago. Its nature is soon learned. While singing—very prettily and touchingly—in the glow of a saffron sunset, a visitor glides stealthily into the darkened room. It is her rejected Eurasian lover of long ago. He bears a different name, is now a shining light of the sham Theosophists, and is there to work out a vile revenge for her (not undeserved) past disdain.

He knows that *Colonel Arlington* lives, and, to lure the impressionable girl into his net, proposes to use that knowledge in a startling way. With the help of a rather too obvious Russian adventuress, a famous Theosophist, also a guest of the *Earl's*, a *séance* is given, during which a vision of the missing traveller is by a trick made to appear to sceptics and believers alike, immediately prior to the arrival of a telegram from the explorer himself announcing his safety and return. This cruel jugglery is merely the first step, however, in *Philip Woodville's* scheme. Since *Miss Arlington* will not and cannot marry him, he resolves that she shall marry no one else. To this end he employs his hypnotic influence over her, as *Joseph Balsamo* used his over *Lorenza* in Dumas's "Memoirs of a Physician." From his quarters in the turret-room at dead of night he wills the poor girl to leave her bed and come to him. Obedient to the summons her white-robed figure glides along the terrace, and enters his room. In hypnotic sleep, again like *Balsamo's* victim, she avows her love for *Woodville*. But her virginal presence calms his passion. Her avowal of love disarms him. His better nature is aroused, and he wakes her only to soothe her wild fears and confess his whole course of treachery and baseness. This confession, strong in his resolve to make amends, he repeats next morning to his host and fellow guests, as did Mr. H. A. Jones's *Judah* before him. But his ignominious departure for his native land does not take place before *Miss Arlington* has let him know that his remorse and atonement have brought her "happiness, not sorrow," and that eagerly she will look for his return when the new life just begun has completely effaced the old.

The one obvious criticism to pass is that "The Charlatan" is no charlatan. Moreover, if he can by an exercise of will throw a girl

into an hypnotic sleep and in that state compel her to traverse a terrace, enter a stranger's room, and reveal the close-locked secrets of her heart, he can surely induce his "subject" to receive a "brain-impression" of the person engrossing her thoughts. But apart from this contradiction, *Woodville's* character is so interestingly drawn, and above all this hypnotic Hindoo is so superbly played by Mr. Tree, that no amount of criticism of this kind can diminish the effect of the piece. Full of "picture," glowing with colour, the drama is an admirable composition of memorable scenes, and in the hands of other actors would no doubt be impressive enough. But Mr. Tree, most cleverly assisted by Mrs. Tree, makes far more of it than that. The romantic glamour they cast over the well-poised, skilfully-contrasted central figures is a very triumph of imagination and skill. Their handling of the third act—the dangerous scene of the sleep-walking and *Woodville's* startling *volte-face*—is quite masterly. On the one hand the suggestion of turbulent passion beneath an almost unruffled exterior, the throes of moral anguish, the bitterness of the man's voluntary humiliation; on the other, the impression of girlish innocence, of childlike fear, of touching indifference to her own peril in the face of her lover's shame, could hardly have been more simply or more powerfully conveyed. Indeed, Mr. Tree's impassive, dignified Oriental, sparing of gesture but lavish of facial play, commanding in manner and look, sallow and sleek, with raven hair, and strange lustrous eyes, must rank with the most striking creations which even he has accomplished.

Honours yet remain for division among the minor players, or rather players of minor parts, despite the brilliant and overshadowing success of Mr. and Mrs. Tree. Mr. Fred Kerr shows us a half-fledged *Juxon Prall* in the intellectual fop *Mervyn Darrell*, and his diverting work in "Judah" is the measure of his success and drollery here. The beautiful *Lady Carlotta* requires only a girl with beauty and a cheery manner, which are quite the least important qualifications possessed by clever Miss Lily Hanbury. Mr. Nutcombe Gould presents another courtly old peer, and sets an example in bearing and manner by following which the boorish *Lord Dewsbury* of Mr. Fred Terry—never at home in these modern plays of restrained passion and unobtrusive feeling—would become more acceptable. There is an excellent little study of character by Mr. Holman Clark of *Professor Marrables*, a scientist "too old to have formed any opinions," and very hazy about the existence of the soul, of which he "has not verified the fact." And with pretty Miss Irene Vanbrugh as a sweet girl graduate addicted to Paracelsus and snubbing her

mother, and Mr. Charles Allan as a trimming, time-serving dean, the cast is complete. The play was received with great warmth, as well it might be, for though Mr. Buchanan's social satire may not strike very deep, it furnishes a highly effective background for a picturesque drama of emotion and intrigue, and provides Mr. and Mrs. Tree with characters in which they play with exquisite art and extraordinary effect.

"A GAUNTLET."

A new and original play, in three acts, translated from the Norwegian of Bjornstjerne Björnson, by Osman Edwards, and adapted by George P. Hawtrey.

First produced in London at the Royalty Theatre on Saturday evening, 20th January, 1894.

Ries	Mr. ELLIOT	Frederike.. . . .	Miss CORNELIE CHARLES
Mr. Christensen	Mr. GEORGE P. HAWTREY	Kamma	Miss FLORENCE MUNRO
Alf Christensen	Mr. GASTON MERVALE	Hanna	Miss KATE GRAVES
Hoff	Mr. A. BUCKLAW	Else	Miss FRANCES BURLEIGH
Peter	Mr. HERBERT GEORGE	Olga	Miss MAUD CLIFFORD
Mrs. Ries	Miss LOUISE MOODIE	Ortrude	Miss EDITH MAITLAND
Mrs. Christensen	Miss KATHERINE STEWART	Svava.. . . .	Miss ANNIE ROSE
Marie	Miss EILEEN MUNRO		

Translated by Mr. Osman Edwards and adapted by Mr. George Hawtrey, this play of Björnson's failed to make much impression. When a play does this it appears to be considered a point of etiquette for the journalist to state that everything that could be done for the piece was loyally done by the actors, but, &c., &c. In this particular instance, however, the demands of etiquette are a little too heavy. The fact is that in dramas of this class—the Scandinavian-ethics class, wherein action is replaced by argument, and broad dramatic situations by somewhat niggling developments of character—a special kind of actor is wanted. A very delicate touch and a very nice observation are required, and a sensitiveness to the pictorial importance of detail which by no means every actor can command.

In "A Gauntlet" the Norwegian novelist deals with the theme so dramatically handled by Mr. Pinero in "The Profligate"—the theme chosen by Mdme. Sarah Grand for treatment in "The Heavenly Twins." But he deals with it in a very mild way. *Svava* learns that the man to whom she is betrothed has lived what *Aubrey Tanqueray* calls "a man's life," and in consequence declines to marry him. There is moral investigation in every quarter. Everybody more or less is found tarred with the same brush, and a good deal of pressure is brought to bear upon *Svava* to reconsider her decision. But all to no purpose. And practically the play is done when she first expresses her determination.

Now, to make much of this requires unconventional acting. New wine in old bottles we know the fate of. And the result is not dissimilar when actors of the old school are thrust into plays of the new. It should be said that Mr. Elliott, as the priggish heroine's frivolous father, a Scandinavian *Brigard*, acted with his usual exceeding cleverness and finish; that Mr. George Hawtrey contributed a brilliant little sketch of character-comedy; that Miss Moodie, as a crushed matron, out-Solnessed her *Mrs. Solness* in lugubrious lachrymosity; and that this version of the play—ininitely less dramatic than that translated by Mr. H. L. Braekstad—was the only one the author would sanction.

After Björnson's play came "Penelope," a musical version of "The Area Belle," which served to re-introduce Miss Kate Santley to the stage most closely associated with her reputation as a lively singer and vivacious actress.

"THE TRANSGRESSOR."

A play in four acts, by A. W. Gattie.

First produced at the Court Theatre, on Saturday evening, January 27th, 1894.

Eric Langley	Mr. ARTHUR ELWOOD.	Hon. and Rev. Henry	} Mr. ARTHUR BUCKLAW.
Gerald Hurst, M.D. . .	Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS.	Meredith	
Colonel Foster	Mr. JAMES FERNANDEZ.	Mrs. Woodville	Miss FANNY COLEMAN.
Sir Thos. Horncliffe, } Bart.	Mr. CHAS. BROOKFIELD.	Constance	Miss BESSIE HATTON.
	Sylvia	Anne	Miss MINNA BLAKISTON.
			Miss OLGA NETHERSOLE.

Can a great actress carry a dull play? That was the question propounded at the Court. But Mr. Gattie never intended that discussion during and after his play should rage round a problem like that. In writing "The Transgressor" he was full of the iniquities and injustice of the law. Given a husband whose wife loses her wits and who falls in love with a fascinating girl, how shall he behave. Shall he remember those little words, "for better, for worse," and bear his cross like a man; or, calmly wait until the tide of passion, which rolls in upon him after years of loneliness and self-denial, grows to such height that his power of resistance is unavailing, and he permits an innocent girl to be borne away with him on the flood? These were the questions which confronted him, these he hoped to poise in a dramatic shape, and with these enthral a countless succession of audiences. But inexperience and an unfortunate blindness to the unattractiveness of his theme shattered his hopes, and had it not been for Miss Olga Nethersole and her extraordinary art, we might have been left without even the problem aforesaid.

Eric Langley had a mad wife, and for twenty years posed as a widower. Then he fell in love with *Sylvia Woodville* and drifted. Intending to tell the whole truth, he told only that part of it relating to his love, and went through a form of marriage with her. Through incredible folly on his part the rest of the story became known, and *Sylvia* had to suffer all the agony of horror that his treachery had ensured for her. But fury gave place to humiliation, shame to love. What though he had been false? At least he had loved her well enough to commit a crime for her. That should be his excuse, if not his justification, and *Sylvia* defied the world, braved its judgment, and gave herself to him "body and soul"—presently, however, consenting to his working out such atonement as he could by submitting to the laws which he had outraged, with the promise that she would wait for him—presumably on earth, possibly in heaven—and for the bliss to come.

That is Mr. Gattie's story, a story in which he begs the question in every other scene. His hero, as drawn, is a dastard and a craven; his heroine, a white flower ruthlessly trampled in the mud. Whereas to do justice to his theme, to treat his subject seriously, it is essential that the criminal and the victim shall find no place in the scheme, that each party to the action shall be in full possession of all the facts before the argument upon justice or injustice begins. One must therefore deny Mr. Gattie any praise for choice of subject or the handling of it. Indeed, there is much that is dull and commonplace in the work. But praise and gratitude alike are his for that one scene of *Sylvia's* agony.

We do not reach it by the right road, but somehow or other reach it we do, and once there the previous dulness is forgotten. Miss Nethersole has done fine work. There were brilliant moments even in that unsatisfying and unedifying *Janet Preece* in "The Profligate." Her repentant *Faustine* in "A Silent Battle" dignified a third-rate play. *Zicka*, the purring spy of "Diplomacy," the adventuress of the limelight and the mysterious chord, in her hands became a woman. It has long been obvious that for distinction and sheer intellect she is the finest artist on our stage. But it is doubtful if anyone ever looked to her for so masterly an exposition of conflicting emotion as that witnessed on Saturday night. To say that the house rose at her is to convey but a fraction of the truth. Quivering from the triumphant assault of her pathos and passion, the audience had no mind for the faults and follies of the piece, and were concerned with only one question—"Will this wonderful acting carry the play?"

Of the many clever actors engaged, none other got a worthy

opening for his talent. Buoyant Mr. Seymour Hicks was wasted on a doctor who is a prig; Mr. Brookfield could not create even comic effect as an impressionist painter; Mr. Elwood, despite his distinction and fine restraint, was unable to make anything of *Langley* but a coward; and Mr. Bucklaw actually earned compassion by being cast for an eavesdropping curate, who should be shorn of the second syllable as well as his cloth. Miss Bessie Hatton was by far the happiest, being very sweet and tender and charming as a lively girl. But really there was no call to mention anyone but Miss Nethersole; for the play was Miss Nethersole, and Miss Nethersole was the play.

“ DICK SHERIDAN.”

A new and original Comedy in four acts, by Robert Buchanan,

First Produced at the Comedy Theatre, on Saturday evening, 3rd February, 1894.

Richard Brinsley } Sheridan	Mr. H. B. IRVING.	Mr. Abednego	Mr. JOHN BYRON.
Dr. Jonathan O'Leary	Mr. BRANDON THOMAS.	Servant	Mr. BERTRAM.
Lord Dazzleton	Mr. CYRIL MAUDE.	Mr. Linley's Servant..	Mr. ANNING.
Captain Matthews	Mr. LEWIS WALLER.	Lady Miller	Miss VANE.
Sir Henry Chase.. ..	Mr. SYDNEY BROUGH.	Lady Pamela Stirrup..	Miss LENA ASHWELL.
Mr. Linley	Mr. EDMUND MAJICE.	Lady Shuttleworth ..	Miss C. BRIETZCKE.
David Garriek	Mr. WILL DENNIS.	First Lady	Miss CAREW.
Mr. Wade	Mr. F. M. PAGET.	Second Lady	Miss ETTIE WILLIAMS.
Captain Knight	Mr. CRAWLEY.	Miss Beamish	Miss A. O'BRIAN.
Mr. Cox	Mr. H. J. CARVILL.	Mrs. Lapp-t	Miss PATTIE BROWNE.
		Miss Elizabeth Linley	Miss WINIFRED EMERY.

One may question it as history and deny it as “ old comedy ; ” but there is no disputing that in “ Dick Sheridan ” Mr. Buchanan has conceived and Mr. Carr has artistically presented a whole gallery of very pretty, lively, entertaining pictures. The first few of the series plunge us into the vortex of the fashion and folly and frivolity of Bath. At the Assembly Rooms, gallants old and young, bewigged, beruffled, and berapiered, elegantly lounge and lazily quiz, flirt, and simper, and lightly tread the gavotte and the minuet. They form a page from Austin Dobson, translated into flesh and blood. And if the ladies be not in truth his “ Ladies of St. James's,” with the crowd they would pass very well for modish members of that more select assemblage.

These pictures of the first act supply new illustrations of the old story, that the course of true love never did run smooth. Suitors three are there for the hand of the lovely *Miss Linley*, and *Sheridan* the spendthrift being the man of her choice, his suit alone is frowned on by her portly parent, a gentleman of overhanging eyebrows and Dr. Johnsonian frame. But frown as he may, *Miss Linley* will have none of his choice, the antique

fop *Lord Dazzleton*, nor of the dashing *Captain Matthews*. Title and purse cannot lend charm to the withered and wizened old peer, nor can the handsome face and passionate fervour of his younger rival blind her to the *Captain's* sinister look. But since the father remains obdurate, it behoves the daughter to be compliant, and the treacherous *Captain*, having provided a chaise in anticipation of his being chosen as her escort to France, in her flight from her father and her home, *Sheridan* and she take it and elope.

Then come pictures of the youthful author's struggles for a hearing and for bread. His marriage with *Miss Linley* is unknown. She has returned to her father's house, and awaits her husband's success before publishing the truth. And *Sheridan* in his garret, devotedly tended by an old Irish tutor, starves and despairs. Till one day, *Garrick*, the great *David Garrick*, walks in with the news that "The Rivals" is a work of genius, and that he will do his utmost to get it produced at Drury Lane. *Garrick*, however, is a clumsy muddler as well as a very unauthoritative and unexpectedly *gauche* and nervous person. To enjoy a pointless little joke of his own, he has brought with him *Sheridan's* worsted rival, *Dazzleton*, whose influence at the Lane is paramount, and who no sooner learns the identity of the author than he vows undying vengeance for the trick at Bath. But if Drury Lane won't have the comedy Covent Garden will, and the prettiest picture of all is of *Miss Linley* in her boudoir on the night of its production, waiting for news of success.

Her heart and mind are in the play-house. To her faithful little maid she can talk only of that and of him. Distractedly she paces between the moonlit window and the ruddy glowing hearth, her lovely face pallid with excitement, her slender form quivering in an agony of suspense. It must, it must be a triumph, for has she not, with a wife's eloquence and a woman's tears, won over the all-powerful enemy, *Lord Dazzleton* himself, and has he not, with a richly-gloved hand upon his battered but kindly old heart, vowed that *Dick Sheridan* shall be proclaimed the genius that he is? Yes, it must be a triumph. Her love transports her to the scene, and she sees and hears it all. The flashes of wit; the answering ripples of laughter, swelling to roars of delight; the resounding cheers; that great jubilant shout which stamps a play with success; the pale face of her hero smiling his gratitude before rushing to clasp his darling *Betty* to his heart, and tell their glad secret to the world. She sees it all, and her heart is aflame with pride and love, and—the door opens, and on the threshold, dimly seen in the deep shadow, stands her hero, humbled and broken. No need to tell the story. Failure is written upon

every feature. *Captain Matthews* has won. To his malignity the first-night fiasco is due, and the lover's last hope has gone. But out of evil sometimes cometh good. The Captain presses his persecution too far. Bringing *Mr. Linley* into his child's room to reveal her in her lover's arms, he draws out the crushing confession that the two shameless ones are man and wife, and the villain's trump card is taken.

What remains? Only the unquestioned triumph of "The Rivals" on its second performance, and the famous duel. Mr. Buchanan would be no playwright were he to neglect such a chance as history affords him of a thrilling fight between *Sheridan* and the *Captain*, and the fight we duly enjoy. It is not fought with the tigerish ferocity described by the historians. The rapiers do not snap as in "The Corsican Brothers," and we are denied the thrill of a combat between men jabbing at one another with splinters of steel, in the beast-like spirit of Mr. Kipling's barbarians, *Torpenhow* and *Dick*. Mr. Buchanan has tempered the fight to his shorn hero. But enough remains for pictorial purposes, and this picture of the ill-lit garret, and the white-faced men in flickering candle-light, exchanging deadly thrusts with glittering steel, is of a kind to rank high in popular esteem.

The worst and best are said of the play in saying that it is full of pictures. Characters, of course, are but lightly touched in. There is no detail, no profundity, anywhere. *Lord Dazzleton*, the showiest of the set, is really two gentlemen at once—separated by a gulf. For two acts and a bit he is all fop and heartlessness, for the rest all sentiment. But Mr. Cyril Maude makes a noble jump when the chasm is reached, and with the cleverest work he has ever done lands safely on the other side. Clever, very clever, all the way through, for just one moment, a moment of sincerity, regret, and humiliation, he is a great artist. Mr. Buchanan's *Sheridan* is a woeful disappointment. Either he pictures him—in his own immortal phrase—"a dull young man of saturnine proclivities"—or he is misrepresented by the actor. *Sheridan* was all spirit and joke and fire—the life of the rout and of the tavern. He loved a song and a glass. And was, I suggest, just such a sparkish fellow as Mr. Charles Wyndham could have shown us a dozen years ago—could show us perhaps to-day. Whereas this *Dick* of the Comedy is moony, morbid, almost morose. He is dull and depressing, save when outwitting an Old Jew of less philanthropic principle than Mr. Hare's. But if the conception be faulty, there is real promise in the execution. Mr. H. B. Irving, though prone to an excess of romantic fervour, plays with genuine feeling, and

in his comedy scene is curiously suggestive of his father in method and in charm.

Miss Emery's delicate hand finds a perfect medium in *Miss Linley*. Full of exquisite feeling, all that she does, says, and looks—and particularly looks, for a lovelier vision the stage never beheld—is quite enchanting, and exercises all the old and irresistible fascination of *Rosamund Athelstane*. Nor is the tale told yet. Mr. Brandon Thomas as an eighteenth-century *Jaiques*, a self-appointed body-servant with just a smattering of the classics—"O'Learyus sum, non Garrickus," is his salutation of the great little *Davy*—is of inestimable value in lightening dull scenes; while the pretty impulsive girliness of Miss Lena Ashwell, Mr. Sydney Brough's manliness and nice conduct of a 'kerchief, hat, and sword, in a part all too slight and seldom seen, a meaning study of a knowing lady's maid by Miss Pattie Browne—Miss Lottie Venne's legitimate successor, and a very grim and powerful performance, finely restrained and marked by tragic passion, by Mr. Lewis Waller, the ideal *Captain Matthews*, are notable features of a production in which one can hardly place a finger on a weak spot. In "Dick Sheridan," the author of "The Charlatan" has not done his best, but what is lacking in his work is more than made amends for by Mr. Carr, who has set upon the stage a dozen Orchardsons and a score of Marcus Stones, any one of which amply repays such as care for exquisite colouring and grace, and the quaint charm and dainty elegance of an artificial age.

"CASTE."

A Comedy in three acts, by T. W. ROBERTSON.

Revived at the Garrick Theatre, on Monday evening, 5th February 1894.

Hon. George D'Alroy	Mr. FORBES ROBERTSON.	Dixon	Mr. G. DU MAURER.
Captain Hawtree . .	Mr. W. L. ABINGDON.	Marquise de St. Maur	Miss ROSE LECLERCQ.
Eccles	Mr. G. W. ANSON.	Polly Eccles	Miss MAY HARVEY.
Sam Geiridge . . .	Mr. GILBERT HARE.	Esther Eccles	Miss KATE RORKE.

Comparisons are—everything that is insanitary—of course. We have it on Mrs. Malaprop's authority. But in the case of "Caste" it is impossible to avoid them, to some extent. To the extent, shall we say, of comparing pegs that are round—in holes of similar shape—with pegs that are square? On a glance at Mr. Hare's company for this revival, certain features at once presented themselves as likely to confront one at performance. Miss Rorke's *Esther* seemed sure to stand out as an effort of strenuous pathos, and the conjunction of Mr. Forbes Robertson

as *D'Alroy* ensured a very powerful rendering of the scenes of parting and reunion. Then Miss Rose Leclercq for the tiresome, Froissart-quoting "Marquizzly," was obviously an ideal choice. And the selection of Mr. Anson for *Eccles* appeared a sagacious one. For the rest it was something of a toss-up whether success or failure was more probable. And, on the whole, Monday's experience was of a nature to encourage prophecy.

Miss Rorke was perfect, and so was Miss Rose Leclercq, and the big pathetic moment was done ample justice to. Indeed, Miss Rorke's insistent strength at this juncture, the finely conceived struggle between heart and will, her silent agony of grief, and sudden break and collapse, chivalrously aided as it was by Mr. Robertson's artistic avoidance of anything like equally dramatic treatment of *D'Alroy's* suffering, saved the whole piece. Here was a gem of acting. The most callous old playgoer in the pit, and the emotional sister artist in the stalls, alike paid it the tribute of tears, and no one was satisfied until the curtain had risen again and again to permit Miss Rorke and Mr. Robertson to bow their acknowledgments.

But saving this scene and that of *D'Alroy's* return—superbly played by Mr. Robertson and Miss Rorke—the revival was terribly disappointing. Mr. Abingdon is too clever an actor to let *Hawtree* slip through his fingers, but he failed to give it the weight and value it used to possess. And think—only think—of a *Gerridge* shorn of his Cockney accent but with the balance redressed by a full complement of aspirates; of a farcical *Eccles* without unction; and a mirthless *Polly*, precise in utterance, "high-toned" in pronunciation, and barely out of short skirts—perhaps as a sly side-reference to the ballet. Shades of Mrs. Bancroft, Miss Venne, David James, George Honey, Brookfield, Hendrie, and how many more, can such things be? No amount of detail, no exertion of intelligence, can atone for mistakes of judgment like these. Make them and the comedy disappears. The humour of the little house in Stangate evaporates. And in place of the dear old fairy-tale, potent mixture of laughter and tears, we get rather stodgy domestic drama, touching, at one or two points—thanks to the actors—almost tragic confines. Still the play fought its way along, despite forced fun and mere husk of humour; but it is safe to predict that the one pleasant remembrance of this revival will be of the intensely pathetic acting of Miss Rorke and Mr. Robertson, and that never was the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft and Mr. Hare so deeply deplored.

Some Amateur Performances.

“AN UNPAID DEBT,” BY THE WHITTINGTON CLUB.

Mr. Charles Dickinson, the hope of the Whittington Club, as far as its literary ambitions are concerned, is not that most distressful thing, a sort of genius. Best for his own comfort and for that of “the kind friends in front,” perhaps, that he is not, and that, to quote John Oliver Hobbes’ apt definition, his mind is not pitched higher than his voice. They are nicely attuned. Plot and situation are his ideals, and his voice, fortunately, is strong enough to give expression to them. *Ergo*, in the new play produced by the Whittington, he is to be congratulated upon a strong story well told. There are no false scents. Through three acts of his play, the author goes right ahead, piling situation on situation, and keeping his eye firmly fixed on the culminating one in the third act. The fourth act is a trifle tedious—a common complaint with last acts, and one which not even Mr. Grundy’s delightful “Sowing the Wind” altogether escaped. The knot is unravelled and our interest has ceased. The harmless, necessary explanations and reconciliations fritter away our patience, and not even the suicide of the repentant villain stirs our blood. The ingredients of Mr. Dickinson’s dramatic dish are a debt (of hate, of course—no one burdens his memory with the remembrance of any other kind of debt), apparent bigamy, and hypnotic suggestion. Effective, if not precisely new, these ingredients, and when mixed by the author with a certain deftness, a sufficiently desirable dish. The debt of hate and the hypnotic power belong to one *Buloff*, forger and bigamist. He is conscientiously desirous of discharging that debt, and his old enemy being dead, is quite prepared to regard the son as legatee. This *Arthur Murray* is wedded to a woman who believes herself to be *Buloff*’s widow. The latter, therefore, has the game apparently in his own hands. This game he proceeds to play with the help of hypnotic suggestion. With its aid *Mrs. Murray* is drawn to his room (no, there is no obligation to “The Charlatan,” for Mr. Dickinson’s play preceded Mr. Buchanan’s). Thither in hot pursuit comes *Murray*. Hot words lead to the discovery that *Buloff* has been tracking down his own brother, who has inherited the name with the fortune of *Murray*. *Buloff* is instantly transformed from the tiger to the dove. The contested lady is proved to be the legal property of *Murray*, and *Buloff*, with the police hard at his heels, shuffles off the mortal coil with ease and expedition. The Whittington are always reliable. At their best, they rise above amateur high-water mark, and at their worst they may be trusted to give failure a wide berth. Against the really powerful work of Miss May Whitty as *Mrs. Murray*, the much tried, their efforts, it is true, showed up as something lacking in strenuousness; but nevertheless, playing with care and earnestness, they held the attention of the audience. Mr. Dickinson enjoyed the common experience of parents, and found his offspring rather more than he could comfortably manage; but the exercise of tact and judgment brought him within measurable distance of *Buloff*. Mr. Gordon Taylor, ever distinguished for sincerity and distinction of manner and bearing, was an interesting *Murray*, and rose to the big scene with *Buloff* without much apparent effort. ’Tis a wise dramatist

who stops short of satiating his audience, and Mr. Dickinson's would have welcomed a double allowance of *Twiggs*, the bombastic parvenu; and his obsequious dependent, played in the drollest fashion by Mr. Clark and Mr. Dutton. But the same cannot be said of the comic love scenes, which, between book covers, would be ruthlessly skipped, though the fair American and her lover had all the piquancy of Miss Norton and the agreeable freshness of Mr. Walther. Miss Mary Stuart supplied an affecting picture of the dog-like devotion of *Buloff's* neglected wife, Mr. Wells was an unstagey stage detective, and Mr. Moore's waiter was an excellent bit of character.

“THE MAGISTRATE,” BY THE ANOMALIES.

Were the critic as complete a prey to green and yellow Melancholy as the smileless king of remote history, there would be no great cause for surprise. Were he addicted to rambles in dark churchyards, accompanied by *Krux's* favourite, “Meditations Amongst the Tombs,” it would be but natural. Loudly and unceasingly is the instability of life dinned into his ears, for in a world of ceaselessly shifting shadows there is nothing quite so kaleidoscopic as the amateur club. One turn, and the old faces are lost to view, and, to all intents and purposes, the club is brand new. The Anomalies have undergone such a change, though, it is to be hoped, only for the moment. Another turn of the kaleidoscope, and perhaps the familiar faces will be again to the front. If not, there's a tear to be brushed away for the sake of auld lang syne, and a welcoming handshake for those who promise to wear with becoming dignity the mantle that has descended to them. Mr. Frank Norton proved that he has in him the right grit for farcical work, and his *Posket* scored very nearly full marks. Mr. Edward Grey, too, makes a very fair *Cis*. And when the game was not in their hands, there, prepared to take all further responsibility, was Miss Lizzie Henderson, very, very funny in the familiar part of *Mrs. Posket*, and well backed up by Mr. Damer Dawson, realistically explosive as the Indian officer. Miss Schuler and Mr. Deane were voted amusing, and there was nothing in the rendering of the minor parts unworthy of the traditions of the Club.

“DANDY DICK,” BY THE ROMANY CLUB.

Whatever sins in the way of casting, whether of omission or commission, may be laid to the charge of the Romany in the day when amateur accounts come to be reckoned up, at least it shall be counted unto them for righteousness that their principal part is always filled to a nicety. It may or may not be a case of makeshift ere they have finished the distribution, but their central figure, at least, must be, like Caesar's wife, beyond suspicion. And that is wisdom, especially where Mr. Pinerò's farces are in question. For the issues hang upon the one part. If you have the right man there, the battle is three parts won. Without him, though the rank and file die never so gamely, the cause is hopeless—as the Crystal Palace Club recently proved to demonstration. No such disastrous experience was in store for the Romany when they laid politic hands upon Mr. Pinerò's popular farce. For they had Mr. Trollope, in manner, voice and smile all that one could ask of the *Dean*, and there they were at once three parts of the way to the winning-post. And there was no difficulty in covering the remaining distance, with Mrs. Walkes to put briskness and spirit into every scene, with Miss Annie Webster to strengthen the third act as amateurs have never yet had it strengthened, with Mr. Walkes exactly what the boorish country constable should be, and with little Miss Allen as dainty a *Sheba* as I have seen, and a veritable “find,” upon which the Romany may warmly congratulate themselves. Only less excellent by

one degree were Mr. Birch Reynardson, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Jeaffreson, and if the sanctimonious butler and the hypochondriacal hussar left something to be desired, it was so inconsiderable as to be scarcely worthy of mention.

“A HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS,” BY THE THESPIS CLUB.

Rebellion is the order of the day, and really, had the audience at Kilburn taken a leaf from the book of the “revolting” daughters or some other body whose souls are, for one reason or another, in arms, their action would have been quite justifiable. Had they loudly voiced their discontent at being set down to such unappetising fare as this most tedious comedy, or given it mute expression, and softly and silently vanished away, they had not been dubbed unreasonable. But they stuck to their seats like Spartans, fired by a loyal determination to die, if need be, in the sacred cause of friendship, and for once virtue reaped a richer reward than it proverbially enjoys, for the skill of the actors, if it could not exactly transform the unpalatable into the palatable, at least helped one to gulp it down without too wry a face. Mr. Colley Salter was the buttermilk, and right genial and expansive he was. Very welcome was Mr. E. W. H. Beaton’s vigorous colouring in some extremely tame scenes, and Mr. Barton was pleasant and unaffected as the snobbish lover. Miss Aimée Adams, though not in appearance the tradesman’s simple-minded niece, was gentle and winning; Miss Kate Adams, as *Mrs. Barlow*, livened up the play wonderfully; so did Miss Simmons when opportunity permitted; and in tiny parts Mr. Lewis and Mr. Brett Biggs attracted attention. “The Fair Equestrienne” should have been an exhilarating start to the evening, but somehow the sparkle seemed to have slipped through the fingers of the players.

“THE MAGISTRATE,” BY THE GENESTA CLUB.

It is averred that never but once—and that was on the historical occasion when Boston Harbour served as the tea-pot—has a really strong brew of tea been seen in America. That strong brews of Mr. Pinero’s farce are equally phenomenal I will not assert, but not more than three or four such can I recall, and to that limited list the Genesta, the latest of the series, can scarcely be added. A very fair but not a strong brew; individual performances were good, but the general effect was not inspiring. The fault could be laid at no particular door. There was nothing amiss with the tea, but the water had not quite reached boiling-point, and when that happens the result is a cup that does not cheer. Mr. Trevor Lloyd is not altogether the prop *Posket* should be; but, like the infant of nursery fame, when he’s good he’s very good indeed, and as this is the case for three minutes out of four, he must not be taken too severely to task. Mr. Trouncer is an invaluable *Cis*, and the *Lukyn* and *Vale* of Mr. Fourdrinier and Mr. Loehlein were trump cards high in the honours. Mr. Ivimey, excellent droll that he is, gave *Wyke* his proper prominence. Miss Loxley has not the style for *Mrs. Posket*, but her method is fairly effective and her energy exhaustless. There was much to commend in the *Charlotte* of Miss Meyer, and also, to come to lesser luminaries, in the Misses De Witte and Messrs. Loxley, Bell, and Till.

“THE SHAUGHRAUN,” BY THE WEST LONDON CLUB.

Four words would sum up all that is necessary to be said of this performance, and those words would be written up against the name of Mr. Sydney Teversham. “Alone he did it.” He was the Alpha and the

Omega of the production. The Club had staged a play demanding actors equal to vivid colouring, and they had staged it with a colourless cast, a cast that could manage nothing stronger than delicate "greenery gallery" tints. The case looked desperate; but Mr. Teversham was prepared to see it through. As actor and stage manager he showed himself indomitable and resourceful as the Shaughraun himself. As manager much might be written of the wonders he worked with the tiny stage of the Bijou Theatre, of the scenic effects he contrived, of the capital marshalling of his troops (more especially at the wake—in the last act the crowd was straggly and only half-hearted in its thirst for blood), but as actor twice the space would be required to do justice to the support he proved as *Conn*. A very Samson, he swung the play aloft and held it there, defying the deadening influences at work. He dared all and did all. In him and him alone the play lived and moved and had its being, though credit must be given for one or two courageous attempts at support. First amongst these stood Mr. Haffenden, unintelligible but striking as *Harvey Duff*. Mr. Cahill, completely misplaced, did his best in that state of life unto which the committee had called him. Mr. Monkley, though a trifle stiff, was not undeserving of mention, and Mr. Dicketts might have passed muster with a less stagey method. To conclude, genuine humour was forthcoming from Mrs. Ellis and Mr. Dickenson as *Mrs. O'Kelly* and *Bridget the Keener* respectively.

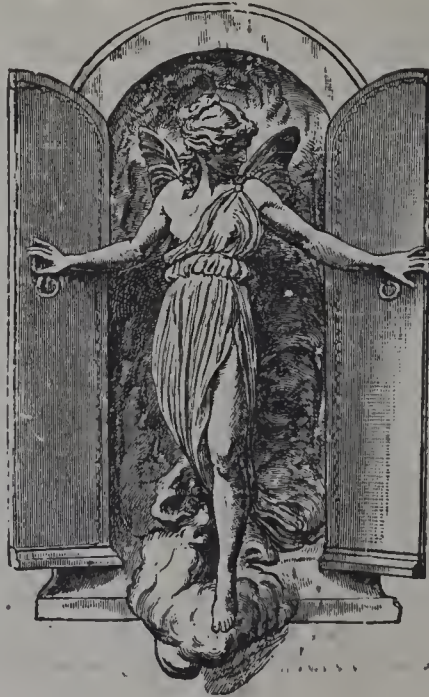
"THE MAGISTRATE," BY THE FORE STREET CLUB.

Were I a member of Mr. Grundy's visionary Moonlight Club, ten minutes of the first act of the Fore Street "Magistrate" would have been more than enough for me. I should have left St. George's Hall at a run; and had I, departing from their tactics, published my honest opinion, I should have written down the performance as tame beyond words. Had I, on the other hand, dropped in for ten minutes in the course of the third act I should have pronounced it a distinct success. Conscientiousness, however, detaining me in my seat, I stoically sat it through, and enjoyed the satisfaction of watching the barometer rise from dull to fair, and before the fall of the curtain stand at bright and settled. Upon Mr. Major's head was the poor start. Not for one moment of the first act was he in the skin of the part. Mr. Atthill's spirits were good, and Miss Henderson, dauntless as ever, worked her hardest; but, unaided, they could not make much way. In the second act things looked brighter. Here Miss Henderson and Mr. Rogers had the game in their own hands and the fun began. And the third act fortunately found Mr. Major on his mettle. Roused to a sense of his responsibilities, he cast aside every weight and at one stride taking the lead, he covered the remainder of the course in capital style. Miss Annie Stalman, handicapped with a colourless *Vale*, showed to advantage when success hung upon her efforts alone. Mons. Adrien Roux, Mr. Pott, and Mr. Aslett, placed in the order of merit, all did good service; but Mr. Roberts wasted *Wylke's* opportunities in an absolutely prodigal fashion.

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE," BY THE GARRICK DRAMATIC CLUB.

Amateur clubs cannot, like Minerva, spring into being full-grown and armed for the fray. Would that it were possible, and that there was no troublesome, fractious infancy to be endured, no trying period when they lay disrespectful hands upon everything within reach, and labour under the delusion that their digestion rivals that of the ostrich. But the inevitable must be faced. The club must have its beginning, and the on-lookers must possess their souls in patience whilst it learns wisdom from experience. The Garrick Club has that lesson to get by heart, and may they prove themselves apt in mastering it. Now, like the irascible

gardener in "Good for Nothing," I want to keep quite calm and cool, and therefore content myself with suggesting that, at any rate for the present, Shakespeare should be left on the shelf. One thing more. Let them learn that a stage-manager is a valuable adjunct. If he happens to be what Mr. Chevalier terms "a God-given unit," so much the better; but if he be only equal to understanding the value of positions, if he can supply a few hints to the weaker brethren, keep one eye on the supers and the other on the curtain, the gain to the play will be considerable. One or two scenes stood out well, notably those with *Jessica* and *Lorenzo*, played with graceful feeling by Miss Elsie Dennis and Mr. Middlemass. Mr. Savage and Mr. Lincoln, too, as *Gobbo* and *Gratiano* respectively were of distinct value, and Mr. Stillwell bore himself well as *Antonio*.



Notes of the Month.

DIRECTLY and indirectly, "the critics" have pretty well monopolised attention during the past month. No sooner had Mr. Charles Wyndham, in the course of an interview, alluded to them as "the only judges left in this liberal age who sum up and decide with masks upon their faces," and rammed his objection home with a reference to the Inquisition, than away flew the masks, and behold they stood revealed, names and portraits and all, naked yet unashamed, in the pages of the *Idler*. With two notable exceptions—Mr. Malcolm Watson of the *St. James's Gazette* and Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy of the *Pall Mall*, the latter at once the sanest and most erudite and eloquent member of what Mr. Wyndham considers a guerilla band—the leaders succumbed to the blandishments of Mr. G. B. Burgin, and with doubtful wisdom flung off the last rags of anonymity, and confided to him the secrets of their prison house. A wondering world, open-eared and open-mouthed, has in consequence drunk in Mr. Clement Scott's confession that upon occasion he has written a *Daily Telegraph* critique a column long between midnight and a quarter past one in the morning, together with Mr. William Archer's agonised admission that not infrequently he spends hours upon an opening paragraph. Further, Mr. A. B. Walkley has taken the opportunity boldly to remove a last lingering doubt concerning the part played in his criticisms by the *mot* of the smoke-room and the chatter of his club. And finally, his claim to a monopoly of Impressionism has been ridiculed by an equally eminent authority, Mr. J. F. Nisbet, of the *Times* who maintains that everyone—even himself!—is an Impressionist; while the veteran Mr. Moy Thomas—on his own evidence a taker of notes—is by a sweeping dictum of Mr. Walkley's thereby convicted of utter ignorance of his "business."

This appearance was successful enough, for gentlemen accused by so shrewd and observant a manager as Mr. Wyndham of

shirking publicity, but it paled its ineffectual fires before the blaze of interest in them kindled by Mr. A. W. Pinero. The guest of the Playgoers' Club at their annual dinner on the 28th of January, Mr. Pinero concluded a remarkable speech with a few words of admonition and appeal addressed to his five or six hundred hosts. He truly believed, he said, that "the breath of life of any art was drawn in an atmosphere of praise. Praise was the vital need of the artist, the greater part of whose wakeful hours—if he were truly an artist—was made up of the contemplation of his own shortcomings. . . . Those critics whose fame lived after them were the men who never missed an opportunity of praising thoroughly. . . . Condemnation was mere journeymen's work; whereas the critic who knew how to praise raised himself to the level of the artist he judged." And "it behoved such as had the interests of the Drama at heart to praise, praise, praise."

The temptation thus afforded for a general fitting-on of a mythical cap not even a masked critic could resist. Mr. Pinero's words were challenged, approved, denied, explained, amended. "Think, think, think," was Mr. Archer's interpretation of this advice to the young critic. Mr. Zangwill reeled off columns of paradox and epigram and quip in the endeavour to fish the obvious truth from the bottom of a non-existent well. In language unintelligible to nine-tenths of his audience, Mr. Walkley elaborately made mock of the whole thing. Mr. Louis F. Austin indulged in solemn reproof. And to Mr. Harold Frederic alone, among the many who rushed into print, it was given to perceive that just exactly what was meant was said, and what was said was meant; and that a dignified protest had at last been made by one in authority, and not a mere scribe, against the persistent adoption of a *nil admirari* attitude on the part of the critics in general. So the net result was the creation of additional interest in the critics, their standpoint, principles, methods, and aims, at the expense once again of the institution which, in theory, they exist to benefit, but which in practice exists to benefit them.

Just six years ago Miss Ellaline Terriss went on the stage, as she has herself described in the columns of THE THEATRE, to play at the Haymarket the part created at the Vaudeville by Miss Kate Rorke, in Mr. Calnour's "Cupid's Messenger." A three years' engagement with Mr. Charles Wyndham followed this

"THE THEATRE," MARCH, 1894.



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

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MR. SEYMOUR HICKS,
IN "UNDER THE CLOCK."

"Modest doubt is the beacon of the wise."

brief experience, and introduced Miss Terriss to characters like *Ada Ingot* in "David Garrick," *Maria* in "School for Scandal," *Miss Neville* in "She Stoops to Conquer," and *Jenny Gammon* in "Wild Oats," as well as the heroines of "Two Roses," "Betsy," and "Truth." After an interval at the Strand in "The Balloon" and "Æsop's Fables," Miss Terriss joined the Princess's Company and got her first taste of romantic melodrama as *Arrah* in "Arrah-na-Pogue," and in "After Dark," "Done in London," and "The Great Metropolis," presently migrating to the Court to play *Miss Lily* in "The Pantomime Rehearsal," *Lady Belton* in "Marriage," and in "The Guardsman," "Faithful James," "The Amazons," "The Other Fellow," "His Last Chance," and "Good-bye." At Christmas, Miss Terriss joined Mr. Oscar Barrett for the fairy pantomime of "Cinderella" at the Lyceum, where her singular refinement, daintiness, and charm have largely contributed to the triumphant success of an entertainment which brings within measurable distance the banishment of music-hall vulgarities and meaningless spectacle from the pantomime stage.

In November last Miss Terriss married Mr. Seymour Hicks, who jumped into popularity as *Andrew MacPhail*, the medical student in "Walker, London." Mr. Hicks is the author of several plays, among them "This World of Ours," "The New Sub.," and "Good-bye." With Mr. Lawrence Irving he collaborated in a stage version of Sheridan Le Fanu's grisly story "Uncle Silas," the matinée performance of which was duly noticed in THE THEATRE, and with Mr. Charles Brookfield he shared the writing of "Under the Clock," the "topical satire" now running at the Court, in which Mr. Hicks represents the *Pierrot* who figures as a character portrait of the young actor in the present number of this magazine.

By the death of Miss Rosina Vokes at Babbacombe on January 27th, 1894, the stage loses a most accomplished burlesque actress and a very clever comedienne. For many years the most popular member of the famous Vokes Family, Miss Rosina was, from 1870 to 1879, a great attraction in pantomime at Drury Lane under the management of Mr. F. B. Chatterton. On marrying Mr. Cecil Clay, the brother of the well-known composer, she retired from the stage for awhile, presently, however, reappearing in America,

where Mr. Clay's burlesque, "A Pantomimé Rehearsal," enjoyed extraordinary favour, and brought both author and actress a fortune. Mrs. Clay died at the age of thirty-six, of which no less than twenty-six years had practically been passed upon the stage.

Most play-lovers are (play)book-buyers, and "Pastor Sang" will appeal to them—by its hand-made paper, its dainty buckram binding, Mr. Aylmer Vallance's mysterious design upon the cover, and the weird and wonderful frontispiece, not even allegorically illustrative of the play, by clever Mr. Aubrey Beardsley. But its interest for the book-reader lies deeper. Translated by Mr. William Wilson, "Over-Ævne," as it is called in the Norwegian, here and there reminds one curiously of Mr. H. A. Jones's "Judah," and now and again of that most impressive and significant of Ibsen's poems, "Brand." *Pastor Sang* is a self-sacrificing miracle-worker, a minister whose prayers heal the sick, raise the dead, and divert avalanches if they do not remove mountains. But one miracle the *Pastor* has been unable to accomplish, the cure of his invalid wife. She is "over-wrought"—that, Mr. Wilson tells us, is the equivalent of "Over-Ævne." She it is who really meets the strain and nervous out-put these miracles of her "over-wrought" husband involve. And what she has undergone has broken her down. She has not slept for weeks. She has not risen from her bed for months. But *Sang* resolves that she shall first sleep, and presently rise strong and well again. He will kneel at the altar of the little church beside the manse, and pray; and not until his prayers are granted will he get up off his knees. Hundreds of villagers are flocking to the church to witness the miracle, and they shall kneel too, and this chain of prayer shall prevail. As he wills, so it is. The instant his voice is heard in supplication, that instant the tired eyelids close, his wife sleeps! But more is to come. Still the *Pastor* prays, and the kneeling crowd around the church pray with him. The suspense deepens, the nervous tension grows, even sceptics feel the mysterious influence. And at length the bedridden woman is seen to rise and walk. Transfigured, moving as in a trance, she glides towards her husband. Aware that his petition has been heard, he leaves the church to meet her. The air is filled with hallelujahs and rejoicings. But the moment her hands touch him, her strength fails, she droops,

sinks, and falls dead in his arms. The minister is dazed, thunder-struck. "But this," he cries, looking upward, "this was not the meaning! But *this* was not the meaning—? or else? or else?" and, catching his hand to his heart, he too falls dead. As a vehicle for acting, it is nothing, for there is little or nothing to act. The effect lies entirely with the stage-manager. He must generate and diffuse the magnetic atmosphere. The hum of the assembling villagers, the stir as they kneel to pray, the solemn silence broken by the *Pastor's* voice, the radiant vision of the dying woman, the cries of joy at her recovery, the awful shock of her death, these would be the stage effects—effects almost independent of individual actors. But to read it is to be infected, to be gripped personally by the weird intensity of the scene, to realise that a spiritual tragedy is in progress, and to feel that, if Björnson is so great a master of dramatic situation as this drama suggests, he will be nothing less than a revelation to us here.



New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from January 19th, 1894,
to February 15th, 1894.

(*Revivals are marked thus **)

- Jan. 20 "A Gauntlet," play, in three acts, translated from the Norwegian of Björnstjerne Björnson by Osman Edwards, adapted by George Hawtrey. Royalty.
- „ 27 "The Transgressor," play, in four acts, by A. W. Gattie. Court.
- Feb. 1 "Beyond," dramatic study, in one act, suggested by a story of René Maizeroy. Adapter unannounced. *Matinée*. Criterion.
- „ 1 "Snowdrop," play, in one act, by Neville Doone and Horace Newte. Bijou, Bayswater.
- „ 1 "Mr. Fitz W——?" farcical operetta, by Horace Newte, lyrics by Walter Parke, music by Bond Andrews. Bijou, Bayswater.
- „ 3 "Dick Sheridan," comedy, in four acts, by Robert Buchanan. Comedy.
- „ 5* "Caste," the late T. W. Robertson's comedy, in three acts. Garrick.
- „ 6 "The Legacy," comedy, in one act, by Frank Lindo. *Matinée*. Royalty.
- „ 6 "Judith Shakespeare," drama, in one act, founded on an incident in William Black's novel, by Alec Nelson. *Matinée*. Royalty.
- „ 6 "A White Elephant," comedietta, in one act, by Arthur Heathcote. Brompton Hospital.
- „ 6 "Two Hearts," play, in one act, by S. J. Adair Fitzgerald. *Matinée*. Royalty.

Jan. 15* "The Little Widow," farce, in three acts, by William Jarman. Royalty.

In the Provinces, from January 13th, 1894, to February 12th, 1894 :—

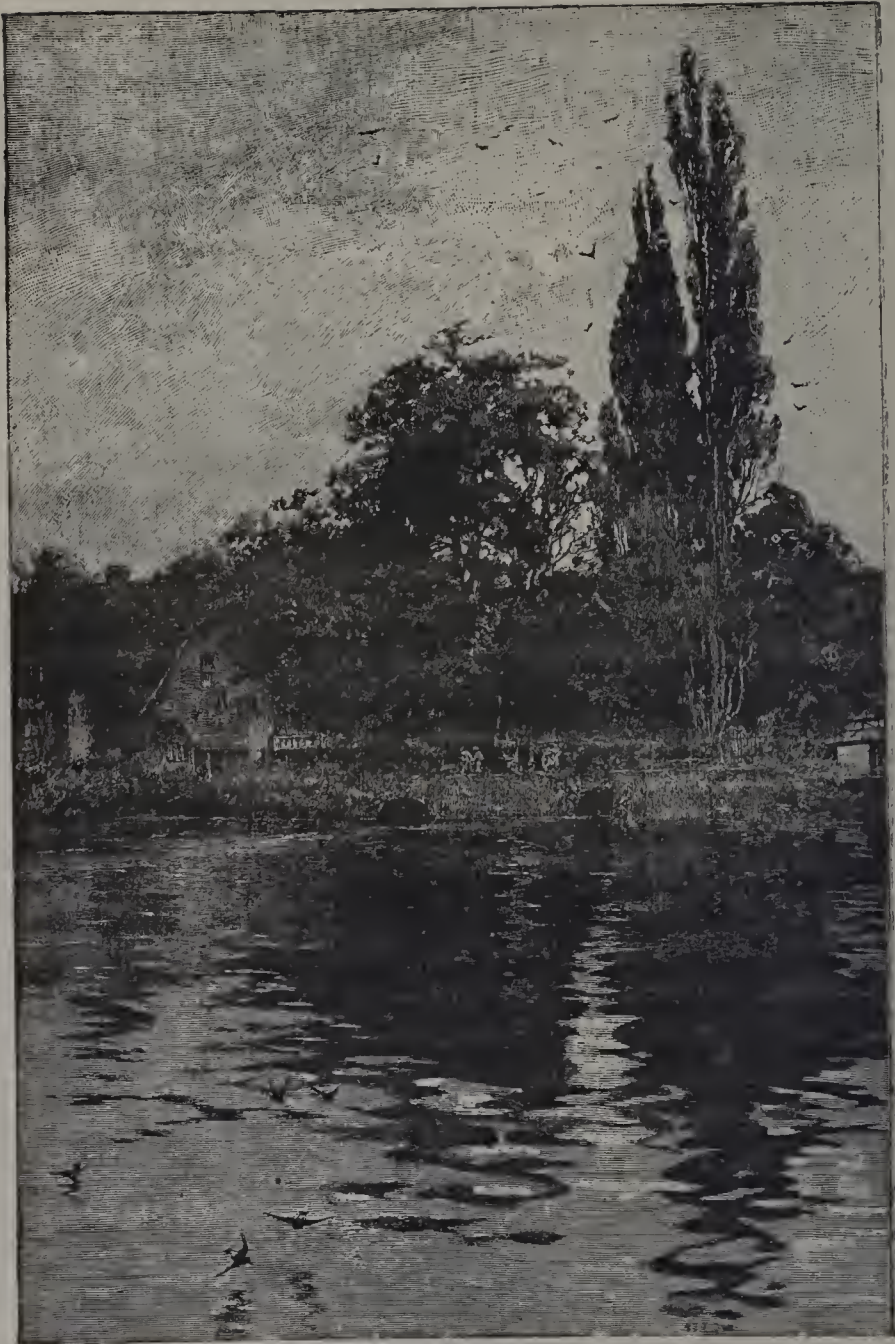
- Jan. 13 "Blue Beard," operetta, in four acts, by W. S. North, music by J. McCullum. Produced by Amateurs. Theatre of the National Children's Hospital, Dublin.
- „ 19 "Married by Proxy," farce, in three acts, by A. W. Tuill. Theatre Royal, Greenock.
- „ 23 "Massaroni," opera, in three acts, composed by F. Bucalossi, libretto by F. Leslie Morton. Leinster Hull, Dublin.
- „ 23 "Adrift on the World," drama, in three acts, by J. C. Twist. Pier Pavilion, Southend-on-Sea.
- „ 23 "Deene Farm," operetta, in two acts, by Alfred Bateman, music by George Richardson. St. Andrew's, Stoke Newington.
- „ 30 "The Substance and the Shadow," drama in two acts, by Frank Mullen and Thomas Atkinson. Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
- Feb. 1 "A White Dove ; or, a Morphia Maniac," drama in four acts, by Charles Freeman. T. R., Willenhall.
- „ 1 "The Gentleman Whip," play, in one act, by H. M. Paull. Devonshire Park, Eastbourne.
- „ 1 "The Boy," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Arthur Law. Devonshire Park, Eastbourne.
- „ 6 "Rizpah Misery," drama, in one act, by Mrs. Vere Campbell. Grand, Glasgow.
- „ 10 "In Old Kentucky," American play, in four acts, by C. F. Dazey, adapted for the English stage by Arthur Shirley. For copyright purposes. T. R., Hull.
- „ 12 "O'Hooligan's Holiday," farcical comedy, in four acts, by J. Russell Bogue. Victoria, West Stanley.

In Paris, from January 9th to February 12th, 1894 :—

- Jan. 11 "Une Dette de Jeunesse," piece, in three acts, by Georges Bertal. Gymnase.
- „ 20 "Paris qui Passe," revue, in three acts and nine tableaux, by MM. Blum and Toché. Nouveautés.
- „ 22 "Le Flibustier," comedy-opera in three acts, by Jean Richepin, music by César Cui. Opéra Comique.
- „ 24 "Izeyl," drama, in verse, in four acts, by Armand Silvestre and Eugène Morand. Renaissance.
- „ 25 "L' Héroïque Le Cardunois," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Alexandre Bisson. Variétés.

- Jan. 30 "Famille," comedy, in three acts, by Auguste Germain.
Gymnase.
- Feb. 3 "Le Trésor des Radjahs," piece, in five acts, by Adolphe
d'Ennery and Paul Ferrier. Chatelet.
- „ 9 "Les Forains," operetta, in three acts, by Maxime
Boucheron and Antoine Mars, music by Louis
Varney. Bouffes-Parisiens.
- „ 12 "Carotins," comedy, in four acts, by Edouard Pailleron.
Théâtre Français.





STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

"Where Avon Flows."

THE THEATRE.

APRIL, 1894.

Rondeau.

“WHERE AVON FLOWS.”



HERE Avon flows I soon forget
All worldly troubles that beset
This hurried life. 'Tis there I greet
The deathless bard, and at his feet
Find solace from annoy and fret!

There where the murm'ring rivulet
Sings thro' cool meadows songs unset,
I list to Shakespeare's wisdom sweet
Where Avon flows!

'Twas there he wrote, and there he set
His seal on Time. The wondrous debt
Can ne'er be paid! His heart will beat
For aye. Death cannot chill its heat
Or warp his spirit, hovering yet
Where Avon flows!

OTWAY THORPE.

The Policy of our Leading Managers.

“**M**Y dear sir, what in Heaven’s name do you mean by ‘the policy’ of our leading managers? When on earth has the majority of them manifested the slightest tendency towards any such thing? Has the secret so jealously guarded by these great ones, the secret hidden from Messrs. Scott and Archer, been at length revealed to you? Are you the depository of this dread apocalypse? If so, when, where, and under what circumstances was your initiation into these mysteries conducted?”

Thus the irreverent, as they read the title of this article, and while the ribald will thus scoff, the judicious will smile the smile of superior wisdom and maintain an attitude of unexpectant reserve. But from practically every quarter the same reply will be returned: a general *Ex nihilo nihil fit* will be heard, and with the devotees of the culinary art we shall be told, “First catch your hare, then you can cook it?” Or, to translate, “Time enough to discuss our leading managers’ policy when you have discovered that they have got one.”

And in truth there is much to be said for this pessimistic point of view. For in pursuing this adventurous quest we move throughout in an atmosphere of Cimmerian gloom. Some faint glimmerings of light, however, seem to show through the darkness. One of the few signs of an adherence to any definite line of policy on the part of our managers may be discovered in the close relations many of them maintain, or have maintained, with leading dramatists of the day. We needn’t go so far back as Mr. Gilbert to illustrate our point. Look at Mr. Pinero’s case. Saving for “Lords and Commons,” his more important plays have been produced either at the Court Theatre or some house managed by Mr. Hare. Generally speaking—though this rule, like any other, has its exceptions—his farces have seen the light at the Court, and his serious plays at the St. James’s or Garrick. This is apart from Mr. Terry’s employment of Mr. Pinero, who has provided our quaintest comedian with “In

Chancery," "Sweet Lavender," "The Times," and (in a revival) "The Magistrate." As a further example of this custom of writing plays more or less to order we have Mr. Buchanan, with a whole series of costume plays for the Vaudeville to be placed to his credit, and Mr. Grundy, dramatic tailor extraordinary to Mr. John Hare.

Fortunately, Mr. Pinero has at last got out of the groove, and with the rejection of "Mrs. Tanqueray" by Mr. Hare, and its production by Mr. Alexander, our leading dramatist has struck out into new paths. It now only remains for Mr. Pinero to write a play for the Haymarket, but I fear this is about as unlikely a contingency as the production of a play of Mr. H. A. Jones at the Garrick. Certainly this close connection between author and manager is a bad thing, it hampers and fetters both parties alike. Our playwrights are so long before they can escape from the rut. Take the instance of Mr. Jones, a dramatist who has made the most desperate struggles for liberty. Even the author of "The Tempter," who has written three plays for Mr. Barrett, three for Mr. Tree, two for Mr. Willard, and two for Mr. Thorne—even Mr. Jones, who has lately entered the sacred portals of the Criterion, and is promised admittance at the St. James's, is still, as I have said, a stranger to the Garrick.

Of the evils of this system I need say little more. They are too glaring for comment. An author gets the measure of his actor and writes for him, then when he accepts other commissions and goes further afield, the unfortunate actor-manager suffers. Either he undergoes a temporary eclipse and suffers the fate of Mr. Edward Terry and Mrs. John Wood, or, like Mr. Barrett and Mr. Thorne, he disappears below the London horizon. I have spoken of one feature common to most London managements—policy it hardly deserves to be styled. Now I come to another question—the attitude of our leading managers towards the advanced movement in dramatic art. In general there is little to be said on this point, save to chronicle a remarkable practical agreement. The chief theatrical lessees are essentially conservative, alike in their choice of plays and the views they hold of a play's mission. They cling to the beggarly idea that a play should "amuse," they scout the notion of its discussing questions of social science ("moral sewerage," if you like, Mr. Buchanan! Why not?) Circumstances may force them to move with the times, and to move a good deal faster than they care to, but any progress promoted by them will certainly be due to compulsion rather than conviction.

And now that we have reached this point in our investigations, it will be perhaps better to change the mode of inquiry. In cases

of this kind the inductive is a better method to employ than the deductive. Truths are best arrived at and conclusions best drawn by an examination of separate individual cases. "*Palmas qui meruit ferat*"—(all apologies to Mr. Walkley for trespassing on his preserves)—first place undoubtedly to Mr. Tree, one of the few managers of the day who has any ideas and initiative of his own. "To the Haymarket," says the genius of "*The Spirit Lamp*," "people seem to come in a proper mood. Mr. Tree is an artist who has succeeded in creating in his audience the temperament to which art appeals." Perhaps "The 'Wilde' is too much with us late and soon;" but there is a grain of truth in what the decadent poet says of his friend the decadent manager. Certainly if a play were merely to be regarded as a medium for the display of the actor's virtuosity, Mr. Tree's artistic efforts would invariably be credited with a measure of success. But this is not the sole point of view. So, granting Mr. Tree's enterprise in the production of "*Beau Austin*," "*A Woman of No Importance*," and "*An Enemy of the People*," there yet remain for consideration "*A Man's Shadow*," "*The Dancing Girl*," &c. Surely the taste that had to be educated up to the appreciation of such works as these—none out of place at the Adelphi—must have had a large leaven of original artistic sin. No, in matters of stage decoration and ensemble Mr. Tree's claims as an artist will be readily acknowledged, but that he merits equal praise in respect of the plays he has produced at the Haymarket cannot so readily be allowed.

True, Mr. Tree is no reactionary like Mr. Hare; true, also, that he is if anything rather a friend than an enemy of the liberal movement in dramatic art. But if he be a friend, he is something of a fair-weather friend. He has coquetted with the movement rather than definitely thrown in his lot with it; he has made capital (in every sense, I hope) out of it, rather than helped it forward. That the Haymarket lessee is the foremost London manager of the day, is a truth almost too axiomatic to possess any significance; for with Mr. Irving given up to classicalism or pseudo-classicalism, and Messrs. Hare and Alexander more or less—the former "more," the latter "less"—devotees of the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, the leadership of the English stage is easily secured by any manager with a particle of enterprise. Mr. Tree must make his choice between the sheep and the goats, must run some risk for the purposes of art before he can claim to be anything more than an unprejudiced, liberal-minded man of business. That he should have let his "*Monday Nights*" collapse shows more eloquently than anything else could that artistic considerations do not solely direct his policy. Looking

at matters from a less ambitious point of view, Mr. Tree deserves emphatic praise for two or three signal services rendered by him to theatrical art. He has led the way in depressing the obnoxious star system so long prevalent on our stage. The Bancrofts did much to encourage ensemble. Mr. Tree has done more, and has gradually gathered round him at his theatre a company superior to any in London. Moreover, in casting a play, Mr. Tree's policy is tinged with no vulgar egotism. He does not take all the plums for himself and his. Of course, his claims are paramount, but that does not prevent him giving his leading man a good part. Save in "A Woman of No Importance," "Hamlet," and "The Charlatan"—the first-named the most superbly-cast play of modern times—Mr. Fred Terry has always had as good a part as his manager; while in "Called Back," "Hypatia," "Peril," and "The Tempter," he has played the lead.

Of Mr. Tree's services in encouraging new authors I need not speak at any length. True, he has introduced more new blood into the dramaturgical body than any other contemporary manager; but this is not saying much, and unless we raise necessity to the level of a virtue we must be sparing in our praises of Mr. Tree on this account.

Nor, indeed, has the Haymarket manager done much to make "the young idea shoot." Still one or two young actors may be mentioned who have bettered their position while under Mr. Tree. Such are Mr. Webster Lawson, Mr. Harwood, Mr. Hallard, and Mr. Holman Clark.

What Mr. Tree may be emphatically thanked for, especially by patrons of "the popular parts of the house," are his strenuous endeavours to raise the standard of the curtain-raiser. He has appeared in one himself ("Gringoire"), Mrs. Tree has acted a pretty page in another ("Le Passant"), Mr. and Mrs. Fred Terry have appeared in a third ("Comedy and Tragedy"), while the merits of Mr. Zangwill's caustic if slightly vulgar "Six Persons" are too obvious for discussion. Mr. Tree's pioneer work in a track where "the elder race has halted" merits cordial recognition.

Another feature of Mr. Tree's management has been its "infinite variety"—variety in the selection of plays, variety in the manager's choice of parts for himself, and finally variety in, or rather the variation of, the feminine lead. At the Haymarket we have been freed from the boredom consequent on seeing the same leading lady season after season. Miss Julia Neilson has filled the recognised position, but this last year she has shared the lead with Mrs. Tree and Miss Olga Brandon, and relinquished

it in favour of Mrs. Beere and Mrs. Tree. This is as it should be, and Mr. Tree deserves the thanks of the public for his determined efforts to minimise the harm wrought by that necessary evil—the permanent leading lady.

From Mr. Tree to Mr. Hare is a jump indeed. It is to pass from an enthusiast for his art, from the hardest working manager of the day, to a very prince of indifferentism and *laissez faire*. Let us look at facts. It would be unfair to make 1893 our criterion, for last season Mr. Tree was unusually busy.

Let us take the five years from the beginning of 1889 to the close of 1893. We shall then find that during this period Mr. Hare has only six parts to his credit to Mr. Tree's fourteen, and that while the former manager produced only four original plays, Mr. Tree at the Haymarket brought out eight. And Mr. Hare, despite the impending production of Miss Fletcher's new piece, believes as little in encouraging new authors as he does in bringing out new plays or exposing himself to the danger of overwork. He has no faith in the "new criticism" or the "new drama." "Looking Backward" is his motto: he sticks to Pinero and Grundy (all praise to him!), revives old Bancroftian successes, and in the last decade of the nineteenth century has produced a new teacup-and-saucer comedy and revived two fine old crusted ones. Of course there is nothing really surprising in this, for the nine years of the Hare and Kendal management at the St. James's were on the whole a singularly barren period in the history of our stage. Still there were some people who thought that, once his own master, in a theatre of which he was sole lessee, some progress might be looked for. New plays were to be produced; a new departure on the part of Mr. Hare, both as manager and actor, was to be inaugurated. But soon, alas! it was seen that the Garrick chief was wedded to the old traditions. In a theatre absolutely his own, with leading dramatists ready to write to his requirements, he forebore to take his fate in his hands, and boldly challenge playgoers' opinions in leading parts. Fearful, perhaps, of his own powers as an actor, and naturally fonder of management than of acting, Mr. Hare conceived instead a magnificent scheme for establishing in his new home a kind of *Comédie Anglaise*. Big with this great conception, the Garrick manager, with a pardonable blare of trumpets, announced the engagements of Mr. Willard and Mr. Forbes Robertson, of Miss Kate Rorke and Mrs. Bernard Beere! But, alas for human hopes! the imposing edifice reared in Mr. Hare's imagination proved after all a mere house of cards. Before the theatre was even opened, Mr. Willard had seceded, Mrs. Beere played only in "La Tosca;" and for the rest,

partly because Mr. Hare had not the plays ready, partly because of divided counsels caused by the actor-manager's success as a "star" in "The Spectacles," the mighty scheme dwindled to a shadow and faded out of sight.

In truth Mr. Hare's policy at the Garrick has been characterized by the same faults as marred his management of the St. James's—lack of enterprise and lack of foresight. He has not had the—what? industry or courage?—to run himself, and he has not had the—what? shrewdness or faith?—to run Mr. Forbes Robertson. The consequences have been disastrous for all concerned. Mr. Hare himself—whose career as a "star" began only with "Mamma" has, during the past five years, added to his repertoire only "A Pair of Spectacles" and "A Fool's Paradise." Mr. Forbes Robertson has been still more unfortunate. He has had not half as many parts as Mr. Fred Terry, and the few new parts he has created have given him little opportunity. His history for the last five years is, for all practical purposes, "writ in water." It includes three years (1890-92) of absolute stagnation—begins with "The Profligate" and ends with "La Tosca."

It is a curious circumstance that, in spite of the frequent absence of Mr. Hare's name from the Garrick bill, in spite, too, of the practical effacement of Mr. Robertson, the Garrick manager should have done so little for the younger members of the theatrical profession. Omitting the remarkable success of Miss Lizzie Webster in "Lady Bountiful," Mr. Sydney Brough is the only young player who has gained reputation under Mr. Hare, and he has had nothing to do there half his time. Mr. Hare's duty (to himself and the public) is obvious. He should send Mr. Robertson and Miss Rorke adrift, get some sweet but inoffensive young lady like Miss Mary Moore to support him; engage Mr. Brough as *jeune premier*, and launch out into big parts.

It would be "painting the rose" and "gilding refined gold" to praise Mr. Hare in respect of the mounting of the plays produced under his direction. The taste and care evidenced in the magnificent series of pictures in "Tosca," and the interiors of "A Fool's Paradise," "Lady Bountiful," and "Diplomacy," had had previous opportunities of manifesting themselves at the St. James's, and suitable and even lavish display in stage decoration was only what was to be expected from a manager of Mr. Hare's high position.

But the Garrick plays have been better mounted than acted; and this, again, was only what was to be expected. I will refrain from mentioning such obvious instances of bad casting as "The

Profligate " and " Lady Bountiful." I will content myself with saying that " The Spectacles " is the only play produced at the Garrick that has been properly (or shall I say perfectly ?) cast.

In the matter of short, one act pieces, playgoers are under very slight obligations to Mr. Hare. The only approach to a decent curtain raiser seen at the Garrick was the maudlin and untruthful but theatrically telling " Dream Faces," which retarded the progress of Mr. Hare's patrons in pit and gallery for a whole year.

And now for Mr. Alexander. The concisest account of the St. James's manager would be " a practical Progressive—no Revolutionist." As a manager he scorns not Mr. Carton and his school, and yet aspires to produce the work of Pinero, Jones, and Grundy. He has given us " The Fan " and " Mrs. Tanqueray," in succession to " Lord Anerley " and " The Idler." He dislikes Ibsen, and yet is about to produce a play of Björnson, and while himself devoted to romance is being borne along on the crest of the naturalistic wave. And Mr. Alexander will be well advised if he sticks to modern plays. His company, save for the solitary instance of Mrs. Campbell, is essentially nineteenth century in style, and though he himself would shine in romantic plays, he has little, save his experience at the Lyceum and his picturesque appearance, to fit him for such strenuous rôles as would there fall to his lot.

But, in all probability, it will be circumstances that will mould Mr. Alexander's future actions, not Mr. Alexander who will mould circumstances to his wish. He will find it difficult to get out of his present groove, and indeed—as my Editor has already pointed out in his brilliant monograph on this actor-manager—it is surely as a manager that Mr. Alexander will be best remembered.

As a producer of plays, the St. James's manager has few rivals and no superior. Indeed, such an eye has he for unity of effect, so careful is his choice of actors, so very special is his purpose, so true a colour-element enters into his artistic composition, that it would be not rash to call Mr. Alexander in this respect the greatest manager of the day.

I need not dwell on these triumphs of his: the magnificent scenes of " The Idler " and " The Fan," the masterly grouping in the second act of " Liberty Hall," and the first act of " Mrs. Tanqueray," though the last were possibly Mr. Pinero's handiwork. They are obvious to the dullest apprehension. Mr. Alexander's artistic treatment of any play that comes into his hands gives his weakest production a probability of success. Would that our actor-manager were as careful in his choice of first pieces. " The Gay Lothario," " Molière," and " Kit Marlowe " (pieces designed

for special display on Mr. Alexander's part), were poor stuff enough, but there is no shadow of excuse for such productions as "Midsummer Day."

A manager who can get witty duologues in abundance from English writers, who could commission someone to adapt the pretty trifles of De Banville or Coppée, who might dramatise the short stories of "Q," Hardy, and Mrs. Clifford, ought to rise superior to such sentimental catlap as "Midsummer Day."

Mr. Alexander is a considerate and generous friend to young actors. It is under his management that Mr. Nutcombe Gould has made his reputation as a delightful *père noble*, and Mr. Ben Webster risen into prominence as a young actor of promise and distinction. Then it was Mr. Alexander, too, who gave Miss Hanbury her first big chance in Mr. Wilde's piece, and it is the same manager who keeps Miss Maude Millett at his theatre for the constant delectation of the middle-class mamma. Nor have we completed the tale. For, thanks to Mr. Alexander, Mr. Esmond, with his *Cayley Drummle*, has gone up several steps of the ladder, and we have yet to mention Miss Granville, Miss Lizzie Webster, and Mr. Vane Tempest—all promising, and of course, refined members of a company which, if branded too freely with the stamp of the Society amateur, is yet so inevitably, seeing the work it has to do.

And now I must draw my remarks to a close. True, there are other first-class managers; but were it not absurd to talk of Mr. Wyndham's policy? At present, judging from "The Fringe of Society" and "An Aristocratic Alliance," the Criterion manager seems to be going in for emasculated adaptations of French masterpieces of the sixties, but in the main Mr. Wyndham is an institution and is himself his own policy! What need, either, to predicate what Mr. Chudleigh may do? Mr. Chudleigh is a cathemerist, and probably does not know himself what his future course of action may be.

And Mr. Comyns Carr and Mr. Daly it seems almost too early to judge. So far as "Sowing the Wind" and "Sheridan" point a way, the Comedy takes the place of Mr. Thorne's defunct Vaudeville. Of course it is to be a high-class theatre, which the Vaudeville never was. But otherwise the main lines of policy seem the same. Miss Emery is again the heroine, Mr. Brandon Thomas replaces Mr. Thorne, Mr. Cyril Maude keeps with his wife, and Mr. Brough and Mr. Irving take the places previously filled by Mr. Conway and Mr. Thalberg. But of course Mr. Carr will be dependent to a great extent on his authors, and before long we shall probably find him producing modern plays with a policy differing but slightly from that of Mr. Alexander.

The author of "Forgiveness" and apologist for Mr. Irving's "Macbeth" is perhaps more eccentric than liberal in his opinions, but he is a man of culture and taste, and his first two productions have been magnificently cast and staged. It is gratifying, by the way, to see that our advice as to Mr. Thomas' suitability as a leading man has been taken by Mr. Carr. A manager cannot be accused of lack of pluck or enterprise who gives so clever but somewhat neglected an actor his due position at last. For the rest, Miss Emery is an actress who astonished people in "Sowing the Wind," and will go further still. Of her husband, Mr. Maude, it is sufficient to say that he is the nearest approach to a great comedian our stage possesses. Go on and prosper, Mr. Carr!

There remains Mr. Daly! But the policy of our Anglo-American manager seems to be firstly and pre-eminently Miss Ada Rehan. Not a bad policy certainly, but one which the surpassing talents of that great actress remove from the realms of debate.

On the whole, then, the policy of our leading managers—lamentable in some respects—is not altogether discouraging. It is either directly beneficial to dramatic art or benevolently neutral, as in the cases of Mr. Tree and Mr. Alexander, or harmlessly inactive as in the case of Mr. Hare and Mr. Wyndham. The leaders in the dramatic world will do little, perhaps, to advance the new movement in theatrical art and literature, but they will at any rate refrain from active opposition. And perhaps, on the whole, in the interests of the stage, this is the best course they could adopt. Pioneers are well enough, but every reform must after all come from within, and when—thanks in great measure to Mr. Tree and Mr. Alexander—the public at length takes an intelligent interest in really public affairs, the caterers for the public taste will not be wanting on their part. They will fall into line too. With a genuine revival of interest in the theatre, the policy of our leading managers will change for the better. But in one respect at least it will be the same policy as of old—the policy that pays.

W. A. LEWIS BETTANY.





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MISS LIZZIE WEBSTER
(MRS. SYDNEY BROUGH).

"This only is the witchcraft I have used!
Here stands my husband; let him witness it."

OTHELLO (adapted).

The Theatrical Revolution :

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY.

VI.

1st Player : I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.
Hamlet : O, reform it altogether.



LD ROSCIUS DAGGERWOOD was so eager to become acquainted with the players of the twentieth century that he returned with his son Kenneth to the theatre more than an hour before the performance was timed to commence. They were received by Stage-manager Charker, and were admitted by him into the sacred precincts of the "coulisses."

Upon the stage a portion of the company had assembled in compliance with notices posted upon the call-board after the last performance, and Mr. Cornwallis was deciding disputed points of "business" and "reading." These were the little frictions and perplexities which have arisen in all times to disturb the symmetry of the performance and the comradeship of the players. Each disputant stated and demonstrated his point, and yielded with a good grace to an adverse judgment on the part of the Director. Instead of personally wrangling with his brother actor, he had posted his grievance upon the call-board kept for that purpose; and the other, not being willing to concede the matter, attended to justify himself.

"No, we are not troubled with wilfulness in either actors or actresses," was the Director's reply to a question bearing upon obstinacy and selfishness in days gone by. "If they reject authority they reject their living. Fines, degradation to poorer parts and less income, and finally expulsion from the Academy, would be incurred by those who set discipline at defiance."

"The manager was almost powerless in former times," said Roscius. "The actor, strong in possession of a 'stamped agreement,' played as he pleased, and often sacrificed the scene for the gratification of his own vanity. A court of law would have

regarded as frivolous the manager's reason for discharging him, the judge being unable to appreciate the technical necessity of exact proportion of an item to the whole."

They stood and listened while one by one the complaints were made and answered. The heroine was called upon by the hero to look at him while he delivered a certain speech to her, so that the attention of the audience should be concentrated upon his words; but she argued with success that by averting her face and letting the audience see the expression on it while he addressed her, she added to the force of the scene.

The scene-painter "called" one of the actors to have him prohibited from casting shadows on a perspective; and an actress "called" the leader of the band to correct the time of some incidental music.

There were many minor difficulties to be got over, from the precise method of a kiss to unnecessary realism in a struggle; but at last all went to their dressing-rooms with the artistic crinkles comfortably smoothed away, and not a screw loose in the machine anywhere.

Then Mr. Cornwallis joined the visitors, and at his bidding Mr. Charker exhibited the perfected mechanism of a twentieth century theatre, and lifted the veil that shrouded the illusions of scenery—adroit combinations of modelling and painting, and of effects to which science and artifice, formerly monopolized by conjuring exhibitions, now lent important aid.

Turning from the property rooms to the stage itself, they found it constructed to display four complete sets of scenery at one time, producing to the audience each in turn. There was, indeed, an upper and a lower stage, each division large enough for two scenes to be set upon it back to back, and the whole fabric could be raised or lowered or revolved by the pressure of an electric button in the prompt corner. Thus, a scene could be quietly changed in the flies, or in the cellar, or at the back of that in which the action was taking place, and in an instant, under cover of the darkness, the whole picture, with all its elaboration of detail, could be transformed as if by magic. A small staff of workmen sufficed for this plan of operation, and the wear and tear of material was reduced to a minimum. Roscius noted many economies in the packing and moving of scenery, of which common sense had suggested the embryos even in the nineteenth century. Flats and "set trees" were no longer held upright by the crude practice of forcing huge screws into the boards, a system which had riddled the stage with holes in a very short time.

After congratulating Mr. Charker upon the completeness and

efficiency of all they saw, the Daggerwoods were conducted to the dressing-rooms, some of which were not yet occupied.

This part of the theatre had evidently come to be regarded in the progress of civilization as of very material importance to the excellence of the entertainment. It struck Roscius as extraordinary to find the actors' quarters within easy access of the stage, and he was not a little surprised to note that in case of fire the artistes would not be entirely cut off from all chance of saving their lives. To find the rooms furnished with decency and even comfort—a clean carpet on the floor, at the window a blind that could exclude the daylight, on the walls mirrors large and true, plenty of light in exact correspondence with the stage illumination, and adequate toilet convenience—astonished him as much as it did to learn that the drains were in order and the ventilation perfect. Again, each room was designed to accommodate but one actor; whereas in former days, even in the best London theatres, it had been the custom to herd them together like cattle. Now there was the seclusion of a study in place of the turmoil of a debating-class, a racecourse, or a tavern.

Entering one of these little chapels of art, they found themselves in a sweet and pleasant atmosphere of quietude. The decorations were subdued, but cheerful, and on the walls hung pictorial illustrations of the work in hand. Adjustable mediums upon the lamps enabled the actor to colour his face to whatever shade might accord best with the light that would be thrown upon him when before the public. Roscius told how he had once made up rather hastily in a dim religious light, and being called for his scene, had rushed upon the stage giddy and breathless from the descent of several flights of winding stairs, to receive the jeers of the audience as he came into the full white glare of the electric lamps, that showed up grotesquely every patch and line, which had seemed right enough in the semi-darkness of his dressing-room. These matters were little heeded by the managers of the nineteenth century, with the result that the stage picture was often marred and the enjoyment of the audience impaired by its obvious artificiality.

It interested Roscius to learn that what was once considered an arbitrary and dead-letter rule, namely, that no communication shall be made with an actor during performance except through the stage-manager, had grown into strict observance. The actor, once launched into the realms of fancy, was dead to the material world until the curtain came down upon the mimic one. Very urgent matters could be dealt with by the sub-director, who had telephonic communication with every dressing-room, and could use his discretion on the subject.

The ancient yelling call-boy had been abolished. The prompter, whose nominal office was a sinecure, took his place in skirmishing about the stage at the command of the Sub-director, who sat at the proscenium entrance throughout the performance, but the unnerving "HALF-HOUR, LADIES, PLEASE!" "QUART'RO'NOUR, GEN'LM'N, PLEASE!" and "HOVER-CHOOOR 'N' B'GINN'RS, PLEASE!" was no longer heard in the corridors.

A synchronized clock kept the flight of time before the actor's eye; while electric bell signals from the sub-director told him of the rise and fall of the curtain, changes of scene, and various incidents, warning him also when his cue for entrance was near. Every player remained in his or her dressing-room until summoned to the scene.

While these arrangements were being explained to the Daggerwoods, the tenant of this particular dressing-room arrived, and was not a little astonished at the unwonted incursion of strangers. The introduction of old Roscius, however, won for the veteran a cordial welcome; and it became evident that the younger generation had much reverence for those who, under less propitious circumstances, had left footprints on the sands of Time.

Cuthbert Vining, the representative of the reformed stage, surrendered his outer garments to his dresser, and while conversing with his visitors, went through a series of exercises with a gymnastic apparatus fitted up in a corner of the room.

"You were wonderful men and women in the old days," said he. "I think of you as the light-cavalry-man of the eighteenth-nineties must have thought of the armed knights of the days of chivalry, wondering how any great, or even acceptably good work was done at all. You had no training, and no selection. Your afflatus was dissipated by contact with the brutality of commercial interests. Your work was unsystematically and insufficiently prepared, and you gave your performance under conditions of mental disturbance and obstruction that destroyed every chance of its being seen to advantage."

"Yes," said Roscius, "we fought against desperate odds. No one regarded the actor as a hothouse plant, and his art came near to dying for want of proper soil and suitable temperature. Few really cared for acting as acting, and most of those who sat in front and watched us believed they could do better with no training at all. Yet the real 'grit' was in us as it was in the warrior of the age of Iron, and we saved something of our heritage to hand down to our grandchildren."

Although Cuthbert Vining would not be required on the stage for a couple of hours, and his part was a short one, with which he was thoroughly familiar, it was considered necessary that he

should enter upon his task free from any sort of distraction, and the Director now proposed to take his visitors away. In apologizing for not wishing to detain them, Mr. Vining explained the modern practice of the actor who conscientiously sought to do his duty to the public, to the author, to Art, and to himself.

“As I put on my costume and make up my face I deliberately shut out of my personality all that is not an essential of the part I am to play. I conceive the time and place and conditions of the mimic world in which I am to move, assisting my fancy with books and pictures relating to the subject. It would be a gross breach of etiquette for anyone to disturb this train of thought, and my dresser resolves himself into a piece of mechanism providing for every material need which would take my thoughts off my work. I am ready to go on the stage an hour before my cue is spoken, and I occupy that hour with a private rehearsal before these mirrors of every effect I am to produce in the play, reconsidering every phase of my interpretation and its bearing upon the whole. There may be some notes concerning my performance similar to those you see posted up before me now, and to these I give particular attention. Some are special instructions from the Director, some are observations of my own, and some are critical hints from the Press. Quite at ease as to the time at my disposal, I also go through each of my scenes in the play during the interval preceding it. You will understand that with one’s imagination refreshed and strengthened in this way, and with the mind calmly concentrated in silence and isolation upon the work in hand, one is able to go before the public with a full command of nerves and faculties, and with all one’s talent whetted to its keenest edge, strung to its highest tension. This is a necessity to me, and indeed it was always a necessity, although the actor of the bygone age made a boast of his slovenliness and lack of purpose, forgetting that when he tore himself from a dressing-room card-party to rush upon the stage, or went on for his scene with his mind full of gambling transactions, the exhibition he made was not only an offence to the audience, but a debasement to himself.”

Reflecting upon the truth of these remarks, the Daggerwoods passed along the quiet corridors. No popping of corks reached their ears, and they detected no brain-clouding fumes of tobacco. Roscius was reminded rather of the intellectual sanctity of university cloisters than of the roystering atmosphere he mentally associated with “behind the scenes.”

The stage-manager went off to give an eye to his various departments, and Mr. Cornwallis assured them that the hereditary disposition to “see a man” would not hinder Mr. Charker

from attending to his business from the rise to the fall of the curtain.

The Director now led them to the green-room, where they found the second or understudy company assembled, there to remain throughout the performance ready for instant service in case of emergency, unlike the deputies of Roscius' day, who when urgently wanted could not be found.

For those who desired to study the performance from the front a large private box was reserved, but the green-room was the favourite resort, and to-night was no exception in respect of their merry gathering in that time-honoured quarter.

Scarcely one of the players who were actually occupied with the current performance ventured to enter there. Certainly no one remained long amid the distractions of that animated assembly. The acting company went quickly and in silence direct from dressing-room to stage, and back from stage to dressing-room, wholly absorbed in their task, with their minds wrapt up in ideals, their eyes fixed upon Ambition's pole-star. But here in the green-room the understudies bore themselves like a reserve force within sound of battle. Argument ran high, and there was a perfect fusillade of humour.

Director Cornwallis introduced the Daggerwoods, and left them to cultivate acquaintance with the actor and actress of the twentieth century.

Old Roscius was not slow to observe the transformation, or rather, evolution that had taken place. At once it was apparent that all present were persons of exceptional cultivation, and not owing their distinction merely to a *bizarre* affectation, or the disregard of the canons of good-breeding. In former times, the actor's physiognomy had possessed an individuality which was now emphasized with this all-important difference, that where they once wore an intellectual mask that covered mental weakness, they had now absorbed into their character the very strength they had counterfeited, and poetry, humour, passion, tenderness, philosophy, courtliness, majesty, were represented in the essence, not the fragrance merely—in the spirit, and not by a poor mockery of skin and bone.

These were not artificial men and women, but human creatures exalted to their highest capacity; not marionettes, but missionaries; not puppets, but prophets; not the parasites, but the leaders of the world. As they reclined, or stood erect, or moved, it was the pose of a statue, the "havior" of a god which was in evidence; and in beautiful harmony with this physical perfection shone the brilliance of cultivated intelligence and purified imagination.

Men and women met here in brother-and-sister fashion with a great intellectual sympathy between them which quelled all grosser thoughts. Lovely women with all the accentuated charm of graces gathered, developed, polished to their best, and men with all that is admirable in manhood wrought to its worthiest, looked upon each other, and tested with reverence each other's power; but their nature had soared above the meshes which once upon a time swathed the artiste helplessly.

With stability of fortune had come stability of morals. With professional dignity had come self-respect.

The actor of the Nineteenth Century mocked at ideals. The actor of the Twentieth worshipped them.

PERSEUS.

(To be continued.)



At the Pantomime.

(“Cinderella” at the Lyceum, Dec. 26th, 1893, to March 17th, 1894.)



H Cinderella, when we met
 In well-remembered nursery days,
 You were the very first who set
 Our childish hearts ablaze.

You were our dearest Princess there;
 Kind, beautiful, yet “not too grand,”
 There was no Princess to compare
 With you in Fairy-land.

The others all are dead; of old
 Your palace crumbled to the ground;
 Yet, Cinderella, still you hold
 Our grown-up hearts spell-bound!

Peeps at the Past.

I.—The Early Work of Mr. Henry Irving.



MR. IRVING has, no doubt, many admirers whose playgoing memories (owing to circumstances over which they had no control) do not go back to the "fifties" and "sixties." To those admirers—sure of their interest in the subject—I offer a brief mention of the work he was then doing, and a few contemporary comments upon it. That was the time—the pre-Lyceum period of his career—when Mr. Irving was accumulating the experience that enabled him to give, in after years, those remarkable studies that have made him world-famous—when he was, so to speak, moulding and polishing and developing his genius for the presentation of higher work.

The quotations that follow have been extracted chiefly from the volumes of the *Illustrated Times*. That admirable publication—which contained the germs of many features not then common in English papers of its own, or of any class, but since then grown very popular—gave, week by week, notes upon dramatic doings and notices of productions by a certain "Theatrical Lounger." The duties of this functionary were for some time discharged (so one gathers from the memoirs of the late Mr. Henry Vizetelly, who founded and edited the *Illustrated Times*) by Mr. T. W. Robertson—the T. W. Robertson of "Caste." I don't know whether the passages to be quoted were written by him. I should fancy not; but, if they were, they possess perhaps an additional interest.

Mr. Irving, according to "Men of the Time," made his first appearance in London at the Princess's Theatre on September 25th, 1859, after three years' hard work in the provinces. I am sorry to say that the *Illustrated Times* of that date makes no mention of his performance, nor can I find any in the *Illustrated London News* of the same week. But the play in which he must have taken part was an adaptation by the late Edward Oxenford of Feuillet's "Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre," which he

called "Ivy Hall." Another version of the comedy was produced a little later by Mr. Sothern, and again another, some twelve years ago, at the St. James's Theatre, by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. In the former case it was the work of Dr. Westland Marston, and in the latter Mr. Coghlan's. In "Ivy Hall" the principal characters were allotted to Mrs. Charles Young, Miss Kate Saville (a niece of Lady Theodore Martin), Mr. Frank Matthews, Mr. H. Widdicomb, and Mr. Garden, the "poor young man" himself being played by a Mr. Harcourt Bland, of whom I read that "the new *jeune premier* is more *premier* than *jeune*; but he showed himself to be unquestionably an artist, and one possessing a thorough knowledge of the stage." Moreover, "he has the appearance and the manner of a perfect gentleman, that *rara avis* of modern theatrical life." Can it be possible—I hazard the suggestion out of the plenitude of my ignorance—can it be that "Mr. Harcourt Bland" was an early pseudonym of Mr. John Henry Brodribb? * The manager of the Princess's at this time, it is interesting to note, was Mr. Augustus Harris, father of the knightly lessee of Drury Lane. This was just after the close of the brilliant tenure of this house by Charles Kean. "Ivy Hall" did not enjoy a long run, and was shortly succeeded by another adaptation, "Love's Telegraph." In this the same company appeared, Mr. Bland again showing himself "a thorough master of the stage," and "rattling through his scenes with a *verve* second only to that of the original actor" of the part, Charles Mathews, to wit. The company at the Princess's, though subsequently joined by Miss Louise Keeley (afterwards Mrs. Montagu Williams) and a Mr. George Melville, "a tolerable actor," who appeared in *Hamlet*, soon lost the services of Mr. Irving, who, not long after, was engaged at Glasgow.

His next descent upon the Metropolis occurred seven years later. In September, 1866, he played *Doricourt* in "The Belle's Stratagem," at the St. James's Theatre—a part which, it will be remembered, he enacted a dozen years ago at the Lyceum. On this earlier occasion Miss Herbert, the manageress of the theatre, was the *Letitia*, and other characters were represented by Mr. Walter Lacy, Mr. Gaston Murray, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Matthews. Mr. Irving, I read, was considered "a young actor of great talent." A few weeks later Mr. Boucicault's drama "Hunted Down; or, the Two Lives of Mary Leigh," was pro-

* No. Mr. Bland was a well-known actor at that time, and an interesting reference to his capacity for *over-acting* may be found in Professor Morley's "Journal of a London Playgoer," in the course of a criticism upon Charles Reade's "Masks and Faces," in which Mr. Bland misrepresented *Quin*, upon its first production at the Haymarket, Nov. 27th, 1852.—ED.

duced at the St. James's, and in this, Mr. Irving's part, *Rawdon Scudamore*, a profligate gamester, was one that he had already played in the provinces. The severe "Lounger" stigmatises the play as "a very excellent specimen of a very unhealthy class of drama" (its character may be guessed from its name and its authorship); but he goes on to say:—"Of Mr. Irving's *Rawdon Scudamore* I find difficulty in speaking too highly. His 'make-up' and general tone indicated precisely the sort of scamp *Rawdon Scudamore* is made by Mr. Boucicault. When he is seedy, his seediness is not indicated by preposterous rags or by new trousers with a hole in them; his clothes are clothes that are well, but not too well, worn. In the second act, which shows him under more prosperous circumstances, his prosperity does not take the form of flashy coats, white hats, and patent leather boots; he is dressed just as a *roué* of some taste (but a *roué*, nevertheless) would dress himself. His best scene is that with his wife *Clare* (Miss Ada Dyas) in this act. The cool, quiet insolence with which he treats his devoted wife—the insolence of the man who is certain of her love, and wishes he were not—is the finest piece of undemonstrative acting I have seen since I saw Mr. Hare as *Prince Perovsky*." From which it may be gathered that, seven-and-twenty years ago, Mr. Irving was artistic above the average, and that your gentlemanly villain of melodrama was born before *Spider* of "The Silver King." One may also note in what high estimation Mr. Hare was already held. Indeed, it is interesting, as one looks through these files, to observe the names of actors and actresses still or recently with us; and sometimes one is amused to find them playing (as it seems to us now) odd and unaccustomed parts. The only one that I recognise as taking part in "Hunted Down" is that of Miss Le Thière, not long since (in "Ravenswood,") a member of Mr. Irving's own Lyceum company.

In February of the following year (1867), Mr. Irving was still at the St. James's, playing *Harry Dornton* in Holcroft's "Road to Ruin." His acting of the part is characterised as "excellent," though the rôle is not one in which we should imagine him likely to excel. The old comedy's last revival in London was, I think, at the Vaudeville a few years ago, when Mr. Charles Warner represented this filial rake. Mr. Edward Compton also keeps it in his repertory. It seems to have remained upon the bills at the St. James's about a month, when "a new comedy, adapted from Victorien Sardou's 'Le Dégel,' by Mr. T. W. Robertson," took its place. This was called "A Rapid Thaw," and we are told that it was "graceful, picturesque, and lively; but, at the same time, too thoroughly French in its dialogue, and too slight in its

construction to obtain a unanimously favourable verdict from an English audience." Herein "Mr. Irving was rather out of place as a comic Irishman"! Miss Ada Cavendish had a part in this play, and the "Lounger" bestows warm encomiums upon Miss Carlotta Addison, whom he regards as the most charming *ingénue* then upon the stage. "A Rapid Thaw" must have proved, in modern theatrical parlance, a nipping frost; for in the next week's paper a revival of "The Rivals" is recorded, and a week later that of "The Merry Widow"; but, unfortunately, I find no mention of Mr. Irving's share in these productions, though I believe that *Captain Absolute* was allotted to him in the former. In the issue for March 30, however, the "Lounger" writes:—"Mr. Henry Irving, one of the best of the many promising young comedians on our stage, has given fresh proof this week of acting in which intelligence and artistic skill are combined. At the St. James's he has played *Joseph Surface*, in 'The School for Scandal,' as it very seldom played nowadays. Mr. Irving makes *Joseph Surface* a gentleman. Villains of the *Joseph Surface* and *Hawkesley* type are not necessarily hangdog-looking ruffians. Polished scamps were not unknown in Sheridan's time. For the sake of Mr. Irving, 'Robert Macaire' has been revived. The play is worth nothing, but it is worth reviving for a short time for the sake of the actor." A week or two later, I note a column devoted to the production of "Caste," and then, on May 4, I come to a notice of a dramatic version of Ouida's "Idalia," by a Mr. Roberts. This was given to the world at the St. James's, and over it the "Lounger" waxes sarcastically merry. "The piece is a bad piece," he concludes, "there's no doubt about that, I am afraid; but it is very capitally acted. . . . Mr. Irving's *Count Falcon* was an excellent piece of acting, and his 'make-up' was singularly good. He was quiet and impressive in a part which a less conscientious actor would have vulgarized by declamatory rant and exaggerated action." In this piece, "Mr. Charles Wyndham (from the *Royalty*)"—where he had been performing in Mr. Burnand's burlesque, "Black-eyed Susan"—"played the young Englishman with gentlemanly repose." The St. James's Theatre was soon after this given over to a French company, and it is some time before one again encounters the name of Mr. Irving.

The next mention of it, indeed, that I have come across is in an advertisement in *Fun*, announcing the performance at the Haymarket of a burlesque, written and to be acted by the staff of that paper—a staff, by the way, that then numbered T. W. Robertson, W. S. Gilbert, H. J. Byron, Moy Thomas, Clement Scott, H. S. Leigh, and others but little less known, among its

members. This performance was to benefit the relatives of the clever and graceful young artist, Paul Gray, who for some years until his early death had been *Fun's* cartoonist. The burlesque was to have been preceded by a new and original comedy by Arthur Sketchley, entitled, "Estelle's Birthday," in which "Messrs. H. J. Irving, J. Hare, H. J. Montague, and J. Clayton" were to have taken part, but apparently it was not performed, another work being substituted for it. "Mr. H. J. Irving" was no doubt *our* Mr. Irving, though there was, at that time, another "Irving" attached to the London theatres. This was a Mr. Joseph Irving, a burlesque actor of some repute. So that when I read of "Mr. Irving" playing a cat in a pantomime, and of "Mr. Irving" singing a capital comic song and dancing an eccentric dance, I imagined, at first, that I had discovered evidences of versatility in a very unsuspected direction upon *our* Mr. Irving's part. But I soon found out that the credit for these performances belonged to the *other* Mr. Irving—one of whose best impersonations, I may say, was that of *Uriah Heep* in "Little Em'ly."

In October, 1867, the St. James's was reopened by Mr. John S. Clarke, the American comedian. The first piece to be performed was "The Widow Hunt," a thing that Mr. Clarke, with his *Major Wellington de Boots*, has made his own. In this, "Mr. Irving impressed the audience most favourably as *Felix Featherleigh*," a kind of light-comedy part. Miss Cavendish, Miss Eleanor Bufton, and Miss Larkin were also engaged here. "The Widow Hunt" was succeeded in a month's time by Maddison Morton's "School of Reform," Mr. Clarke being the Yorkshireman, *Robert Tyke*, and Mr. Irving playing some part not mentioned, but so playing it as, with Miss Bufton, to be set down as "the only two performers worth looking at or listening to in all the company."

Early in the New Year (1868, that is to say) "Dearer than Life," a rather famous domestic drama by Mr. H. J. Byron, was produced at the dead and gone Queen's Theatre. This drama was remarkable chiefly for its characterisation, and, being by Mr. Byron, its dialogue was, of course, clever; but it had an interesting story to set forth, too. The players who helped to tell the story would, could they be gathered together again to-day to re-tell it, be considered a rather remarkable company. Mr. Irving impersonated a type of the time. He played (says my authority, the "Lounger") "a betting gent of the 'Champagne Charley' breed with a great deal of quiet power. Mr. Irving is an admirable 'cad,' he marks the character strongly, but he never over-colours it." The name of this personage was *Bob*

Gassitt. The other principal parts were represented by Mr. Toole, Mr. Lionel Brough (who made a great hit as a drunken old vagabond), Mr. Wyndham (who played the hero), the late Mr. John Clayton, and Miss Hodson (who is now Mrs. Labouchere). This play ran until Easter—a very considerable run in those days and then came a production about which the “Lounger” writes: “‘*Oliver Twist*,’ at the Queen’s, would, perhaps, be the most important of the Easter novelties, if it were not an abject failure.” This was the dramatic version of the novel, arranged by Mr. Oxenford, principally to enable Mr. Toole to enact the *Artful Dodger*. It is still sometimes revived by Mr. Toole (in a form somewhat curtailed, I fancy), although upon its production it met, I read elsewhere, with a “tempestuous reception.” Mr. Irving played *Bill Sikes*, and “would play it very well if it were not for a slight tendency to over-act the part.” Mr. Toole was, of course, the *Dodger*; Mr. Brough, *Bumble*; Mr. John Clayton, *Monks*; the late John Ryder, *Fagin*; Miss Henrietta Hodson, *Oliver*; and Miss Nelly Moore, *Nancy*—the remaining characters being in the hands of Mr. W. H. Stephens, Miss Everard, and others. A Mr. Irving—but I am not sure if it was *our* Mr. Irving or the Mr. Joseph Irving already mentioned—appeared, shortly after, at another vanished playhouse, the Holborn, in a dramatisation by Charles Reade and Dion Boucicault of their well-known novel, “*Foul Play*.” The character impersonated by “Mr. Irving” was that of *Joe Wylie*, the sailor who scuttles the wrong ship—as readers of the wild but fascinating story will remember. Of this performance the “Lounger” writes:—“Mr. Irving has a capital notion of the villainous merchant-mate; his make-up is admirable, and his whole bearing is worthy of the highest praise—but he should subdue a slight tendency to over-act.” Mr. Burnand burlesqued this drama, as he had previously burlesqued the book in *Punch*; and Mr. Irving’s former colleagues at the Queen’s played in it—Mr. Toole, Mr. Lionel Brough, and Mr. Wyndham (whose eccentric dancing created much laughter, I read), as well as Miss Nelly Farren, taking part in the fun. Mr. Irving’s name is next encountered amongst the performers at the Queen’s Theatre, of a sensational drama by Mr. Byron, “*The Lancashire Lass*.” In this, “the leading part” (says the *Illustrated London News*) “is that of *Robert Redburn* (Mr. Henry Irving), an adventurer. It is elaborately written by the author and as elaborately played by the actor, who has achieved no little triumph in his delineation of a complex and difficult character.” Mr. Wyndham played the hero, “a young engineer,” and Mr. Emery (father of Miss Winifred Emery), Mr. Clayton, Mr. Brough, Miss Hodson, and Miss

Moore took part. The title of Mr. Emery's rôle, "*a Party by the Name of Johnson*" gave birth to a catch-phrase of the period.

Early in 1869, "*Not Guilty*," a drama by Mr. Watts Phillips (author of "*The Dead Heart*"), was put on the stage at the Queen's, Mr. Irving playing the hero—one *Robert Arnold*, a locksmith—and being surrounded by much the same company as that mentioned above, Mr. Toole, however, being added. It is in association with Mr. Toole's name that one next comes across Mr. Irving's, for I find him supporting the comedian in "*Dearer than Life*," and other pieces in his repertory, at the Surrey Theatre, in June. In July he was at the Haymarket, playing the villain in a piece, "*All for Money*," by Miss Le Thièrè, the character being called *Captain Robert Fitzhubert*, a very fraudulent person. In August he had joined the Drury Lane company for the production of Boucicault's "*Formosa*," revived not so very long ago at the same house. He played *Compton Kerr* "very well." A little later he gave some "excellent" readings, in conjunction with the late Mr. H. J. Montague, at the Westbourne Hall; and in December he went to the Gaiety to play *Mr. Chevenix* in "*Uncle Dick's Darling*." We seem to touch bottom, as it were, when we read that; we are no longer in pre-historic times.

In April, 1870, the Vaudeville Theatre was opened with a play by Andrew Halliday, "*For Love or Money*," in which Mr. Irving acted "admirably" a kind of impostor, *Alfred Skimmington* by name; and in June came "*Two Roses*," and, of course, *Digby Grant*. In the following year Mr. H. L. Bateman assumed the management of the Lyceum, and Mr. Irving was engaged as leading man, thus beginning his lengthy connection with the theatre wherewith his name will hereafter always be associated. His first part here was that of a young lover, in a kind of fairy spectacle called "*Fanchette, the Will o' the Wisp*." In October he first played *Jingle* in Mr. Albery's version of "*Pickwick*," and in November he electrified London with his *Mathias* in "*The Bells*." It was then that the general public awoke to the fact that in him we had a great actor.

W. S. HUNT.



Deuil de Comédie.*

DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO "STALLS."

(By ALPHONSE DAUDET. Rendered into English by MISS KATHLEEN WATSON.)

"WHAT'S the matter now? Why are you crumpling that newspaper up so wildly? Does the play bore you?"

"Well, hardly. Because I'm not paying any heed to it. . . . It's this article I've just been through, one of those stereotyped things which they spring on you five or six times a year with the sickening monotony of an empty sentimental refrain, like one of those poisonous patriotic roundelays that M. Cooper is murdering our hearing with just now. Oh! that idiotic sentimentality, that misplaced enthusiasm, that lame and small opinion which after all is sure to tumble into the ordinary conventional rut!"

"What on earth is it all about?"

"About that actor B——, who's just lost his daughter, and yet two days afterwards was figuring in a benefit performance."

"Poor fellow!"

"There you are! Now we have it! The journalist pure and simple! Waxing sympathetic over the lot of the agonized father who has to paint and 'crow's foot' himself, stick on a wig and a false front, and play his part for our delectation, after just returning from the side of a grave where the pride of his life lies cold and stiff. Stuff! If the fellow's despair is as great as it is painted, who wants him to come forward again so soon?"

"His manager, of course. He must fulfil his engagement!"

"I don't believe a word of it! Where will you find the manager brute enough to refuse a father the right to indulge in a little legitimate grief for his child? Who wants him to turn up on the boards with his eyes all red and watery? If by any chance such a manager were to be met with, pray where are the judge and jury who would give him his case? Judges are but men after all. Impassive justice does not alone reign supreme in their midst. Charity and humanity squeeze themselves in.

* From "Entre les Frises et la Rampe," published by Dentu, Paris.

As a matter of fact, I cannot even picture to myself the actor who would come forward dressed in that black which is not of the bar or bench, and would say quite simply: 'Gentlemen, my daughter's death has overwhelmed me. It will be quite impossible for me to act again for a fortnight'—well, I cannot believe that the poor fellow would find himself condemned to make amends or pay a fine just because his voice refused to sing or his grief to smile and make others smile."

"It rather strikes me, old man, that you are allowing yourself to be led away by an excessive and not altogether fair sort of feeling in the matter. It jars upon you to see an actor on the boards again so soon after the death of one near to him. Yet you do not rage against the grocer at the street corner, who, the day after his wife's death, serves as usual behind the counter, pounding the sugar and roasting the coffee beans with steady courage. Don't certain shopkeepers, for instance, send out such messages as—'His afflicted widow will take on the business'? That's no invention on the part of petty newspapers. Besides, without needing to consider these egoistic effusions, these cases where the constant pursuit of money has atrophied almost all moral considerations whatever—yet your actor's case is rather the common lot of all of us. Scarcely have we time to stoop to our friend, to the parent lying there dead, when life is there behind us, on our heels, scourging us onward; we must hurry up again, take our place in the ranks, and go our way. That is why it is so sad to watch the crowds in large cities. We brush up against anguish, new bereavements, seen in stealthy tears under heavy veils; voices strike the ear, trembling with curses or with sobs; but it all moves on *quand même*, loses itself in the sweeping tide, only stopping for a moment on the gloomy shores where we weep for our dead who are at rest. In the country it is still more noticeable. The ground must be tilled, the cattle must be fed. Seed time and harvest may not be postponed; the seasons wait for no man. So that when, at the mill, or in the upper room at the farm, the master's last hour has come, everything around him goes its usual way, the carts go out, the cattle come home, in the fields they are sowing the seed whose growth he will never see; scarcely have they laid him away in the little village graveyard before his widow, laying aside her ample burial cloak, will be cleaning out the parlour, lighting the fire, getting the meals ready for the children and servants—her face all tear-swollen the while."

"Quite so! But those are all manual labours, material things, absorbing only the physical side of one. It is the fulfilment of the stern law of labour imposed on man since the beginning of

time. In connection with the idea of grief these necessary labours have nothing repellent in them. But in the actor's work there is that *je ne sais quoi* of ecstasy, *abandon*, frivolity, that generous expression of personal vanity which seems incompatible with genuine grief. His is no trade, it is Art."

"Well, yes, I allow that. But be careful. If the actor who appears on the stage the very day after a bitter loss, so shocks your delicacy that you would like to hiss him off the boards to teach him discretion and good taste, what about the scribbling hack who has to do his quantity in equally painful circumstances? Do you remember that horrible touching scene of Balzac's, where *Rubempré* is writing his ghastly couplets by the glimmer of the funereal tapers round *Coralie's* corpse? Merely a novelist's trick? Well, then, I will tell you of a case in real life about as gruesome as that. I had lately in my possession the letters of one of the most famous writers of the age, who died a few years since. In one of these letters, written towards the end, the then poor poet, sentenced by destiny to constant and excessive travail with his pen, compares himself to a cart-horse 'fallen between shafts,' and remembering the heavy load he had been dragging after him for thirty years, he says how he never earned the right of release or rest for one minute, that even the very week that his mother died he wrote his *feuilleton*, and with that *feuilleton* paid her funeral expenses. I shivered when I read that. I could hardly bear to repeat it, but that the letter from which it is taken is soon to be published with the whole correspondence. Does that make any impression on you? Are you going to slang *him* too? Come, I think not! Yet his case is just such another as your actor's. Where do you draw the line between them? Why may they not share equally in your respect, your compassion?"

Hereupon was one of those pauses which follow an unanswerable argument, and which can only be compared to the want of breath resulting from a blow struck straight at your breast. Presently one of two voices went on :

"Well, yes! I think you're right. It is just possible that this actor who appeared on the stage the day after his daughter's funeral was compelled to do so by some stern necessity of life, like those you were quoting to me just now. But I don't want his action to be singled out for peculiar distinction. I don't want to read the everlasting, heartrending, commonplace article which puts me in an inevitable rage, and which brought about this discussion: 'Poor father! Brave worker! Only fancy! Whilst he sent us into convulsions of laughter, he was thinking of his child, and weeping hidden tears. . . .' Or else this: 'Unhappy woman,

gallant actress, forced to sing, put on fetching glances, to bewitchingly send home the point of a "blue" refrain, while all the time her husband is lying sick to death, and she dare scarcely count on finding him still alive! When one has read that sort of thing five, ten times a year, how can one help getting a little wild? If you only knew the effect these articles have on actors—these overgrown children who always need to be looked at, think of no other thing but what noise or impression they can make, and are for ever posing even under the saddest influences. Deceived as to the public feeling, losing their heads in that false atmosphere, to which they get acclimatized, they succeed in drawing up for themselves a quite mistaken code of honour: 'My daughter died yesterday. Never mind. I have promised to appear in this performance. Appear I will. Professional duty before all things else.' The truth of it is the actor loves acting; he cannot dispense with it. Rest assured that the poet, when he wrote that agonized *feuilleton* mentioned in his letter, wrote it in pain, with anger gnawing at his heart, in a lonely room, which seemed so big and cheerless because of that everlasting loss of his, and where every object reminded him of his misery. The actor, on the contrary, once on the stage, clad in the 'armour' of his part, as they say, thinks no more of his anguish: he has forgotten it for one evening in the intoxication of the lights, the crowd's applause. And it's just because I feel that he has forgotten it, because I feel that in amusing us he was amusing himself immensely too, that, despite all your excellent reasons for it, there is, in his haste to be before the public again, something which disgusts me to the very core of my being. Besides, all actors don't fall under the sway of this brutal and absurd exaggeration of professional duty. For example, there is an anecdote going the rounds about dear old Lafontaine, when he was carrying everything before him at the Gymnase. I don't know if it's true, but it's quite in accordance with the character of the man, whom you know as well as I do. One evening, a few minutes before he was timed to appear on the stage, he got a telegram to say that his old father, who then lived in the suburbs of Paris, was seriously ill, and calling for him incessantly. In the twinkling of an eye, the actor, desperate, already rouged and pencilled, changed his clothes, tore off his wig, rushed from his room, and flew downstairs, deaf to the representations of the manager, the cashier, &c."

"You wretch! Where are you off to? The house is full."

"*Tant pis.* Go on and make a speech. Give them back their money. Change the play——"

"Eut——"

“None of your buts for me! You can’t oblige me to play the fool with a dagger sticking into my heart. To begin with it, I couldn’t do it: All the time I should be thinking of my poor old father dying, and me not with him. I should very probably burst into frantic weeping or rush off in the middle of a scene.”

In vain they implored him, threatened him with an action; it was no use. The actor put on wings, and the Gymnase had to do without him, for that night at least. Well, I think that justifies my views, and is a reproach to all who do not do likewise. Instead of marching up and down the sidewings with a face the wrong side outward, heaving heart-piercing sighs, giving and taking sympathetic hand-shakes, getting himself called “my poor friend” by the whole company, including the prompter, as always happens in similar cases, Lafontaine rushed off to be with his father, saved himself a burning remorse, perhaps, and us the annoyance of seeing in the papers the customary: ‘Poor son! Plucky fellow! Only fancy,’ &c., &c.”

The pretty part of the story is that when he arrived home he found his good old father, as usual, indulging in the nightly game of cards with a neighbour. When the old rascal saw his son he laughed gaily:

“Well, my lad! gave you a fright, eh? But there, I was altogether out of sorts and thoroughly depressed. I was longing to embrace you again, and as, of course, I knew you weren’t acting——. Oh, come, now, don’t bully me. Sit down. We’ll have a good time together.”

I was not aware of this *dénouement*; but, all the same, I insist on thinking that Lafontaine was the right sort of fellow, and that he did well to do as he did.



Condensed Dramas.

No. IX.—THE COTTON (CAKE) KING.

“Each scene we number singly, gathering, one by one,
A web dramatic weaving from threads so often spun,
Villain and victim shuttles, throwing mingled scowls and tears,
Comic relief for filling—these form the (theatrical) woof of years.”

WILLIAM SMALL.

ACT I.

The Good Old Home We Know so Well.

SCENE.—*Mrs. Drayson's Lilac Garden, so called because it is devoted to the cultivation of every other species of theatrical vegetable.*

Silas Kent (discovered, reclining on a garden seat): I am the usual pathetic old dodderer, with a granddaughter upon whom I dote; but through failing memory I have quite forgotten my Lancashire dialect, and so am compelled to adopt the ordinary accent of an Adelphi actor. I earn a precarious living by breaking pipes; it is all, alas! that I am fit for.

Elsie (his granddaughter, enters): I am clothed in pathetic grey and am invariably tearful; so the Works have made me their Pet. I am grateful for the honour, but even that cannot make me happy.

Kent: Elsie, my apple-blossom, I have broken my last pipe, so my work for to-day is done; let us go home.

Elsie (stifles a sob): But you forget, grandfather, we must first enlighten the audience as to the other persons in the play.

Kent: Oh, very well; but it is all quite simple. Mr. Osborn, the hero, loves Hetty, the heroine; and, of course, Mr. Stockley, the villain, also would make her his——

Elsie (starts): What! The villain of a melodrama in love with the heroine! Who would have expected it? *(To herself.)* But woe is me! To think that a villain should be faithless to the maiden he has betrayed. *(Sobs and staggers.)*

Kent: You are distraught; confide in me.

Elsie (recovers herself; with the usual sickly smile): No, no; it is nothing. Merely the passing shudder of an earthquake. *(Kent, relieved, fades away.)*

Tupper, an alleged colour-mixer at the works, who apparently devotes the whole of his time to an assiduous neglect of his duties, enters, and, with the aid of Kitty, a music-hall-stage-struck maid-of-all-work, provide the usual interlude of comic relief. As soon as the audience are sufficiently exhilarated they retire, and the play proceeds.

Richard Stockley, a bold determined villain, with the air of one who would cheerfully break the entire Decalogue in a single act, enters.

Elsie (to him) : Will you marry me ?

Richard (to the audience) : Dear me ! These betrayed persons will always ask such inconvenient questions. (*To her.*) Let us change the subject.

Elsie : My heart is broken. (*Weeps, and staggers off in the approved fashion.*)

Hetty, the heroine, enters.

Richard : Hetty, I have a proposal to make to you. My father, a strange, eccentric creature, declares that he will disinherit me unless I can induce you to become my wife.

Hetty : Preposterous ! Did he not ruin my father, and reduce my mother and myself to abject poverty ?

Richard : Ah, you don't know the governor ; he is a dramatic enthusiast, and will do anything, no matter how ridiculous, for the plot of a play in which his name is mentioned ; hence this stipulation. I don't particularly love you, but will you be mine ?

Hetty : Certainly not. (*Goes into cottage.*)

Jack Osborn (a bounding, beaming, and somewhat burly hero, trips gaily on) : Dick, dear friend, I regard you with that idiotic, gushing friendliness which the hero invariably lavishes upon the villain in the early acts of a melodrama. I bought the Ashton Works, and you were included in the fixtures, so you are still the Manager ; it therefore follows that you are absolutely ignorant of my ordinary business transactions. Allow me, therefore, to inform you that I have cabled to my agent in New York to plunge in cotton—that is why we are all so fluffy.

Richard : But, if you remember, I took the telegram myself, so I know all about it.

Jack (sotto voce, with a knowing wink) : Just so, my boy ; but the audience didn't ; that's why I mentioned it. And now I will drop into metaphor—so literary, you know. Have you observed what invariably happens when an infant is fed upon plum pie ?

Richard : Indigestion, leading to what is known in nursery circles as “ tummy-ache.”

Jack : Just so ; well, that's my condition exactly. I am in

love with the heroine; and although much experience of melodrama has taught me that any hero who would make the heroine his, marks out for himself a tempestuous career, yet I mean to go through with it. She comes; kindly efface yourself.

Richard: I will.

(*Does so.*)

Hetty enters.

Jack: Hetty, do you guess why this somewhat incongruous sundial, plucked from a contiguous manor house, has been planted in your modest cottage garden?

Hetty (with downcast eyes): I do.

Jack (joyfully): Ah! Then let us repeat the good old business and lean against it while I propose to you. (*They lean accordingly.*) I am called the Cotton Cake King; will you be mine?

Hetty: I will, provided you explain to me how you acquired the sobriquet.

Jack: Years ago, before my American accent became fitful, I dealt, vaguely and indefinitely, in cotton. One day a ring was formed for a fight, and thanks to my superior weight I came off the conqueror; so as a tribute to my colossal proportions, due mainly to my energetic assimilation of oleaginous nutriment (literature is cheap to-day), I was called the Cotton Cake King.

Hetty (admiringly): How proud your mother must have been of you.

Jack: She was. When I turned the scale at—no matter how many—stone she swooned with ecstasy.

Hetty: How touching!

Shillinglaw (a battered engine-driver, enters): A'm a wunnerful instance of t' result of t' drink, for a'm t' only person in t' play who inserts his t's plentifully and so preserves t' accent. Muster Osborn, will ye tak back t' sack thou hast gi'en me?

Jack (firmly): I will not; you are fully and completely discharged.

Shill.: Then a'll pa'ay tha oot. Ha! ha! (*Leaves revengefully.*)

Jack (wriggling, laughing, and skipping with joy): I feel so happy, Hetty, that I must invent some excuse to leave you. I know—I will pretend to go to look for somebody—anybody—why not Elsie! (*Dances a pas seul, and ambles off.*)

Mr. Fonscca (enters): I am an unconventional and comparatively noseless Hebrew. Will you be mine?

Hetty (thoughtfully): Have you ever observed that, in Adelphi melodrama, everyone proposes to the heroine in the first act? I never noticed a similar superabundance of offers under like circumstances at the St. Ja—but no matter.

Mr. Fon. : The point has not escaped me. It is due to structural exigencies. (*Eloquently.*) 'Tis thus we weave the woof and warp the weft, until the eventful moment approaches when the ruddy wine-cup is ripe for the Shears of Fate and the Handcuffs of the Detective. Pardon my literary flavour, and be my bride.

Hetty : I cannot ; I love Another.

Mr. Fon. : Oh, that persistent Another. I meet him in every play. However, as I am on the present occasion a sympathetic character, I will stifle my heart-throbs. (*Thumps his waisteoat.*)

Jaek re-enters, aimlessly.

Mr. Fon. (to him) : Sell me Ashton Works ; you are ruined.

Jaek (leaves off gambolling and staggers) : Impossible.

Mr. Fon. (produces a newspaper) : Read that, and be convinced.

Jaek (takes it, and reels) : What do I see ! The good old newspaper paragraph which always carries prompt theatrical conviction ! Fonseca, the works are yours. Hetty, farewell for ever !

Hetty : Must I give you up ?

Jaek (alarmed, sotto voce) : Good gracious me ! No ! You are no longer at the St. Ja— ; in *this* Temple of Art a faithless heroine would promptly empty the pit. You must say you will wait.

Hetty : I will.

Jaek (resuming his heroic tones) : And where I was once master I will now be man. (*Confidentially, with a wink.*) I shall really be a kind of manager, but "man" makes a better line to bring down the curtain. (*Which accordingly descends.*)

ACT II.

The Nightingale's Trill.

SCENE I.—*A wood inhabited by a twenty-horse-power steam nightingale, who sings aggressively at intervals ; mill hands, male and female, who are apparently prepared to do anything except follow their avowed calling, are indulging in a beanfeast. The comic relief delight them with an "al freseo" music-hall entertainment, and they are enjoying themselves hugely with the help of the ear-splitting nightingale, when suddenly that irritating bird begins to imitate a cornet ; this so maddens the hands that they immediately take refuge in an adjacent pub.*

Richard and Elsie enter.

Elsie (as usual) : Will you marry me ?

Richard (reproachfully) : How can you ask me such a question when the armour-plated songster is singing so sweetly ?

Elsie : My heart is again broken. I will wander. (*Does so.*)

Shillinglaw (enters) : Ah want t' vengeance on t' Muster Osborn.

Richard : Then tell the hands that he has betrayed Elsie. Their ethical standard is so exalted, especially when soaked in beer, that they will immediately lynch him.

Skill. : Ah will. (*Leaves to do it.*)

Richard retires up. Jack and Hetty stroll in.

Jack : Let us have a love scene.

Hetty : We will. Listen to the mellifluous blasts from the iron-throated caroller.

Jack (to himself) : Oh, d——n that bird ! Anything to escape it. Ah ! I know. I will, as usual, go and look for Elsie. (*Docs so.*)

Richard (comes forward) : Hetty, allow me to insinuate slyly that Jack Osborn is Elsie's betrayer.

Hetty (proudly) : That I will never believe. (*Stalks off.*)

Richard : Not at first, but you will in time. I know the ways of heroines. (*Effaces himself.*)

Elsie re-enters, weeping.

Jack (follows her) : Elsie, you are in trouble ; confide in me.

Elsie : You are just the sort of person to whom a timid, gentle girl would be likely to impart the shameful secret of her life, so I will tell you all. I have been more or less betrayed.

Jack : Then regard me as your brother, and in order to give colour to the lies of the villain, let us group ourselves lovingly. (*They do so.*)

Hetty steals on, watches them, then clutches what is supposed to be her heart in the approved I-see-it-all manner. The nightingale causes the welkin to ring.

Jack : Oh, that confounded bird again ; he compels me to leave hurriedly, without excuse. (*Leaves accordingly.*)

Hetty (comes forward) : So Jack is false.

Elsie : No, not Jack, but Richard.

Hetty (joyfully, and with a selfish disregard of Hetty's feelings) : Then all is well. (*Nightingale turns on full steam ahead, scene changes*), and

SCENE II.—The Office at Ashton Works, *walks on.*

Mr. Fonseca, Jack, and Richard enter.

Mr. Fon. : Mr. Osborn, you have managed these works so splendidly that I am going to send you to America. (*Leaves.*)

Jack : Then I must have two hundred pounds.

Richard : I will lend it to you. (Gives him notes.)

Jack (*places notes in safe*) : I will now take myself off, in order to—to look for Elsie. (Goes out.)

Richard opens the safe with a duplicate key and does some wonderful sleight of hand with the bank notes. The operation is a little difficult to understand ; but it is clear that it will furnish indisputable proof that Jack Osborn is a thief.

Hetty enters.

Richard : Why are you here ?

Hetty : Well, upon my word, I don't know ; but as the heroine is bound to be on in every scene, I am certain that there is an explanation, if one only knew it. When I was at the St. Ja——

Richard : Enough ! Once more I ask you to be mine.

Hetty : Never.

Richard : Then allow me to inform you that in a few moments Jack will be slaughtered in cold blood by the mill hands.

(Leaves stealthily and locks her in.)

Hetty, in a great distress, sobs, cries, beats the wall, smashes the glass, and, in short, does everything but follow the only sane and obvious course—namely, open the window—the room being on the ground floor—and walk out. Scene turns a somersault and resolves itself into

Scene III.—Outside the Office.

Shillinglaw (*enters*) : As a'm a haand, dishcharged for t' droonkenness, a've naw difficulty in getting appointed for one t' night only to t' responsible poast of t' gaat keeper to t' works.

Richard : Are the hands handy ?

Shill. : Trew to their t' practice of never comin' to t' mill till after t' working hours, they are round t' corner pantin' for t' blood. *(Richard chuckles as only a villain can.)*

Elsie enters.

Richard : Why are you here ?

Elsie : Because I am the Pet of the Works, and to ask you to marry me.

Richard : I cannot just at present ; but I will console you with a struggle. *(Forces her to the ground.)*

Jack (*enters*) : Obviously you are her betrayer ; therefore unhand her and let her go into the office.

Richard : Why not send her home ?

Jack : Because I shall find her presence in the office very useful later on. *(Elsie enters the office.)*

Richard : Jack Osborn, your time has come.

Hands enter, divide into sections, and become unanimously threatening.

Jack (starts and strikes an attitude): I gather from your incoherent murmurs that you regard me as Elsie's betrayer.

(Hands murmur in the affirmative.)

Jack (opens the office door, and shows Hetty supporting Elsie): You see those ladies? Their presence proves conclusively that the betrayer of Elsie is Richard Stockley.

(Hands, instantaneously convinced, transfer their homicidal attentions to Richard.)

Jack (guarding Richard): No; immediate murder is too lenient a punishment for this wretched Richard. Let him marry the girl; her tears and lamentations will do the rest.

Curtain.

ACT III.—Love's Last Lift.

SCENE I.—Mr. Fonseca's Garden.

Comic relief enter and explain, more or less humorously, with the assistance of a comic Curate, that Jack has been absent in America for fifteen months, and is supposed to be dead. This done, they depart.

Richard (enters and addresses the audience): I have confined Jack in a madhouse in New York. I had no difficulty in getting him incarcerated. I merely mentioned that he was a melodramatic hero, and they took him at once. I have also so arranged matters that even if he should come back alive, he will be charged with every variety of felony known to the criminal law. You will, no doubt, perceive that I am no half-hearted villain.

Hetty enters.

Richard: My father is dead, and has made the usual idiotic, impossible will; so I shall be unable to inherit his property unless I marry or outlive you.

Hetty: Then why not kill me? *(Enters house.)*

Richard: Not a bad idea that. I'll try it. *(Leaves, maturing a murderous scheme.)*

Jack (disguised as the captain of a penny steamer, with a beard, enters): Back once more in the vicinity of my beloved. *Yearns at the windows.)*

Mr. Fonseca enters.

Jack (offers his hand, which Mr. Fonseca declines to take): You believe me guilty? Then listen! *(Proceeds to pour forth an*

incredible, interminable story. After about half an hour or so of this stream, Mr. Fonseca, reduced to desperation, interrupts him.)

Fon: Stop, stop, anything to dam this deluge of dialogue. I believe everything—you are the most innocent man on earth!

(Scene changes.)

SCENE II.—Shillinglaw's Ground-floor Garret.

Shillinglaw (discovered): Ma wife has got t' mumps or something else catching. Ah mun hae t' brass for t' trained nurse.

Richard (enters): Induce Hetty to enter your wife's sick room, and fifty pounds is yours. *(Leaves.)*

Hetty (enters): I am broken-hearted, but although without an income of my own, I am clothed in expensive costumes and provided with ample funds to enable me to act as the Lady Bountiful of the village. I presume that, as I live in his house, it is Mr. Fonseca who supplies me with money, but happily he is a sympathetic character, and so it does not give rise to scandal. Shillinglaw, here is a basket of assorted groceries carefully selected for the consumption of a patient suffering from something catching. Let me take them to your wife.

Shillinglaw, sorely tempted, at first consents, but afterwards repents, and finally, after an admirably acted scene, turns Hetty out of the house. Scene changes.

SCENE III.—A Beer-shop by Moonlight.

Shillinglaw meets an Elderly Gentleman with a Gun.

Shillinglaw: What dost ta want here?

E.G.W.G: Well, I've rented the shooting down here, but ordinary game is scarce, so I'm taking my chance of a pot shot at a villain. If successful, my explanation will be that when Silas Kent died he said "Remember." That is all; and now let us indulge in irrelevant dialogue while they set the next scene. *(They do so.)*

SCENE IV.—Cotton-printing rooms, lift, and office. *The hands, strange to say, are discovered at work; but after a couple of minutes of arduous labour they appear to have had enough of it, for they stop the machines and leave hurriedly. Richard is seated in the office, carrying on the business and meditating villainy.*

Shillinglaw (enters the office): Ah've a letter—t' good auld letter—which proves tha' villainy. Give me fifty pun for 't, and let t' play proceed. *(They discuss the subject.)*

Hetty (enters the mill apartment, where she is unperceived by them. Meditatively): Of course, my presence in this, the great scene of the play, is indispensable; but I wish I had been furnished with some adequate motive for coming here. It is true

that the female portion of the comic relief declares that she fetched me from Shillinglaw's cottage; but as I must have left before she arrived this is obviously absurd. And, again, why bring me here? It may be urged that it was in order that I might meet the hero, whose arrival, as it is the talk of the village, I must have heard of by this time; but, I repeat, why here? Then the conduct of the hero puzzles me. He rushes off, notwithstanding his accentuated yearnings, without a word to me, who was close by, in order that he might immediately settle accounts with the villain; and yet, although in the meantime I have been all over the village, I have arrived here before him. He can't have gone to look for Elsie as of old, because, as I mentioned to the villain in the last scene but one, she is now reposing beneath the usual grassy mound. It is all so strange. Ah! they managed things so differently at the St. Ja——, but no matter, I daresay the audience won't notice it.

(Richard, in the office, after a prolonged controversy with Shillinglaw, pays him the money, and then proceeds to strangle him. Shillinglaw audibly protests.)

Hetty (starts): What's that? (Rushes through the lift shaft, which by an architectural eccentricity, peculiar to theatrical cotton works, forms the only passage from the mills to the office.)

Richard (ceases to strangle Shillinglaw, who very wisely departs): Why are you here?

Hetty: That is just the question which is tormenting me.

Richard (running over the situation to himself): Shillinglaw knows she is here, and he is my enemy, and would, if he could, most willingly denounce me. So now to commit a crime, the elucidation of which would not baffle the most pig-headed rural policeman! (Thrusts Hetty into the shaft of the lift and rings the bell to warn the lift-man—a hand who, oddly enough, is not only the sole workman left in the building, but presumably never leaves his post night or day.)

Hetty shrieks with alarm, and, after carefully and most injudiciously shutting the opposite gate, her only means of egress, proceeds to batter it with her hands.

The lift slowly descends (great sensation): it comes lower down (still more sensation); and the flattening out and consequent annihilation of the heroine seem imminent, when the lift man, evidently one of those gifted creatures who can see through a deal flooring, very judiciously brings the machine to a standstill.

Jack (rushes on, grasps the situation and the iron door, which he bends back as though it were made of pasteboard; thus Hetty is rescued, and the lift descends and reaches the bottom with a realistic thud).

Curtain.

ACT IV.—The Gun that is Not Fired.

Scene: The Ruined Tower, with Mr. Fonseca's House in the foreground.

Richard (enters, and, as is his wont, takes his audience into his confidence): Any ordinary villain, with an easily proveable charge of attempted murder hanging over him, would have long since fled the country; but I am a persevering, hopeful, idiotic villain. I have even gone so far as to give Shillinglaw, the only man who can prove my wickedness, into custody. And although experience of melodrama should have taught me that it never pays to falsely accuse a hero in the last act, yet I mean to make the attempt.

Elderly Gentleman with a Gun appears at the back, and points it at Richard.

(Audience breathless, thinking the Time has Come.)

A Voice (presumably at the back, whispers to the would-be Sportsman): Forbear! Know thou that this is the close time for villains.

(E. G. W. G. apologises, shoulders his weapon and melts away.)

Jack and Kitty enter.

Richard: A warrant is out against you, and here come the police to execute it.

Police enter with Shillinglaw.

Shillinglaw: Na, na, Richard Stockley is t' guilty mon. Muster Osborn is innercent.

Richard: Nonsense, who will believe what you say?

Mr. Fonseca: I will, and do! I believe every word uttered by this disreputable-looking but manifestly honest engine-driver. I am a magistrate for the county, and I will now hold the usual informal open-air Court of Justice. Jack Osborn, I pronounce you guiltless of all the charges brought against you in this or in any other piece.

(Jack and Hetty embrace and Richard is led out in chains.)

Curtain.

W. R. W.

Plays of the Month.

“DAN’L DRUCE.”

A New and Original Drama, in three acts, by W. S. GILBERT.

Revived at the Prince of Wales’s, on Tuesday afternoon, February 20th, 1894.

Sir Jasper Combe ..	Mr. WILLIAM RIGNOLD.	Joe Ripley	Mr. F. W. PERMAIN.
Dan’l Druce	Mr. W. MOLLISON.	Sergeant	Mr. C. MEDWIN.
Reuben Haines	Mr. SIDNEY VALENTINE.	Soldier	Mr. L. WALLACE.
Geoffrey Wynyard ..	Mr. FULLER MELLISH.	Dorothy	Miss NANCY M’INTOSH.
Marple	Mr. JULIAN CROSS.		

It was worth while reviving “Dan’l Druce,” even for one afternoon only, just to prove how easily an actor may be led astray! Not a dozen actors on the stage but would regard Mr. W. S. Gilbert’s churlish, scowling, miserly misanthrope, whom the love of a child converts to man, as a fine memorable part. Yet as a matter of fact what is he? During three-fourths of the piece, little better than a dreary old bore! Looking back upon the original performance at the Haymarket eighteen years ago, one recalls without effort little or nothing of the admirably-conceived process of conversion. The tender domesticities of *Dan’l*, and *Dorothy*, the pretty maiden left in exchange for his hoarded gold, and her swarthy simple-hearted sailor, Geoffrey Wynyard, have faded from the picture. Tints so delicate cannot resist the bleaching influence of even twenty years. And the one thing which stands out is the first-act figure of the outcast miser in his tumble-down hut on the Norfolk coast.

Artistic virtue clings to him through this period of vice, of squalor and picturesque dirt. His haggard face and gleaming eyes and fierce demeanour, his *Gaspard*-greed of gold, arrest attention and inspire respect. But with the growth of benevolence and loss of hair this same artistic virtue goes out of him, and by the third act he is become no more, no less, than a prosing old blacksmith with a bald head. The fault is purely Mr. Gilbert’s. The story is right, it is the treatment that is wrong. Even Saul of Tarsus had failed of an audience, had he never tired of dinning into every ear what befell him on the road to Damascus. Never was a gentleman so “inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity,” as the ex-miser *Dan’l Druce*.

He is as fond of reciting his "call to grace" as any Revivalist "Converted Clown." Now it's a dull dog that tells the story of his life to every soul he meets; and this besetting weakness is fatal to *Dan'l Druce*. Not the superb intensity of Mr. Hermann Vezin, in his prime, flanked as it was by the idyllic grace and tenderness of Miss Marion Terry and Mr. Forbes Robertson as the Gilbertian *Alden* and *Evangeline*, could meet and defeat that charge of dulness in 1876; and they were giants in those days!

In choosing *Dan'l* for a "star" part, therefore, Mr. Mollison fell into a trap. He was misled by the chance it offers of remaining *en évidence* throughout. He had forgotten that the shrewd actor—the character whom the audience loves—is he who comes in to crown the situation, not he who labours eternally to create it. Still, that invaluable first act, touched as it is with the glow of romance, proved Mr. Mollison an actor of fervour, feeling, and range. The rich, full voice he is fortunate enough to possess rang tellingly throughout this stormy scene, and the climax, the discovery of the little child beside his rifled hoard, was gripped with genuine power. "Touch not the child! It is the Lord's gift!" used to thrill the house, trumpeted in those clarion vibrant tones of Mr. Vezin's, and Mr. Mollison's effect was every whit as fine. But the real triumph of the afternoon rested elsewhere.

In the character of *Reuben Haines*, the Cavalier sergeant, "full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard," Mr. Gilbert has achieved a fantastic worthy to stand beside *Antient Pistol*, or the yet more ancient *Bobadil*. A thrasonical ruffian, half bully, half craven, with a trick of epigram and paradox, and a vocabulary as long as the bow he habitually draws, *Reuben* is a true original—whom no one has hitherto rendered plausible. Mr. Odell, fired with the spirit of a Hablot Browne or a Cruikshank, pictured him as a compound of *Smike* and *Sir Mulberry Hawk*. With truer art Mr. Mackintosh, in the curious revival at the old Court—when Miss Fortescue was the simple Dorothy! and Mr. Charles Hawtrey, Geoffrey the fervent and romantic!—suggested a seventeenth-century mercenary, a *John Saxon*, with a craftier tongue and less genius for war. But Mr. Sidney Valentine gets still nearer the truth. His *Reuben* is a daring study in contrasts. *Reuben* is a complex creature. He allies the braggart with the spy. His treachery and malignity must wear a bluff and honest look. To compass these contradictions Mr. Valentine artfully employs a vein of sinister comedy peculiar to himself, and if he does not invariably reconcile one phase with another, he gets so near success in a terribly difficult task that the revival stands excused and even justified, by reason of his presence in the cast. Mr. William Rignold, a bluff, bold actor of

the impulsive old school, made a welcome return to the London stage as the remorseful Cavalier, *Sir Jasper Combe*; and Mr. Fuller Melish made a manly *Geoffrey*, and Miss McIntosh a dainty and sweet-looking *Dorothy*, with a sense of comedy, if not of sentiment. But we who have seen Miss Marion Terry and Mr. Forbes Robertson in these parts may be excused for doubting if we shall ever see the real *Geoffrey* and *Dorothy* again.

“THE NEW BOY.”

A new and original Farcical Comedy in three Acts, by ARTHUR LAW.

First produced in London at Terry's, on Wednesday evening, 21st February, 1894.

Archibald Rennick ..	Mr. W. GROSSMITH.	Mr. Stubber	Mr. T. A. PALMER.
Doctor Candy, LL.D. ..	Mr. J. BEAUCHAMP.	Mrs. Rennick	Miss G. HOMFREY.
Felix Roach	Mr. J. D. BEVERIDGE.	Nancy Roach	Miss MAY PALFREY.
Théodore d' Brizac ..	Mr. SYDNEY WARDEN.	Susan	Miss ESME BERINGER.
Bullock Major	Mr. K. DOUGLAS.		

The measure of enjoyment over “Vice Versâ” is the measure of delight in “The New Boy.” The laugh first awakened by poor transformed *Mr. Bultitude* and his countless agonies, while wearing the features and body of his son, is revived by Mr. Rennick during his short spell of schoolboy life. For this farce is merely a frame for Mr. Weedon Grossmith's portrait of a second *Mr. Bultitude*, in knickerbockers, a sailor blouse, and a man-o'-war's-man's cap. And what Mr. Grossmith can look and be in such a plight no pen can describe.

To save his elderly-looking wife and himself from ruin, this youthful-looking husband consents to wear “the lovely garnish of a boy,” and pass as her son. His stature, face, and figure assist—indeed suggest—the deception. He puts off the old man and puts on the new by the simple doffing and donning of clothes, and with the assumption of blouse and knickerbockers behold *Mr. Bultitude* the second, a harassed man in a trying position, endeavouring to surmount undignified obstacles by the use of arguments and language hopelessly at variance with his childish dress and look.

Pitiful incongruity is the mainspring of artistic farce. Think of Mr. Pinero's “Magistrate” and “Dandy Dick.” In them you have—with, of course, infinitely finer art—precisely the same means employed. Worthy gentlemen, embodiments of respectability and authority, by their own foolishness brought to a pathetic pass of humiliation and temporary misery. But nothing they suffer, and no woebegone picture they present, can compare with the ludicrous effects achieved by “The New Boy.” Indeed, since “The Private Secretary”—another person ostensibly entitled to respect—was kicked and hustled and starved, there

has been nothing so funny on the stage as this married man in a sailor suit, who is patted on the head, dandled on the knee, tossed in blankets, forced to play Rat in a game which he wins if the "Terriers" don't hit him with boots ten times in two minutes—"but they always win!" is his pathetic conclusion—threatened with "paddy whack," and coerced into stealing apples, for which he gets a thrashing from the farmer and is condemned by a magistrate to ten strokes with a birch.

As a play much might be said against "The New Boy." At many moments it is dull, and the last act in particular sadly hangs fire. But whenever Mr. Grossmith is on the stage the laughter is incessant, the humour irresistible, and luckily Mr. Grossmith is not very often out of sight. Another capital performance is that of Mr. Beauchamp as *Dr. Candy*. He diffuses a perceptibly chilling atmosphere of impositions and canes. Then Mr. Kenneth Douglas is as fresh and boyish a schoolboy as even Mr. Hamilton Bell in "Vice Versâ;" in other words, he is the boy he plays; and Miss May Palfrey is an ingenious little schoolgirl flirt; while Miss Esmé Beringer does admirably as a pert housemaid. The acting all round is, in fact, worthy of the farce, which again is not unworthy of the boards on which "Sweet Lavender" ran for years, or of the excellent comedian whose peculiar humour it so successfully employs.

"THE HEIRS OF RABOURDIN."

A Comedy in three Acts, by EMILE ZOLA, translated by A. T. de MATROS.

First produced in London at the Opera Comique, on Friday evening, 23rd February, 1891.

Rabourdin Mr. JAMES WELCH. Chapuzot Mr. HARDING COX. Dominique Mr. C. M. HALLARD. Ledoux Mr. DOUGLAS GORDON. Dr. Morgue Mr. CHARLES GOODHART.		Isaac Mr. F. NORREYS CONNELL. Vaussard Mrs. ARTHUR AYERS. Fiquet Mrs. LOIS ROYD. Eugénie Miss LENA DENE. Charlotte Miss MARY JOCELYN.
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The Independent Theatre Society have certainly scored one. Their critics—not the thick and thin supporters of the movement, but the somewhat sceptical "independents" of the critical band—have for months and months cried out for comedy. "You harrow us, you revolt us," they protest; "you put on plays which obviously no manager in his senses would dream of producing. We can't tell if there be good in your purpose or no. Show us the other side of the picture before you claim our good word. Blood and horrors and disease are not what we want. Comedy is the thing; produce comedy, and we and the public will support you." And at last, in answer to this appeal, Mr. Grein produces Zola's "Heirs of Roubourdin!"

The belated answer is a crushing one. Never again will a

single voice be raised for Independent "comedy." "The Heirs" would satisfy the cravings of a lifetime. Anything sooner than humour like this, than another such "approximation to life," which comedy is understood to be. Sooner the Whitechapel intrigue and naked barbarism of "Thérèse Raquin," sooner the nightmare terrors of "Ghosts," sooner anything with a note of drama, a backbone of motive, a touch of naturalness in it. Imagine three acts of pull devil, pull baker, between a reputed miser with not a sou in the safe, and a crowd of sycophantic nephews and nieces eager to outvie one another in currying favour to get appointed his heir; three acts, during which nothing witty is said, nothing funny is done, unless it be accounted funny to forcibly physic the wretched *Rabourdin* during a sham illness designed to extract money from the expectant crew; three acts, at the end of which matters are precisely in the same condition as at the opening of the piece; three acts of childish nonsense sufficiently futile to provoke an even Independent audience to open derision.

It would be interesting to hear what Emile Zola thought of the experiment. He could surely have no faith in so witless a reflection of Molière's "Le Malade Imaginaire," so feeble a hash of the best situations in Ben Jonson's "Volpone." Indeed, a man of his sturdy common-sense might well have been expected to sympathise with the scornful verdict of the Parisian audience which hooted it off the boards twenty years ago—if not to reach Charles Lamb's heroic level in the matter of Mr. H——, and actually join the hooters. But, countenanced by the author or no, it is certain that the production was a dreary mistake, intelligible only as Mr. Grein's last word on the question of comedy as a fit and proper entertainment for his Independent patrons.

The acting called for little comment. Mr. James Welch, whose reputation was practically made by his starveling *Lick-cheese* in Mr. Bernard Shaw's Independent play "Widowers' Houses," worked very hard but to little purpose as maltreated Moribund; and Mr. Harding Cox provoked some merriment as a hale octogenarian who now and then recalled *Gunnion* in "The Squire."

“ MRS. DEXTER.”

A farce, in three acts, by J. H. Darnley.

First produced at the Strand Theatre, on Wednesday evening, 28th February, 1894.

Major Kildare, M.P.	Mr. CHAS. HAWTREY.	Fulton	Mr. S. LASCELLES.
Frank Fairfield, Q.C.	Mr. LIONEL WALLACE.	James	Mr. ALEC MACKENZIE.
Henry Thornton, Q.C.	Mr. WILFRED DRAYCOTT	Mrs. Dexter	Miss FANNY BROUGH.
The Hon. Timothy Townsend	Mr. GORDON HARVEY.	Mrs. Kildare	Miss HELEN CONWAY.
Reginald Dexter, M.P.	Mr. W. F. HAWTREY.	Mrs. Thornton	Miss EVA WILLIAMS.
Mr. Paxton	Mr. ERNEST COSHAM.	Miss O'Hara	Miss ALICE MANSFIELD.
		Marie	Miss INA GOLDSMITH.

Should one judge a play by its weakest point or its strongest? Put it in another way. Should the dreary dulness of two acts and a half be atoned for by ten minutes of good sound comedy, or should that short breathing space in Paradise—such paradise as modern farce affords!—heighten the distress engendered by previous measureless fatigue? It is a nice question, and one upon the answer to which everything depends in Mr. Darnley's intricate farcical Divorce case of *Dexter v. Dexter* and Kildare, which for just ten nights held the stage at the Strand. For there are just ten minutes of excellent humour and human nature, immediately prior to the fall of the curtain, whereas all that goes before had been better written in sand.

The idea is not a new one. It is at least as old as John Parry and Mr. Corney Grain. A story is being told, when a situation is reached, involving a dozen more or less antagonistic moods, each one of which is thenceforth disclosed, illustrated, and emphasised by a few familiar and appropriate bars of music. In this instance, the situation involves two people at daggers drawn, a wronged, yet not too deeply wronged, husband, and an indignant, yet not too indignant, wife. Upon rather flimsy evidence the former has consented to institute a divorce suit against the latter, a suit which none of the counsel engaged in the case find it to their interest to pursue. In hopes, therefore, that a reconciliation may ensue, these cunning Q.C.'s—with small regard for legal etiquette—contrive, on the eve of the trial, to lock the petitioner and respondent in one room and await the issue—and there is the situation.

Madame laboriously assumes unconcern. Monsieur meditates. Each overplays indifference. The silence grows oppressive. Madame takes refuge at the piano. And Satan finds some mischievous tunes for idle hands to play. The tender chords of “Home, Sweet Home,” float out upon the air. *Mr. Dexter* leaps to his feet in a rage and impolitely utters meaning monosyllables, which provokes the strains of “’E dunno where ’e are.” The faithful piano interprets and records the changing moods of both, as asperities soften and tenderness grows, until “Darby and Joan”

pronounces the reconciliation complete, when round the doors bob the heads of the wily Q.C.'s, and the case of *Dexter v. Dexter and Kildare* is at a legally inglorious end.

Happy they who care for the perfection of comedy acting and did not miss this one delicious glimpse of Miss Fanny Brough. Her humour was entrancing, her naturalness supreme. Nor should Mr. W. F. Hawtrey, as the aggrieved and relenting husband, be passed without a cordial word of praise, for he, too, played with a nice touch and admirable sense of character. But the main plot of the piece was clumsy, and neither Mr. Charles Hawtrey's quiet humour, nor Miss Brough's untiring energy, could distract attention from its witlessness and want of all proportion. After the first night Mr. Edouin was introduced into the piece as a blackmailer, originally very often heard about but never, never seen, and his quaint low comedy lightened the heavy humours of the farce considerably. One actress beside Miss Brough deservedly won favour with the audience, Miss Eva Williams, whose *Judith Shakespeare* a week or two before in a graceful trifle by Alec Nelson—produced at an injudicious *matinée* of the Society of British Dramatic Art—attracted attention, and whose grace and intense earnestness in "Mrs. Dexter" increases the interest then aroused in her future.

"THE BEST MAN."

A New Farce, in three acts, by RALPH R. LUMLEY.

First produced at Toole's Theatre, on Tuesday Evening, 6th March, 1894.

Sir Lovel Gage	Mr. JOHN BILLINGTON.	Pemble	Mr. F. J. ARLTON.
Price Puttlow	Mr. J. L. TOOLE.	Mrs. Montaubyn ..	Miss BEATRICE LAMB.
Allen Skifford	Mr. C. M. LOWNE.	Brenda Gage	Miss FLORENCE FORDYCE.
Walter Brewer	Mr. E. A. COVENTRY.	Ada Jevons-Bailey	Miss CORA POOLE.
Minch	Mr. GEORGE SHELTON.	Nina Skifford	Miss ALICE KINGSLEY.
Williams	Mr. CHAS. BRUNTON.	Sarah Spooner	Miss ELIZA JOHNSTONE.

One illustrious lady, we all know, came to grief over a Diamond Necklace; and now, a hundred years later, just the time for history to repeat itself, Mr. Ralph Lumley exhibits another, of his own discovery. *Mrs. Montaubyn*—this Marie Antoinette up-to-date—although "Monte" among her intimates, can be no descendant of the famous millionaire of that name, for she is as poor as a chapel mouse. Living as she does in a country where poverty is a crime, naturally it was through that poverty that she got into trouble, and in losing her head stood in danger of losing a husband as well. And this was how it came about.

Monte boasts beauty, ample charms, and that extensive and peculiar knowledge which (*teste Mephistopheles*) all widows

possess. With these she rekindles the lukewarm embers of *Sir Lovel Gage's* bluff and middle-aged affections, and presents him with the handsome balance of her life. He, not to be behind-hand, retorts with a lovely diamond necklace. And they are engaged. But like the farmer with the claret, they "get no forrarder." For at the altar these diamonds must be worn, and *Monte* within a week of the gift has them not! To oblige a scapegrace brother she conveyed them whither "the less thrifty among the poorer classes go at the end of the week"—not "to church?" as her confidante and future stepdaughter guilelessly enquires—and there they lie, when Mr. Lumley introduces the distracted widow, on the eve of her frequently postponed wedding.

The trap is a neat one, and Mr. Lumley handles it deftly. Thus, the money to redeem them is raised just in time to be too late. *Mr. Price Puttlow*, the best man, becomes the owner of the necklace, which he designs for the now desperate bride. She, stealthily journeying home after her fruitless errand, involves him—an unknown travelling companion—in a breach of the bye-laws of the railway company over which he presides. And, through *Monte's* giving her maid's name to the railway officials in preference to her own, *Mr. Puttlow* presently finds himself seriously compromised with an unknown grim domestic of forbidding aspect, whom the local station-master-intends to marry. The revelation of his identity clears the air. Circumstances alter cases. What was an insult before, *Mr. Minch* now regards as a mark of favour. "'E's our Chairman; it was an 'onour, *Sarah*, an 'onour." *Monte*, the discreet, holds her tongue. *Puttlow* is mystified into holding his. *Sarah* and *Minch*, from sordid motives of advancement, hold theirs. The necklace at last reaches the bride's hands—and neck. And the wedding proceeds.

With Mr. Toole for the perturbed and perplexed railway magnate, it is easy to imagine that the farce yields many a laugh. But the cleverness of it lies neither in its provision of a telling part for a favourite (and not too easily fitted) actor, nor in its comic situations.

What is best and really admirable is a general deftness, isolation of idea, development, and dialogue; a deftness which attains a Pineronian polish and subtlety in the unostentatious evolution of all *Monte's* and *Puttlow's* troubles from the very occurrences that they most desired—proof positive that Mr. Lumley has a shrewd eye for what Mr. Hardy calls the little ironies of life.

As is not uncommon in plays of this kind, the minor characters

stand out with greatest prominence. For over them the author is not hard put to it to maintain an air of consistency. Thus, nothing of the kind could be better than the concertina-playing *Minch*, and his cross-grained *Sarah*—played with rare quaintness and comic intensity by Mr. Shelton and Miss Eliza Johnstone. Whereas the all-important *Puttlow*, diverting as he always was with Mr. Toole's personality at his back, suffered from vagueness and blurred outlines. *Monte* is, of course, the part of the piece—a part obviously written for Mrs. John Wood or Miss Fanny Brough. Hysterics, terror, elation, despair, require an actress of fiery method, which Miss Beatrice Lamb has not. In her own majestically magnificent way, however, she is effective enough, and in contrast with the piquant prettiness of Miss Florence Fordyce, Miss Alice Kingsley, and Miss Cora Poole—whose comedy has a note of originality in it—Miss Lamb is truly regal, and so carries one step further the comparison between *Monte* and that hapless Queen who was also the heroine of a romance of a Diamond Necklace.

“THE COTTON KING.”

A drama in four acts, by SUTTON VANE.

First produced at the Adelphi Theatre, on Saturday evening, March 10th, 1894.

Jack Osborn	Mr. CHARLES WARNER.	Peter Bell	Mr. HOWARD RUSSELL.
Richard Stockley ..	Mr. EDWARD O'NEILL.	Phillips	Mr. TRIPP.
De Fonseca	Mr. HERBERT FLEMING.	Inspector Graham ..	Mr. WILLIAMSON.
James Shillinglaw ..	Mr. CHARLES CARTWRIGHT.	Mrs. Drayson	Mrs. DION BOUCICAULT.
Benjamin Tupper ..	Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS.	Elsie Kent	Miss HALL CAINE.
Rev. Mr. Ponder ..	Mr. LENNOX PAWLE.	Kitty Marshall	Miss ALMA STANLEY.
Dr. Gilbert	Mr. LYSTON LYLE.	Mrs. Martin Smith ..	Miss KATE KEARNEY.
Silas Kent	Mr. JOHN CARTER.	Susan	Miss HARRISON.
George Piper	Mr. W. NORTHCOTE.	Hetty Drayson	Miss MARION TERRY.

Mr. Sutton Vane, the new Adelphi dramatist, has several things to contend against. First, there is the overshadowing reputation of the one and only master of melodrama, the late Mr. Pettitt. Secondly, there is the recent dramatic awakening of the people. And thirdly, there is the new-comer's own play-writing creed. Either of the first two obstacles might well prove dangerous to a new play. But serious as they are, they sink into ludicrous insignificance when compared with the last. For Mr. Sutton Vane, who, on high authority, is, by-and-bye, to throw into the shade Mr. H. A. Jones's efforts and achievements in the way of reconciling literature and melodrama, accepts that mischievous heretical doctrine that there is drama in accident.

Many of the old conventions one cheerfully admits. For instance, we know, as a rule of the game, that the hero must be to the villain's faults a little blind, and to his virtues (if any) over-kind. Let him, as in “The Cotton King,” be never so

shrewd a man of the world, with the foresight of a North, sharp enough to outwit the giant financiers of Wall Street, and leave that Pandemonium a millionaire, he must still be incapable of fathoming the shallowest villain, whose schemes, like those of Baradas, are "like glass! the very sun shines through them!" These glaring contradictions are of the game. We put up with them. But not so the crediting of every defeat through three inordinately long acts, and final victory in the fourth, to the blind operations of chance. For if we accept this, we reduce the figures from the level of men to that of dummies or waxworks.

The story of *Jack Osborn*, his cotton-mill, his sweetheart, his villain-friend, and staunch Jew-backer, is too long and intricate to be told in detail. By the time the last curtain is down—something past midnight—the "dangers he has passed" would qualify him for the love of *Desdemona*. He has suffered ruin and blighting calumny; he has escaped lynching by the skin of his teeth, been kidnapped, imprisoned in a madhouse, and set free by fire; and he has worked his way across the world in order to arrive home just in time to drag his faithful *Hetty* from under a descending lift set in motion by the villain-friend. But throughout this long record of disaster—a record which took over four hours to run through—not one incident has followed naturally upon what has gone before, not one effect but has been got by artificial means. The play was in fact saved by the acting, which, in almost every instance, was a model of what such acting should be, and by the acting in particular of one very human and dramatic scene.

It is a scene of temptation. A drunken out-of-work, reduced to his last shilling, with a fever-stricken wife and child ordered by the doctor the usual impossibilities for the poor, is offered fifty pounds if he will send the ailing heroine into the sick-room to catch the contagion and die. He sums up for and against: his wife's life and his child's against this girl's; shall he, or shall he not? A knock sounds and the heroine comes in, and his agony is quietly lived through, and the temptation beaten back, in five minutes of acting as fine as any that London at this moment can show.

These are the difficult things to do. No fine setting, no actor to play against, no rousing speeches to work upon, nothing to help, and a pasty-faced drunkard in dirty rags to be made dignified. "It is so easy to be good on five thousand a year," and, Becky Sharp might have added, "So easy to be dignified in a silk hat and a frock coat." But so terribly hard in corduroys. But Mr. C. Cartwright did it, and held the house spell-bound into the bargain. There was no getting away from that twisted white

face of his, with his glinting eyes and spasms of pain; and just as "The Transgressor" is endured for the sake of Miss Nethersole's one passionate scene, so should "The Cotton King" be ventured on if for Mr. Cartwright's sake alone.

Besides this, there was nothing demanding any real dramatic inspiration. Mr. Warner played with his wonted fervour as the purblind victim of chance; and defied lynchers and narrated adventures by flood and field with genuine power. The rare gifts of Miss Marion Terry, whose engagement we had all hoped was made in view of some great emotional scene, were flung away upon a conventional heroine, who suffers much and does nothing. Miss Hall Caine made a touching little figure of a girlish mill-hand betrayed by a plausible villain, capitably acted by Mr. Edward O'Neill. And Mrs. Dion Boucicault and Mr. Herbert Flemming filled with distinction two prominent—yet minor—characters. Perhaps the popular favourites were Miss Alma Stanley and Mr. Arthur Williams as a couple of mill-hands who go "on the halls"—in the "strong-man line"—and incidentally indulge in some timely humour, much to the taste of gallery and pit. But, as usual at this theatre, thunders of applause greeted everybody and everything, good, bad, and indifferent, though in fairness it must be owned that the one great, spontaneous house-roar of the evening went up at Mr. Cartwright's scene, undoubtedly the most truthful and stirring piece of artistic acting witnessed for many a day.

REVIVAL OF "THE WORLD" AT THE PRINCESS'S.

During the fourteen years which have elapsed since Sir Augustus Harris first woked and won fortune with this melodrama at Drury Lane, we have travelled and, as travellers will, seen many curious things. Melodrama is supposed, like hope, to "spring eternal" in the melodramatist's breast—eternally child-like, eternally sensational, eternally the same. But the supposition is incorrect. The melodrama of to-day is very unlike the melodrama of fourteen years ago. "The Silver King," "Hoodman Blind," "The Lights of Home," and a half score more have done their work, and secured at least a hearing for character in plays which formerly were plays only of situation.

In "The World," for instance, the most ingenious and effective piece of all Mr. Pettitt's and Mr. Merritt's and Sir Augustus Harris's joint work, character goes for naught. A certain number of figures distinguished by differences in sex, apparel, feature, and form, move in a certain number of cleverly contrasted and

exciting scenes. As characters they interest one not at all, only as doers or sufferers of some preposterous deed do they rank in any way as personalities. And on February 24th, a melodramatic Saturday night audience, occasionally tickled out of reverence by the childishness of the whole thing, actually set to work to chaff their favourite form of entertainment. For scenic ingenuities and thrilling hand-to-hand combats, however, they evinced as fine and fresh a taste as even the immortal Mr. Crummles could desire, and thunderous were their greetings of the ship explosion, the drifting raft with its raving castaways, the chloroforming of the brave and bulky hero in the Great Hotel, the attempted fratricide by the villain, the hero's escape from his asylum warders, and the villain's fatal tumble down a lift. The acting was of the seasoned, the many, many-seasoned kind, and resolved itself largely into breathless displays of amateur athletics. But Mr. William Elton as the Hebraic villain, and Mr. Glenney as his Gentile brother in crime, and Mr. Charles Dalton as the stalwart muscular Christian, and Miss Olga Brandon as a lady with a heart as well as a past, and Miss Agnes Thomas as the hero's guardian angel, in trousers and a natty cutaway coat, and Miss Kate Tyndall as a melodious heroine, and Mr. Julian Cross as an arch-fiend in a red jumper and digger's boots, enjoyed a fleeting popularity, and received, according to their deserts, the yells and cheers and ear-piercing whistles which pass, with melodramatic audiences, for expressions of admiration.



Some Amateur Performances.

THEATRICALS AT THE KILBURN TOWN HALL.

Fortune certainly favoured these amateurs, who recently indulged in a series of performances at Kilburn of "A Night Off" and "Masks and Faces." Two dips into the dramatic lucky-bag, and neither draw a blank—the latter, indeed, a veritable prize. Sneer and invective are the allotted portion of "A Night Off;" but, critical contumely notwithstanding, Mr. Daly's farce comes out in popular favour a full mile ahead of many a rival that has enjoyed the hall-marked pat of approval. Make over *Snap* to a comedian like Mr. Guildford Dudley, add thereto, as the erring *Professor*, Mr. Henry King, not to speak of Mr. Whitaker and Mr. Mackay, and just watch the effect upon the lungs and the facial muscles of the audience. Perhaps there were moments in the last act when the play lagged superfluous, but it was not through any fault of the actors, for one and all were unflagging

in their efforts—not only they but also the ladies, Mrs. K. St. Hill, Miss Violet Goetze, Miss Maud Hertz, and Mrs. Herbert Morris putting their shoulders to the wheel in really businesslike fashion. Farce on the first night, old comedy on the two succeeding evenings. Can amateurs play Reade's delightful comedy? Why, cert'nly. Provided, that is, that half-a-dozen or so can be found who can creep into the skin of the eighteenth century as well as into its clothes. Provided also—and here's the crux—that they can count on a *Peg*. How many comedy actresses do amateurs number? Why, they can be counted by the score. How many possible *Pegs* could be reckoned upon? Well, I know one—Mrs. Arthur Ayers. Other amateurs have good spirits, and brighten a scene; Mrs. Ayers has splendid spirits, and carries the play. *Peg* must be always at high pressure. Tears, laughter, tenderness, wrath, all come with a burst. She is a volcano of emotions. There was no Mrs. Ayers at Kilburn; but though Miss Goetze does not suggest the volcano, she looks charming, and her scenes are at least lively, and therefore a good deal may be counted unto her. For the rest, there was much that called for praise and little that merited blame. A rich meed of the former is Mr. William Mackay's by right inalienable. There are two ways of playing *Triplet*—the poetic and the prosaic. Mr. Mackay chooses the former. He gives us a *Triplet* something of the fashion that might be looked for from Mr. Irving. There is something fanciful and fascinating in his performance which takes captive the interest of the audience. For a certain charming simplicity of style Mrs. Herbert Morris stands alone amongst amateurs. It is this which fits her so admirably for such a part as *Mistress Vane*, and would, in any contemplated production of Mr. Gilbert's play, make her a most acceptable *Dorothy Druce*. Mr. Harold Whitaker is not the impassioned gallant of our dreams; neither is Mr. Arthur Jones equal to the full-blooded comedy of *Quin*; but Mr. Skilbeck's picture of an old fop was admirably coloured, Mr. Bertram Wallis's cool and cynical *Pomander* demands recognition; and Mr. Speer and Mr. Edwards as *Snarl* and *Soaper* supplied a pair of sketches well differentiated.

“MASKS AND FACES,” BY THE PINERO DRAMATIC CLUB.

A sorrier set of Masks and Faces this! The Kilburn amateurs supplied, if not a portrait, at least a likeness that was recognisable. Not so the Pinerites. They have laboured at their task, but to little purpose. The face they turn towards us with such care is not one we know. We miss the dainty, sweet perfume of those far-distant days when *Peg* queened it in green-room and in garret. Vanished are the bright features of comedy, aglow with smiles, clouded with tears, and in its place a dull, expressionless face confronts us. Miss Bailey remained as far in the background as the part would admit, speaking *Peg's* lines intelligently, and, despite nightmare experiences with the easel, scoring very fairly at one or two points in the third act. Mr. Samuel Allen's *Triplet* is the homely one. In Mr. Mackay's there is a strain of genius, impracticable perhaps, but not the less genius. One felt there might be something in those rejected tragedies. There is nothing of the genius or the poet in Mr. Allen's version. His *Triplet* is a cheery little body, very fidgety, and blessed with a German accent. He is duly comic and duly pathetic, and merits congratulation upon a consistent performance. Mr. Middlemass did a good deal to relieve from tameness the scenes in which he appeared; Miss Elsie Dennis cannot give *Mistress Vane* an air of rustic freshness, but she was unaffected and pleasing; Miss Annie Stalman made something of *Kitty Olive*; and Mr. Rome Attwell supplied a faithful portrait of *Burdock*. Of the rest, nothing that is kindly can be said, and strict silence shall be maintained.

“DIPLOMACY” AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL, LIVERPOOL.

With a capital train service between Liverpool and London, and with the recent admirable revival of Sardou's comedy drama at the Garrick,

really no plea for the shortcomings of the Liverpool amateurs can be entertained. A visit to the Garrick would have done wonders for them. "It surely was their profit had they known." But there, amateurs in these latter days are grown so mighty independent that 'tis not unlikely they thought they would 'quit themselves more bravely unhampered by recollections of how Mr. Robertson said this, or how Miss Rorke looked here. Well, 'twas a pity! They would have gleaned valuable ideas as to the treatment of their picture. They would have seen where bold strokes were needed to give it the proper effect, and where any but the lightest of touches would ruin it. Mr. Ferris would have learnt from Mr. Robertson that *Julian* is not a hero of melodrama; Mr. Harrison would have known how to supply a proper contrast with *Henry*. Mr. Alfred Crawford, an actor not without power, would have seen how his share of the big scene should be worked up; the delicacy and pathos of Miss Rorke's *Dora* would have been a revelation to Miss Hellier, and Miss Nazeby would have noted that a strong outline was essential to *Zicka*. In fact, with the exception of Mr. Austin Harford's *Stein* and Miss Benvenuti's *Marquise*, both worthy if not remarkable, there was really nothing that called for commendation.



Notes of the Month.

THE last nights of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" are announced, and so, before many weeks have passed, that noble tragedy will have disappeared temporarily from the London stage. We say temporarily, for there is no doubt that in the future the play will be revived time after time; and in days to come old playgoers, garrulous over the past, will recall the *Paulas* of their youth and the *Paulas* of their middle age, and condemn, as is the wont of the playgoing fogey, the latest *debutante* who shall dare to attempt the interpretation of a "classic." Yes, "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" is, without doubt, the most notable piece of dramatic work of our time, and there is but one man living who has it in him to oust the play from that proud position, and that man is Mr. Pinero himself.

WITHOUT in any way reflecting upon the interpretation of the play given by Mrs. Campbell, Mr. Alexander, and his excellent company, we cannot but look forward with eager interest to a possible revival of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" at some future time, when it shall be interpreted by an entirely different company of actors. It is an open secret that Mr. Pinero wrote the

play in question, not to suit any particular star, or constellation of stars, but "to please himself;" and, excellent as is the rendering of the play at the St. James's, we must not forget that "Mrs. Tanqueray" is no mere medium for the exploitation of the idiosyncracies of certain actors, but a great work of art. Before a play, no matter how mighty a masterpiece it may be, can make its impression on the public, it must first filter through the personalities of its interpreters; and if it be a real work of genius, it is bound to lose rather than gain in the process. In this respect is the dramatist at a sad disadvantage compared with the novelist; the latter, by carefully-written analyses of character and elaborate descriptions, can render himself independent of all assistance save that of the printer. But the dramatist, poor man! cannot place himself in direct communication with his public; he must stop short at a certain point, and leave the rest to his interpreters.

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL, in the part of *Paula*, has won golden opinions from the critics and made a great reputation; but is she exactly the *Paula* Mr. Pinero had in his mind when he created that marvellous, that soul-revealing character? We wonder! Without an attentive study of the text it is of course impossible to pronounce a decided opinion, for, as we have already remarked, the personality of the actress obscures our vision; still one cannot but think that there is just a shade too much of the tiger in Mrs. Campbell's *Paula*, and that it was "not a shrew that Pinero drew." However, time and a succession of *Paulas* will alone solve the question.

GREAT interest has been excited by the notice that the next production at the St. James's Theatre will be a play by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones. This gentleman is a writer of undoubted talent; but Mr. Pinero, his predecessor, happens to be a man of genius, so we cannot but sympathise with Mr. Alexander's latest author in the difficult position in which he will be placed. Yet when we consider what an admirable judge of a play Mr. Alexander has shown himself to be, and what a master he is of the art of production, we cannot believe ourselves to be rash in hazarding the prophecy that Mr. Jones's forthcoming play will probably be a greater success than any he has previously written since his salad days of "The Silver King."

MR. OSCAR WILDE has recently presented to the world, in sumptuous raiment, that offspring of his brain, "Lady Windermere's Fan." We wonder if the text as here presented is identical with that originally submitted to the manager of the



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MR. SYDNEY BROUGH.

"That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more!"

OTHELLO.

St. James's. We presume it must be so, or Mr. Wilde would have mentioned the fact. And the elaborate stage-directions, are they also the product of Mr. Wilde's brain, or are they copied from the St. James's prompt-book? Ah!

MR. SYDNEY BROUGH, the subject of one of our portraits, is a son of that admirable comedian Mr. Lionel Brough. After a preliminary apprenticeship in the provinces, he made his first appearance in London seven years ago, when he played the part of *Diggory* in Miss Kate Vaughan's revival of "She Stoops to Conquer." He shortly afterwards appeared under Mrs. Brown-Potter's management as *De Bresser* in "Civil War." His next important part was *Charles Middlewick* in the Criterion revival of "Our Boys." Later on he played *Jack Wyatt* in "Two Roses," and made an excellent impression by his fresh, natural rendering of that somewhat stagey hero. After a succession of parts of more or less importance at various London theatres, came the turning-point in Mr. Brough's career, when Mr. Hare enrolled him in a notable company of comedians gathered together for the new Garrick Theatre. Our readers cannot have forgotten the *Wilfred Brudenell* of Mr. Pinero's noble play, "The Profligate." Mr. Brough's natural, breezy, and in parts pathetic interpretation of the character had but one male rival in the production—the *Renshaw* of Mr. Forbes Robertson. In "La Tosca," which followed "The Profligate," Mr. Sydney Brough was cast for the part of *Trevillac*, and later on, when "A Pair of Spectacles" was produced at the Garrick, he gave an admirable rendering of the part of *Dick Goldfinch*. Also in the revival of this piece, after the withdrawal of "Lady Bountiful," he played Mr. Hare's former part with great success. After a brief interval at the Vaudeville, he returned to the Garrick to create *Trevenion* in "Robin Goodfellow." Last autumn, when Mr. Comyns Carr assumed the management of the Comedy, Mr. Brough joined his company and created the part of *Ned Annesley* in "Sowing the Wind;" an admirable performance, the excellence of which must be fresh in the minds of our readers. It was during the run of this piece that Miss Lizzie Webster became Mrs. Sydney Brough. At present the subject [of our notice is playing *Sir Harry Chase* in "Dick Sheridan," a part altogether unworthy of his powers.

It is but a short time since that we were congratulating ourselves upon the fact that our playwrights had ceased to borrow from the French, and were trusting entirely to their own

invention. But latterly it seems to have occurred to the searchers after dramatic material that there is such a place as Germany, a land abounding not only in philosophers but also in dramatists. Very shortly we shall discover at the Haymarket what Mr. Louis Parker can make out of a German adaptation of one of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales; but in the meantime Mrs. Charles Sim, a writer of short stories and a well-known amateur actress, has produced at St. George's Hall, for copyright purposes, a play entitled "The Serenade," which she has adapted from the one-act drama by Paul Heyse, entitled "Donna Lucretia."

MISS LIZZIE WEBSTER, whose portrait appears in the present number of the THEATRE, comes of a good theatrical stock, and is by relationship closely connected with the contemporary English stage. She is the granddaughter of Benjamin Webster, the well-known actor of a bygone generation, and former manager of the Adelphi Theatre. Mr. Ben Webster, of the St. James's Theatre, is her brother, and Mrs. William Bell, better known as Miss Annie Webster, was a leading member of the St. James's company during the reign of Messrs. Hare and Kendal; last, but not least, she is the wife of Mr. Sydney Brough, whose portrait, with a sketch of his career, appears in the current issue of this magazine. Miss Webster obtained her first experience of acting with the Irving and Romany Amateur Dramatic Clubs, in the former of which she played a round of Shakesperian characters. Her first professional appearance was at Terry's Theatre, where she played for a time the name part in "Sweet Lavender." She was next engaged by Mr. Hare for the Garrick, and played in "Dream Faces." Later on, when "Lady Bountiful" was produced, she was cast for the part of *Melia*, which she played with great success, proving herself to be an admirable *comédienne*. It was during her engagement at the Garrick that she had the honour of appearing, with the rest of Mr. Hare's company, before the Prince of Wales at Sandringham, and before the Queen at Windsor, in "A Pair of Spectacles" and "A Quiet Rubber." In the last revival of "Brighton" at the Criterion she played *Mrs. Carter*, and at a revival of "Peril," at the Haymarket, in May, 1892, she successfully impersonated *Lucy*. In September, 1893, she joined Mr. Alexander's company at the St. James's, and acted as "understudy" to Miss Maude Millett; and during the temporary absence of that lady appeared as *Ellean* with considerable success. Previous to this she had played Miss Chester's part of *Lady Orreyd*, in the same play, for a period of six weeks.

New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from February 16th, 1894, to March 12, 1894.

(*Revivals are marked thus **)

- Feb. 17 "Wapping Old Stairs," comic opera, in two acts, by Stuart Robinson, composed by Howard Talbot. First time in London. Vaudeville.
- „ 17 "Tell Re-told," operatic burlesque, in two acts, by H. W. Clapper and H. Walther, composed by Clement Locknane. Produced by amateurs. St. George's Hall.
- „ 19 "Wet Paint," comedietta, in one act, by Frederic Hay. Vaudeville.
- „ 20* "Dan'l Druce," drama, in three acts, by W. S. Gilbert. Prince of Wales's.
- „ 21 "The New Boy," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Arthur Law. Terry's.
- „ 21 "The Gentleman Whip," play, in one act, by H. M. Paull. Terry's.
- „ 23 "The Heirs of Roubourdin," translated from the French of Emile Zola by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. Opéra Comique.
- „ 24* "The World," drama, in five acts, by Paul Merritt, Henry Pettitt, and Augustus Harris. Princess's.
- „ 27* "As You Like It," Shakespeare's comedy. Performed entirely by ladies. *Matinée*. Prince of Wales's.
- „ 27 "Once Upon a Time," adaptation by Louis N. Parker of Fulda's "Der Talisman." For copyright purposes. Haymarket.
- „ 28 "Mrs. Dexter," farcical comedy, in three acts, by J. H. Darnley. Strand.
- „ 28 "For Charity's Sake," comedy, in one act, by Charles Fawcett. Strand.
- „ 28 "Dr. Palgrave," drama, in four acts, by Lloyd Bryce. For copyright purposes. Globe.
- Mar. 6 "The Best Man," farce, in three acts, by Ralph Lumley. Toole's.

- Mar. 10 "The Cotton King," drama, in four acts, by Sutton Vane. Adelphi.
 ,, 10 "Go Bang," musical farcical comedy, in two acts, words by Adrian Ross, music by Osmond Carr. Trafalgar Square.
 ,, 12 "Deadwood Dick," drama, in five acts, by Paul Korrell. Pavilion.
 ,, 12* "Formosa," drama, in three acts, by Dion Boucicault. Lyric, Hammersmith.

In the Provinces, from February 13th, 1894, to March, 1894 :—

- Feb. 15 "The Mahatma," comedy, in three acts, by Leopold Montague. St. James's Hall, Lichfield.
 ,, 17 "Altogether," farce, in one act, by Edward Dowsett. Town Hall, Edmonton.
 ,, 21 "A Family Novelette," farce, in one act, by E. Nesbit and Oswald Barron. Public Hall, New Cross.
 ,, 24 "The River of Life," drama, in four acts, by Arthur Shirley and Benjamin Landeck. For copyright purposes. Grand, Hull.
 ,, 26 "Rogue Riley; or, the Four-Leaved Shamrock," drama, in three acts, by E. C. Matthews. Her Majesty's, Aberdeen.
 Mar. 5 "Her First Engagement," comedietta, in one act, by Myra Swan. Theatre Royal, Middlesbrough.
 ,, 7 "A Man of the World," drama, in four acts, by Louis B. Goldman. Public Hall, Treharris.

In Paris, from February 24th to March 13th, 1894 :—

- Feb. 23 "Une Journée Parlementaire," comedy, in three acts, by Maurice Barrès. Théâtre Libre.
 ,, 23 "Le Gentil Bernard; ou, l'Art d'Aimer," comedy, in five acts, by A. Dumanoir and F. Clairville. Variétés.
 ,, 24 "Les Bandits de Paris," drama, in five acts, by Théodore Henry. République.
 ,, 24 "Le Ruban," comedy, in three acts, by Georges Feydeau and Maurice Desvallières. Odéon.
 ,, 27 "L'Image," comedy, in three acts, by Maurice Beaubourg. Théâtre de l'Œuvre.
 Mar. 8 "Fanoche," vaudeville, in three acts, by Maurice Ordonneau. Nouveautés.
 ,, 13 "Madame la Commissaire," vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Chivot and Bocage. Variétés.



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

Copyright.

MISS LILY HALL CAINE.

"Attempt the end, and never stand to doubt;
Nothing's so hard but search will find it out."

ROBERT HERRICK.

THE THEATRE.

MAY, 1894.

Five Years of Progress.



To write a history of our stage for the past five years with special reference to the Advanced Movement in dramatic art is hardly the purpose that inspires these pages. That were a subject on which Mr. Grein might wax eloquent; a tale to fill Mr. Archer's customary score of pages in the *Fortnightly*; certainly a task whose importance should preclude its being undertaken by a member of the much-advised, if erring band of "auxiliary reviewers."

And indeed it is no such gallant quest that I pursue: my object is rather to fasten, if possible, on some salient characteristics of the "New Movement" in the English Theatre, and to endeavour to estimate the practical results it has so far yielded.

And first of all, for the better removing of misapprehensions, let us see what we mean by the "New Drama," for both friend and foe appear to have but the vaguest notion of what the phrase connotes. The term is a misleading, if convenient cant phrase, and would seem to stand for a (supposed) general renaissance in the English theatre in these latter times. Certainly the expression is a comprehensive one; it shelters beneath its catholic wing the work of literary craftsmen so incongruous as Ibsen and Stevenson; it brackets the sociological treatises of Pinero with the Dumasian essays of Wilde. It includes the demi-mundane studies of F. C. Philips and Mrs. Campbell Praed with the higher melodramatics of H. A. Jones, and ranges from the crude actualities of Messrs. George Moore and Bernard Shaw to the loftier flights of a Todhunter or "Michael Field." So that to identify this new upheaval of dramaturgical talent with the

influence exerted by any particular dramatist were absurd. Chronology alone refutes the fallacy; for long before "A Doll's House" was staged at the Novelty, long before "The Profligate" saw the light at the Garrick, there had been signs that the realistic decadent wave had reached our stage.

Mrs. Beere gave the movement its earliest impetus by the successive production of Mr. Philips's "As in a Looking Glass" and Mrs. Praed's "Ariane." Then Miss Olga Nethersole came to the front in "The Dean's Daughter"—another play of Mr. Philips's. Not to mention "Tares." And all this happened in 1887 and 1888. Nor is the idea of foreign influence borne out by a careful examination of facts. Take the much-quoted case of Ibsen. That the great Norwegian has influenced our stage, and influenced it profoundly, none but the veriest dolt would deny; but that his influence will be so preponderating as to ensure for his methods and subjects imitators among our leading dramatists is a contention that cannot for one moment be allowed. A little Ibsen, like a little yeast, goes a long way, and as a matter of fact, Mr. Jones is the only one of our prominent playwrights who has manifestly fallen under the Master's spell. True, faint echoes of "Ghosts" and "Hedda Gabler" may be heard in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," but nowhere, save in Mr. Jones's "Judah" and "Crusaders," can conscious imitation of Ibsen be traced. Similarly with regard to Mr. Pinero. The only two plays of recent birth that bear the impress of his methods are "The Pharisee" and "Mrs. Lessingham." The former work reverses the position of the sexes, and posits the same problem regarding woman's pre-nuptial impurity as "The Profligate" did with respect to a man's bachelor *liaison*. "Mrs. Lessingham" seems a curious jumble of Mr. Pinero's last three serious plays flecked by recollections of "Keynotes" and "A Superfluous Woman." Both pieces, however, are inoculated by the Ibsen bacillus. The heroine's needless confession in "The Pharisee" was obviously suggested by similar scenes in Ibsen; while the eponymous heroine of "Mrs. Lessingham" appears to be a quaint blend of "Théa" and "Hedda Gabler."

In discussing the results accruing from this revival in our theatre, it will, perhaps, be well to treat the subject under two heads: first, to estimate the value of the dramatic outputs from the regular stage; and secondly, to consider the relations subsisting between actors and the New Drama.

First as to the plays: the poetic play, the conventional play, the foreign play, and the one-performance play I don't propose to consider. Nor shall I deal with the "actual" comedy.

Such works as "The Henrietta," "The Times," "To-Day," and "Gudgeons" are outside the scope of the discussion. I shall touch only on those plays inspired by the new renaissance which deal with sexual problems. Such works will fall into one of three classes. First comes "the drama of to-morrow." Of the perfervid hysterical school that writes plays on the women question from the women's rights standpoint, Mr. Pinero is the distinguished chief. Then there is the "drama of to-day," wherein social satire adds piquancy to the moralist's deliverances on social questions. Pre-eminent in the writing of this kind of play is Mr. Wilde. Finally, we have a little group of plays, romantic in manner and realistic in treatment, whose classification I can explain later on.

Mr. Pinero's first essay in the sociological drama can hardly be styled a success. "The Profligate" is far from being a great—far from being a perfect or convincing work. It is crude in theory, it ignores human nature, and scoffs at physical laws; it is inconsistent in treatment, melodramatic in construction, and crammed with a most amazing set of coincidences. The hero is not a gentleman, but a cad of 'Arryish proclivities, the heroine an exasperating little fool with a mission to touch pitch. You can't construct tragedy out of such incongruous material as this.

"Mrs. Tanqueray" is a better piece of work—a fine, in some respects a great, play. And I say this, though I sat through the piece unmoved. But except that *Paula* is a more detailed presentment of the demi-mondaine than other writers have given us, except, too, that the author has diverted sympathy from her victims, to the miserable creature herself, I must say I fail to see anything very original in the study Mr. Pinero affords us. The play is a noble, thoughtful piece of work, but it makes you think rather than feel. I need not refer to French plays to make my point as to the worn-out nature of Mr. Pinero's theme. Mr. Philips has sketched ladies who "keep house" for successive admirers in "As in a Looking Glass," and many another novel. Mr. George Moore has traced the gradual demoralisation of a woman of this class in "A Mummer's Wife," and thrown out a prologue to "Mrs. Tanqueray" in one horrible chapter of "A Drama in Muslin," and Mr. Wilde, in *Mrs. Erlynne*, has, with admirable reticence and wonderful skill, given us his contribution to the study of the great pornic problem.

To the group of plays which contains "The Profligate" and "Mrs. Tanqueray"—plays really treatises in disguise, polemics in advocacy of the new doctrine of the equal obligation of purity on men and women alike, "The Pharisee" naturally belongs. It is an earnest, thoughtful play, depending entirely for its success.

on the sincerity with which its main thesis is advanced. Its dialogue is effective but not polished; its comedy scenes are dismal and devoid of the slightest scintillation of wit, while the means taken to postpone the dénouement are gratuitously clumsy. Yet the play has some very effective scenes, and the character of the hero is drawn with photographic accuracy. This type of the modern man, trained in the Rugby school, moulding his life on the absurd standard of Dr. Arnold, and living on the conventional truths, fast developing into lies, that have done duty for the last fifty years, this English gentleman, with his cast-iron morality, utter lack of sympathy and ferocious attachment to duty (duty in his case being, as Mr. Wilde says, "what he wants other people to do"), was a triumph for author (Mr. Malcolm Watson) and actor (Mr. Herbert Waring) alike.

Two other plays merit inclusion in this list, "Tares" and "The Honourable Herbert." Mrs. Beringer's piece is reproduced in main outline in George Fleming's new drama. Like "Mrs. Lessingham," "Tares" deals with the conflicting claims of two women—one pure, the other passionate—on the love of a man who has "lived a man's life," and as in the one play so in the other, motives are strained past all belief. Moreover, the way out of the *impasse* is the same in both cases—the *ancienne* retires from the field.

Mr. Chambers's drama is in essence a piece of pure theatricalism. It is a drawing-room melodramatist's attempt to catch the "new spirit," and might have been written any time within the last thirty years. The hero is a fast, cross-grained husband, the heroine the conventional all-forgiving wife.

The fault of the new school of playwrights—of Mr. Pinero and "George Fleming"—is the fault that mars the work of the new school of pseudonymous lady novelists—a glaring and fatal lack of proportion. It consists primarily in the undue importance attached to sexual lapses; and, secondly, in the deliberate ascription of all the mischief supposed to result from these illicit relationships to the man. So the hero of a modern story must be drawn after one of two models: he must either be the hard, unsympathetic husband, cynic, or Philistine, whose incompatibility of temperament with that of his wife throws her into the arms of her lover, or the rakish invertebrate husband eager to gratify his novel passion for union with an innocent girl. But whatever happens, the woman is always represented as the victim; the man is always the brute whose "education" (*teste* Madame Grand) has been neglected. With the "new woman" it is always a case of "heads I win, tails you lose." Not only does she demand that the male anima

shall be handed over to her in a perfect state of preservation—a kind of Ion—a *puer intactus*—but she further insists on her absolute right to break the bond of marriage as soon as circumstances render it in any way irksome. She may legitimately find sympathy outside the domestic hearth; but woe unto her husband if he seek similar consolation for himself. Such a simplification of the great sexual problem is far from commending itself to the *Lady Windermere*s and *Leslie Brudenell*s of our day. Let the woman fight fairly in this “duel of sex.” Man may have become, in Mr. Buchanan’s phrase, “a beast that walks upright,” and the aid of the other sex may be essential to his reclamation; but physical laws give him the advantage over the woman, and he is not likely to be bullied into submission. Misrepresentation will not assist the advocates of the “new morality,” though a diligent course of reading might prove of service. Let me recommend three of Meredith’s books—“*Rhoda Fleming*,” “*Diana of the Crossways*,” and “*One of Our Conquerors*,” and, in addition, George Egerton’s “*Keynotes*.” A careful study of these works and a dip into Balzac, de Maupassant, and “*Mademoiselle de Maupin*” would, I fancy, effect a very salutary revolution in those writers’ opinions.

Our second group of plays consists practically of the theatre of Mr. Wilde. “*Lady Windermere’s Fan*” and “*A Woman of No Importance*” are interesting alike as stage plays and as pieces of literature. Both proved popular acting dramas, and both possess that undoubted literary flavour which such a master of our language as Mr. Wilde might be expected to give to all his work. But while these plays prove that their author can write a good acting piece, they are far from being characterised by that dramatic grip and mastery of stage technique that meet us in the work of a Pinero or a Sardou. Truth to tell, the Master’s dramatic construction is not merely loose and haphazard, it is absolutely ingenuous in its simplicity. Mr. Wilde takes a story (preferably borrows it from M. Dumas) that might be told in two acts, and by dint of sparkling dialogue spins it out to four acts. Like Sardou, he likes to have an act of exposition. But this expository act Mr. Wilde requires, not for the necessary marshalling of his characters, but for the display of his verbal fireworks. Act two comes, and you think the play is going to begin. So it is, but not till Mr. Wilde has given you another taste of his quality. Then, just as the pit is getting a trifle restive under this deluge of talk, Mr. Wilde stems the tide of conversation with a little bit of drama, and down goes the curtain amid uproarious applause. The third and fourth acts of Mr. Wilde’s plays are always the best. There you get real drama that grips

you—a story couched in plangent, emotional English of wonderful insight and eloquence. But why must the third act have such a woefully melodramatic curtain? And why cannot Mr. Wilde invent a story of his own?

In "The Fan" he gives "Francillon" a somewhat farcical twist, and assigns it a mother-in-law *motif*; in "A Woman of No Importance" he takes "Le Fils Naturel" as his model. He wisely spares us Dumas' ridiculous prologue, with its early history of the *filie mère*, and he has the sense to make man and woman the protagonists in his English version; but in return he gives us an entirely superfluous first act, and no more satisfactory than Dumas' is his rather laboured attempt to prove the probability of his heroine's being able to maintain herself and son, and meet her betrayer on equal conditions of affluence and social status. The Frenchness of the whole idea is glaring—we have no "natural son" problem in England.

One noticeable feature of these plays is the light they shed on a very vexed question in play-writing. Mr. Wilde in his stage work defines within rigid limits the operations of the literary play. He rejects the method of Ibsen—the curt, pregnant sentences, obscure in the study, vital on the stage, along with the gap and pantomime scheme of Mr. Grundy. "A play," says the despiser of "puppets," is "meant to be acted," and Mr. Wilde has developed a method of his own whereby every sentence is wrought and polished with a view to its dramatic effect. Nothing is lost; the dialogue throughout the play is thrown into high relief, as it were, and every witty sally, every emotional passage, wings its way across the footlights with unerring precision. The audience can take the full measure of the language at once, and for the first time in the history of our stage a play can be judged in its entirety, dialogue and story, prior to being read.

It is impossible to leave this second class of plays without a reference to "The Transgressor." It seems to me that Mr. Gattie's play has hardly met with its deserts, either from the public or at the hands of the critics. The magnificent acting of Miss Nethersole in the last two acts, with its almost French warmth and abandonment to passion, has received its due meed of praise, but the piece itself has been rather cold-shouldered. I must confess that, accepting the author's scheme and the hero's excuse for his deception, the play impressed me as an original, thoughtful, stimulating piece of work—a genuine product of the new spirit, alike in its vehement denunciation of conventional sham and in the sane, healthy, generous nature of the heroine. I found "The Transgressor," in fact, a thoroughly

interesting and genuinely moving play, and this though the dialogue is rather apt than literary, and the comic scenes merely rouse an occasional smile. Mr. Gattie is a true modern, and has the right stuff in him; he should be encouraged by the success of his first venture to write another play of modern life.

So much for the first two divisions of our modern plays! Let us leave our "fallen men" and "fallen women" to fight out the great "duel of sex," let us close our ears to the frantic ravings of "the gentlewoman," "Sarah Grand," and her stalwart disciple Arthur Pinero, and enjoy the comparative sanity that breathes in the atmosphere of "Beau Austin," "Sowing the Wind," and "The Tempter." I have classed these three plays together for an obvious reason. Differing as they do in degree of literary excellence, in subject matter and in relative importance, they resemble one another in their essential detachment alike from the old school and the new. In all three plays subjects are dealt with of whose very existence the ordinary young person is supposed to be ignorant, and these matters are discussed in no half-hearted fashion, but with a delicacy and frankness only tolerated in our playhouses within the last ten years.

But there is nothing modern in *Rosamund Athelstane*, in *Dorothy Musgrave*, or in the *Lady Isobel*. They are true women, women "human to the core," despite all their imperfections, but they have nothing in common with the "White Cross" or the neuropathic prig.

In my brief analysis of the dramatic output of the last five years I have alluded to the more important of the changes brought about by the present dramatic renaissance. I have shown how the drama seems likely at length to reclaim its long-lost position in our social economy; how—thanks to Mr. Pinero and Mr. Wilde—the dramatist is becoming an artist and threatens to pose as a moralist. But the changes do not end here. Not only has the social status of the drama and of the dramatist risen, but the actor comes in for his share of the good things. At length, given something his brain can grapple with, he is learning to respect his art. No longer called upon to clothe in flesh and blood the puppets of the conventional drama, he has now an opportunity of showing his true mettle. So new players have risen at one bound into prominence; experienced actors lightly esteemed have at length made themselves a name; and artists ranking high in one branch of their art have won renown in an entirely different line. Look at the cases of Miss Robins and Mrs. Campbell. The *métier* of both ladies is the delineation of the non-moral neuropathic woman. The former actress's reputation has been won by her acting in Ibsen's plays in particular,

and in the advanced drama in general. She has gone from triumph to triumph. "Hedda Gabler," "The Master Builder," and "Rosmersholm" showed her intellectual grasp. "Alan's Wife," "Diplomacy," and "Mrs. Lessingham" have revealed her strength of passion. Mrs. Campbell is another example of what brains will do. She has dignified the adventuress or seducee in Adelphi melodrama. She has revealed promise as a romantic actress, and finally, Mr. Pinero's wonderful play has revealed her as an unrivalled exponent of the naturalistic drama.

Miss Olga Nethersole has had a harder fight. She is the passionate modern woman who defies Society's conventions, and it has taken her five years to make her reputation in this line of part; but it is made at last, and made by the new drama. "The Dean's Daughter" and "The Profligate" were good training for "The Silent Battle" and "The Transgressor."

Then there are Miss Janet Achurch and Miss Olga Brandon; both, despite "Alexandra" and "A Visit," are one-part actresses, and as yet we can scarcely gauge their full powers.

The men have naturally not benefited so much by the bracing influence of the "New Drama." Mr. Waller, despite his performances in four of Ibsen's plays, is hardly suited to the modern introspective man. He is a popular romantic actor—Mr. Terriss's destined successor. Mr. Terry, too—the Forbes Robertson of the near future—is also romantic rather than modern in his methods. Mr. Waring and Mr. Elwood are the most conspicuous instances of actors made by the advanced movement.

Mr. Waring is the Philistine husband to the life. The part seems so natural to him that he experiences some difficulty in getting out of the groove. In "A Doll's House," "The Pharisee," and "The Idler," in "The Master Builder" and in "Gudgeons," he acted this rôle to perfection. His *Solness* is the ablest work he has given us; a triumph of mingled symbolism and naturalism.

Mr. Elwood's record since he became a "man of some importance" is also very creditable. His part in the New Drama is the good-hearted lover, with a surface heartlessness. This, or a similar kind of rôle, he played in "Hedda Gabler," "The Honourable Herbert," and "Saints and Sinners." His latest appearance has been in a husband part, a rôle originally intended for, and better suited to, Mr. Forbes Robertson. His *Eric Longley* is the best part Mr. Elwood has had, and the best thing he has ever done. It was a restrained and very powerful performance—a piece of acting which did much to ensure playgoers' interest in the first two acts of "The Transgressor."

Nowhere, however, has the "New Drama" led to such strange developments as in the case of Mr. Forbes Robertson and Miss Kate Rorke. The *bouleversement* in the artistic progress of these two artists has been almost ludicrous. Miss Kate Rorke, the erst guileless heroine of Buchananised old comedy, became the spotless fledgling schoolgirl with a Nonconformist conscience. Mr. Forbes Robertson left Shakspeare and romance to figure as the approved modern husband—half coward, half cad, and wholly rake. "Tares" began the process of conversion for the two players; then came "The Profligate," with its similar story. In "Lady Bountiful," Mr. Robertson and Miss Rorke were still quarrelling over "the other woman." She reappeared in "Diplomacy," to mar the happiness of this devoted couple. Now comes "Mrs. Lessingham," and, as one paper ingenuously remarks, the Garrick is itself again. Mr. Robertson is profligate enough to satisfy his most exigent admirers, and Miss Rorke's progress in the "new morality" is manifested by her rejection of the ethics of Pinero in favour of those of "Sarah Grand."

And mention of "Mrs. Lessingham" reminds us that "the wheel has come full circle," that the "New Drama" and its concomitant "New Morality" have reached their apotheosis. Progress at the Garrick, in fact, is cyclic, just as success is "artistic." Fortunately, Mr. Hare seems at least to have found "the missing word," and is now going in for "Money."

W. A. LEWIS BETTANY.



Tempora Mutantur.



CURIOUS change is prevailing
 In plays of the order grotesque ;
 Poor Parody's prospects are paling,
 And dim burns the lamp of Burlesque.
 The fun of the last generation
 At length has been forced to give way,
 And bow to that new innovation,
 The " Musical Farcical Play ! "

No longer our stage they environ,
 Those smart little skits from the " Strand ! "
 Played out is the punning of Byron,
 And quenched are the quips of Burnand !
 Of Farnie, and Reece, and their tribe, rid,
 We seek, to amuse us, to-day,
 That " end of the century " hybrid,
 The " Musical Farcical Play ! "

No couplets it has for recital,
 On nothing its incidents hang,
 Though sought at Morocco, its title
 In Town, will be bound to go Bang !
 Its lyrics are smart and sarcastic,
 Its music is catchy and gay,
 Its plot (when it has one) elastic ;
 That " Musical Farcical Play ! "

But while such a number entangle
 The Drama with questions that vex,
 And rush to the footlights to wrangle
 On subjects of science and sex,
 Let's welcome this modern corrective,
 Which brushes the cobwebs away,
 And change its description defective
 To " Music-hall Farcical Play ! "

ALFRED LINDSAY.

"Audrey—A Country Wench."



THE name and description in the book have a spring-like fascination—an odour of hay and hawthorn, a flavour of new milk and simplicity. On a theatrical programme the words convey a very different idea. We are prepared by them to see a coarse she-lout roll about the stage on her stomach and eat turnips. Surely if Shakespeare had meant *Audrey* to be the "very strange beast" we usually see clowning under her name, he would have used other terms than those he chose in which to describe her. He has never any hesitation in telling us what sort of people he is writing about, or giving them names that tell us without further explanation on his part. It would be difficult to find a word of authority, from the beginning to the end of "As You Like It," for *Audrey* as she is generally presented.

The ordinary stage *Audrey* is certainly always greeted with noisy applause, but one might almost take it as a general rule that when the average manager producing Shakespeare hears that noisy burst of applause he may be sure he has done something wrong. There is always in an audience a large section which hates Shakespeare in its heart, is intolerably bored by him; and when something is presented which is not Shakespeare, this section is relieved and rested, gets a moment or two's real enjoyment, and applauds heartily. Certainly a manager has a right to please that section of his audience if he chooses, only he must not think he is producing Shakespeare when he does so.

A little while ago, a manager, possibly with the laudable intention of improving Shakespeare, introduced into one play a serenade taken from another, with the result that Shakespeare's words were flatly contradicted, and one of his pure, frank heroines grossly misrepresented. The audience applauded the scene; but that particular burst of applause was not given to a representation of him. It was for the misrepresentation.

At the St. James's some years ago there was a very charming

Audrey, an *Audrey* so sweet and winning that if she was not true Shakespere she was most certainly no libel on him; but the ordinary clownish, apple-munching, wooden-shoed, tumbling *Audrey* is no more like Shakespere's conception than *Caliban* it like *Coriolanus*.

Anyone reading the part of *Audrey* carefully will find in it a certain rustic dignity, a gracious seriousness, sure to be attractive to a man like *Touchstone*, weary of trying to be wittier than he was by Nature, as the professional jester must. She was stupid, but not with the aggressive self-satisfaction of the commonplace fool—Solomon's typical fool, who is "wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render a reason." She has the fascinating gift of appreciation, the modest receptivity, that make ignorance charming and dulness refreshing.

And then she is good, very piquantly good, to a man of *Touchstone's* Court experience. It is Oliver Wendell Holmes, I think, who points out that genius has a much greater reverence for character than character can possibly have for genius. *Touchstone* was not a genius, but had wit enough to appreciate *Audrey's* character.

Her strongest characteristic is her honesty, and honesty in her speech included decency of bearing and avoidance of coarse words and unmannerly acts. She is sturdily proud of her virtue—prompt to defend herself from the suspicion of having trifled with *Corin*; when she is bewildered with the novel theory that she cannot be both honest and fair, she gravely thanks God that she is foul (which by the way, merely meant dark-complexioned). But though she is foul, she is no slut, as *Touchstone* is very well aware. His folly is only professional, and though it takes the not uncommon form now and then of representing himself as worse than he is, he makes no mistakes about *Audrey's* honesty. One manager a short while ago, by an almost blasphemous perversion of the text, made him deny it altogether. Shakespere makes him assert it. "An ill-favoured thing, sir, but 'mine own. Rich honesty, sir, dwells, like a miser, sir, in a poor home, as your pearl in your foul oyster." *Touchstone*, of whom *Jaques* in a moment of seriousness says: "A man of your breeding," would not have been attracted in the least by the stage *Audrey*. She would not have amused him, there would have been no fun in bewildering such a woman with gibes and paradoxes. He would have missed the pleasure a clever man always finds in talking to a dear, sweet, stupid woman, who never quite understands what he says, but always admires it. It was her healthy, frank stupidity that appealed to him.

And *Audrey's* stupidity is even more fascinating than her

virtue; she is so very deliciously stupid. She can never catch up with *Touchstone's* wit, but she follows it with wondering fidelity. One word at a time is about all she can understand, and by the time she has got at the meaning of that word he is miles away—and she still wondering. He was the most wonderful creature she had ever seen in all her life. When *Touchstone* bid her "bear her body more seeming," she was much more likely to have been standing with her hands on her hips, staring in open-mouthed admiration of his wonderful flow of words, than hanging on to the courtiers in coarse curiosity. She had probably seen them all before, and didn't think so very much of them. They were quite dull compared to her dazzling lover. Why were they not all, from the the *Duke* downwards, listening to him in profound respect? She had an almost holy awe of him. Her "God give us joy" is almost reverent. How any actress can take the words as the cue for hopping round her lover like a sportive calf passes the non-professional understanding. Certainly, when one does so, it is only, as I said, the people who dislike Shakespeare that applaud her.

Jaqucs' apparent contempt for her does not count for much. "Here come a pair of very strange beasts which in all tongues are called fools," scorns her and *Touchstone* as lovers rather than as individuals. He has not a very high opinion of *Orlando's* wisdom—nor of his own, for that matter. One may fancy if one will that he had felt the charm of *Rosalind's* sex through her boy's clothes (though in playing the part one would have no right to force an unauthorised fancy of one's own on an audience), and that he let some little feeling of bitterness vent itself on the least important of the four couples in his general benediction before forswearing the world, for certainly *Audrey* and *Touchstone* would be little more likely to wrangle than *Phæbe* and *Silvius*.

I have discussed the stage *Audrey* with several actresses, some of whom have played the part. One or two would have preferred to play Shakespeare's had they been allowed; but most of them talked of "stage tradition," and said "*Audrey* was always played so." This sort of thing is enough to make us take Mr. Oscar Wilde's playful dictum, "We may take it as a general rule that whatever was good enough for our fathers is not good enough for us," as a serious creed. They have made the meaning of Shakespeare of none effect through their traditions!

I wonder, will any actress ever have the courage to give us the real *Audrey—Audrey* as she is written—a stolid, devoted, solemn Midland Saxon woman; for choice, barelegged and sunburnt, but not dressed to an exaggeration of the sluttishness she denies and Shakespeare does not authorise; slow of speech and sweetly

stupid, against whose admiring dulness *Touchstone's* quips would patter gently like hail on a thatched roof. What a treat it would be! Such an artist would possibly gain less noisy applause than the loutish turnip-devourer; but she might at least be sure that such applause as she did receive came from those who love Shakespere rather than those who do not.

C. D.



The Confession.*



ARGUERITE DE THERELLES was dying. Although but fifty-six, she seemed like seventy-five at least. She panted, paler than the sheets, shaken by dreadful shiverings, her face convulsed, her eyes haggard, as if she had seen some horrible thing.

Her eldest sister, Suzanne, some six years older, sobbed on her knees beside the bed. A little table drawn close to the couch of the dying woman, and covered with a napkin, bore two lighted candles, the priest being momentarily expected to give extreme unction and the communion, which should be the last.

The apartment had that sinister aspect, that air of hopeless farewells, which belongs to the chambers of the dying. Medicine bottles stood about on the furniture, linen lay in the corners, pushed aside by foot or broom. The disordered chairs themselves seemed affrighted, as if they had run, in all the senses of the word. Death, the formidable, was there, hidden, waiting.

The story of the two sisters was very touching. It was quoted far and wide; it had made many eyes to weep.

Suzanne, the elder, had once been madly in love with a young man, who had also been in love with her. They were engaged, and were only waiting the day fixed for the contract, when Henry de Lampierre suddenly died.

The despair of the young girl was dreadful, and she vowed that she would never marry. She kept her word. She put on widow's weeds, which she never took off.

* From "The Odd Number," sketches by Guy de Maupassaut. (Osgood McIlvaine.)

Then her sister, her little sister Margu rite, who was only twelve years old, came one morning to throw herself into the arms of the elder, and said: "Big Sister, I do not want thee to be unhappy. I do not want thee to cry all thy life. I will never leave thee; never, never! I—I, too, shall never marry. I shall stay with thee always, always, always!"

Suzanne, touched by the devotion of the child, kissed her, but did not believe.

Yet the little one, also, kept her word, and despite the entreaties of her parents, despite the supplications of the elder, she never married. She was pretty, very pretty; she refused many a young man who seemed to love her truly; and she never left her sister more.

They lived together all the days of their life, without ever being separated a single time. They went side by side, inseparably united. But Margu rite seemed always sad, oppressed, more melancholy than the elder, as though perhaps her sublime sacrifice had broken her spirit. She aged more quickly, had white hair from the age of thirty, and, often suffering, seemed afflicted by some secret, gnawing trouble.

Now she was to be the first to die.

Since yesterday she was no longer able to speak. She had only said, at the first glimmers of day-dawn:

"Go fetch Monsieur le Cur , the moment has come."

And she had remained since then upon her back, shaken with spasms, her lips agitated as though dreadful words were mounting from her heart without power of issue, her look mad with fear, terrible to see.

Her sister, torn by sorrow, wept wildly, her forehead resting on the edge of the bed, and kept repeating:

"Margot, my poor Margot, my little one!"

She had always called her "Little One," just as the younger had always called her "Big Sister."

Steps were heard on the stairs. The door opened. A choir-boy appeared, followed by an old priest in a surplice. As soon as she perceived him, the dying woman, with one shudder, sat up, opened her lips, stammered two or three words, and began to scratch the sheet with her nails as if she had wished to make a hole.

The Abb  Simon approached, took her hand, kissed her brow, and with a soft voice:

"God pardon thee, my child; have courage, the moment is now come, speak."

Then Margu rite, shivering from head to foot, shaking her whole couch with nervous movements, stammered:

“ Sit down, Big Sister . . . listen.”

The priest bent down towards Suzanne, who was still flung upon the bed's foot. He raised her, placed her in an arm-chair, and taking a hand of each of the sisters in one of his own, he pronounced :

“ Lord, my God ! Endue them with strength, cast Thy mercy upon them.”

And Margu rite began to speak. The words issued from her throat one by one, raucous, with sharp pauses, as though very feeble.

“ Pardon, pardon, Big Sister ; oh, forgive ! If thou knewest how I have had fear of this moment all my life. . . .”

Suzanne stammered through her tears :

“ Forgive thee what, Little One ? Thou has given all to me, sacrificed everything ; thou art an angel. . . .”

But Margu rite interrupted her :

“ Hush, hush ! Let me speak. . . . do not stop me. It is dreadful . . . let me tell all . . . to the very end, without flinching. Listen. Thou rememberest . . . thou rememberest . . . Henry. . . .”

Suzanne trembled and looked at her sister. The younger continued :

“ Thou must hear all, to understand. I was twelve years old, only twelve years old ; thou rememberest well, is it not so ? And I was spoiled, I did everything that I liked ! Thou rememberest, surely, how they spoiled me ? Listen. The first time that he came he had varnished boots. He got down from his horse at the great steps, and he begged pardon for his costume, but he came to bring some news to papa. Thou rememberest, is it not so ? Don't speak—listen. When I saw him I was completely carried away, I found him so very beautiful ; and I remained standing in a corner of the *salon* all the time that he was talking. Children are strange . . . and terrible. Oh yes . . . I have dreamed of all that.

“ He came back again . . . several times. . . I looked at him with all my eyes, with all my soul. . . I was large of my age . . . and very much more knowing than anyone thought. He came back often. . . I thought only of him. I said very low :

“ ‘ Henry . . . Henry de Lampierre !’

“ Then they said that he was going to marry thee. It was a sorrow ; oh, Big Sister, a sorrow . . . a sorrow ! I cried for three nights without sleeping. He came back every day, in the afternoon, after his lunch . . . thou rememberest, is it not so ? Say nothing . . . listen. Thou madest him cakes

which he liked . . . with meal, with butter and milk. Oh, I know well how. I could make them yet if it were needed. He ate them at one mouthful, and . . . and then he drank a glass of wine, and then he said, 'It is delicious.' Thou rememberest how he would say that?

"I was jealous, jealous! The moment of thy marriage approached. There were only two weeks more. I became crazy. I said to myself: 'He shall not marry Suzanne, no, I will not have it! It is I whom he will marry when I am grown up. I shall never find anyone whom I love so much.' But one night, ten days before the contract, thou tookest a walk with him in front of the château by moonlight . . . and there . . . under the fir, under the great fir . . . he kissed thee . . . kissed . . . holding thee in his two arms . . . so long. Thou rememberest, is it not so? It was probably the first time . . . yes. . . Thou wast so pale when thou camest back to the *salon*.

"I had seen you two; I was there, in the shrubbery. I was angry! If I could I should have killed you both!

"I said to myself: 'He shall not marry Suzanne, never! He shall marry no one. I should be too unhappy.' And all of a sudden I began to hate him dreadfully.

"Then, dost thou know what I did? Listen. I had seen the gardener making little balls to kill strange dogs. He pounded up a bottle with a stone and put the powdered glass in a little ball of meat.

I took a little medicine bottle that mamma had; I broke it small with a hammer, and I hid the glass in my pocket. It was a shining powder. . . The next day, as soon as you had made the little cakes . . . I split them with a knife and I put in the glass . . . He ate three of them. I, too, I ate one . . . I threw the other six into the pond. The two swans died three days after . . . Dost thou remember? Oh, say nothing . . . listen, listen. I, I alone did not die . . . but I have always been sick. Listen . . . He died—thou knowest well . . . listen . . . that, that is nothing. It is afterwards, later . . . always. . . the worst . . . listen.

"My life, all my life . . . what torture! I said to myself: 'I will never leave my sister. And at the hour of death I will tell her all . . .' There! And ever since, I have always thought of that moment when I should tell thee all. Now it is come. It is terrible. Oh . . . Big Sister!

"I have always thought, morning and evening, by night and by day, 'Some time I must tell her that . . .' I waited . . . What agony! . . . It is done. Say nothing. Now

I am afraid . . . am afraid . . . oh, I am afraid. If I am going to see him again, soon, when I am dead. See him again . . . think of it! The first! Before thou! I shall not dare. I must . . . I am going to die . . . I want you to forgive me. I want it . . . I cannot go off to meet him without that. Oh, tell her to forgive me, Monsieur le Curé, tell her . . . I implore you to do it. I cannot die without that . . .”

She was silent, and remained panting, always scratching the sheet with her withered nails.

Suzanne had hidden her face in her hands, and did not move. She was thinking of him whom she might have loved so long! What a good life they should have lived together! She saw him once again in that vanished bygone time, in that old past which was put out for ever. The beloved dead—how they tear your hearts! Oh, that kiss, his only kiss! She had hidden it in her soul. And after it nothing, nothing more her whole life long!

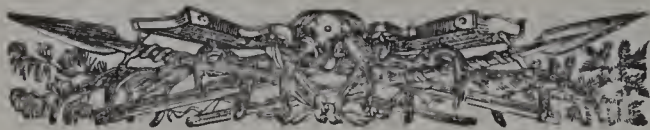
All of a sudden the priest stood straight, and, with strong, vibrant voice, he cried:

“ Mademoiselle Suzanne, your sister is dying!”

Then Suzanne, opening her hands, showed her face soaked with tears, and throwing herself upon her sister, she kissed her with all her might, stammering:

“ I forgive thee, I forgive thee, Little One.”

GUY DE MAUPASSANT.



Condensed Dramas.

NO. X.—MRS. LESSINGHAM; OR, MOODS AND TENSES.

ACT I.—The Imperfect.

“It is a question whether the Present may be followed by the Imperfect and the Pluperfect.”—SCHELLER.

Scene, Mr. Forbes's Chambers in the Temple.

Farmer (a servant) is discovered hastily removing the only tray in his character.

Mrs. Lessingham (clothed in raiment appropriate to the recent re-opening of a family vault, enters): I am just off to Kensal Green. Can I see Mr. Forbes?

Farmer: No, madam, he is out.

Mrs. Less.: Then I'll call again after the funeral.

Farmer: What name, ma'am?

Mrs. Less.: Say that Mrs. More or Less——. No, say a lady with grief in her garments, but a smile on her lips, desires to gaze into his expressive orbs. Please remember my exact words. This is a literary play, so appropriate expression is everything. *(Disappears.)*

Major Hardy (enters): I am a hero, and have just been vaccinated; my arm took so well that they made me a V.C. Let us talk about a dog; he has nothing to do with the plot, but it will mystify the audience and mislead them into the belief that I am a sympathetic character with a kind heart. *(They talk about a dog until the servant has had enough of it, when he departs.)*

(Equivalent for light comedy relief lady enters; is very arch and entertaining for a few moments, and then retires.)

Mr. Forbes (enters in wig and gown): I am an (early) rising barrister. I practise in the Courts before they meet, and so get through my work without interruption, and finish for the day soon after breakfast-time. Hardy, you are my oldest friend, therefore you know nothing of my private affairs; allow me then to inform you I love Lady Anne Beaton as only a barrister with abundant leisure can love a beautiful, high-born, and wealthy heiress.

Major H.: But what about Mrs. Lessingham? These old loves, whether in melodrama or in literary plays, have a nasty habit of turning up at the wedding.

Forbes: Oh, she's all right. Hardy, friend of a lifetime, let me impart to you that which I myself, our many mutual friends, and the Society papers have all withheld from you, namely, the details of my *liaison* with Mrs. Lessingham.

Major H.: I will hang upon your lips, with my back to the audience, in the usual manner of the sympathetic auditor.

Forbes: Mrs. Lessingham's husband yearned for drink, so she yearned for sympathy. She came here to get it; but the time came when sympathy turned to love, so we fled to Algiers. We lived there for five years, till one day there came a quarrel—it was about private theatricals. We were both directors of the Bedouin A. D. C. I wanted to put on "Paul Pry" and play the low comedy lead, but she fancied herself as *Lady Teazle*, and insisted upon "The School for Scandal"—so we parted for ever.

Major H. (retires to a corner and murmurs to himself): Lady Anne must and shall be mi-en. Methinks my anonymous letter to Mrs. Lessingham will do the trick. Oh, if I could only say Ha! ha! But, unfortunately, in a literary play, the villain must bide his time; but let everybody beware! (*A knock is heard at the door.*)

Forbes: Come in!

Mrs. Lessingham (re-enters and raises her veil).

Major H. (having laid the train, prudently retires before the explosion).

Forbes (starts): Mrs. Lessingham!

Mrs. Less.: Yes, Walter, your own Gladys. Five years ago we grew tired of one another and parted; so now that my husband is dead I naturally assume that you are panting to make me yours. (*Clings to him lovingly.*)

Forbes (with what ought to be convincing coldness, does all he can to keep her at a distance).

Mrs. Less. (who is apparently a thick-skinned neurotic, continues to lavish caresses).

Major Hardy (re-enters).

Forbes (to him): Tell her!

Major H. (cheerily): With pleasure.

(*Forbes sneaks away.*)

Major H.: Mrs. Lessingham, Walter loves another.

Mrs. Less. (starts): What! After five years' complete silence on my part! Impossible!

(*Forbes sneaks in.*)

Mrs. Less. : Her name?

Forbes : That I will not tell you ; and as the Society journals are invariably silent about the marriage of any lady who happens to be the wealthy daughter of a peer, you will never know.

Mrs. Less. (*perambulates the stage and indicates by facial expression her future career*) : I have but one consolation left to me—the fact that I can afford to keep a carriage. Major Hardy, take me to it.

Forbes (*interposes*) : Stop, there is suicide in your eye. Let me remove it with the feather of commiseration.

Mrs. Less. (*in a frenzy of despair*) : No, no.

Major H. (*to Forbes*) : Let us go away and leave her alone in this room.

Forbes : What good will that do?

Major H. : Someone may come in and find her here, complications will ensue, and these will be a great comfort to the forlorn Lessingham.

Forbes : Good. I will retire to my bedroom, and by way of adequate motive, I will mention that I propose to brush my hair. (*Leaves. A knock is heard at the door.*)

Major H. (*to himself*) : Lady Anne, of course. Now for a satisfactory row. Oh, how I should like to laugh sardonically! (*To Mrs. Less.*) Someone is coming. Secrete yourself. There is a large choice of doors : select one.

Mrs. Less. : I will. (*Makes her choice, and leaves. Major Hardy joins Forbes in his bedroom.*)

Lady Anne Beaton (*enters*) : It is Walter's birthday, so I have come to decorate his chambers with flowers. It is a Scotch custom, kindly but unconventional. I will now empty all Walter's cigar boxes, cigarette cases, and other receptacles, and fill them with heather—thus substituting flowers for weeds. 'Tis a sweet conceit, and will charm him hugely.

(*Mrs. Lessingham—who understands what is expected of her—re-enters.*)

Lady Anne (*without looking round*) : Where does Mr. Forbes keep his tobacco-jars?

Mrs. Less. (*in hollow tones*) : On the bottom shelf of the bookcase. (*To herself.*) 'Twas even so at Algiers, for that article of furniture was ever his constant companion.

Lady Anne (*starts and regards her*) : Oh, I beg your pardon. I always assume that when anyone enters the room it is a servant. So characteristic, you know—suggests the aristocrat.

(*Forbes and Major Hardy re-enter. Forbes starts and staggers. Major H. chuckles in a corner at the success of his plot.*)

Lady Anne (*severely*): Introduce us. (*They are introduced.*)

Mrs. Less.: Take me to my only consolation—my carriage.

(*Major H. takes her.*)

(*A stagey American and an un-stagey dog enter and supply a literary equivalent for comic relief. As soon as everyone is sufficiently depressed, they depart, and the play proceeds.*)

Lady Anne: Who is the lady?

Forbes: As you may assume from her costume, she is one bowed down by grief.

Lady Anne: A friend of yours?

Forbes: She was—five years ago.

Lady Anne: Ah! Then it is clear you have a Past! We both presumably belong to that much-paraphrased section of humanity called "Society"; and if you had been guilty of any slip in days gone by, it would be common property, and I should have heard of it. As it is, I know nothing against you. Nevertheless, I am endowed with the celebrated Beaton intuition, and in a moment—I See it All. (*Forbes cowers.*) A lady in black comes to see you. You knew her in the past. The inevitable conclusion is that——. How long did you live with her?

Forbes: Five years.

Lady Anne (*triumphantly*): I knew it.

Forbes: What are you going to do?

Lady Anne: Goodness only knows.

Curtain.

ACT II.—The Pluperfect.

"The Pluperfect properly denotes an action more than perfect, or an action that is complete in reference to another that follows it."—SCHELLER.

Mrs. Lessingham's Palatial Sitting Room at the Langham.

Major H. (enters): There's been an awful row, although I shall pretend I know nothing about it.

(*Lady Anne enters.*)

Major H. (innocently): Why are you here?

Lady Anne: To see Mrs. Lessingham.

Major H. (to himself): Hurray! She is an obstinate girl, a true Beaton; now, if I try to persuade her to go, she will most certainly remain—firm as a rock. (*To her.*) *Lady Anne*, let me implore you to quit this house.

Lady Anne: Never!

Major H.: Let me beseech you.

Lady Anne (stamps her foot) : I will not.

Major H. (to himself, joyfully) : I knew it : so I will again remark, although with bated breath, Hurray !

Mrs. Less. (enters) : Lady Anne !

Lady Anne : Major Hardy !

Major H. : I gather from your tone you wish me to be gone.

Lady Anne : Your perceptive faculties are acute—I do.

(Major Hardy leaves, chuckling.)

Mrs. Less. : Why are you here ?

Lady Anne : I know all.

Mrs. Less. : What can I, with an air of commendable self-sacrifice, tell you to prove that you are mistaken ? *(Muses for a moment.)* Of course, the very thing ! You know that I keep a carriage and live in an expensive first-floor suite in this hotel, and that Mr. Forbes is only a rising barrister ; so let me assure you that I am a bad lot, and only went to him for money.

Lady Anne (incredulously) : Oh, indeed.

Mrs. Less. : Let me also assure you, in a manner that cannot possibly carry conviction, that I never loved him ; he was only my caprice—whatever that may be.

Lady Anne : Do you mind repeating those statements to Mr. Forbes, who is waiting below ?

Mrs. Less. (with well dissimulated surprise and distress) : No, no.

Lady Anne : Just so ; exactly. Mr. Forbes will now enter and propose for your hand. As you may guess, he does it entirely for love of me, and at my urgent entreaty.

Forbes (enters) : Mrs. Lessingham—Gladys, we parted five years ago, and since that time, as you may gather from my manner towards you, I have ceased to have the slightest regard for you. Moreover, I have fallen in love with a younger, more beautiful, and much wealthier lady. Nevertheless, at her bidding I do what anybody else under similar circumstances would absolutely decline to do ; I lay at your feet the shattered fragments of my bur-roken heart, and implore you to stoop down and sweep them up.

Mrs. Less. : Oh joy ! oh rapture ! *(To herself.)* Good old Major !

(Falls into Forbes's arms.)

Curtain.

ACT III.—The Future.

“The Future is also followed by the Perfect when the discourse is of a past event.”—SCHELLER.

SCENE.—*The High Moor. The Equivalents for Comic Relief enter, and, with the assistance of a practicable tea-kettle and an ear-trumpet, perform a comic picnic.*

Mrs. Forbes (formerly Lessingham) strolls in, and, as she has no taste for tea, sits gloomily apart.

(Major Hardy enters, and forthwith the comic picnic proceeds in whispers.)

Mrs. Less. : I have been married a year, but it has only just occurred to me that if you marry a man who has ceased to care for you and is passionately in love with another woman, it is extremely unlikely that he will prove a satisfactory husband. I will now go and wander.

(She leaves, and the comic picnic begins to talk at the top of its voice.)

1st Picnic Item : By Jove, deah boy, woman is decidedly a wondahful crechaw !

2nd P. I. : I believe you, old chappie ; she's quite incomprehensible. What ? *(After uttering these words of wisdom they stuff their hands into their pockets and stroll off. Comic picnic effaces itself generally.)*

Lady Anne (who has been sketching the view from the top of a contiguous mountain, descends in order that she may finish it from another point of view.)

Major Hardy : Why did you induce your cousin to ask Mr. Forbes and his wife to stay in the same house with yourself ?

Lady Anne : Just for fun. As you know, I took advantage of his love for me to force him into a marriage with a woman he did not care twopence about, and who had voluntarily parted company with him five years before their second meeting ; so naturally I was most anxious to find out from personal observation how he liked it.

Major H. : I can tell you ; he loathes it, and loves you still.

Lady Anne (with feigned surprise) : Impossible !

Major H. : And what is more, he'll, in the course of the next few minutes, standing in this very spot, make love to you.

Lady Anne (indignantly) : It is untrue. *(To herself.)* But it would be such fun. I do so like to lead them on and then overwhelm them with indignation. *(To him.)* Major Hardy, send Mr. Forbes to me.

Major H. : With pleasure. *(To himself.)* Ha, ha ! I think I've put another nail into your coffin, my boy. *(Is going.)*

Lady Anne (sweetly) : Major Hardy, you are my dear friend.

Major H. (to himself) : Now's my turn. (*To her.*) Anne, I love you.

Lady Anne (starts, indignantly) : Oh, this is an outrage! (*To herself, smiling.*) I knew he'd do it.

Major H. : I will leave by the midnight train.

Lady Anne (coldly) : As you please, sir. (*Major H. goes out.*)

Lady Anne : He won't, not a bit of it; and upon my word I think I shall have to put up with him. I'm getting on—and, really, now that he has discarded that absurd sling, he's quite presentable.

Forbes (enters, rushes to her) : Oh, Anne, how I love you!

Lady Anne (to herself) : I see his wife hiding behind a boulder, so I'll lead him on and have some fun! (*To him, innocently and archly.*) Oh, Walter, surely you are mistaken; for in Society husbands always love their wives, don't they?

Mrs. Forbes (steals in at the back and listens).

Forbes : I can assure you that ever since I have been married I have had a place-I-would-not-mention of a time.

(*Mrs. Forbes screams and faints. Picture.*)

(*Curtain.*)

ACT IV.—The Open Verdict.

“When the Imperfect disagrees with the Present over the Pluperfect, She often takes a dive into the Future.”—ANON.

SCENE.—The Hall, Castle Glen.

Mrs. Forbes (discovered, her maid is putting the last stitches to an elaborate dinner gown) : I always dress after dinner, and in the most public room in the house; it's so very unconventional and literary!

Maid (presenting the usual microscopic poison vial) : Here are your drops, Madam. I think it my duty to inform you that should you take it into your head to commit suicide, a dose of more than two drops would be instant death.

Mrs. Forbes : Thank you for the information; you can go.

(*Maid departs.*)

(*Major Hardy and Stage American enter.*)

Major H. : As dinner is just over and it is now presumably about nine, and as I start by the midnight train, we have just

time, three hours—for another fifty-up at billiards. (*Drifts away.*)

S. A. (*who from his demeanour is of opinion that it was quite unnecessary for the Major to have left the billiard-room and wandered into the hall to make this statement, drifts after him.*)

(*Forbes enters.*)

Mrs. Forbes : Walter, will you take me to Algiers for the usual summer holiday?

Forbes : I will.

Mrs. Forbes : Thank you! It will be a great consolation to you in days to come to remember that you denied me nothing—not even a Cook's ticket to Algiers. (*Takes an elaborate farewell of him, which of course does not in any way arouse his suspicions, and he goes out.*)

American Infant Terrible (enters) : Say old gal, where's the Helmar board, I'm going to have an all-fired flutter.

Mrs. Forbes (to herself) : Here is a sympathetic soul; he shall be the recipient of my last words. (*To him.*) Robert P. Snead, let me say farewell to you.

A. E. T. : Well, hurry up, ole hoss.

Mrs. Forbes : In days to come, when the world shall speak ill of me, say that I, the lonely, the desolate, quitted it with forgiveness on my lips and my best frock on my back.

A. E. T. : Tol-de-lol-de-riddle-de-de-ray. (*Leaves the room whistling.*)

Mrs. Forbes : Now for the Deed! More than two drops will kill me, they say; so to make certain I will swallow the entire contents of the bottle. (*Does so.*) I reel, I stagger; let me now crawl to the sofa, and expire thereon with draperies gracefully disposed, in a manner becoming a leading lady. (*Does so.*)

(*Forbes, Lady Anne, and Major Hardy re-enter.*)

Forbes (runs to the sofa) : She is dead, and consequently the proper thing to say is that It is Just, although I'll be shot if I agree with it, for I've been treated most shamefully. Hang the Eternal Feminine!

Lady Anne (to Major Hardy) : As you have missed your train, I will be yours.

Major H. : At last! Triumph! (*They go out.*)

Forbes : Wait a bit, my boy! Herein I see the makings of another play, in which at last my time shall come; you are only another experiment, for it's as clear as noonday that she won't be happy till she gets me.

W. R. W.

(*Curtain.*)

The Theatrical Revolution :

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY.

VII.

1st Player : I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.
Hamlet : O, reform it altogether.



HE veteran actor of the nineteenth century sat in the Green-room chatting with the happy histrions of the new era, fraternizing very pleasantly with the senior members of the company, some of whom counted years of service equal to his own, and receiving the ready confidence of the younger folk who treated him as a father. All fell to comparing notes with him, and his thirty years' oblivion of the stage made him seem to them like a visitant from another world. When he congratulated them upon the splendid advance they had made in social esteem, they inquired with a keen interest as to the degree of that elevation. In the last decade of the eighteenth century actors had been intimate with royalty, and actresses had become the wives of noblemen. Men and women of title were recorded among public players, and, on the whole, the evidence of social standing in history of that period was favourable. Why did old Roscius Daggerwood assure them that he would be proud to be numbered in the ranks of actors *now*, with an emphasis on the adverb which implied a disparagement of the former time? Roscius explained to them how false and misleading were those signs of social equality to which they referred. He pointed out that vanity and vice had great part in the strain of blue blood that they noticed, and that actors, as actors, were only tolerated in aristocratic circles in the light of a performing animal, a tradition of the "motley fool," to be petted and spurned; while from the higher society of learned and illustrious persons they were, with scarcely more than a single exception, practically ostracized. A gentleman was always a gentleman, and found the level of his culture anywhere; but in

those days the circumstance of his being an actor was one to be condoned, whereas now it was his *passport* and certificate of worth. Of course, the establishment of the Academy had brought about this change. Men and women no longer became actors because they were fit for nothing else, but because their qualities rose superior to other vocations. So long as mere walking upon the stage and mumbling speeches was accepted as acting, any idler or refugee could add the burden of his vagabondage to the struggling, fainting Muse; and respectability in an actor or actress was a matter for surprised comment. But when once due qualification was insisted on, and that not only of a technical but of a moral and intellectual order, and when merit insured solvency, the dignity of the calling was established beyond dispute. Folk could no longer shake the head pityingly over the smart young fellow whose connection with the stage implied a "truant disposition," or view deprecatingly the emancipated manners of the actress to whom they extended indulgent hospitality, listening with apprehension to her enlarged ideas of human intercourse. The acquaintance of stage-players was cultivated *now* from a desire for a good example, and an expectation of being edified by the association.

Perceiving how the substantial advantages they now enjoyed had formerly been a hollow and rotten pretence, the company turned their contemplation upon the old style of recruiting the theatres which had brought dramatic art into so much peril and discredit. How would a young girl, handsome and talented, proceed say in 1894 if she desired to become an actress?

"That depended," Roscius replied, "upon whether she was rich or poor, well-advised or left at the mercy of her ignorance. If poor and unfriended, she would probably meet with some rogue in the guise of a dramatic agent, who would wheedle out of her every penny she possessed, under pretence of instructing and introducing her, or she would fall a victim to some sensual brute who held 'the office opposite to St. Peter.' If she had good counsel she would acquire the rudiments of speech and deportment from some reputable teacher, and seek an unpaid engagement in some hard-working and properly-conducted company. But if she were well-to-do she would not trouble about learning to act, but would bring herself into social contact with the managers of fashionable theatres, dress elegantly, and drive up to the stage door in a smart turnout, the result of which would be a speedy entrée, and as much fun as she cared for."

"But setting aside the amateur, now happily swept off the professional stage, what would have been my experience had I lived in those irregular times, and tried to make my way as an



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

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MR. MURRAY CARSON.

"I hold every man a debtor to his profession, from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavour themselves by way of amends to be a help and ornament thereunto."

FRANCIS BACON.

actress upon my own merits?" The question came from a bright and earnest young girl who had been listening to the conversation.

Old Roscius gazed at her, and rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Well, my dear," said he, "assuming that you had gone the right way to work to learn your business properly, and possessed talent and the personal advantages which are evident to me, I think your experience would have been a heart-breaking one. Weary of incessant wandering over the country with companions who could only become congenial to you by your sinking yourself to their level; wearier still of being defrauded of your earnings by bankrupt adventurers; you would at length strive for a London position. In this endeavour you would meet with endless humiliations and disappointments. You would wait all day long for weeks and months in an agent's office, as if you were a domestic servant ready to be hired. You would hang about draughty stage doors in foul slums for an audience with managers which would seldom be granted. You would be told by any manager who condescended to see you that your provincial credentials were useless, and he must see you act before engaging you. You would give a *matinée* at great expense to afford him this opportunity—and he wouldn't come to it. You would become poverty-stricken and broken-spirited, your beauty would fade away, your nerves would fail you, your temper would grow soured, you would get old, and that would be the end of it—that, or suicide."

"And should *I* have fared any better?" inquired a "juvenile man," smiling at the veteran's grim picture.

"Possibly," admitted Roscius, "for men had more access to the centres of business, and could 'cultivate' more satisfactorily than woman. By 'cultivating' I mean not the cultivation of oneself, but of other people—their acquaintance; that is to say, their interest, their friendship, to secure their influence at the proper time. Obviously a woman could not continually throw herself across the path of men without exposing herself to misunderstanding, if not to insult; and men held the citadel of success, and the influence of men was necessary to those who would storm it. To be about everywhere, pick up news of vacant parts in good time, and get the right word from the right man at the right moment was much more the business of an actor than developing his talents; and those to whom this incessant cadging was congenial got along pretty well, outstripping those who shrank from a contest intrinsically opposed to the sensitiveness of the artistic temperament. But for a woman the case was desperate. Clubs and public-houses were inaccessible to her, and she generally got the news too late. To write for an engagement was an offence. To call upon a manager

was a futile humiliation. Her Press-opinions were thrown aside with a sneer. The recommendation of any *man* was regarded as implying an immoral relationship. What could she do? Nothing, but go back to the Provinces and spoil there. An actor (male) had a better chance certainly, but only those who had a smart business capacity or exceptional good fortune made a decent living on the stage. In the Provinces as soon as one attained sound qualifications he found himself pushed aside by novices, who would play for less salary; and in London he could not get on at all without knowing and using all the tricks of the office-seeker. I fell into the error of associating myself with the highest class of stage work, thinking that the honours I won would pave the way to a first-class position. But triumphs over the difficulties and subtleties of Browning, Shelley, Ibsen, and other authors whose works demanded the utmost command of an actor's resources, only gained me the reputation of a 'crank.' It was positively advanced as a reason for not employing me that I took too much trouble with my part—was too much in earnest, and had too serious a view of art altogether. Drunkenness, rioting, gaming, disgraceful relations with the Divorce Court, bankruptcy, or wife-desertion would not have impeded me; but originality, artistic zeal, and such bizarre qualities thrust me into outer darkness. I was an outsider. I belonged to the genus Damphool. They didn't want me."

"Was there any register of available actors equivalent to our modern muster-roll?"

"None whatever. From time to time an effort was made to establish something of the kind, but it got no support from either managers or actors, and all went on in the old haphazard way. If a London manager wanted to cast a play, his first thought was of the actors playing in other theatres whom he could not have; his second was of those who had been so constantly employed that the public had got sick of them. With some thousands of players to choose from, the London manager had an up-to-date artistic acquaintance with not ten per cent. of that number, so little trouble did he take to keep himself conversant with new talent. It was laughable to see managers bidding against each other to secure a leading lady who had seen her prime ten or even twenty years before, and paying her a fancy salary to assume a part for which she had become painfully unsuitable. 'We must have Mrs. This or Miss The Other,' they would declare. Why? Because they knew of no one else who could play the part. And yet in their waste-paper basket lay the applications of scores who were full of youth and freshness and enthusiasm, and possessed, in

addition to talent and beauty, modest ideas of their own importance."

"And managers submitted to all sorts of caprices, paying an excessive price for an inferior article, to use a trade-expression. Can you explain it?"

"In one word—perversity."

"Was it not from an idea that the public required well-known names as a guarantee of the excellence of the performance?"

"That was a fallacy—and the managers knew it. The finest company ever got together could not make an unsatisfactory play draw. People went to see the play, not the players, with the exception of stars of very special magnitude, and even those could not draw apart from the medium through which their genius was manifested. In England the first consideration was the enjoyment promised by the play, and if that was unattractive the most popular players performed to empty benches in the most fashionable theatres. And perhaps those very actors whose popularity obtained for them an abnormal salary destroyed the success of the piece. Far be it from me to undervalue the worth of matured art, but the meaning and the charm of a play may be lost by veterans caricaturing youth and simplicity, or by petulant, pampered women of the world vainly imitating pure unselfish virginal love, religious devotion, chastity. There must come a time when we lose the power of embodying certain qualities, and if those qualities are necessary to a play this failure on our part must prejudice it seriously. It is not the true thing that is offered to the public, and we substitute for the delight afforded by a true presentation such interest as may be felt in our attempt to counterfeit it. In an old familiar play that interest may be sufficient for the playgoers, but in a new piece the achievements of the actors do not supply the predominant interest. The characters are the life of the story, and the story cannot be justly appreciated if the life of it be presented wrongly. There is a rankling dissatisfaction in the playgoer's mind, the cause of which he cannot define. He thinks the play is bad, and goes away to make this report, praising, perhaps, the very performers whose misinterpretation has given him this impression. London managers at the end of the nineteenth century were very injudicious in the casting of plays, not only, as I have suggested, in retaining old-time favourites in a line of parts which they had lost the power to do justice to, but also in allotting important characters to mere novices, because the said novices happened to be the manager's son, or the manager's friend's son, or a capitalist's daughter, or somebody else's

protégé. This practice and the mixing up of amorous follies with the business of the theatre were the causes of many a managerial shipwreck. Personal vanity was another rock to split upon. From the moment a manager ignored the public in the conduct of his theatre his fortunes began to wane. And no wonder. Why should people pay to witness that which would not give them pleasure? And when the public ceased to pay, the capitalist was called in to bear the losses. And for losing his money the capitalist naturally wanted something, and the something he wanted was pretty sure to hasten the ruin of the theatre. Thirty years ago things were very much out of joint in the theatrical profession. Only an infinitesimal proportion of the population attended the theatre, and the number of persons registered as earning their living on the stage greatly exceeded the opportunities for their employment. In the Provinces the patronage of the theatres had fallen to a very low ebb, the greed of the resident managers and the railway companies making it impossible for the travelling managers to bring an adequate troupe of actors, so that there was seldom any performance worth paying to see. And in London, owing to the lack of encouragement of new authors and the excessive demand upon the accepted ones, plays commonly fell below the level of a pleasure-giving entertainment. In 1894 the public appetite for the theatre was not sick unto death as was the case immediately before the Revolution. Whenever it got about that enjoyment was to be obtained for money, the money was forthcoming, and that particular theatre was continuously filled to its utmost capacity. But the managers were half-hearted—paralyzed by the chaotic condition of all theatrical affairs. They were feeling the effects of that lack of system and co-operation which had always been characteristic of the class long before branded ‘rogues and vagabonds.’ Plays and players were left to struggle up wearily without culture or guidance. There was little attempt to elevate public taste, for the operation was regarded as perilous, and though all agreed that ‘the play of humanity’ and ‘acting that touches the heart and quickens the pulses’ must be always successful, authors did not write such plays, and managers slighted players of true emotion and magnetism. Now and then a manager would produce something ‘boldly original,’ but his courage was stimulated by the knowledge that if the venture failed his backer would bear the loss; and his selection of originality was probably a well-worn theme served up again in a repellent and depressing form. It was not grasped that a piece might be novel and edifying, and delightful too. The revival of ancient successes, the characters and

incidents of which had been imitated over and over again in subsequent plays, was the policy of timid managers. It was like the resurrection of corpses from which all the flesh had been stripped. How bare were the bones, how unbeautiful, how mouldy! Melodrama had become a thing of unreason, a hotch-potch of extravagances that held the actors up to ridicule. Farce was very hackneyed and feeble; the least departure from worn-out combinations met with instant and lasting success. Spectacular productions had grown so gigantic and lavish that the public turned from them surfeited. The lowest taste was the most accurately judged and catered for, curious *mélanges* of pruriency and folly described as burlesque extravaganza, variety opera, or musical comedy—making huge profits. The greatest difficulty was experienced in catering for the serious and healthy-minded playgoer. There was no premium on the better class of play, and we have glanced at the condition of the rising generation of players. The blasé critics too hastily damned with the fatal stigma ‘dull’ any aspiring work, and the public, oppressed by bad financial times, snapped at any hint of what they might avoid spending their money on.”

“But beyond the dark shadow you have described to us, Mr. Daggerwood,” said Director Cornwallis, “the bright dawn was gathering. Rays of it were even reflected upon 1894. Truth exalted by idealism being once excepted as essential to stage portraiture as in every other form of art, and the helpfulness of the theatre for good being not only recognized as possible, but insisted upon as a most important and indispensable feature, a national demand arose with which the State had to comply. The result of straightening and strengthening, purifying and subsidizing was the creation of a new joy for the people and a course of prosperity for the theatre, which has proved of immense advantage to civilization. But to descend from a bird’s-eye view to the introspection which shows you how the reconstructed machine works, and wherein it differs from the old clumsy form is, I know, your desire. You see how things are; you know how things were thirty years ago: the comparison must interest you. Here is Inspector Green” (the Director introduced a dapper and alert little man, who had just entered the Green-room). “We are now casting a play, and this gentleman has been in search of the very best and most precisely suitable actors for the parts that have to be filled.”

“I have visited forty-three theatres, and travelled over a thousand miles,” remarked Inspector Green.

“But does not the circular—the register of available actors—

give you the information you want? Would not a telegram or a letter effect the negotiation?" inquired Roscius.

"Not in every case," answered Mr. Cornwallis. "True we have a much wider knowledge of the histrionic army than was possible in your day, when London managers had the same company all the year round, and saw no performances outside their own theatre; but we are more careful about exactly fitting actors to the parts, and spare nothing to attain perfect suitability. We should not cast a comedy actor for a farcical part, nor a romantic one for tragedy. He must have the right sort of smile, the proper quality of voice, the particular glance and gait that will make the required effect. Mr. Green has no doubt brought me a good choice of players, and if you come to-morrow you shall see them tested, and get an insight into our method of rehearsal."

PERSEUS.



A Vision of Smoke.

(Dedicated to those who think smoking ought to be allowed in the theatrical auditorium.)



I HAD a dreadful vision in the silence of the night,
 I remember with precision every sound, and scent,
 and sight;
 In my lonely chamber seated, I was puffing at my
 pipe,
 With imagination heated, till its fancies, over-ripe,
 Assumed immense proportions,
 Indulged in wild contortions,
 Producing strange abortions
 Of a pantomimic type;
 I was smoking, smoking, smoking,
 My familiar meerschaum pipe.

Then the room became a playhouse, and the house began to fill,
 'Twas a tragic, not a gay house; there was "Hamlet" in the
 bill.

The Ghost was standing grimly, while the Prince before him
bow'd,

And both were looming dimly thro' a dense increasing cloud ;

It set me gasping, choking,

Most astounding, most provoking.

Why! the audience were smoking ;

Every creature in the crowd,

They were smoking, smoking, smoking,

And it seem'd to be allowed !

Oh, the stalls were overflowing with the fragrance of cigars,

And the pit with pipes was glowing, like the night sky with its
stars,

Each *near* box seemed a *far* box, and the lights were farthing
dips,

Every box was a cigar box—and the gods were in eclipse.

And what was most amazing,

The ladies, too, were raising

Grey fumes, with matches blazing,

Cigarettes between their lips.

They were smoking, smoking, smoking,

Little tubes with amber tips.

With difficulty breathing, for my chest was sore oppress'd,

I had to take to wreathing rings of vapour like the rest ;

The air grew thicker, warmer, and it stagger'd me indeed,

To find that each performer was indulging in the weed.

Yes, Hamlet in his sadness,

King and Queen in all their badness,

And Ophelia in her madness,

Were indulging in the weed.

They were smoking, smoking, smoking,

It was very odd indeed.

“ O, shade of the Immortal ! this is more than I can stand ! ”

I must struggle to the portal of this reeking Stygian land !

I cannot sit the *play* out, I should faint, or yell, or scream,

But I couldn't find my *way* out, and my horror was extreme.

Till, in my room awaking,

My nerves upset and shaking,

My meerschaum falling, breaking,

Soon I felt a joy supreme,

For that smoking, smoking, smoking,

Had been nothing but a *dream* !

“The Minor Canon :”

OR

CHOCOLATE AND BUTTERSCOTCH.

A Monodrama.

Dramatis Persona :

The Reverend Algernon Hyssop, Minor Canon, of Bedminster.

THE SCENE.—A drawing-room : a very comfortable drawing-room. The time, afternoon-tea time.

The Rev. Algernon (without) : Certainly, my good girl, certainly. I will wait with pleasure. Mrs. Rossiter will not be ten minutes? Implore her not to hasten. (*He enters: A plump, well satisfied body.*) You gave her my name, of course—the Reverend Algernon Hyssop? Thank you. (*He comes down to the table.*) “Not ten minutes!” A good half-hour, my dear Mrs. Rossiter. We know you, naughty! (*He sits in an armchair, comfortably.*) I don’t—(*He crosses his legs*)—I don’t *think* she can refuse me. A charming woman. A woman of a thousand; ahem—of *twenty* thousand, I am assured. Poor Mr. Rossiter—in the deplorable language of the City—“cut up warm.” Sad, sad! Grass, of course. Flowers. . . . I think she likes my position. A *Minor Canon* : it is, as it were, a touching dignity. One can realise that a *Minor Canon* was a baby once. The *Minor Canons* are, shall I say, the violets of the Church. Be brave, Algernon; I don’t think she can refuse you. (*Then, with a certain irritation.*) Of course, there *is* Dawkins. It were affectation to deny his existence. He is a man of substance—his detractors say eighteen stone, but to that I lend no ear. In the—doubtless wholly respectable—calling of a woolstapler, Dawkins has amassed wealth : very considerable wealth : and Clarissa corresponds with him! (*He suddenly sees an envelope, and an open letter, on the table.*) A letter! (*He peers at it through his eye-glass.*) In her fine Roman hand—but *not* to Dawkins. “Miss Lobelia Skepworthy—” dear Clarissa’s most intimate friend : doubtless her confidante! (*He peeps at the letter, then stops.*) No! (*After a struggle.*) The temptation, to our weaker human nature, is well-nigh irresistible. (*Stealthily looking round, he*

sees Mrs. Rossiter's photograph on a stand.) Ah nay! Before those lambent eyes, the Minor Canon must be true to his high office. (He takes up the photograph.) Sylph-like! It is curious that I never could endure a stout woman; and I rejoice to notice that Clarissa Rossiter is careful—very careful. No sugar in her tea. One potato—a seductive vegetable. Dry toast, not bread. No wretched sweetmeats—What! (With a start, as he picks up a packet of butterscotch.) In her drawing-room! Butterscotch! A cake of butterscotch, from an abominable automatic machine! Unwholesome; tooth-destroying; fattening! A vile compound—which from my early boyhood has had a fascination for me that I could not resist. (Nibbling.) Yet, Algernon Hyssop, pause! Will you marry a woman given over to this insidious, this degrading passion? Will you propagate a race of butterscotch devourers? Never! (Bringing his hand down with emphasis, it strikes the letter.) Her letter. (Glancing at it.) And, on the very first page, the word, the fatal word—butterscotch! I thought she wrote of love to our Lobelia—and 'twas of toffee! This is no matter for a suitor's delicacy. The lover is no more. The Minor Canon steps forth, to investigate and reprove this sorry vice. (He reads, still eating butterscotch.) "My own, own Lobby—" another disappointment, I admit it. I had not conceived that Mrs. Rossiter would commence an ordinary letter "My own, own Lobby." Of course, there are circumstances—"My own, own Algie" were a distinctly allowable form of exordium. But to resume. "Lobby. I am so excited I can hardly write. This is the crisis of my life." I wronged her! At the crisis of one's life, one's own, own Lobby is more than allowable; it is felicitous. "Now, my fate is settled." This tractate on butterscotch is distinctly confidential; but I must master its contents. (Still eating.) "To-day, I have every reason to believe that two eligible suitors will propose for this little hand"—it is singular how this sticky sweetmeat interferes with one's elocution. "Dear Mr. Hyssop, the Minor Canon"—how prettily, with what a modest affection, is this worded! "Dear Mr. Hyssop, the Minor Canon, you know. He is all that is charming." A woman of singular insight, this. "Now, Mr. Dawkins is not a University man"—dear good Dawkins, no. No, no! No, no! "But he has sound common-sense"—tut—h'm—psha! (Candidly.) Dawkins is an ass, simply. "And has made a large fortune by honest industry." I am told, by those in a position to know, that Dawkins's wools are largely intermixed with extraneous substances. "Now you'll own, dear, it was not easy to decide." Thank you, Mrs. Rossiter; I am flattered. "So what do you think I did? Going to the railway

bookstall this morning, I saw one of those automatic machines where you put in a penny and take out a sweet." I own that, up to the present, I entirely fail to grasp the bearing of this—tractate. "I couldn't make up my mind; I determined to toss up. I said, I'll shut my eyes and put a penny in the slot. If it comes out chocolate"—a quaint notion, these *Sortes Automaticæ!* Ahem—"comes out chocolate, I'll have Mr. Hyssop." Will you, indeed, madam? I thank you! "If it's butterscotch"—And it *is* butterscotch! (*Looking for the packet. Then he remembers.*) It—ahem—*was* butterscotch. So! (*Angrily seizing his hat.*) Farewell, Clarissa Rossiter! A long farewell! Never, never shall you sign yourself "Clarissa Hyssop." (*He is putting down the letter, when its end catches his eye.*) There is a post-script. Doubtless to name the happy day, or some such paltry matter. "Lobby, darling, it's done it." Silly woman. "The dear old automatic has shown me my heart"—the dear old automatic! Oh, my brethren, the depths, the unfathomable depths of human folly! "The dear old"—psha! "No sooner had I drawn butterscotch than it flashed upon me. I loathe butterscotch"—Eh?—"I can't live without chocolate—I mean Algernon." *What!* This sweetmeat must have got into my head! "Loathe, butt—can't live without—mean Alg—"*(Reading wildly. Then, with more composure.)* "Address your congratulations, in six months, to Mrs. Algernon Hyssop, Minor Canoness." Oh-h! "Dear, darling Lobby, good-bye!" What exquisite aptness of phraseology! Then—then her heart was true to chocolate, after all! Oh, joy exceeding!—Eh? (*Listening.*) She's coming! I must not appear flushed, as with the foreknowledge of victory. Let me see. I should restore these little articles to their places: the photograph, the letter—dear, darling Lobby!—(*Kissing it*)—the butterscotch. The butt—the—(*Looking round in vain.*) Tut, tut! (*Then, with a smile.*) Dear, dear! Dear, dear! An omen—surely an omen of good fortune. (*Settling himself comfortably in the armchair.*) I have devoured Dawkins!

The curtain falls.

EDWARD ROSE.



Plays of the Month.

“FROU-FROU.”

A new version in English, of Meilhac and Halévy's play, in four acts.

First produced at the Comedy Theatre, March 17th, 1894. (Placed in the evening bill March 31st, 1894.)

Henri de Sartorys ..	Mr. BRANDON THOMAS	Servant in the Palazzo at Venice}	Mr. ANNING
Monsieur Brigard.. ..	Mr. CYRIL MAUDE		Miss VANE
Le Vicomte Paul de Valréas }	Mr. H. B. IRVING	La Baronne de Cambri	Miss MARIE LINDEN
Le Baron de Cambri ..	Mr. WILL DENNIS	Louise Brigard.. .. .	Miss LENA ASHWELL
Jack	MISS GLADYS DORÉE	Pauline	Miss RADCLIFFE
Zanette	Mrs. CRAWLEY	Governess	Miss WINIFRED EMBRY
M. Brigard's Servant ..	Mrs. BARRETT	Gilberte Brigard	

It was very pleasant, while it lasted, to listen to the noisy delight with which a crowded house greeted Mr. Carr's revival of “Frou-Frou.” Every one had come to enjoy themselves, and enjoy themselves they did. Never was such a play! Never was such acting! All was for the best in the best of all possible worlds! And critical appreciation fell to a ruinous discount.

But after delirium comes awakening. With that dreadful “next morning” after some monstrous folly one sees things in the sober light of reason. And once out of the stifling atmosphere of infection, it needed but a moment's thought to convince one that “Frou-Frou” had not been acted at all! The entertainment might be—one may admit, was—amusing, exciting, touching; but it was not “Frou-Frou.” In that brilliant microcosm of all that is showy and unreal in social existence, what is the dominant feature? Is it not the shallowness and flippancy of all concerned. The play, if anything, is a satire upon ultra-civilized society. It first makes a target of luxury, and idleness, and elegant trifling, and then pierces it with a thousand shafts of elemental human nature. Thus, an impression of distinction, of fashion, of polished insincerity, is essential to the picture. And how do they go about to create this at the Comedy? By employing the methods of melodrama! They are all as dead in earnest as Mr. Charles Warner in “The Cotton King.” They wallow—and bellow—in their scenes of emotion. With one exception, they are bourgeois to a degree. And their sole endeavour, seemingly, is to attain the paradise of the lower middle classes, and be, one and all, “respectable!” Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind.

Will it be believed that *Brigard*, the wrinkled butterfly, the

voluptuary with a voluptuary's fondness for his bewitching child, *Gilberte*, becomes in Mr. Cyril Maude's hands (and in this version) introspective and a candidate for paternal martyrdom! He actually recognizes this affection as his one good quality, and in still unregenerate days would, to give it scope, deny himself his vices. And then he sins. This surely is to sin in blood at freezing point. Sir Pandarus could do no worse.

After this, a *Valreas* compact of genuine intensity and a *De Sartorys* no suaver than a mill-hand awoken but a faint surprise. And, if it were not for Miss Winifred Emery, one would doubt its being "Frou-Frou" at all. Not that Miss Emery can in any complete sense embody that capricious wisp of vanity. The character lies beyond her reach. Sunny mirth is foreign to her disposition. Nor can she compass such a frightful storm of passion as that which carries *Frou-Frou* over the moral border and deposits her in Venice with her lover. Little joyous cries and impulsive actions won't represent the one, nor separate waves of feeling, though dexterously whipped into foam, the other. But still there is enough *Frou-Frou* to recognize her by. The comedy was enchanting. Never had the scene of the amateur theatricals a more guileless and girlish heroine. And the death was beautiful. A little more *Clarissa* than *Frou-Frou*, perhaps, but not inartistically so.

It only remains to be noted that in these days of "Mrs. Tanqueray," of "Tess," and "Fantasy," and "Heavenly Twins," the preposterous absurdity is permitted of representing the fugitive lovers as lodging in Venice several streets apart!

"ONCE UPON A TIME."

A new play, in four acts, freely adapted from Ludwig Fulda's "Der Talisman," by Louis N. Parker and H. B. Tree.

First produced at the Haymarket, on Wednesday Evening, March 28th, 1894.

The King	Mr. TREE	Benedict	Mr. WILLES
Berengar	Mr. LUIGI LABLACHE	Guido	Mr. FREDERICK WATSON
Diomede	Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD	Baldino	Mr. GAYER MACKAY
Nicola	Mr. GILBERT FARQUHAR	Pedro	Mr. D. COWIS
Stefano	Mr. CHARLES ALLAN	Caspar	Mr. BERT THOMAS
Panfilio	Mr. HOLMAN CLARK	The Head Cook	Mr. W. HARREAVES
Ferrante	Mr. H. REVELLE	Officer of the Guard	Mr. EDWARD RITCHIE
Basilio	Mr. HUGH DORRINGTON	Habakuk	Mr. LIONEL BROUH
Omar	Mr. FRED TERRY	Magdalena	Miss JULIA NEILSON
Beppo	Mr. F. PERCIVAL STEVENS	Rita	Mrs. TREE

With his last production, Mr. Tree is faithful to the policy he not long since adopted. Like "The Tempter" and "The Charlatan," this free adaptation of Ludwig Fulda's notorious *succès de scandale* appeals first to the eye. Once again, as a series of pictures, the entertainment is worthy of the Haymarket and the artistic guiding spirit of Mr. Tree. Further, it is so

touched, here with pure dramatic flame, and there with the gentle light of poetry, that at such moments the interest aroused is sufficient to attract attention. But as a play, a work of sound dramatic fibre, it suggests no answer to the question which at once springs to every lip, "Why has Mr. Tree done this?"

Fairy plays are very charming in their way. How charming they can be has but just been demonstrated by Mr. Oscar Barrett at the Lyceum. But even a fairy play must be complete in itself, and this *Once Upon a Time* is not. Its first scene is altogether delightful. The *King's* forest is a place of loveliness in which one would be glad to linger. *Habakuk*, the grumbling basket-maker, and his dainty rustic daughter, *Rita*, are companions who promise well. And when the arrogant young autocrat imperiously ennobles them, while degrading to their level his one loyal subject, *Diomede*, and that noble patriot's queenly child, *Magdalena*, because she declines to listen to the boy *King's* dishonourable suit, we seem on the verge of a conflict between human passions, in the last degree strenuous and dramatic. But at this point the adapters stray from the human path, and quickly lose their way in a trackless waste of fantasy.

The Emperor's New Clothes, the wondrous "Magic Robe" which *Omar*, the unknown son of the *King's* banished trusty councillor, affects to weave, and all affect to see, dazzles them, blinds their vision, and, like a will o' the wisp, lures them into undramatic quagmires, from which superhuman efforts cannot wholly extricate them.

All that we gain is a Gilbertian scene of comedy, the spectacle of the *King's* courtiers vowing, one by one, that they can see the magic garment upon a naked prop, and with luxuriant vocabulary admiring the empty air. This we get, and the stately procession of the *King*, clad in "the robe" and under garments of "white samite, mystic, wonderful," amid the noisy adulations of his people, and *Rita's* laughing protest that the *King* "has nothing on," and the monarch's passionate insistence that "by divine right" he sees the robe, and by his will they all shall see it too. This is all the gain—a mere matter of picturesqueness, and a little subtle satire. Whereas the loss is vast—the play of woman's power on man, of self-respect on self, of passion upon reason, of, in short, the eternal elements of drama. We lose *Magdalena*, the *Joan of Arc* of this kingdom by the sea; we lose *Diomede*, the potential *Strafford* to this fantastic tyrant; we lose the human influence of the ennobled peasants upon the artificial court. We exchange, indeed, a play for a pageant, and lose immeasurably by the exchange.

There are features, of course, for which the curious piece must be seen. That first picture is in itself worth a visit, and Mr. Lionel Brough and Mrs. Tree as the peasants are throughout delightful. Humour and pathos come at will, with Mr. Brough, whose basket-weaver is a little gem of comedy; while Mrs. Tree, curiously child-like and full of an elfin grace and merriment, is more charming and more deft than ever before. But the *King* reveals none of Mr. Tree's rarest gifts. He looks noble, and declaims with art and eloquence, but the character is shadowy and unsatisfactory in the extreme. Indeed, as a vehicle for acting, the piece is nought. Mr. Gilbert Farquhar gets a great deal of humour, it is true, out of a portly Chamberlain who has stepped straight from the pages of "The Arabian Nights;" but the virile manliness of Mr. Fred Terry and the stately beauty of Miss Julia Neilson go almost for nothing, and the final impression is merely one of Oriental gorgeousness, of glittering gems, of sumptuous gold brocades, of a tropical forest, and of a dancing, laughing, singing child of the woods—a fragrant Ouidaesque creation, whose pretty feet are not confined within "Two Little Wooden Shoes"—for the sake of whose joyousness and charm this curious managerial experiment may perhaps stand excused, if not completely justified.

"THE COMEDY OF SIGHS."

A new and original Comedy, in four acts, by JOHN TODHUNTER.

First produced at the Avenue, on Thursday Evening, March 29th, 1894.

Sir Geoffrey Brandon ..	Mr. BERNARD GOULD	Lady Brandon ..	Miss FLORENCE FARR
Major Chillingworth ..	Mr. YORKE STEPHENS	Mrs. Chillingworth	Miss VANE FEATHERSTONE
Rev. Horace Greenwell	Mr. JAMES WELCH	Lucy Vernon... ..	Miss ENID ERLE
Williams	Mr. ORLANDO BARNETT		

Upon the strength—and weakness—of "A Black Cat," produced not long since by the Independent Theatre Society, Dr. Todhunter was advised to emulate the late Robert Bruce and try again. He has done so, and the result is another Black Cat—this time, however, without a tale. What story there is we have known at least since, under Mr. Tom Taylor's manipulation, *Still Waters first Ran Deep*. There is young *Mrs. Mildmay*, inclined to coquet, without meaning any harm. There is bluff *John Mildmay*, too honest to beg, too proud to steal, the love that is his if he holds up not perhaps a finger, but at any rate a fist. There is well-groomed *Captain Hawkesley*, now enjoying his Majority, who smiles and smiles, and is a (rather tame) villain. And in the place of *Mr. Potter* and the other venerable mirth-makers, there is a Socialistic skirt-dancing curate, who sees the compromising kiss and tells. The one old friend we miss is

Mrs. Sternhold, and in her place we get a sensible woman of the world, not ill-drawn. But, for the rest, they bring us nothing in bringing an air of up-to-dateness and wire-drawn wit.

The heroine is presumably intended for another *Hedda Gabler*, a *femme incomprise*—one of those evasive supersubtleties whom *Lord Dundreary* might describe as “a fella I can’t underthand, you can’t underthand, no fella can underthand;” but in practice she proves unequal to Dr. Todhunter’s conception. She does not pique, and fascinate, and perplex. She simply bores. And when she has led on the gallant major to kissing point, and trembled on the brink of an elopement, and laughed in her lover’s face, and enjoyed her husband’s honest indignation, and flung her arms round his neck, and with a kiss for him made amends for the other, there is nothing to do but recommend for such a perverse creature the discipline, and punishments, of the nursery.

Miss Florence Farr, the new manageress, and an actress of no little talent, has publicly stated that her intention is to produce plays which “no ordinary management would take up.” It is only just to say that in “*A Comedy of Sighs*” she has exercised her judgment with only too conspicuous a success.

“AN ARISTOCRATIC ALLIANCE.”

A Comedy, in three acts, by Lady VIOLET GREVILLE.

First produced at the Criterion on Saturday Evening, March 31st, 1894.

Gerald, Earl of Forres	Mr. CHAS. WYNDHAM.	Jarvis	Mr. MARKHAM.
Mr. Firkin Potter	Mr. CHAS. GROVES.	Lady Winifred Skipton	Miss FOWLER. (Mrs. Latham Cox.)
Mr. Anthony Greenwood	Mr. J. G. TAYLOR.	Rose Lea	Miss ANNIE HUGHES.
Capt. Marchmont	Mr. F. WORTHING.	Alice, Countess of Forres	Miss MARY MOORE.
M. Cordognac	Mr. H. DE LANGE.		

“*Le Gendre de M. Poirier*” is, we all know, a masterpiece. No one who was in Mr. Wyndham’s fashionably-thronged theatre on this Saturday evening had any difficulty in deciding that Lady Violet Greville’s play, its English equivalent, was not. There were good moments, chiefly at the beginning. The opening scenes between the thoughtless and titled young spendthrift who has married a pickle manufacturer’s daughter for her millions, and his school-girlish wife, and her ambitious vulgarian of a father, gave promise of wit and some little human nature, and even a little drama. But as the play progressed we fell upon evil times.

The verbal smartness became mere mechanical joking of a ponderous kind. Everybody did precisely what the authoress had prepared us not to expect of them. And worst of all, the lazy young aristocrat and the energetic man of business—both laboriously presented in the light of good-hearted, more or less

worthy people, embodying familiar well-contrasted types—entered upon a pitiable competition in contemptible currishness and caddishness.

One can scarcely endure, even in these self-exposing days of the arch-dissector, Ibsen, a man who puts an end to an intrigue, and fosters a domestic affection simply because his wife gives him £10,000, resumes it when his father-in-law affronts him, turns his back on it again because his wife gets to know, puts any number of insults upon her parent, and finally asks to be considered a man and a gentleman! Nor is one in much better plight over a man of commerce whose transparent honesty is soberly thrust down one's throat at every turn, but whose principles nevertheless are, it seems, for sale to any political party that will bid with a title. Everything is grotesquely out of relation to comedy, to life, to the characters depicted; and nothing, I imagine, but the tolerance and courtesy extended to favourite actors like Mr. Wyndham, Miss Mary Moore, and Mr. Charles Groves, accounts for the applause with which this travesty was greeted.

One or two scenes Mr. Wyndham played with wonderful dexterity, throwing sand in one's eyes with plausible suavity and deftness and elegance all the time, and Miss Moore was very charming in her own dainty Dresden China way; but the acting success belonged to Mr. De Lange. His *cordons bleu*, a cook with the soul of a G. F. Watts—all devotion, all art—was a veritable triumph of Gallic fire and exaggeration, and proved quite the funniest and most finished sketch seen for many a day.

“THE LITTLE SQUIRE.”

A Comedy, in Three Acts, adapted from Mrs. de la Pasture's Novel, by Mrs. William Greet and Horace Sedger.

First produced at the Lyric, on Thursday Afternoon, April 5th, 1894.

Claud Vernon	Mr. CHARLES SUGDEN.	Mrs. De Coursay	Miss MARY RORKE.
Mr. Wentworth	Mr. SEYMOUR.	Bessie Barton	Miss FANNY BROUGH.
Wilkinson	Mr. W. S. LAIDLAW.	Mrs. Hardwick	Miss ROSE LECLERCQ.
Granfer West	Mr. MONTELLI.	Mrs. Brownlow	Mrs. EDMUND PHELPS.
Cartridge	Mr. BENTLEY.	Cicely Hardwick	Miss ISA BOWMAN.
Adrien de Coursay ..	Miss DOROTHY HANBURY.	Lise de la Riviere ..	Miss EMPSIE BOWMAN.

Not without reason, the little hero of the adaptation, by Mr. Horace Sedger and Mrs. William Greet, of Mrs. de la Pasture's “well-known” novel might have borne the name of “David Copperfield,” for the plight of the *Little Squire* and *Peggotty's* poor forlorn little charge is the same. *Mr. Murdstone*, to be sure, has lost some of his villainous colouring. He has shed his “beautiful black whiskers,” and with a new name assumes a less forbidding aspect. But *Murdstone* by any other name is just as

sour. And the thin lips and ominous smile of the blonde artist lose nothing by comparison with the similar adornments of his more forbidding prototype.

As for the boy's mother, she and *Clara Copperfield* are one. "Sweet babe," *Mrs. Elizabeth Berry* would have called her, and babe she certainly is. Blinder than *Lucy Feverel* to the advances of her titled lover, she remains insensible to the obvious knavery of the artist-tutor; and, but for a stale piece of melodrama which the authors have up their sleeve, she would marry him, and consign her adorable "Little Squire" to the Copperfieldian fate he does not deserve. Luckily, however, for her gallant little son, the rascal has had the disastrous stupidity to marry before—and actually a village girl from the same district!—so naturally his contemplated bigamy is exposed at the church door.

The story of Little Squire Copperfield is, therefore, as may be seen, not all it might be; but it has its compensation in the children characters. For once in a way, these are real children. The delightful unconsciousness of childhood—I speak now not of the youthful actors' manner, but of the child nature they are set to represent—is faithfully observed and reproduced. A child's frank egotism, and its comically placid handling of the great facts which move its elders—religion, love, and so on—are for the first time on the stage done justice to. And the result is a succession of captivating scenes. At times these pretty mites are set in unchildlike surroundings, and say and do unchildlike things, but for the most part the dangers of sentimentalism are avoided, and one's enjoyment is unalloyed. For sheer cleverness, it would be hard to say which of the clever trio deserves the palm. The boyish *Little Squire* of Miss Dorothy Hanbury, said, by the way, to be the first part this little actress has ever played; the fashionable, frock-loving young lady of fifteen—Mr. Gilbert's *bête noire*—drawn with a precocious sense of humour by Miss Isa Bowman; or Miss Empsie Bowman's touching little picture of a natural child—all are as clever as they well can be. But most charm belongs unquestionably to the last. Nothing could be more loving than this gentle little creature, with her sweet little voice and pretty simple little ways, and no one who goes to see "The Little Squire" will be able to resist his bewitching little sweetheart.

To give the crude story as lifelike a look as can be, some of the best actresses of the day are engaged, and thanks to them many blots are concealed. Miss Rose Leclercq is as entertaining as ever in her familiar character of a cynical and witty woman of the world. *Lady Bawtry* in "The Dancing Girl," *Lady*

Staunton in "Captain Swift," or ingenuous heroine's shrewd sister as here, it is always the same woman. Miss Leclercq has to show a woman whose every word is barbed, and who makes her playful stabs with an art and a humour that have no equal on the English stage. Miss Fanny Brough abandons fun for remorse and a consumptive cough, and proves once more, if proof were needed, that nothing she does is done amiss; and Miss Mary Rorke is duly gentle and yielding as the beautiful *Mrs. Copperfield* the second. Mr. Sedger has mounted the piece very prettily, and when he has cut out some tiresome and dreadfully theatrical village folk and one or two superfluous episodes, will no doubt see playgoers flock to the Lyric to make acquaintance with "The Little Squire" and his dear wee queen of the woods.

" MRS. LESSINGHAM."

A new and original Play, in four acts, by GEORGE FLEMING.

First produced at the Garrick Theatre, on Saturday Evening, April 7th, 1894.

Mr. Walter Forbes ..	Mr. J. FORBES ROBERTSON.	Farmer	Mr. G. DU MAURIER.
Major Edward Hardy,	Mr. JOHN HARE.	Lady Anne Beaton	Miss KATE RORKE.
R.A., V.C.		Lady Porteous ..	Miss DOLORES DRUMMOND.
The Hon. Archie	Mr. SHERIDAN LASCELLES.	Mrs. Lessingham ..	Miss ELIZABETH ROBINS.
Hope-Glen		Mrs. Hope-Glen ..	Miss HELEN LUCK.
Mr. Charles B. Snead	Mr. CHARLES ROCK.	Mrs. Snead	Miss INA GOLDSMITH.
Mr. James Vane ..	Mr. G. W. HARDY.	Harper	Miss EMILY CROSS.
Master Bobby Snead	Master FRANK SAKER.		

For all practical purposes the new play is nothing more, nothing less than a dramatic and interesting setting for an exceedingly clever (but unconvincing) study of a woman who at every crisis of her life falls a victim to her own unhappy temperament. She is a fluttered frightened dove—a soiled dove it must be said—who flits here, there, and everywhere about her rather cruelly-constructed cage, seeking a way of escape into Paradise. Married to a brute, she sought the solace of a selfish and passionate young barrister's platonic sympathy. Pining for happiness, a kind word, a tender caress, she fled with him to Algiers, when the platonic mask fell from their faces, and basked in sunshine for awhile. Her husband declined to try for a divorce, and the lovers separated for some trivial reason. (A very weak spot this in the authoress's scheme.) He drifted away, and not inconceivably forgot. She, quite inconceivably, omitted to correspond, and waited, as such a woman might wait, until she was free. At last that day of freedom comes, and full of the memories of her Eden in Algiers, she hurries to his rooms in the Temple, to take up her happiness exactly where she had laid it down. But five years of absence have done their work. Eve's hero has put off the old Adam and put on the new. *Walter Forbes*, her passionate young barrister, has replaced her image

with another. He is to be married to a frank, innocent young girl, and *Mrs. Lessingham* is just the last woman in the world he desires to see.

True to herself, this nervous, emotional, undisciplined creature snatches at the happiness she hungers for. She cannot see that her old lover is ice, his heart a stone. And with brutal directness has to be told the truth. She has no balance. With her it is one extreme or the other. If she cannot win her Eden, she must die, and die there and then no doubt she would, did not *Lady Anne* prevent her. This girl encounters her, elicits the truth from *Forbes*, and with unaccountable readiness to resign her hero in order to bring this wrecked life to harbour, induces him to offer the woman marriage. Again the victim of her own weakness, *Mrs. Lessingham* grasps at the shadow, snatches at the straw. She is prepared to efface herself to secure his happiness. She would not hesitate to compass her own death in his behalf. But this is only when he is not by. He has but to come into her presence, and reason flies before passion. Her love overmasters her. Gratefully she accepts the offer which, obedient to *Lady Anne's* self-sacrificing wish, he makes.

To such a union there can be but one end, and that a tragic one. Either the dreary tragedy of misunderstanding, misery, lovelessness, and dull despair; or, as here, the sharp tragedy of a violent death. After a year of wretchedness, the *Forbeses* meet *Lady Anne*, and the wife hears her husband confess that his existence with her is a living hell, his one hope in *Lady Anne's* surviving love for him. Unfortunately, she does not hear *Lady Anne's* scornful and indignant rejection of his passion, so once again she finds herself dividing these—as she thinks—lovers. Once again she is cheated of her happiness. And for the last time she flees before the certainty of wretchedness—to death.

The story is not a cheerful one, nor is it satisfactory, from any point of view. The truth is that the brilliant novelist, "George Fleming," who with this "*Mrs. Lessingham*" presents her first essay in drama to the stage, has "dallied with the puppets" not quite fairly. Her soiled dove, over-wrought, hysterical, truly a "Superfluous Woman," is never allowed a chance of escape. The authoress sets her down to play a game against Society and selfish Man, and then cogs the dice against her. Her misery is artificially prolonged by the eccentric behaviour of her husband and *Lady Anne*. It is machine-made tragedy that we see—not self-sown. And the consequences are disastrous to the drama; for one gets out of touch with each character in turn, resents the insistence upon needless suffering, and very likely ends by blam-

ing the principal actress for not dying two acts earlier in the piece.

This attitude, if adopted, were most unjust; for, with the material at her command, Miss Robins does veritable wonders. She cannot make of *Mrs. Lessingham* a convincing woman. That would be beyond any art. But for the most part her conception is most vividly presented. Her want of balance is very dexterously shown, and is never allowed to pass out of sight. The woman's capacity for self-torture, too, is finely indicated. And when Miss Robins reaches the death-scene she handles it with a simplicity, breathes into it a broken-heartedness, a childlike longing for rest and sleep, which is possible only to the highest art. Miss Rorke, as the high-minded and beautiful *Lady Anne*, pervades the piece like a spirit of purity, and all her tones ring wonderfully sweet and true. But she, also, is in a like predicament with Miss Robins. The character is inconsistent, and no art can make it otherwise. Mr. Hare and Mr. Forbes Robertson, on the contrary, are distinctly happier.

The former as a gallant V.C. who is merely an heroic "Charles, their friend," has indeed a very straightforward character, which he presents with a reserve, a dignity, and an authority worthy of all praise. Mr. Forbes Robertson is hardly so well off. The barrister is in reality a "Profligate," without the strength and picturesqueness of that interesting person, and no demand is made upon the actor for his finest qualities. His every opportunity, however, is made the very most of, and it would be worth while sitting through the play again just to hear him confess to *Lady Anne* the misery of his married life. Here was conviction with a vengeance. Would that "George Fleming" had written more scenes for him, in the same spirit of truth. Beautifully mounted, with one exquisite scene of a Scotch moor on which the *dramatis personæ* walk knee deep in heather, and acted as the Garrick company at its very strongest know how to play, the drama excited great interest, and was received on the first night with every sign of favour.



Some Amateur Performances.

“PYGMALION AND GALATEA” AT THE CHELSEA TOWN HALL.

The mind of the amateur is a complex thing, that I for one shall never fathom. The actor, as we know from Mr. Tree's lips, is a timid, self-distrustful creature, standing sorely in need of a constant application of Mr. Pinero's sovereign remedy, “praise, praise, praise.” But he is brazen self-assurance personified, compared with his amateur brother, more especially if the latter has something really good on hand. With his failures he is less shy. Those he will inflict upon the critic without scruple. But his good work! Ah, that must be modestly hidden away. I recalled this little eccentricity of his the other evening on finding Chelsea in a state of agitation, not over the Pasteur microbe, but, as enquiry elicited, over the dramatic microbe present at the Town Hall, and curiosity led me to join the in-going throng. Well, the result proved the correctness of my knowledge with regard to the manners and customs of this curious species. This performance ranks as the best revival of Mr. Gilbert's fairy comedy that has been seen for some time. But not so much for its general excellence as for one phenomenal feature will the production be accorded a niche in my memory. That feature was the *Cynisca*—a real live *Cynisca*, not the jealous virago that ninety-nine amateurs put forward as the best apology they can offer. Here, in the person of Miss Olive Kennett, was the hundreth who could faithfully mirror to us the tigress nature of *Pygmalion's* wife. She soared to tragic heights of love and hate. Her delivery of the curse was, perhaps a shade less impressive in its intensity than was Mrs. Hallward's in the *Romany* revival; but that could easily be forgiven for the sake of her powerful grasp of the part in its entirety. Before such work as this it was not surprising that the efforts of her companions somewhat paled their fire, even the unusually romantic *Pygmalion* of Mr. Dawson Milward being dwarfed almost into insignificance, whilst the delicate tints of Mrs. Evans' graceful and winsome *Galatea* became very nearly neutral against Miss Kennett's vivid colouring. Mrs. St. Hill, bearing in mind the balance of the play, was a discreet *Daphne*, but Colonel O'Callaghan's *Chrysos* called loudly for the sternly repressive hand of the stage-manager. Pretty Miss Lilian Braithwaite made a dainty Athenian maiden, and Mr. Barry was bluff and hearty as her stalwart warrior lover.

“STILL WATERS RUN DEEP,” BY THE ORIOLES CLUB.

The worth of a steersman who can keep a firm hand on the helm is like that of a virtuous wife, not to be reckoned in rubies. Where would this same production of the Orioles have been, I wonder, if Mr. George Dowse had not been possessed of a clear head and a steady hand. He has not the veteran's knowledge, of course. More than once the comedy was dangerously near shipwreck on rocks to which the old hand would have given a wide berth; but always in the nick of time his clear judgment asserted itself and the situation was saved. Thus, his *John Mildmay*, though a sound and serviceable performance, compelling attention and

respect, was of less real value to the play than his keen-sighted direction. Of those who, working well under orders, helped on the success, Mr. Frederick Crapp stood out the most clearly with *Hawksley*. Tact rather than force carried him through the strong scenes, and, united with scrupulous care and valuable ease of style, it served. Mrs. Crossley was the *Mrs. Sternhold*, and though not equal to lending the part the emphasis that Mrs. Charles Sim or Miss Olive Kennett could supply, contrived to manage a very fair contrast to Miss Farrell's pretty, childish *Mrs. Mildmay*. Mr. Ernest Sherie's *Potter* was an amusing bit of work; but Mr. Alt was at sea with his words. Mr. Dowse's managerial instinct was certainly asleep when he permitted Mr. Lloyd's ill-timed fooling in the last act.

“HAMLET” AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL.

This production, due to the energy and enterprise of Mr. Glossop Such, was chiefly remarkable from the fact that it did not spell crushing disaster for the actors or misery unspeakable for the audience. If, like a human life, the least eventful performance were the happiest, then was this a truly beatific evening, for it stands out in the memory as conspicuous for its lack of sensation. No “violent delights” were there, nor yet any painful disappointments. All was equable and fair. It was impossible to lay a finger on any one actor or any one moment and say, “Lo, here a touch of greatness,” or “Lo, there a blot so dark that the whole play is shadowed.” There are no adjectives of superlative strength, either complimentary or the reverse, to be served out. Mr. Such gave a safe, if undistinguished reading of the Dane. Despite his lack of princeliness and his inability to dig right down to the roots of a passion or an emotion, he is interesting if not absorbing, by virtue of the earnestness, intelligence, and remarkable finish of his work. Mr. Lewin Mannering has never done anything so good as his *Claudius*. It was a most promising performance for so young an actor. No scenes in the play were more convincing than his, and they richly merited the hearty applause they won. Miss Houlston, though she does not realise for us the exquisite simplicity of the ideal *Ophelia*, was pretty and pathetic and inventive in the matter of mad “business.” Miss Snow, albeit too youthful in appearance to pass as *Hamlet's* mother, and lacking the experience to do her big scene justice, brought stateliness of bearing and striking intelligence to her task. *Laertes* is not the part for Mr. Lincoln. The finger of fate points to what Mr. Dudley Hardy would call “the light side of nature.” Given a part so wholly outside his range, he played it with studious care, but the result was not of the happiest, and matters were not helped by his appearance. Mr. A. Attwell, wearing much of *Mercutio* in looks and something of him in disposition, did not strongly suggest *Horatio*. A most acceptable reading of *Polonius* was supplied by Mr. Blagrove; Mr. Hodges gave due expression to the quaint humour of the *First Gravedigger*; and Mr. Playford as the *Ghost*, “doomed for a certain term to walk” in an extremely limited space and amid surroundings curiously modern, was genuinely awe-inspiring.

“THE SHAUGHRAUN,” BY THE BURLINGTON CLUB.

It's a fatal thing to arrive at an amateur performance before the play is well under weigh. Assisting at the first act is to my mind always suggestive of an early breakfast *en famille*. There is a general atmosphere of glumness. The mind and the temper are *en déshabille*. So with the actors. They have to get up steam. Let it be comedy, farce, or drama, they can't start at full speed. They can't work it up as Macready did, with the aid of a ladder in the wings. Let us therefore allow a fair space for the

pumping-up process, discard disastrous habits of punctuality, and, for the future, start fair with the second act. Allowing that latitude for the Burlington, it must be recorded that the play went capitally—chiefly, no doubt, owing to the efforts, super-amateur, if not super-human, of Mr. John Newton, who enjoyed the usual privilege accorded to the willing horse. Of those, however, who faithfully fulfilled their share of the work, Miss Edith Jordan stands first, a bewitching *Clare*, and meriting a more gallant lover than Mr. Mason could present. Mr. Macqueen's firmness and sincerity ensure his safety in such a part as *Ffolliott*; Mr. Kinsey's portrait of an Irish priest was not untrue to life; for good intentions, though but half carried out, Mr. Wood shall have a good word; so, too, shall Miss Bessie Harrison for her quaint humour, and Miss Gregory and Miss Rochford for sweet looks and pretty ways.

“ARRAH-NA-POGUE,” BY THE VAUDEVILLE CLUB.

Boucicault's Irish dramas are supposed to be dead—as dead as the Ibsen craze or the Home Rule Bill is thought to be. Fifteen years ago they were relegated by critical opinion to the boy in the gallery. Therefore, when I record that at St. George's Hall a revival was received with lusty appreciation, the logical inference is that the audience to a man, not excluding the humble writer, belonged to the race of “gods.” They chuckled over the humour, and there were not a few moments when eyes were moist and the owners wished that the lights had been lower. There were yawns, too, but only during the frequent and protracted waits. Amongst amateurs, Mr. Frank Hole could scarcely be bettered as *Shaun*. He lacks something of the needful buoyancy, but he is cheery and diverting in the lighter scenes, and tackles the heavier ones in really splendid style. Clever and ingenious, too, was Mr. King's Quilpish *Feeney*, though at moments a trifle over-coloured. Mr. Read was firm and manly as *O'Grady*, and Mr. Thompson a very martinet as *Coffin*. Mr. Fenton was conscientious if not over-interesting as *MacCoul*, and the same may be said of Miss Thompson; but Miss Draper was unaffected and pleasing as *Arrah*. And the stage crowds deserved a round of applause on their own account.

“SWEET LAVENDER,” BY THE SALE DRAMATIC CLUB.

The Sale amateurs thirsted for a novelty, but they did not cast all other considerations to the winds. They did not undertake “Sweet Lavender” unadvisedly or without a due reckoning of the cost. They could not, perhaps, meet the demands of the play as fully and freely as some amateurs one could mention; but they managed a satisfactory response. There was no brilliant firework display, perhaps; but, on the other hand, there were no damp squibs drearily fizzling out. The ladies were the firmest support to the play, for the Club had bolstered it up pretty strongly in this respect, Miss Emilie Grattan's winsome *Lavender* winning anew golden opinions, Miss Edith Jordan presenting a pathetic picture of the Temple “laundress,” Miss Ada Melrose bringing a fine fund of humour to the part of *Mrs. Gilfillian*, and Miss Laura Hansen delightfully breezy as *Minnie*. Mr. Ballard's *Phenyl* was an uneven performance. Sometimes he was in the skin of the part, and sometimes he wasn't; but as he was in the former case for four minutes out of five, he shall have my good word. Mr. Watkin's *Clement Hale* was overmuch in the champagne vein; but his scenes with *Lavender* were informed with a welcome sincerity. Mr. Pattison gave a careful and consistent rendering of *Wedderburn*; Mr. Roe's sketch of a fashionable physician was skilfully dashed in; and Mr. Pollitt passed muster as the American, though the part did not sit over well upon his shoulders.

ENTERTAINMENT AT THE BROMPTON HOSPITAL.

At the first blush one would not be apt to regard the Brompton Hospital as a likely field for acceptable dramatic novelties, but 'tis generally in the unlikely spots that trifles may be picked up, as the gentleman who in an out-of-the way corner of Paris recently purchased a genuine Raphael for sixpence would testify. "A White Elephant," the trifle written by Mr. Arthur Heathcote, and produced at Miss Agnes Hill's entertainment, is not a find of like magnitude; but it is a bright little work, containing a dexterous blend of the grave and gay, and amateurs athirst for a novelty should be grateful for having it brought under their notice. The "white elephant" is a charming maiden who loves but, as she fancies, has been deceived in the object of her affections. To drown her trouble she plunges headlong into the pursuits of the old couple whose home she shares. The one is an ardent naturalist, the other the village Lady Bountiful, and both are highly embarrassed by their niece's ill-regulated enthusiasm. A letter from the absent lover, however, brings peace to the fluttered dove-cote. The "white elephant" will be speedily removed, and Darby and Joan permitted to resume the even tenor of their way. Mr. Heathcote had no grounds for complaint concerning the treatment of his offspring at the hands of its interpreters, Mr. Paley playing with abundance of quiet humour as the naturalist, Mrs. Edmund Phelps providing an ideal picture of his adoring old wife, and Miss Agnes Hill, a disturbing element of undeniable charm. "A Joint Household" was another item of a miscellaneous programme, and here Miss Hill and Miss Westmacott supplied some capitally contrasted work.

"THE GLASS OF FASHION," BY THE BANCROFT CLUB.

"Dreadfully serious" would, I am convinced, have been the verdict of Ibsen's exuberant *Hilda* upon the Bancroft rendering of Grundy's comedy. It was a "glass" that only cheered intermittently and never extravagantly enlivened. Mr. Cahill certainly was brisk and hearty as *Macadam*, though he did not probe the depths of his humour; and a meed of praise is the due of Mr. Kenyon Bright for his prying *Jenkyn*, though over-deliberation interfered considerably with his success, and in make-up he rather suggested the stable than the press. But their good could not outweigh the ill of a youthful *Lady Coombe* and a quiet and reserved *Peg*, Miss Chester's serious view of the latter preventing Mr. Ward's scoring as he would have done with the *Hon. Tom*. But if the comedy element left a good deal to be desired, the dramatic interest came out unusually strong in the hands of Mr. Dawson Milward and Mr. David Davies. Mr. Milward's *Borowski* would have been more completely equipped with a spice of grim humour (lack of humour, indeed, is the vulnerable point in Mr. Milward's histrionic harness), but that defect was easily forgiven when weighed with the firmness of his grip, the polished surface when scratched revealing a very Tartar. It was a performance revealing a very appreciable increase of power on the part of the actor. Mr. Davies made *Trevanion* a bit of a martinet, but 'tis a pardonable fault in a soldier; and his dignity, self-reliance, and virility were of enormous value to the play. Miss Drayton could not rise to the more exacting moments, but her reading of *Mrs. Trevanion* as a spoilt, wilful child was permissible and effective. Mr. Lewin Mannering fortunately rescued "Dream Faces" from degenerating into a nightmare. His touch is a trifle heavy for the handsome, reckless reprobate; but he held the attention of his audience from start to finish.

"LADY CLARE," BY THE ROMANY CLUB.

Buchanan's version of "The Ironmaster" has never stood high in favour amongst amateurs, and in steering wide of it they have shown their good

sense. Tackling the leading parts means, for the majority of amateurs, courting disaster. There are just three or four I could lay my hand upon who might be trusted to render a fair account of *Middleton*, and Miss Olive Kennett, I fancy, could reveal to us something of the tragedy of that second act; but save and excepting these it were best to leave the play on the shelf, "in the odour of camphor." It's too tough a nut for them. Mr. and Mrs. Hallward have stronger teeth than most, and even they do not get to the kernel of their characters, though the actress (at her best in the first and last acts) comes uncommonly near it—so near, indeed, that with a stronger note of pathos it would be actually within her grasp. As it stands, however, it is a performance to be equalled by few amateurs, and beaten only by the one exception I have named. Compared with the difficulties with which the principals are compassed about, the path of the remainder seems singularly free from obstacle, and such trifling ones as present themselves are dismissed with enviable ease by the capable cast the Romany put forward. Mrs. Sim, alone amongst amateurs in her capacity for character of a boldly-marked kind, was exactly the actress required for *Melissa Smale*; Mr. Auckland Bramwell's realistic *Ambermere* aroused the strongest interest in a new actor; Mrs. Coplestone, with the merest corner to fill, filled it to perfection; Mr. Tulloh gave a graphic sketch of the American millionaire; Mr. Birch Reynardson exercised marked discretion as the *Count*; a couple of minutes sufficed Mr. Montgomerie for an excellent bit of work; Mr. Jeaffreson's boyish spirits enlivened the wearisome comic relief; Miss Annesley was lively if somewhat self-conscious as *Mary*—curiously enough, in little Miss Allen, the dainty little actress who made her *début* at the last Romany performance, the Club had the very actress to their hand.



Notes of the Month.

WHAT is the most interesting achievement of the present season? The man in the street, with a preference for Mr. Alexander's dexterously-managed playhouse, will tell you, the production of Mr. H. A. Jones's new and shrewdly christened play. And indeed grounds more relative than his for this selection of "The Masqueraders" would be hard to find. Often and often Mr. Jones has testified to perfect accord with *Hamlet* in his view of the functions of the play and players, "to show the very age and body of the time his form and pressure"; and if rumour lie not, the consummate cleverness, the unerring eye for what Bismarck calls "the psychological moment," which gave us "The Middleman," "Judah," and "The Dancing Girl," have once more served the astutest writer of our time. Nature labours

in the wake of Art, Mr. Oscar Wilde has said in, of course, infinitely choicer phrase; and Nature at the moment (and the London playhouses) seems labouring in the wake of the art of Mr. Thomas Hardy, John Oliver Hobbes, and Mr. A. W. Pinero. Strong meat, with pungent sauce, is the dish most in favour, as it should be, seeing that everyone one meets has a "Keynote" in his desk or up his sleeve; knows, once knew, or would dearly love to know a "Tess"; and has "A Bundle of Some Emotions and a Moral" in the tying. Consequently, we shall expect of Mr. Jones's novelty a startling combination of the characteristics of these writers. The quaint passages and episodes will, no doubt, be Hardy-esque, and the powerful Pinerotic—with perhaps the least suspicion of an emphasis on erotic—while the cynical, sulky "Mr. Hobbes" will impart an agreeable bitterness to some portions and mitigate the aggressive optimism inherent in Mr. Jones.

The man in the street—King-street—is, however, not everybody. There is his friend whose temple and altars stand in the Haymarket, and his vote will be given for the new production of Mr. Tree. He, too, stands foursquare to the winds of partiality that blow, for distinction and enthusiasm appear in everything attempted at this house; and, further, a certain something, a quality of exclusiveness one can find nowhere else in London, and of extreme interest unquestionably is Mr. Tree's appearance in a new part, and his managerial treatment of an original play, whether it be a "Once Upon a Time" or "A Bunch of Violets." But the impartial Independent, who favours neither Haymarket, nor St. James's, will adopt quite other views.

To him, the event of supreme importance came with Primrose Day, when "Twelfth Night" reached its hundredth night at Daly's. This fact is of all the most interesting, because almost inexplicable. How comes it that "Twelfth Night" has brought Mr. Daly a small fortune? It is a beautiful spectacle. Granted. But "The Foresters" was lovelier still. And it had the further advantage of appealing to popular sentiment, both through its author being the one poet of the people, and its subject a romantic canonised champion of liberty in Lincoln green.

Shakespeare, some one will say—with an under-the-breath reference to his educational appeal and young ladies' schools. But this won't do either. For did not Mr. Irving put the comedy on at the Lyceum—and with unprecedented speed take it off again. Yet he had Miss Terry for *Viola*; and neither in

charm nor following has Miss Terry any cause to envy Miss Ada Rehan. In addition, he put forward the attraction of himself as *Malvolio*, and who would pit Mr. George Clarke against Henry Irving as comedian or star? Where, then, lies the reason for its success? It is a dull play. It is by an author whom none but members of Shakesperean Societies and a handful of critics, budding and blown, affect. It failed at the first theatre in the world, though produced by the first manager and actor of the day. And now it succeeds, despite the general (unpardonable) ignorance of Mr. Daly's claims to be regarded as a front rank man; despite the comparative indifference shown towards seemingly far more attractive items in his *repertoire*: despite the presence in his company of but one popular favourite; despite the manager's praiseworthy contempt for all cheap and shoddy methods of haling folk into his house. Can anyone explain?

Can it be that the audiences have been largely composed of the mere idle lovers of pretty pictures, simple melody, and homely fun? Has Mr. Daly tapped that huge section of the public which usually finds its way to the Gaiety, the Lyric, or the Savoy? If it be so, and really there seems no other explanation handy, what a revolution it portends. Literature and the Drama may be divorced, and remain so. But not necessarily Literature and the "Sing-Song." The serious student may jib at poetry and imagination; but not so the lounging frivoller. Upon masters of isms and ologies, who do their best to realise Mr. William Archer's beatific vision and make of the theatre "the meeting-place of all the arts and sciences," the airy notions of a fantastist immediately pall; and as for poetry, they will stand no more of it than lies in stinging political squibs or the dainty verse of a *Le Gallienne*. But against this intolerance of the cultured and sober we have now to set the open-minded "comic-opera"-tor, with a taste for Shakespeare as well as the musical lasses. Perhaps within a season or two this Daly leaven will have worked, and the progressive movement be receiving its chief impetus from the Gaiety and the Halls. Already, indeed, one may begin to speculate on the earliest possible date for an Alhambra entertainment of "The Seasons" devised by Mr. Alfred Austin, the *début* of Mr. Andrew Lang as a writer of fairy plays and pantomime, and the acceptance by Mr. Swinburne of the Laureateship of the Lyric. In view of such possibilities, who can deny that the hundredth performance of Mr. Daly's exquisite "Twelfth Night" entertainment easily takes rank as *the* event of the season?

“O Mihi Praeteritos Annos.”—“JUPITER REFERT.”

And can this be our favourite comedy, “Money,”
 At the trim Prince of Wales’ that delighted the town,
 When Hare, or Charles Coghlan, or Wood, or George Honey,
 Was actor, not mummer, comedian, not clown.
 When knighthood was not—well, not *miss*-represented,
 And lovers were not quite a couple of spoons;
 When clubs, with the costume in vogue quite contented,
 Dispensed with the service of *old pantaloons*!

Ah, what were the play, Lady Franklin, without you!
 Tho’ why such incompetence place on the scene?
 Can it be you’re reluctant to have those about you
 Who might share some applause with the comedy queen?
 Well chosen your motto, tho’ readings may vary,
 And wide of original meaning may fall;
 For if it be “Summa Ars Artem Celare,”
 You’ve succeeded in giving us no art at all.

Your latest reforms may be tasteful or plucky;
 ’Tis the *play* that we want, and we crave for it still;
 Nor can “Harry” the Lovely, nor “Arthur” the Lucky,
 Quite compensate us for the absence of skill.
 And delicate “Clara,” so doll-like and slender,
 My artless, my artful, my angular pet!
 We’ll use for thy name a diminutive tender,
 And instead of fair Marion, say Marion-ette!

SEVERAL correspondents have kindly pointed out an error into which I fell last month in connection with Mr. W. S. Hunt’s article on Mr. Irving’s early work, and Mr. George W. Baynham sends from the Savage Club this interesting letter:—

“Permit me to correct a misstatement in Mr. Hunt’s very interesting ‘Peeps at the Past’ in last month’s THEATRE. The Mr. Harcourt Bland he refers to was in no way connected with the Mr. Bland referred to in your corrective note. The latter was Mr. James Bland, who was in the *corps* of the Haymarket Theatre for many years, and also an actor at the Lyceum, where he figured conspicuously in most of Planché’s fairy extravaganzas. If I am not mistaken, you will find his name too in the cast of ‘the Macready revival’ at Covent Garden. Professor Morley refers to his *Quin* at the Haymarket in 1852. At that time Mr. Harcourt Bland was playing light comedy at Dublin to the low comedy of that then very rising and promising young actor

Mr. J. L. Toole, who had just made his *début* in that city. From thence Mr. Bland went to Glasgow, where he remained till he came up to the Princess's and appeared in 'Ivy Hall' (the 'Poor Young Man' of the play being over fifty years of age). He earned as a light comedian a reputation second only to that of his confrères Charles Mathews and David Fisher. Retiring from the stage, he became Professor of Elocution at Glasgow University. He was also a deep theologian, and published an erudite work on the Apocalypse. He died very suddenly and peacefully about nineteen years ago. His widow is the daughter of Mr. F. Cooke, long associated with the Kean revivals at the Princess's. His daughter is Miss Elsie Chester, happily remembered as a charming character actress; and his son, Mr. Harcourt Beatty, who takes his father's real name, is one of our most promising *jeunes premiers*. For the facts connected with the stage career of the two Mr. Blands I can answer, having been personally acquainted with both, and having been also Mr. Harcourt Bland's immediate successor as stage manager and light comedian at the Theatre Royal Glasgow, and succeeding him likewise as Professor of Elocution at the University."



New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from March 13th, 1894,
to April 12, 1894.

(*Revivals are marked thus **)

- Mar. 17 "Frou-Frou," new version, in four acts, adapted from the French of MM. Meilhac and Halévy. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- „ 19 "His Lordship's Birthday," farcical musical comedy, in two acts, by Francis Raphael and Edward Lauri. Parkhurst.
- „ 24 "The Missing Link," farce, in one act, by Arthur Shirley. Surrey.
- „ 26 "The Enemy's Camp," drama, in four acts, by Herbert Leonard. Pavilion.
- „ 29 "A Comedy of Sighs," comedy, in four acts, by John Todhunter. Avenue.
- „ 29 "The Land of Heart's Desire," play, in one act, by W. B. Yeats. Avenue.
- „ 29 "In the Eyes of the World," play, in one act, by A. C. Fraser Wood. Globe.
- „ 31 "An Aristocratic Alliance," comedy, in three acts, freely adapted by the Lady Violet Greville from the French of Emile Augier and Jules Sandeau. Criterion.
- April 2 "Jaunty Jane Shore," burlesque, in two acts, by Richard Henry, music by John Crook. Strand.
- „ 3 "Miss Rutland," play, in three acts, by Richard Pryce. *Matinée*. Gaiety.
- „ 4 "The Fiend at Fault," "mediæval musical mystery," in one act, by Sutherland Edwards and William Taylor. Vaudeville.

- April 5 "The Little Squire," comedy, in three acts, adapted from a novel by Mr. De La Pasture, by Mrs. William Greet and Horace Sedger. *Matinée*. Lyric.
- „ 7 "Mrs. Lessingham," play, in four acts, by George Fleming. Garrick.
- „ 9 "A Guilty Mother," drama, in five acts, by Benjamin Landeck. Pavilion.
- „ 12 "Don Juan," burlesque, in three acts, by J. T. Tanner, lyrics by Adrian Ross. A "second edition," largely re-written. Gaiety.

In the Provinces, from March 8th, 1894, to April 12, 1894 :—

- Mar. 12 "The Welsh Orphan; or, The Work Girl of Cardiff," drama, in four acts, by Paul Cavendish. For copyright purposes. Gaiety, Cardiff.
- „ 26 "The Line of Fate," drama, in four acts, by J. J. Hewson. Theatre Royal, Macclesfield.
- „ 29 "True Grit," drama, in five acts, by Henry Pettitt and Arthur Flaxman. Theatre Royal, Wigan.
- April 4 "The Thunderbolt," drama, in four acts, by D. Belac and W. Hamilton. For copyright purposes. Theatre Royal, West Bromwich.
- „ 6 "Andrew Paterson," play, in one act, by Nora Vynne and St. John Hankin. Prince of Wales's, Liverpool.
- „ 7 "Cross Strokes," comedy, in three acts, by Cola Niel. Produced by amateurs. Theatre Royal, Richmond.
- „ 9 "The Buccaneers," comic opera, in two acts, by Loughnan St. L. Pendred, music by Berthon F. Pendred and Ethel Glazier. Produced by amateurs. Streatham Town Hall.
- „ 9 "Pickles," "musical conceit," in two acts, by H. Mills and T. W. Charles. Prince of Wales's, Liverpool.
- „ 10 "Léonore," comic opera, in three acts, written and composed by J. H. E. Ashworth. Pleasure Gardens, Folkestone.
- „ 12 "Villon: Poet and Cutthroat," comedy, in one act, by Fythian Fayne. Grand, Birmingham.

In Paris, from March 14th to April 10th, 1894 :—

- Mar. 16 “Thaïs,” romantic opera, in three acts, libretto (drawn from the novel by Anatole France), by Louis Gallet, composed by Victor Massenet. Grand Opéra.
- „ 20 “Clary et Clara,” operetta, in three acts, by H. Raymond and Antony Mars, music by Victor Roger. Folies Dramatiques.
- April 6 “Le Pèlerinage,” comedy, in four acts, by Maxime Boucheron and Maurice Ordonneau. Gymnase.
- “ 10 “Son Secrétaire,” vaudeville, in three acts, by Maurice Hannequin. Nouveautés.



"THE THEATRE," JUNE, 1894.



Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

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MISS PATTIE BROWNE,
AS MRS. LAPPET, IN "DICK SHERIDAN."

"Well, of course I'm only a woman."—"DICK SHERIDAN."

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

THE THEATRE.

JUNE, 1894.

My "First Night."

(AN AUTHOR'S IMPRESSIONS.)



IT is timed for eight o'clock. In five minutes the curtain will go up. Scene-shifters, supers, manager, call-boy, prompter, everyone is at his post. The actors in the first scene place themselves about, throw themselves into the requisite attitudes. I take one last peep through the hole in the curtain. The theatre is crammed; fifteen hundred heads rising round in tiers, laughing, nodding in the light. I vaguely recognize one or two of them; but their faces seem entirely changed. They look so pinched; so dogmatic; so abominably self-assured, with their opera-glasses already in position like so many revolvers aimed at me. True, in one corner there are dear faces pale with expectation and suspense, but against them how many heartless, indifferent ones! Just to think, too, of all that those people bring in with them from the world outside—the mass of anxieties, distractions, preoccupations, distrust . . . to think that it must all melt away, that this atmosphere of deadliest *ennui* must be pierced, that these hundreds of human beings must be swayed by one common emotion, and that my drama can only find that light which is its life in these countless pairs of unyielding eyes. . . . O! if I could only postpone it yet awhile, prevent the curtain from going up. Too late! There go the three raps of the conductor's bâton, the prelude has begun . . . then that long silence, and a voice that comes to me in the side-wings, sounding so dull, so far away, so lost in that great theatre.

It is my play that they are acting! Luckless wretch that I am, what on earth have I been up to?

Awful moment. I neither know where to go or what to do. Stay there, stuck to a sham door with straining ears and bursting heart; encouraging the actors when I so much need encouraging myself; talk without having the faintest notion what I'm saying; smile with the vacancy of the absent-minded gleaming in my eyes the devil take the lot of them! I would sooner slip round into the theatre itself and look the danger bravely in the face.

Hidden away at the back of a box, I try to pose as an indifferent, impartial spectator; as if for the last two months I had not day by day seen the dust of the boards floating round my play; as if I myself had not ordained all those gestures, tones, even the least details of the *mise-en-scène*, from the structure of the rooms to the turning on of the lime-light. It's a very curious thing. I want to listen, but I can't. Everything bores me, upsets me. How noisily they turn the keys round in the doors of the private boxes and shift the stools about! People coughing significantly at each other, silk dresses rustling, fans fluttering, a thousand trifling noises—all like hurricanes to me. Then those hostile gestures and attitudes, those stiff, discontented-looking backs, those wearied elbows nonchalantly unbent—they shut out all the pretty staging.

Before me a young man with a binocular telescope is taking notes in deadly earnest. Says he:

“Distinctly childish!”

Beside me, they are talking in a low voice:

“Remember. It comes off to-morrow.”

“To-morrow?”

“To-morrow, without fail.”

“To-morrow” seems positively important to these people whilst for me there is nothing beyond to-day, to-day! Across such heartless confusion my words cannot possibly strike home, or even carry. Instead of swelling, resounding through the building, the voices of the players don't travel beyond the footlights, and there fall, muffled, into the prompter's hood. Why is that gentleman up there looking so desperate? As a matter of fact, I begin to feel frightened. I shall take myself off.

Behold me in the open. It is dark and wet; but I hardly notice. The boxes and the balconies are swimming before my eyes in wave on wave of luminous heads, and in the midst of all, the stage, like a brilliant fixed star, getting less bright with every step I take.

All in vain I stalk on—try to rouse myself. I can see nothing but that cursed stage; and in the back of my brain that wretched play, whose every line I know by heart, acts itself out, every scene in dismal procession to the end. It's like a bad dream, which I can't get rid of, and in which the mud, the noise, and the people in the street who knock up against me, are all inextricably mixed. At the end of the boulevard, a sharp whistle pulls me, and I grow pale. Idiot that I am! . . . it's only the tram-starter. So I walk on, and the rain comes down heavily. It seems to me that away, over there, it is raining on my play, that everything is getting soaked through and coming to pieces, and that my brave heroes, all spoilt and most ashamed, are dabbling at my heels along the pavements shining with gas and water.

To free myself from such gloomy thoughts I go into a restaurant. I try to read; but the letters run into each other, dance, whirl, lengthen into monstrosities. I don't even know what the words mean; they seem all eccentric, devoid of sense. It reminds me of how once, some years ago, I tried to attack a book, when out on the open sea in vilest weather. Somewhere on the lower deck, where I had taken refuge, I found an English grammar, and down there, amidst the drenching waves and the dislodged masts, so as to forget the danger, so as to miss the sight of those immense green breakers crashing over the bridge in noble style, I threw myself heart and soul into the mastery of the English *th*; but all in vain. I yelled aloud, repeated the words over and over; nothing could reach my brain beyond the howling of the sea, the bitter moaning of the north-east wind among the yards of the sails.

The newspaper in my hand at the present moment seems as incomprehensible to me as my English grammar of old. However, by dint of fixing my eyes on the large sheet unfolded before me, I see between the short, close lines the next day's articles unrolling slowly, and my poor name struggling about in thorny bushes and waves of bitter ink . . . Am I mad? Suddenly the gas is lowered. They are going to close the restaurant.

Already?

However late can it be? The boulevards are full of people. They are coming out of the theatres. Doubtlessly I am passing the very people who have seen my play. I would like to ask and learn; yet I dash on, at the same time so as not to hear the loud-voiced comments, the *feuilletons* in the open air. Ah! lucky devils they, who can go home happily, knowing that they never perpetrated a play. . . . Here I am before the theatre doors.

All closed, lights out. I can certainly learn nothing this evening: yet the limp notices, the little illumination lamps still twinkling over the chief entrance door, afflict me with an overpowering sadness. The huge building that just now was instinct with life and light to the very end of the boulevard lies dull, dark, deserted, drenched as though after a fire . . . Ah, well! it's all over, Six months' fatigue, work, hopes, dreams all gone, lost, burnt out, extinguished like the evening's gas jets."

ALPHONSE DAUDET.



To Miss Ada Rehan as Viola.

Happy the world, when pages, such as she,
 Set little feet upon Illyria's shore
 And from Orsino to Olivia bore
 Hot notes of love. What visionary he
 E'er made of words so rare a melody
 As love-lorn Viola, or, haply, wore
 Habit of man with freer grace before—
 From jewell'd cap to garter at the knee?
 We cry no marvel that her glorious voice
 Waken'd no love, in fair Olivia's ear,
 For absent Duke;—her sweet proximity
 Gave eye no fairer, heart no other choice.
 And we, who 'neath thy player's garland peer,
 See thee in Viola and her in thee.

G. F. W.

The Marguerite Gautier of Eleonora Duse.



IN a certain slender but precious volume of fascinating essays which kindle our critical instinct perhaps as much by their genial wisdom as by their rapiers play of wit, the calling of the actor has been subjected to a somewhat belittling process of disillusionment.

Our pleasure-giving friend is a poor sort of creature whose first care is to destroy his own identity.

“It is not what you are, or what by study you may become, but how few obstacles you present to the getting of yourself up as somebody else that settles the question.”

And so finally this delightful writer comes regretfully to the conclusion that the actor's calling cannot be a very worthy one.

But Mr. Augustine Birrell had not seen the *Marguerite Gautier* of Eleonora Duse.

Her lovely, chastened, inobtrusive, impersonal, yet vital art, has woven round the actor's calling a fresh green laurel. It has added to his art a grave and sweet dignity—a new power, potent to move and sway the hearts and minds of men, and to sway them nobly.

As we witness this exquisite creation, in a well-worn story—a woman's ill-fated but superb devotion to the man she honours—does not a longing steal into the heart for more beautiful, more tender, less self-regardful relations with our fellows the world over? By the magic of a supreme and lofty art have we not for three short hours lived and suffered with a very noble and tender soul, and somehow as we leave the theatre we find ourselves in a gentler, softer mood, made of more penetrable stuff than when we entered it? Genius has touched our hearts—the touch of Nature, and we feel all the world's our kin, and we realise afresh how that feeling makes our life great and deep.

Mirrored with ineffable tenderness and by innumerable touches of infinite grace and delicacy we have known Love's very self, heard Love's very voice, seen her every gesture.

In a feverish, vulgar, mammon-worshipping age—Ah! how

good and fair is the sight of life's brightest aureola! Do we not need to be reminded that only when in some measure *it* has been vouchsafed to us can we discover how the world shall be best served?

For noble and chastened art, what is there to give but noble praise?

About it all unconsciously there ever hovers a winning ethical suggestiveness. It calls to the deep within us.

As we follow with breathless interest, in a language all unknown, the progress of the play, we seem to feel once again that here in this atmosphere which the artist's genius has created for us, this beautiful atmosphere of devotion, loyalty, tenderness, self-abnegation, love, and pathos, is the true atmosphere of life in which alone we shall discover the only solvent for the sorrows, the sores, the torpor, the care, the injustice that lacerate the heart of humanity.

And as *Marguerite* lives before us in large and stately grace, of action or repose, in her royal womanliness, how she quickens and intensifies our æsthetic ideals! Her every gesture suggests a grace more beautiful than beauty. Somehow or other, our English art seems after, by comparison, tinged with commonplace. On all sides we are asked what is the secret of the artist's power?

One would answer that question by asking another. Can we ever give quite adequate reasons for our enthusiasm, our delights, our love? I fear love would cease to be love if we could explain it all. Our boasted scientific criticism must own that reason and thought cannot compass art or life. We critics can only give our impressions.

The secret is not that of personal beauty. This wonderful Livorno portrait reveals features lacking even in sensuous attraction. A chastened countenance of a strong-souled artist surely—thoughtful, triste, a human face good to look upon in its quiet strength and patience, but not beautiful as we estimate beauty.

In the principles and practice of her art Eleonora Duse seems to us to have followed in the footsteps of her great countryman, Salvini. With her the first supreme necessity is conception. Nay, she would rely on a profoundly felt conception, yielding perfect execution and charm of technique. Her first and chief care therefore would be the fostering of sensibility. That seems a commonplace; but was it not the wisest of men who wrote "sensibility is the greatest of all qualities"? Sensibility to character, to beauty, to life, in all its infinite manifestations, has yielded much of what charms us in this lady's supremely delightful art.

Her *Marguerite Gautier* is a perfect conception at one with perfect execution. *Marguerite* in her eyes must be above all things a noble creature; and truly a noble creature we feel her to be. Whatever she does, into the most trifling as to the greatest, she carries a noble grace and simplicity. Her gestures are always infinitely suggestive—expressive, but not demonstrative. Again and again with native grace and abandon does she realise in motion and pose and gesture that quality of a large and noble nature. We fancy her voice just a little metallic in the first act; but when the depths are stirred, what a change! Can we ever forget that “*armando*” she utters as, with breaking quite overwhelming love, she throws her arms around her lover? How we feel the beauty of the love she lavishes upon him!

When one recalls it all, strangely enough, one remembers that the mere utterance of her lover’s name in the last three acts is the most moving thing in the tragedy. The “*armando*,” Love’s voice breaking with tenderness. The “*armando*,” Love’s voice *still*, entreating him to forbear from insult to her honour. The “*armando*,” Love’s voice *still*, as she lies dying in the agony of parting from the man to whom she has given a life’s noble devotion. Can we ever forget that agony, the pathos, the pity, the anguish of that last “*armando*”?

Most of us have cherished memories in the past. Salvini’s *Othello*, Jefferson’s *Rip*, Beerbohm Tree’s *Gringoire*, Ellen Terry’s *Olivia*. To-day we add one more figure to that beloved and gracious company, the *Marguerite Gautier* of Eleonora Duse. And we shall say of her as of those others:

“A thing of beauty is a joy for ever;
It will never pass into nothingness,
Spite of the inhuman dearth of noble nature.”

PHILIP HOUGHTON.



The Theatrical Revolution :

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY.

VIII.

1st Player : I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.
Hamlet : O, reform it altogether.



THE privilege of being present at a test-rehearsal of a new company was accorded to the veteran actor alone, and only by the acquiescence of those who were to undergo examination. Under the modern system artists were not called upon to exhibit their infirmities to a casual audience of cleaners, stagehands, rival players, and gleaners for the press. This was a strictly private function confined to those immediately concerned—the manager, the stage director, the inspector, and the authors of the play. All that was seen and heard was treated in absolute confidence, so that no one might be compromised by immaturity. Perfected mechanical appliances enabled the stage manager to supply unassisted all essentials in the way of scenery and lighting, and having done this, he retired to his room until sent for to render further service. The conclave took their seats in the centre of the theatre and proceeded to judgment with closed doors, the inspector introducing his selections as they were called for.

“You will understand, Mr. Daggerwood,” said Director Cornwallis, “that this is not a trial of competence, but of suitability. The qualifications of the ladies and gentlemen who will appear before us now are beyond all question save in this respect, that Nature may not have exactly fitted them to compass all the effects we require. I may have made a mistake in instructing the inspector, or he may not have succeeded in carrying out my idea, or it may happen that we—the authors and myself—will see reason to alter our plan in casting the play; but it is not to be supposed that any discredit attaches to the rejection of a candidate.”

Old Roscius nodded approvingly.

“It was a serious embarrassment in my day,” said he, “that a manager could not exercise a judicial selection without coming in contact with the sensitiveness of actors, and perhaps being influenced by their self-assertion or importunities. Actors used to object very strongly to rehearse on approval; and not without reason. To have a new part in a play with which they were unacquainted thrust into their hands—no context, only a word or two of uninformative cue—and to have to read it in cold blood without study, and under all the disadvantage of unadapted dress and physiognomy, was an ordeal from which they could hardly escape scathless.”

“Every chance is now given to an actor to prove his fitness,” rejoined Mr. Cornwallis; “but as for previous study of the part, that is not needed. A qualified actor should be able to produce any effect without preparation, just as a competent musician of your day was expected to play at sight. It must have been a tedious business teaching a company how to act. Our modern rehearsals differ from those to which you were accustomed to this extent: formerly every part of the machine had to be made; now we merely have to put the parts together.”

The proceedings commenced with the appearance on the stage of a candidate for the heroine of the play. This lady held high rank, and Roscius was amazed to see that she had dressed and made herself up for the character.

“An absolute necessity,” the Director assured him. “Were she to stand there as she appears in private life we should be forced to reject her as too mature for the part.”

“But surely you could judge by her efficiency in some recent performance?”

“We do not work in that haphazard way now,” returned Mr. Cornwallis, smiling. “We must be certain that her style will actually harmonize with the situations in which she would have to appear in the new play. She has been instructed as to the age, nationality, station of life, temperament, state of health and other circumstances of this character which would affect her reading, and assisted in her make-up with approved drawings. We have now to ascertain how far her voice and manner will touch the situations. The first scene, please,” he continued, addressing the inspector, “that in which Cynthia makes her entrance. The scene is the secret meeting of revolutionary conspirators, of whom Cynthia, by reason of family wrongs, is the leading spirit. They are depressed and intimidated by reverses when she comes to stir the sinking fire of their ferocity into a blaze. That which has crushed her associates has incensed her,

and in inspiriting them she is betrayed into a ruthless savagery, which still must have an almost holy fervour glorifying her fierce words."

The actress, having listened attentively, left the stage, and after a slight pause for the concentration of her thoughts, signified that she was ready. The inspector then read the dialogue leading up to her entrance, and at the cue she came down the stairway into the supposed cellar with an effect which struck the true note of genius and gave evident satisfaction. In the subsequent fiery passages, however, her success was less assured. "She is too much the hardened Anarchist," was the verdict, and after various essays it became evident that she could not suggest the underlying softness and goodness which were essential to the ultimate sentiment of the drama. Her attempts to do so did not carry conviction. Her love scene was 'passionate rather than tender; her filial scene had dutifulness instead of devotion. She could have portrayed a fanatic Amazon tamed by sexual emotion, but a gentle, self-abnegating, unguided girl, who for a while wore a mask of hate foreign to her nature, this lady could only simulate, and simulation, however skilful, is not sincerity, and in 1923 they knew better than to sacrifice the whole purpose of a play by attuning a melody in a wrong key.

After seeing a number of admirable artists discarded, Roscius began to consider the judges unduly fastidious.

"Surely," he said, "you can speculate a little in the development that might come of closer acquaintance with the subject."

"We are compelled to do so, of course," the Director answered. "It would be too much to expect a perfect realization of our fancy. We speculate in the players' *achievements*, but we determine their *possibilities* beforehand. Given the right material, the required fabric may be constructed; but the formation of a face, the timbre of a voice, the instincts of a mentality, sometimes involve an absolute unfitness for the use we would put them to. What would be the consequence of heedlessness of the fact? Why, the meaning of the play would be nullified; the sentiment distorted; the force of the situations would fail. Gross injustice was done to authors in the olden time, and the public lost the delight which should have been afforded by what they saw."

This set old Roscius wondering how many failures of the nineteenth century would have been turned into acceptable pieces had they been more prudently cast and more appreciatively staged, and how many modern plays that now gave satisfaction would have been voted wearisome and conventional if obscured by the unimaginative and unintelligent treatment of former days. A homely thought may be turned into poetry, and a

delicate fancy may be vulgarized into childishness; subtlety may be buried out of sight, and strength and boldness may be so coarsely handled as to give offence instead of pleasure. He watched the steady aim of Director Cornwallis to achieve truth and reasonableness. The element of "make-believe" was dispensed with, and every action was justified according to nature. A woman for whom men had to contend to the death could not be represented by an actress, however skilful, whose physical attractiveness had withered and faded away. An actor with the slightest sinister effect in voice, manner, or physiognomy was regarded as useless for the rôle of an honest man—unless such a contradiction chanced to be a feature of the part. Primarily the eye was catered for; then care was taken that the ear should be satisfied; the cultivation of the actor and the art of the stage-director were relied upon to gratify the understanding. Roscius could not but admire the ready command of expression which distinguished the twentieth-century actor. Tempestuous passions were portrayed without effort or crudity, and fine shades of feeling were promptly delineated. It was as if the director sounded notes on a musical instrument, so instantly and accurately were his requirements responded to. The result of the examination was not communicated to the candidates at once. If rejected, they could only guess at the cause, and any change in the estimation in which they were held found indication for the most part by a change in the line of parts offered them. The young girl who had been used to virginal characters could trace the loss of her special charm in a new demand for her services to interpret elder sisters, wives, or *betrayed* maidens. The rake who had married and reformed might see as in a mirror the influence of his good consort when the managers began to invite him to play prigs. The world-life of the players had, in short, an inevitable influence upon their work in the theatre, and to this much better heed was given than formerly. Among those who were tested for character parts were men and women of striking personal peculiarity; and, noticing that these were passed with little demur, Roscius remarked to the Director that their work was probably familiar to him.

"It does not happen to be so in every case," Mr. Cornwallis replied. "These are chosen for their eccentric personality, and hearing them speak a single speech tells me the effect they will make in every situation."

"Humph! Are they not likely to subdue those eccentricities when they come before an audience? It often happened that a naturally comic effect was lost by the self-restraint of the actor, just as grotesque mannerisms would crop out under the influence

of nervousness and mar the graces of one who exhibited no such defects in ordinary life."

"Ah, there comes in the difference of our training system. Formerly the actor modelled himself upon some one whose style took his fancy; or, if he did not possess the faculty of imitation, he sought to cultivate himself by extinguishing himself—assuming a stereotype method of expression in which his personality was subdued. Now our 'Doctors' are very careful to prevent this mistake. Every actor and actress has an individuality which has its own peculiar charm and potency. In the beginning this involves awkwardness and offending crudities, and the task of the stage coach is to temper, prune, and guide such manifestations until they serve instead of obstructing. In this way does the horticulturist convert weeds to fair uses. It would be equally wrong to grub them up altogether as to allow them to grow untended. I have in mind eminent actors of your day who were examples of both these mistakes. Some of them, trading upon their individuality, exaggerated their worst defects—grotesque facial expression, gesture and gait, monotonous delivery, &c., while on the other hand the aim of a certain actor-manager seemed to be the effacement from his performances of everything that gave life and colour. We have found the happy medium with immense advantage to our productions, and our players are neither dummies nor monstrosities."

"From this cultivation of the player's individuality I infer that the power of disguise—the concealing of one's own identity in that of the character assumed—is not much valued now."

"It is appreciated in its proper place, but we class it with another division of art altogether. A man or woman so gifted finds the most profitable scope for this talent in the detective force; and I may tell you that disguises which were only fabled thirty years ago have now reached the perfection which was then dreamed of. It is necessary to the interests of justice—and indeed to the safety of officers of the law—that the detective should be able to obliterate his identity; but on the stage the actor who eclipses his personality with the character he assumes despoils himself of the credit of his work. The greatest actors of your time perceived this and allowed their individuality to shine through the mask and impress itself upon the audience. By so doing they won popularity, every stroke of their art deepening their personal imprint instead of being frittered away upon portraiture which the public eye could not treasure up in particular association with their own self. It is required of the stage-director that he shall cast every part to an actor whose resources are suited to it, on the principle that the more closely

Nature has adapted him the truer and more assured must be his representation. And all that is required of the actor is that he shall repress those of his peculiarities which are out of harmony with the part, and enhance all those which will give it force and effect. This guarantees to the audience the soundest portraiture and to the actor the fullest measure not only of success, but of appreciation, while we who produce plays can rely more definitely upon the material with which we deal than if the assumption be an unknown quantity which may turn out essentially different from that which formed a factor in the plan we have conceived."

"When I retired from the stage," remarked Roscius, "the London public had grown tired of actors' mannerisms. I have heard playgoers protest that they did not see the characters in the plays, but only Brown, or Jones, or Robinson, as the case might be, whose aggressive personality destroyed illusion and kept the beholder always in mind that art and not nature was before him."

"That objection surely arose from the failure of your actors to merge their personality in the parts they played. They had little real adaptability—they did not sustain their embodiment—they 'went on' for characters instead of impersonating them, and allowed blemishes of style to crop out in contradiction of the identity they tried to depict. Then it is, of course, proverbial that one may have too much of a good thing, and when the same actors remained year after year in one theatre, appearing in every production, each play bore a resemblance to its predecessor which deprived it of novelty and force. Our continual change of cast and distribution of players maintains the freshness of our entertainments, and instead of successive productions being but a repetition of what has gone before, running plays are rejuvenated once a month, and there is a strong inducement to witness pieces again and again to compare the performances of the different companies."

"But is not the performance of the succeeding company a copy of the original?"

"By no means. Copies are never equal to the original. We never cease from endeavouring to do better than what has been done, and welcome the new light thrown upon the work in hand by a fresh imagination. Of course, consistency, symmetry, harmony must be maintained, but within these limits it would be madness not to allow the actors a free hand. You have observed that in the trials to-day I simply asked the actors to convey certain ideas; I did not presume to dictate to them the precise mode of expression."

"Ah! the system of thirty years ago was one of tyranny. The

producer insolently assumed that none of the actors knew how to act, and an exact intonation or gesture would be imposed, however uncongenial to the actor's instinct. A West-end company would start work upon a play in an enforced spirit of childish helplessness, all original thought perfunctorily paralyzed. Puppet-like they were allotted their precise sounds and evolutions, and when once the performance was accepted, a stereotyped repetition of it was rigorously enjoined. An automatic representation would have had just as much life and impulse, humour and emotion, as the entertainment offered when a piece had run a month or two on this plan. Then again, I think that our method of rehearsal was all wrong. We began to decorate the house before we had built it. Some actors memorized their lines before they had compared them with those spoken by their colleagues, and our unsystematic producers asked for the highest finish of reading and execution before they had laid down the basis of conception. I'll be bound you have reformed that."

"Assuredly. First of all a full copy of the play is given to each actor, so that he may know the relation of his part to the whole. I then give a lecture upon the meaning and purpose of the piece, explaining the necessity for certain readings. Then I take the work in sections and lecture specially to those concerned, calling upon them to illustrate my points as I deal with them. Soliloquies and duologues are then remitted for private preparation and submitted for my revision when the actors have perfected their design. The composite scenes I arrange in every detail, giving due consideration to any suggestion that does not disturb the general plan. We limn the effects roughly and boldly at first, to fill in and refine by degrees, as a sculptor works upon his statuary. We make rapid progress, for each stage of our work is thorough; we waste no time in doing a great deal one day to forget it the next; every step is firm and sure. Our labour is a delight to us because it gives intrinsic satisfaction, and we do not feebly hope for the indulgence and toleration of the public, but build up a solid claim upon their admiration."

"But you do not escape criticism, I believe? The Press——"

"Ah, that is a subject which deserves a conversation all to itself. I will introduce you to a critic who will tell you how he qualified for the office and how he discharges it, and give you a few hints of the advance which we have made in that quarter. It has been a grand one for the drama, believe me."

With hearty acknowledgments old Roscius went back to his hotel, eagerly anticipating the promised view of another aspect of the Theatrical Revolution.

An Unregarded Singer.



HE was only a simple, hard-worked little teacher of music and singing, but she was very charming. She lived a lonely life, shorn of all the luxuries we call necessities now; she walked hand in hand with poverty, and sorrows one by one had wreathed themselves like mists about her days, yet you never spent a quarter of an hour in her presence and felt that you had lost it. If it be that we only give out to others what we first have breathed in from our own environment, then her existence would have seemed too colourless to allow of its ever flashing forth a single spark. Nevertheless, the edges of her conversation and certain touches in her fine manners caught at times a radiance which must have had its source in something inward that was very fair, and quite unguessed at, unsuspected by the world, and by reason of which it came to pass that long after you had ceased to think of the thing she said, you remembered well the thing she seemed to be.

We are shy to-day to say of such as she was, that their charm is due perhaps to the fact that God is no stranger in their hearts.

Looking thoughtfully around, it would rather seem as if, for practical purposes, people had wrapped their God away—tenderly and sorrowfully it may be—with the fairies, sweet dreams, and eager longings of their childhood. So that now, when another's sweetness of soul shines out across the plain, prosaic day, we cast about in our minds for a modern rendering of the case, and wonder what story, what hidden tragedy perhaps, what private heart-pain, is the inspiration and interpretation of the same.

The little teacher of singing lived where dwelling-places lie thick and close against each other in the crowded city ways. She had a small room into which the morning sunlight poured, and in that cheery, simply laid-out room you ever saw her at her best. In other people's houses she sometimes seemed a little nervous, a little conscious of her insignificance and her last year's frock,

perhaps ; but in the protection of her own small home, amongst her few well-chosen books, her ferns, her piano, her music-scores, the desk at which she worked so patiently and bravely, composing and setting down the tender harmonies the world never cared to hear—there, the grace of a very sweet individuality sat upon her like sunshine on a lonely little flower.

In her room there was a corner with a wide, soft chair and a book-table by the side. She called it her peace-corner ; but, so busy was her day, that often the only hour she could spend there was an hour snatched from sleep. If you went to see her, you were always carefully installed in that peace-corner, while she herself would sit without ceremony at her old well-worn ink-stained desk, and talk to you with her arms folded across it—a favourite way she had.

Often I wondered about her. She had such a sweet, serious face, and her figure was so frail and pathetically small. Yet when you went to her in her poverty and loneliness, you somehow felt that you were going to a garden of repose ; where fair things had time and space to grow, where order and beauty were not crowded out, where, though the earthly sun was hidden, you yet walked in tenderest light.

On a certain evening I chanced to be with her, and as far as we ever know each other's hearts, I thought to know hers then. I found her resting from her work, her expression instinct with the radiance of some joyful inspiration, and I said to her : “ You look so happy ! Why ? ”

“ Why not ? ” she answered gaily, and the smile that usually had such a world of pathos in it was touched with a strange, rare glory. “ Why not ? ”

Then, almost with a nervous quickness, it seemed to me, she ran our talk into trivial things ; but presently, as the shadows deepened, she spoke again of what lay nearest to her heart. Her own words I have forgotten ; but this is the sense and substance of what she said :

“ Because, you see, all alone up here, working away, I forget the world entirely. In my ears a beautiful music is ringing. If I can but catch faint fragments here and there, and set them down, I do not count long hours of labour spent in vain. And . . . and . . . besides all this, I have a friend . . . a friend who has taken me aside from the hard, cold world of facts, from all the awful littlenesses that of necessity crowd our days, and led me to a land where a strange sweet glow is spread around ; where great dreams find sometimes fairest realization ; where careless thoughts condense to purpose strong ; where life is brave and self of small account.

Through him, my friend, I see what alone I never might have seen at all—how this thing which we call Art is nothing less than that great mistress to whom we bring, each in our several way, the first fruits and the service of our lives; how for her dear sake we brave misconception and much loneliness of soul; how every joy may lay us lower at her feet and every sorrow fold us closer to her heart; how in her inner sanctuary God Himself is surely most often and most truly found. So much has he done for me, this friend of mine, that could I ever write one line of symphony or song, of which, he, hearing it, should say of it, that it was well and fairly done—then all my future would be coloured with a gold so bright that it would outshine the grey; for when the mists were thickest and the night the darkest, I still should only see the light of his approval breaking through the gloom.”

Her voice, her eyes, her attitude, her very self—each spoke, though all unconsciously, to the presence in her heart of that dear, human love, that loyalty of one to one, which inspires to brave endeavour, even when the onward road is strewn most thickly with difficulty and disaster. And he, whoever he may be, if he loves her not, alas! alas! for her, I thought, when the hour of her awakening comes.

It was long before I saw her again, for after that our ways went far apart, mine calling me to a distant country. Contrary to the manner of most people, perhaps, we never wrote to each other. Her life was already thronged with so many cares and claims that, it may be, she felt it well-nigh impossible to add those of correspondence to the list. Besides and beyond all this, our faith and friendship were not of that sort which, to be in perfect working order, require, from either side, constant assurance of their immutability. Were we never to have met again, I think I know that we should have been true to each other to the end of the world.

Very often my thoughts were in that far-off room into which the morning sunlight streamed. Sitting up on deck, watching the glorious stars of the tropical nights, I used to wonder how life was going with her, who, for bare food and raiment, would toil at her teaching with untiring patience all the day, and work half the night at the work, which though she did it with her life-blood, was still so dear to her, the making of the songs—the songs which some day he might hear! Away there in her loneliness, singing to her unseen yet ever-present audience, it might be, I thought, that the great mistress Art did not reckon her quite amongst the least and lowest of her handmaidens.

When I got back to that grim north city by the Clyde,

hastened with all speed to where she was, rejoicing much to think that I should see her earnest gentle face again. On the threshold, the old woman of the house stopped me for a moment—she was an ancient Highlander, and talked a dear, quaint dialect which is fast dying from the land to-day.

“Eh! but she’s gey far through wi’ it,” she whispered, tearfully and hoarsely; “I canna’ bide fra’ greetin’ when I think o’ her. She’s aye at her wairk, nicht and day, and aye smilin’ too, but she’s wearin’ awa’, she’s wearin’ fast awa’, and it’s richt sair I grudge her, though it’s juist to the Almighty himself that she’s ga’en, to him, and nane ither.”

Then I knew that what I most had feared for her had come to pass.

The door of the little room was just ajar. Softly and unannounced I entered. It was a hard cold night, but the grate was fireless. She was sitting at the old, well-worn, ink-stained desk. The light from a small lamp threw a faint yellow glory over her pathetic little face and form, and the music-scores strewn all around her. Much pain had made of her a woman, perhaps, and strengthened the sweet soul shining from her thoughtful eyes; but it had taken from her body, and worn it to a very shadow of its former self. The little hand that held the pen, and was pressed against her forehead, was of itself a thing most pitiful to see. Not for long could one have stood watching the fitful flickering of that fragile life—and still been strong.

Suddenly she turned: “You!” she cried joyously, “not really you!”

Then a memory came back to her, and a great blaze of colour swept the weary whiteness from her face. And when she spoke again, though her voice trembled a little, her smile was beautiful and brave exceedingly.

“Let me see,” she said, “where were we? I think, I remember. Well, he lost belief in me, and then forgot me . . . and so I have rather lost belief in myself. But still, you see, old habits cling . . . and I am always trying. That is all there is to say of me. But I am very tired. Now come, please, and tell me all about yourself. Sit in the old corner, will you? No one has sat there since he . . . he . . . went away.”

KATHLEEN WATSON.

"The Mirror."

(FROM THE FRENCH OF ALPHONSE DAUDET.)



O the north, to the banks of the Niemen, there came one day a little Creole, fifteen years old, all pink and white like the flower of an almond tree. She came from the land of the humming-bird, and the wind of love it was that wafted her across. . . .

Her people told her :

"Oh ! never go ! It is so cold over there. The winter will kill you."

But the little Creole did not believe in winter, and only knew what cold meant by the iced sherbet she used to drink occasionally. For the rest she was in love, and so had no fear of death. . . .

Thus it was that they landed her in the fogs by the Niemen shores, with her fans, her hammock, her mosquito curtains, and her cage of gilded trellis-work full of the little birds of her native island.

When grim old Father North saw this flower floating towards him on a sunbeam from the south, his heart was moved to pity ; and as he knew indeed that the cold would make short work of the little girl and her humming-birds he hurried to light up his big yellow sun, and dressed himself in summer clothes to go and meet them. . . . The little Creole was deceived ; she mistook the heavy brutal northern heat for the warm glow that always lasts, the everlasting sombre verdure for the green of spring, and she had her hammock hung up between two fir trees in the heart of the park, and all day long she would be swinging to and fro fanning herself.

"But, indeed, it is positively hot in this your northern world," she would say, laughingly.

Until thoughts come at last to trouble her. Why, in this strange land, O, why are there no verandahs round the houses ? Why these thick walls, these carpets, these heavy hangings ? The great porcelain stoves, the big loads of wood stacked in the court-

yard, the skins of silver-fox, the doubly-lined wraps, the furs packed away in the old oak presses. . . . What do these things mean?

Poor little one, soon, very soon shall she know!

One morning, on awaking, the little Creole has a fit of shivering. The sun has disappeared, and from the low, black sky, which during the night has drawn perceptibly nearer to the earth, silent white flakes are falling—one might almost be under the cotton trees. . . .

Winter is here! Winter has come! The wind is whistling and the stoves are roaring. In their great gilded cage the humming birds warble no more. Their tiny blue, pink, crimson, opal-tinted wings hang heavily, and oh! the sadness of watching them huddled up against each other, benumbed and swollen with the cold, their beaks so exquisitely fine, their eyes no larger than a pin's head. Away there in the depths of the park, hoar frost lies on the hammock, the branches of the fir-trees are as cut glass against the sky. . . . The little Creole is cold; she would rather not go out.

Gathered together in a heap in a corner by the fire, like one of her own tiny birds, she spends her time in watching the flames, and out of memories making sunshine for herself. In the huge glowing fire she sees again her native country: the wide sun-filled spaces, the brown sugar gushing from the canes, the rich ears of the Indian corn floating in golden dust; and the long siestas, the transparent blinds, the straw matting; and the starry nights, the iridescent fire-flies, the millions of infinitesimal wings trembling amongst the flowers, and the gauze threads of the mosquito curtains. . . .

And whilst she dreams after this manner before the firelight, the winter days crowd round her, each one shorter, darker than the one before. Every morning they lift a dead humming bird from the cage; at last only two are left—two little flocks of green feathers, shivering against one another in a corner. . . .

Until there comes a day when the little Creole cannot get up at all. Like a tiny frail pleasure bark stranded on Northern ice-slopes, the cold has clasped her tight and paralysed her. So gloomy it is, and the room so sad. The hoar frost has drawn across the windows a thick curtain of dim silk. It seems as though the town is dead; alone, in the silent streets, the steam whistle of the snow-clearing engine echoes dismally. In her bed, to amuse herself, the little Creole tries to catch gleams of firelight on the spangles of her fan, and, for the rest, spends her time in gazing sadly at herself in a hand-mirror from her island home, edged all round with large Indian feathers.

Blacker, gloomier, the winter days speed on. In her lace wrappings the little Creole lies, pining constantly. What seems to her the saddest thing of all is that from her bed she cannot see the fire. She feels to have lost her native land twice over.

. . . . Every now and then she asks :

"Is there a fire at all in the room?"

"O my sweet, indeed there is! The fire-place is bright with heat. Don't you hear the wood crackling and the fir-cones spluttering? O, come, come!"

But all in vain she leans over; the flames are too far off. She cannot see them: this it is that saddens her beyond expression. One evening as she lies there, pale and thoughtful, her head on the edge of the pillow and her eyes turned unceasingly towards the bright invisible flames, her friend comes very close to her and takes the mirror from the bed:

"My darling! You want to see the fire? Well, wait . . . you shall." . . . And, kneeling down before the hearth, he tries to send her in the mirror a reflection of the magic glow:

"Have you got it, dear?"

"No! I can't see anything."

"Now?" . . .

"No! Not yet." . . .

Then all at once, as she catches the whole brilliancy full in the face and lies drowned in light:

"I see! Now I see!" she cries in ecstasy, and so dies, joyously, two tiny flames dancing in the depths of her eyes.



I hear the audience shout "encore,"
When up shoots Davy thro' the floor—
An op'ra hat this time he wore
 Upon his wig—
Acceding to the loud demand
Takes Mrs. Siddons by the hand—
Quick change of music by the band,
 They hop a jig!

Shade of old Drury's classic walls!
O tell it not in those far halls
Where ghostly great ones pay their calls
 On Avon's bard.
They'd flock *en masse* to that wise sage,
Their phantom hearts aflame with rage—
Such desecration of the stage
 Would hit them hard.

What happened next I couldn't say,
For some kind angel came my way,
"We're lockin' hup; be goin' to stay?"
 Was all she said.
I started, woke, and gazed around;
Long rows of seats in holland gowned
Dispelled the dream. I rose and found
 My way to bed.

OTWAY THORPE.



Plays of the Month.

“ARMS AND THE MAN.”

A Romantic Comedy, in Three Acts, by G. BERNARD SHAW.

First produced at the Avenue Theatre, on Saturday Evening, April 21st, 1894.

Major Paul Petkoff ..	Mr. JAMES WELCH.	Nicola	Mr. ORLANDO BARNETT
Major Sergius Saranoff	Mr. BERNARD GOULD.	Catherine Petkoff ..	Mrs. CHARLES CALVERT,
Captain Bluntschli ..	Mr. YORKE STEPHENS.	Raina Petkoff	Miss ALMA MURRAY.
Major Plechanoff	Mr. A. E. W. MASON.	Louka	Miss FLORENCE FARR.

“Mockery! mockery! Nothing but mockery!” exclaimed a character in Mr. Bernard Shaw’s brilliant play, produced on Saturday night, and a section of the audience, appropriating the remark as a criticism on the piece, cried “Hear! hear!” Like most generalizations, however, this one overshot the mark. Of mockery there is much, enough and (a little, perhaps) to spare. But there is more, far more, in the play than mockery alone. Rough and ready classification would relegate it to the order known as Gilbertian farce, and couple it with “Tom Cobb” or “Engaged,” whereas it is really a unique product. It is, in brief, a romance expressed in terms of realism.

The blend is curious. Almost as strange as Mr. Aubrey Beardsley’s blend of the beauties of Rossetti and Japan. But the effect, unlike that mystical Eccentric, is piquant, stimulating, entertaining, in a rare degree. How indeed should it be otherwise, granted that a man of the nimble wit of Mr. Shaw was to conduct the operation. For just think of the idols of Romance if thus mildly tampered with. Monte Cristo with a law of average to contend against! Rebecca and Rowena weighted with a mere fraction of their share of human weaknesses! Cœur de Lion afflicted with neuralgia! Or Amy Robsart a prey to nasal catarrh! Touch them with the commonest infirmity, and their romantic setting ensures their own destruction. So it is with the unconscious wits in Mr. Shaw’s “romantic comedy.” With a lurid background of patriotism, battles, carnage, rout, refuge, and intrigue, his characters have only to conform to the conventions of romance, and they might be deified to-morrow. But their manipulator has the temper of a genial Swift, and employs the background merely to show them up against.

Hence, in place of Romance we get satire, and satire more brilliant than the modern stage has seen.

The plan of the play is nothing. Its machinery involves a hunted fugitive from the field of *Slivnitza*, his midnight concealment in the heroine's room, her interest in the stranger, the exalted love she bears the hero of the day, his inability to subsist on such ethereal food, his preference for her maid's more material embraces, the fugitive's return, and the dispersal of the several mists in which these heroes and heroines are enshrouded. This, as I have said, is of no account. The threads are ingeniously handled, but that is all. The merit lies in the bland self-revelations in which they all indulge. Each in turn is tumbled from romantic heights to the solid ground of matter-of-fact commonplace, but in the fall is thrown into such whimsical attitudes that the comicality is irresistible. Whilst for auxiliary pegs on which to hang delightful satire Mr. Shaw has to his hand the glories of war, and Bulgaria's place in the march of civilization. His picture of the professional soldier who fights when he must, but is "jolly glad not to fight at all," is calculated to send Mr. Rudyard Kipling into hysterics, and the cynical yet waggish way in which he strips war of its gorgeous garb, and tricks it out in cap and bells, would make Wellington turn in his grave and Napoleon deny his name. The comedy pelts so many fetishes that its friends and admirers may be few; but no one who loves wit for wit's sake, no matter whose withers are wrung, should miss a comedy which for a kind of scorching fire of wit and a certain romping audacity is nothing short of a revelation.

The acting was nearly all it should or could have been. Miss Alma Murray, looking sweetly pretty, and playing with charming simplicity and cleverly veiled humour, was the secretive heroine; her bantering, self-assured, faithless hero having just the right touch of rhodomontade applied by Mr. Bernard Gould, whose acting of a terribly difficult part was in the true spirit of burlesque. Mr. Yorke Stephens was excellent as the placid, well-balanced hireling soldier. A subordinate Bulgarian officer Mr. James Welch invested with rich humour; and Miss Florence Farr and Mrs. Calvert appeared in characters affording still less scope. The reception was enthusiastic, and Mr. Shaw, from before the curtain, was prevailed upon to add a few witty words to the many that the actors had delivered from the other side of it.

“ A BUNCH OF VIOLETS.

A play (founded on Octave Feuillet's "Montjoye") in four acts, by SYDNEY GRUNDY. First produced at the Haymarket Theatre, on April 25, 1894.

Sir Philip Marchant .. Mr. TREE. Viscount Mount-Sorrell .. Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD. Hon. Harold Inglis .. Mr. C. M. HALLARD. Mark Murgatroyd .. Mr. LIONEL BROUGH. Jacob Schwartz .. Mr. G. W. ANSON. Harker .. Mr. HOLMAN CLARK.		Butler .. Mr. HAY. Footmen .. { Mr. MONTAGUE. .. { Mr. FERRIS. Lady Marchant .. Miss LILY HANBURY. Violet .. Miss AUDREY FORE. Mrs. Murgatroyd.. Mrs. TREE.
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So far as the play is concerned, Mr. Grundy is no happier with "A Bunch of Violets" than with its forerunner, "Mammon." His theme is excellent—*la haute finance*. But theme is not all in drama. Treatment in drama, as in matrimony, is the matter of supreme importance. And his treatment is not exactly satisfactory.

In presenting a financier of the speculative kind, he had two types to select from—one, the Napoleon, the conscienceless dictator, the favourite of fortune, who marches to the goal of his ambition over the bodies of ruined widows and starving orphans, the man who succeeds by reason of the superb audacity of his plans of campaign; the other, the wily, insidious, mock philanthropist, ever with a prayer on his lips and a Bible tucked under his arm, who worms his way into the confidence of the weak and unsuspecting, and trafficks upon their simple faith. Either would assuredly make a notable dramatic figure. Each ought to require an overwhelming combination of adverse circumstances to hurl him from his pinnacle of unrighteous greatness. And the last struggle and final ruin in either case should certainly furnish the dramatist with scope for a fine scene. But Mr. Grundy's idea of a successful financier differs from these.

He conceives a man who cannot be master even in his own household, who is fleeced by his own confidential clerk, whose resource and nerve desert him at the moment when they are essential to his life, who is weak enough—not only to indulge in the luxury of domestic sentiment, but—to barter all he has lived for—rank, wealth, power—for a bunch of violets from his daughter's hand! This surely is unreasonable in the extreme; unreasonable, if not indeed absurd. With such a man it is not a matter for wonder that he could be overthrown, but a marvel that he ever reached a height from which his fall could excite the least remark. Mr. Grundy, in short, has mishandled his paltry hero, and in doing so has dealt a death-blow to his drama—from at any rate the standpoint of reality.

If, however, "A Bunch of Violets" is not redolent of life, it proves very grateful to those innumerable nostrils that sniff with no superior curl at things stagily effective. *Sir Philip Marchant* may be a wretched specimen of the magnate of Threadneedle Street, and his early marriage with a Sunday School pupil, who,

in later life, bigamously tangles his infamous web of riches and renown, may provide the measure of his silliness; but on the stage at the Haymarket he proves an interesting—though frankly impossible—person. Even though it be beyond the kindest fancy to conceive him successful to the extent Mr. Grundy demands, it is instructive to watch the fabric of his inconceivable greatness torn into shreds. And for this we have to thank, not Mr. Grundy, but the players who dignify his disappointing work. Mr. Tree, and Miss Lily Hanbury, and Mrs. Tree join hands to give us such a highly-finished picture of reality as the crude frame the author has provided does its constant best to kill. Watching their delicate art, noting the myriad shades of expression of which each is master, one loses count of the stagey things they are concerned with, and becomes absorbed in the natural things they do.

Take the scene of revelation, of the vulgar wife's betrayal of her humbled husband's secret to the noble-minded woman who has innocently filled her place of wife, what is it one remembers? Not the old, old stagey situation, but the living suffering of the one woman, the vulgar triumph of her jeering rival, and the bowed figure of the author of the mischief, sitting, dogged and mute, apart. So with his ruin, so with his self-encompassed death. His visionary diamond mines, his frauds, his ridiculously childish schemes, are naught. The machinery furnished for him is palpably a sham. But there is no sham about the highly-wrought effects associated with these poor and trivial causes. The dazed brain, the despairing clutch at fortune, safety, life, the last flash of shame and remorse, the momentary calm, and quietly met fate, are realised with the imagination and the power of a great actor, and Mr. Tree achieves a triumph in the teeth of his author and his play.

Not less admirable, not less insistently vivid and brilliant, is Mrs. Tree's work as the bigamous incarnation of fury and spite. More than once has the actress shone in parts of the same *genre*. Who that saw it can forget her heartless governess in "The Millionaire"? But clever as that was, it must give place to this newer woman with the flame-coloured hair, with the mocking *moues*, and scornful curtseys, and shrewish tongue. And for this—and the versatility it reveals, for only a week ago the actress was graciousness and fantasy itself in "Once Upon a Time"—Mrs. Tree is entitled to the very highest praise.

These leaders, and Miss Hanbury, of whose dignity and womanly feeling scarcely too much could be made, are in reality the play, though odd corners here and there are left for little sketches of character, of which Mr. Lionel Brough, and Mr. G.

W. Anson, and Mr. Holman Clarke make the very most. But limited though the area of interest be, and sordid though it be, one cannot come away unedified or displeased.

THE MASQUERADERS.

A Play, in four acts, by HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

First produced at the St. James's Theatre, on Saturday evening, April 28th, 1894.

David Remon	Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER.	Rodney	Mr. F. KINSEY-PEILE.
Sir Brice Skene.. ..	Mr. HERBERT WARING.	Sharland	{ Mr. A. BROMLEY-DAVEN- PORT.
Montagu Lushington	Mr. ELLIOT.	Jimmy Stokes	Mr. WILLIAM H. DAY.
Eddie Remon	Mr. H. V. ESMOND.	Brinkler	Mr. ALFRED HOLLES.
Lord Crandover ..	Mr. IAN ROBERTSON.	Thomson	Mr. F. LOFTUS.
Hon. Percy Blanch- flower.. .. .	Mr. A. VANE-TEMPEST.	A Servant	Mr. THEO. STEWART.
Sir Winchmere Wills, M.D.	Mr. GREAME GORING.	Dulcie Larondie ..	Mrs. PATRICK CAMPBELL.
George Copeland ..	Mr. BEN WEBSTER.	Helen Larondie ..	Miss GRANVILLE.
Fancourt	Mr. ARTHUR ROYSTON.	Charley Wishanger ..	Miss IRENE VANBRUGH.
Carter	Mr. GUY LANE-COULSON.	LadyClarice Reindean	Miss BERYL FABER.
Randall.. .. .	Mr. J. A. BENTHAM.	Lady Crandover.. ..	Mrs. EDWARD SAKER.

It has long been manifest that Mr. Alexander is the very shrewdest manager of the day, and this fact was rammed home on Saturday night by the production of "The Masqueraders." What would, what *could*, follow "Mrs. Tanqueray," has long agitated theatre-going bosoms. The answer is now given—something utterly unlike Mr. Pinero's magnificent play. That was realism naked and unashamed. Realism could stand no chance against the haunting memories of that amazing work. Therefore astute Mr. Alexander has altogether abandoned for the nonce that school of drama, and given us Romance. Satirical suggestions of realism fleck, it is true, the romance of Mr. Jones's new play, but for the most part it is frank, unabashed romance, bearing but the remotest relationship to that "modern life" of which it affects to treat. It tackles no problem, it reveals no secret of the heart, it illustrates no new phase of human nature. But if in this sense it lacks nerve and originality, in another it lacks neither. Its setting for the three familiar figures, the husband, the wife, and the lover, is audacious and original in the extreme. And as a daring and florid device in stage craft it completely took captive the most brilliant audience of the season, the Princes and Princesses, the Chancellors and ex-Chancellors, the innumerable notables in every walk of life who crowded Mr. Alexander's fashionable playhouse.

Had Mr. Rudyard Kipling written the play, he would have laid down his pen at the end of the third act and said: "Beyond this is another story." For, not to blink at the great deficiency in Mr. Jones's new play, it has reached its climax before the last act begins. In these three acts we get the story of *Dulcie*



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MR. HAYDEN COFFIN,
AS CHARLES GOLDFIELD, IN "A GAIETY GIRL."

"Ah! make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and sans End."

"THE RUBÁIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYÂM."

and her two lovers told in its entirety. We have seen her thirsting, pining for gaiety and "life" in the seclusion of the bar of a country inn. We have seen her courted by two men—one, "the choicest blackguard in England," the other, a student of the stars, a dreamer, a reverent worshipper of woman, a chivalrous Paris to the greatest of Helens. We have sat, with something (let us hope) of a blush, through the insulting business of a kiss of this friendless girl's being put up to auction by a madcap party of what presumably are English gentlemen and gentlewomen. We have seen with something of wonder the dreamy scholar and "parfait knight" take part in this sad business: and the dazzled girl, despite a wistful glance at the pale-faced astronomer, accepts the blackguard's offer of his hand and sorely-besmirched title. And the pitiable sequel also we have seen. The wretched married life, the silent devotion of the lover, the the growing tyranny of the besotted husband, and finally the desperate means the lover takes to sunder these two wrecked lives, and bring the one he lives for into the harbour of his own protection, reverence, and love.

It is a wonderful scene, this of the winning of his rival's wife. It bears no relation to everyday existence. It is a sheer romance—boldly conceived, most cunningly devised romance. But no one can deny its extraordinary effect. The disordered room in the hotel at Nice, the card-strewn floor, the opposing figures of the maddened gamblers, the set white noble face of the one, the bloated features and bloodshot eyes of his antagonist, and between them, as they cut and cut the fateful cards for a vast fortune staked against a wife and child, the terror-stricken woman who stands riveted and mute, meekly prepared to abide the issue—all make up such a stage picture as for sheer effectiveness, for "thrill," for excitement pure and simple, never has been evolved from modern drama. Finally, we have seen the last "cut" executed and heard the triumphant cry of the tortured lover as he wins his dear prize, and hurls from him the defeated brute, clasps *Dulcie* in his arms, and promises her such peace and happiness as she has never known. And in seeing this, we have seen, all we want to see.

With that last act we begin another play. *Dulcie* is carried to her lover's observatory, and from the moment she sets foot in it she begins another life. No longer a meek, unresisting, passive girl, but a woman of character, of resolve, of will, she shrinks, hesitates, pleads, argues, threatens, and denies. Indeed, she becomes the central figure of a "problem play" which Mr. Jones might do much worse than write, the problem being the attitude of a loving woman towards the man who, with her

husband's sanction, has released her from the bondage of a loathsome marriage, and whose only fetters are the fetters of the law. But this is travelling beyond the limits of one's theme. That relates or should relate solely to *Dulcie*, and the struggle that ensues for her between *Sir Brice* the Blackguard, and the chivalrous star-gazer, *David Remon*. And that theme is, I maintain, bounded by the great scene, the scene which artificial as it is—and futile though it eventually proves to be; for the woman, if a woman of such character as Mr. Jones in his fourth act avers, would have fled the degradation of her married life without the excuse of having been staked and won at cards—quickened the pulses of every soul in the house, and momentarily sent the most slow blooded crazy with delight.

Perhaps the justest attitude to assume, however, is not that of the analyst. As I have said, the realism of “Mrs. Tanqueray” is *non est*. Actuality is not Mr. Jones's aim. And when he has brought his poor timid patient *Dulcie* through the agony to which her one false step of accepting *Sir Brice* condemned her, it is no doubt of a piece with his frankly romantic scheme, that pathetically human though she is, *Dulcie* should rise to and inspire that impracticable devotion to an inhuman ideal of which romantic heroes and heroines are invariably capable. At its best then Mr. Jones's play is a fine piece of stage craft, conventional in outline, original and stirring, and supremely picturesque in detail. And Mr. Alexander has unquestionably done a brilliantly clever thing in following with it so terribly actual a piece as “Mrs. Tanqueray.”

“The Masqueraders” is also a remarkable medium for acting. *Remon* and his brandy-swilling protagonist are, of course, the absorbing figures, for *Dulcie* is a woman of neutral tints, and Mr. Jones betrays his eye for the little ironies of life in choosing for these two men to fight and fume about so very ordinary a creature as this country girl with her pathetic loyalty and shallow beliefs. But played as these men are by Mr. Alexander and Mr. Herbert Waring one could scarcely desire figures of profounder truth. Gracious and chivalrous Mr. Alexander always can be to perfection. But here he is more, far more. There is genuine passion in almost every scene, and his share of the great one is a revelation of industry, dominant, though inarticulate. Nor is Mr. Waring one whit less strong. His brutal husband is a faultless study of well-groomed brutality, a study more brilliant than anything he has previously done. Upon Mrs. Patrick Campbell, of course, all eyes were particularly bent, and her *Dulcie* proved what an artist this lady is. *Dulcie* might have been played flashily, as maiden, coquette, and

married flirt and impassioned woman. But then she would not have been *Dulcie*. For assuredly Mr. Jones did not christen his heroine without a reason. But Mrs. Campbell put these temptations from her. Not as emotional actress but as artist she strove her best, and the result was beautiful in the extreme. There was one speech, the baring of a woman's heart after years of an unlovely marriage, which for haunting horror and poignant pathos could not have been excelled. Apart from these players, the actors had but slight, though often superlatively effective, opportunities. Best among the minor characters were the heartless young cynics of Mr. Elliot and Mr. Vane Tempest; the unscrupulous "wife of the world" of Miss Irene Vanbrugh, and the dreamy, mystical boy, brother of the astronomer-hero of Mr. H. V. Esmond. There is not, however, one part that is not well played, and several of Mr. Alexander's scenes are most elaborate and beautiful. To all intents the first night enthusiasm was universal, and beyond doubt Mr. Jones has provided the theatrical sensation of the season.

THE WILD DUCK.

A play, in five acts, by HENRIK IBSEN. First produced at the Royalty Theatre, Friday, May 4, 1894.

Werle	Mr. GEORGE WARDE.	Relling	Mr. LAURENCE IRVING.
Gregers Werle ..	Mr. CHARLES FULTON.	Molvick	Mr. GILBERT TRENT.
Old Ekdal	Mr. HARDING COX.	Gräberg	Mr. CHAS. LEGASSICK.
Hia mar Ekdal ..	Mr. W. L. ABINGDON.	Pettersen	Mr. SYDNEY DARK.
Gina Ekdal	Mrs. HERBERT WARING.	Jensen	Mr. C. S. SKARKATT.
Hedvig	Miss WINIFRED FRASER.	Flor	Mr. G. ARMSTRONG.
Mrs. Serby	Mrs. CHARLES CRESWICK.	Bal e	Mr. HERBERT FLETCHER.
	Kaspersen		Mr. HERBERT MAULE.

Browning was obscure. So some people said, until Mr. Augustine Birrell darted piercing *obiter dicta* at their incautiously exposed intellect, and with greivous wounds enforced a shame-faced silence. But Browning at his worst is nought compared with Ibsen. When obscurity is only another word for leaps in thought, the trouble is soon past. You have only to get into your author's stride, keep his pace, and jump when he jumps, and you will never be left lagging in the rear groping for his meaning in alleged "obscurity." And that is the worst you have to reckon with in Browning. But Ibsen is different.

His obscurity arises from his devotion to symbolism; and a very little symbolism can, like a Will o' the Wisp, lure you a very long way. What it did with "The Master Builder" is within recent memory. It set Mr. Dawson Archer and Mr. Pythies Walkley by the ears, and for weeks was a bone of

contention in peace-loving households of a (intellectually) baser sort. Why? Because it was symbolical. We could all agree that it was utterly unlike life, and curiously unlike drama; but agree upon the application of its symbolism, we could not, and *hinc multæ lachrymæ*. So with "The Wild Duck," produced on Friday. It is obviously symbolical. But of what? Goodness—in other words Mr. Grein, as the H. M. Stanley of the exploration—only knows. And I would suggest that in future, in enterprises of this order, an official "Digest" of the play be issued in the advertisements and programmes, much as Mr. Irving issued one when he revived "Romeo and Juliet," to prepare us for his reading. Then we should be saved much wild speculation; we could all adopt one standard of criticism, and the poor actors who stand over-much in the pillory in these elusive plays, could at once be seen to be revealing the official idea or obscuring it.

Shorn of its symbolism, the play slowly drifts from domestic intrigue to farce tintured with suicide, and is endurable and even interesting, mainly by reason of the living reality of the loafing egoist *Hailmar*, and the pathetic truthfulness of his wife *Gina*, and *Hedvig* her child. The bitterness of Ibsen's satire is as ever almost painful. That Truth is a beautiful thing he manifests in the ruin of the happiness of this family by bringing among them a staunch truth teller, and by making of this uncompromising idealist, this battler in the cause of truth, the most woefully defeated of all by the very achievement of his victory. Such enjoyment as one had in the performance was directly due to Mrs. Herbert Waring, Miss Winifred Fraser, and Mr. Charles Fulton. *Gina*, in Mrs. Waring's hands, became an absorbing study in naturalness. In its simple restrained homely way, it was remarkably clever, and brought Mrs. Waring at once to the front. Still better was Miss Fraser's wistful, wondering *Hedvig*. To ask a woman to play a child is generally to ask an impossibility, but Miss Fraser accomplished the task triumphantly. It would be hard to say in which direction she travelled furthest. in force or in charm; but this is certain, that the whole effect was delightful in the extreme. Mr. Fulton's *Gregers Werle*, the sincere blunderer, was a strong, boldly outlined piece of work, as is all that this excellent actor does. And Mr. Harding Cox and Mr. Laurence Irving were effective enough, if a little disposed to crude and heavy colouring, as *Ekdal* and the cynical doctor, who acts chorus to the play.

"LA DAME AUX CAMELIAS."

A translation, in Italian, of the play, at Daly's Theatre, on Monday May 7th, 1894.

Margherita	Signora ELEONORA DUSE.	Un Dottore	Signor UGO PIPEÑO.
Duval	Signor CESARE ROSSI.	Un Servo	Signor ALFREDO GERI.
Armando Duval . .	Signor CARLO ROSASPINA.	Un Portalettere . .	Signor ALFREDO SAINATI.
Gaston de Rieux .	Signor NAPOLEONE MASI.	Olympia	Signora A. MEZZANOTTE.
Saint Gaudens . .	Signor ANTONIO COLOMBARI.	Mdme Duvernoy . .	Signora ALBERTINO G. PERO.
Gustavo	Signor LUIGI GALIMBERTI.	Erminia	Signorina IONE CRISTINA.
Il Conte di Giray .	Signor PAOLO CANTINELLI.	Nanette	Signorina INES CRISTINA.
Il Signor di Valville	Signor F. GARAVAGLIA.		

The return to London of the most rigorous and consummate artist on the stage was on Monday the occasion of a very reassuring demonstration of regard. As if to put the great actress in heart for this her second season, and erase any memory she might harbour of a none too fervent acceptance last year, the enthusiasm waxed fiery and fierce. And, stimulated no doubt by this token of established favour Signora Duse excelled herself in an unsurpassable performance of the hapless Marguerite.

Adjectives were exhausted over this extraordinary assumption twelve months ago. No Kiplingesque "dredging of the dictionary" could place at command terms of eulogy more expressive than were those lavished upon this fascinating artist and her perfect art. All is summed up in the avowal that the judgment then passed now proves to be a sound one. Although her methods and her personality were so novel and captivating that any excess of praise might well have stood excused in the inevitable shock of a great surprise, it is seen that not the most impassioned champion ever strayed beyond the bounds of reason, the limits of critical regard. For her art and her fascination prove to-day, as formerly they proved, supreme.

As memory ranges over this simple piece of living, striving, loving, despairing, dying, one is confronted with gem after gem of exquisite truth. One would hardly choose the hectic heroine of Dumas' sickly and unsavoury romance for an example of the crystal virtues of true womanhood, yet Signora Duse's art is equal to endowing this poor fragile piece of frailty with heroic quality, and of thus endowing her without abating one jot of her humanity. This it is which raises her above her fellow players, and her achievement above their finest work. She works in a natural medium. Not one impression of all those vivid pictures which she stamps upon the mind is blurred by a trace of unnaturalness, of what one may call heroic exaggeration. And yet one cannot but be conscious within a minute of her arrival on the scene, of an elevation, an all-pervading dignity in her revelation of this woman's heart, which appeals rather to our reverence than to our admiration.

From the moment when the scene is first enriched by her pale, melancholy face, the haunting sadness of her eyes, and her

curiously soft caressing tones, to that last moment, when after the ineffable pathos of her touching death, the curtain drops upon the sorrow and suffering of her mimic life, she holds one literally, absolutely, in thrall. Art, of course, it is. Nothing but art, the most consummate and the most minutely calculated, could so illude, impress, enthrall. Yet nowhere is a trace of art to be found. Nature itself is the effect attained, and nature charged with a poetic purity that lends it a strange beauty not readily to be defined.

In a sense the actress ennobles her theme, and to the delight of witnessing the highest histrionic skill, one adds the subtler pleasure of encouraging and regarding noble work. Whether or no we are to make acquaintance with this great artist's conception of the profoundest piece of womanhood in modern drama, Mr. Pinero's tragic study, "Mrs. Tanqueray," at any rate we have Marguerite to marvel at, to feel with, to remember, and for that alone we can give thanks.

"A SOCIETY BUTTERFLY."

A comedy of modern life, in four acts, by ROBERT BUCHANAN and HENRY MURRAY. First produced at the Opera Comique Theatre. Thursday, May 10, 1894.

Mr. Charles Dudley..	Mr. WILLIAM HERBERT.	The Duchess of New-	
Dr. Coppée	Mr. ALLAN BEAUMONT.	haven	Miss ROSE LECLERCQ.
Captain Belton	Mr. F. KERR.	Lady Milwood	Miss WALSHINGHAM.
Lord Augustus Leith	Mr. EDWARD ROSE.	Hon. Mrs. Stanley ..	Miss LYDDIE MORAND.
Major Craigellie ..	Mr. HENRY J. CARVILL.	Mrs. Courtlandt Parke	Miss E. B. SHERIDAN.
Lord Ventnor	Mr. S. JERRAM.	Miss Staten	Miss ETHEL NORTON.
Herr M x	Mr. H. TEMPLETON.	Rose	Miss EVA WILLIAMS.
Bangle	Mr. CHAS. R. STUART.	Marsh	Miss EVA VERNON.
	Mrs. Dudley		Mrs. LANGTRY.

Characters in the Intermezzo.

Hera	Miss WALSHINGHAM.	Cenone	Miss GLADYS EVISSON.
Pallas	Miss LYDDIE MORAND.	Paris	Mr. F. KERR.
	Aphrodite		Mrs. LANGTRY.

It is the mission of a butterfly to flutter, and this one of Mr. Buchanan's and Mr. Henry Murray's making has already fulfilled its mission, and fluttered to good purpose. The ferocious onslaught, on the second night, by Mr. Buchanan upon Mr. Clement Scott, for his alleged contemptuous dismissal of the play, in the *Daily Telegraph* review, must attract attention of a kind, and very possibly the "Butterfly" will enjoy a sunny if ephemeral existence. But this fact, if fact it should prove, will not remove their comedy from the category of inept and feeble plays. Bad plays, however, have been redeemed ere now by an exceptional attraction; and, had the authors been wise with the wisdom of the serpent, they might have played their chief card, Mrs. Langtry, as a winning trump. As it was, they wasted her.

To begin with, it lay miles beyond her reach, as beyond the reach of any actress, to reconcile a sweet-natured, pure-minded woman with an exhibition of herself before a set of raffish nincompoops as the *Lady Godiva* of the legend. A simple heroine can be outraged by her silly husband's preference of a creature innocent of beauty or art, wholly ignorant of wile and charm, and only partially acquainted with the American tongue. She can in desperation seek revenge in kind, and burst from chrysalis into butterfly—from village parson's simple child into professional beauty and society queen. But one thing she can not do and still preserve her genuine claim to womanhood. And that one is just the thing that this *Mrs. Dudley* does. She flings away her self-respect, casts her modesty to the winds, and in cold blood, for the cheap applause of a parcel of *blasé* new-sensation hunters, plays *Lady Godiva* in a London drawing-room. *Mrs. Langtry* as *Lady Godiva* in a tableau was a happy thought. There are the makings of a "boom" in the idea. But it must be *Lady Godiva* under proper conditions, if "proper" can be said to be the word. Certainly it must not be a *Lady Godiva* so ill-posed and ill-lighted, so enwrapped and becloaked, that one might with equal truth interpret it as *Juliet* stealing forth to her rendezvous with *Romeo* at the *Friar's* cell, or *Boadicea* contemplating flight before the Romans. I am almost tempted to class the episode as a "sell," of the kind common at bazaars, when, after a humorous mock exhibition, the showman asks you as you come out, "not to tell your friends." At any rate, it is certain that *Mrs. Langtry's* version of *Godiva* did not satisfy the votaries of Art.

Then, again, *Mrs. Langtry* was wasted as an actress. True, she had many lovely gowns to wear, and the donning of exquisite frocks is by some considered the be-all and end-all of an actress's art. But most look for something more than this, and *Mrs. Langtry's* career has not been without its stage successes. In all that she has ever done—done well, I mean—what she had to be in act, was always truer than what she had to be by tongue. To do was her *forte*, never to say. And, unfortunately, her authors here have burdened her with ample views on the inequality of social laws, the right of the deserted woman to tread in the footsteps of the errant man, and so on—views which to sound convincing require an expressive voice, a high-strung nature, the actress temperament—things one must reluctantly say to *Mrs. Langtry*, in *Rosalind's* words, "which you have not."

But why pursue the subject? The chief characters were in addition to being poorly played self-contradictory and vague. The amusement created by the two or three well-drawn figures in the

piece could not suffice. And neither the art of Mr. Fred Kerr as a would-be Lothario, disinclined to sacrifice himself to his desires, nor that of Miss Rose Leclercq, who acted superbly, as an ennobled *George Tid* in "Dandy Dick," a mistress of the language of the stable and the turf, could do more than carry just the scenes in which they individually were concerned. Mr. Edward Rose played brightly and funnily as a beauty-worshipping erotic poet, and Miss Ethel Norton brightened one tiny scene as a lady journalist of inexcusable impudence and irresistible push; but the rest was naught. To sum up, the whole play was a piece of misconception and miscalculation, and the direst disappointment was the outcome of the one happy thought, the much advertised and utterly ineffective tableaux.

"THE TWO ORPHANS."

A revival of the drama, in five acts, at the Adelphi Theatre, on Saturday Evening, May 12, 1894.

Count de Linière Mr. HERBERT FLEMMING. Marquis de Presles Mr. LYSTON LYLE. Armand Mr. ERNEST LEICESTER. Jacques Mr. WILLIAM RIGNOLD. Pierre Mr. CHARLES CARTWRIGHT. The Doctor Mr. W. CHEESMAN. Picard Mr. DAVID S. JAMES. Martin Mr. W. NORTHCOTE. La Fleur Mr. J. NORTHCOTE. Marais Mr. HERBERT BUDD. Count de Mailly Mr. V. EVERARD.		Marquis d'Estreés Mr. R. NORTON. Charlotte Mr. R. COLLINS. Jacquot Mr. NESBITT. Countess de Linière Miss ALICE LINGARD. Louise Miss MARION TERRY. Henriette Miss ELLIS JEFFREYS. La Frochard .. Miss DOLORES DRUMMOND. Marianne Miss EDITH COLE. Genevieve Miss HENRIETTA POLINI. Florette Miss ALMA STANLEY. Cora Miss AILSA CRAIG.
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Bracketed with "The Ticket-of-Leave Man" and "The Silver King," this work of MM. D'Ennery and Cormon ranks among the best melodramas ever written. To-day, as in 1878 at the old Olympic, it holds an audience for hours in thrall. Shorn of something of its old attraction by the loss of several actors impossible to replace, it still touches, absorbs, excites, and thrills as no play of its kind has ever done. Gone are the chivalrous *Pierre* of Mr. Neville, the sinister hag of Mrs. Huntley—an unforgettable picture of merciless malignity—and Mr. Frank Archer's polished, implacable Minister of Police. Gone, too, are others almost equally important, the gallant impulsive young *Chevalier* of Mr. Macklin, the lovely *Countess* of Miss Helen Barry, the quaint *Picard* of Mr. Proctor, and *La Fleur* the abductor—a tiny part, indeed, but one most admirably played by a then young unknown, who is now called Mr. Beerbohm Tree. They are gone, and with them has gone a certain distinction, a breath of the grand air which can exalt and dignify even melodrama. Still, we need not be disconsolate, for at least the play is left—the play and Miss Marion Terry!

As in 1878, so now, Miss Terry is the blind *Louise*, and it is not enough to say that her *Louise* is an exquisitely beautiful and touching piece of work. It were not too much to assert that of its kind nothing can ever have been seen more delicately outlined, more pathetically true, than this helpless, sightless girl, condemned by inhuman wretches to sing and beg and starve for their gain in the Paris streets. A heart of stone would melt in gazing on her wan white face, and big, despairing, tearless eyes; in listening to the hopeless wail of her sorrowful song. For so fine an artist, so rare an actress as Miss Marion Terry, it is not much, perhaps, to do. Everything begets sympathy, the kidnapped girl's forlorn condition, her rags, her hunger, her helplessness, her obvious misery. But behind all this, and the cunning aid of paint, Miss Terry brings into play an unerring insight, a simplicity, a sincerity which transmute the painted sham into startling reality, and convince one that in her one sees a mistress of her art. With such a *Louise* one could cheerfully ignore a lack of colour here, a dreadful superabundance there, elsewhere a woful want of elegance and distinction, and in many parts a curious blindness to the period of the drama, and the manners and customs of those pre-Revolutionary days. On the stage or off, it was all one. Her influence was supreme; Miss Terry held the house completely captive; the story of the blind girl dominated the whole piece, and when, in the famous garret scene—the finest bit of melodrama ever composed—the brothers had fought and the cripple had won, and the reunited sisters were restored to freedom, from gallery to stalls the delight at her deliverance knew no bounds, and the triumphant success of the revival was assured.

Circling round this wondrously pathetic figure of Miss Marion Terry's sensitive imagination are many excellent actors, of whom several at any rate are seen to advantage. Mr. Charles Cartwright gives an artistic reading of the hapless cripple hero. The haughty *Count* falls to clever and incisive Mr. Herbert Flemming, and his beautiful *Countess* with the sad face and accusing conscience to Miss Lingard, always an interesting and impressive actress. Miss Dolores Drummond succeeds Mrs. Huntley as the raucous, brutal, brandy-drinking *La Frochard*, and Mr. William Rignold, colossal as of old and even still more prone to slap the colours on with a bill-sticker's brush, is again the swaggering, handsome, dare-devil gypsy, the cripple's blustering, burly brother. Miss Ellis Jeffreys forsakes the Criterion and drawing-room comedy for the abducted *Henriette's* romantic adventure among the reckless young bloods of pre-Napoleonic France, and reveals unmistakable emotional power, though power as yet undis-

ciplined and immature. Among the minor players must be mentioned Miss Alma Stanley, who scores quite a hit as a very pert *mignonne* with a very lively song, Miss Henrietta Polini as a Sister of Mercy, and Miss Cole as a self-sacrificing penitent in the *Salpêtrière*. The theatre being the *Adelphi*, the fine old play has of course every advantage of picturesque setting and appropriate costume, and from all appearances the managers can now sit down for a few months to enjoy the golden fruits of a long run.

“JEAN MAYEUX.”

A mimo-drama, in three acts, by BLANCHARD DE LA BRETESCHE, music by CHARLES THONY.

First produced at the Princess's Theatre on Saturday evening, May 12th, 1894.

Jean Mayeux	M. ED. VALLOT.	La Chenil'e	Madame DESIRÉ.
Alphonse	M. JORDANIS.	La Marquise de la	
Le Beau Leon.. .. .	M. DEPRETER.	Lilliere	Madame SANDRE.
Robert Tissot	M. RENE DUBOS.	La Gadiche	Madame BIGNON.
Marquis de la Lilliere..	M. FERRIN.	Jeanne de la Lilliere ..	Mlle. BERGINE.
Le Rcuquin	M. VERDAVAINNE.	L'Ogress	Madame COLTEREAU.
Auguste	M. DECHAMBRE.	Caravane	Madame DELORME.
Baptiste	M. MOREAU.	Mlle. Duchemin	Madame VALÉRY.
Superintendent of Police	M. DEAU.	Girondine	Madame FONTAINE.
Municipal Guard	M. GASPARD.	La Greles	Madame RASPAIL.
A Rag Picker	M. BORD.	La Grande Lisa	Madame DURAND.
M. de St. Joyeuse	M. GABRIEL.	Mlle. de Caravel	Madame BREVAL.
Le Vicomte	M. CALOU.	Mlle. Lea de Guisnee..	Madame GUYONNET.
M de Frances	M. DENORTIS.	Mlle. de Frasnes	Madame DESCHAMPS

By a curious coincidence, on the night which saw the “Two Orphans” revived at the *Adelphi*, the same story was told in dumb show at the Princess's. “Jean Mayeux,” the mime-drama now being played by an exceedingly clever company of pantomimists, is in fact nothing but the history of the blind *Louise*, restored to sight and provided with a tailor-made gown and a modern setting. In this version she is *Jeanne*, a schoolgirl of sixteen, whom chance leaves unprotected in the Paris streets at night, and terror at being pursued by a betting man drives into a common ball-room in the slums. Drugged and decoyed to their garret by *La Chenille* and her ruffian son—direct descendants of *La Frochard* and the bully *Jacques*—she is beaten, starved, and treated to gross indignities at their hands before being championed by the devoted cripple *Jean Mayeux*, and through his instrumentality restored to her friends. Truer to life, however, than the unmitigated romance from which it has been culled, it proves a tragedy. The slavish adoration born in the cripple's heart is not of the kind that suffers the loss of its object and creator, and half-demented at having for ever to resign the new-found sunshine in his dreary life, the poor wretch kills his little goddess.

In the course of the piece are many scenes, remarkable for a certain gutter realism, for passion, for pathos, and for what one may term the poetry of rags and vice. To every scene the actors in the main bring gesture and facial play so expressive as to supply the eloquence of words, and by the great scene of the brothers' fight and the cripple's victory the audience was held spellbound and finally stirred to genuine enthusiasm. Unfortunately, the central figure of the girl is not inspiring. Mdlle. Sergine mimes well and acts intelligently, but her personality is against the part she has to play. Could Miss Marion Terry, now, be translated to the Princess's, the episodes of the awakening of the cripple's love and the imprisoned girl's terror in the presence of her *roué* pursuer would at once acquire a significance and force they do not at present possess. Despite this drawback, however, the piece must certainly be seen. It is, thanks chiefly to M. Vallot and Madame Desiré, the *Jean Mayeux* and *La Chenille* of the drama, as engrossing, as real, as was "L'Enfant Prodigue," and there are touches in the scene of the Gigolette's ball so vivid in their truth to low life as to become quite horribly impressive, while on the other hand the relations of the cripple and *Jeanne* are inexpressibly touching and poetical.

The bully brother is effectively mimed by M. Jordanis, whose mad-drunk, mute bawling of a doggerel ditty in unison with the half-tipsy hag, his mother, was among the cleverest things of the evening. But after M. Vallot's pathetic acting as the hero, I am not sure that the best-observed work does not come from a young lady who plays one of the Bacchantic, chorybantic "Gigolettes," a frank unspoiled child of nature most naturally represented, and curiously reminding one of Madame Sarah Bernhardt in her less dignified moments in "Théodora." "Jean Mayeux," though in essence no more than a highly-coloured pantomimic melodrama, an exciting story told in amazingly eloquent action, becomes in these speaking hands a song (of low life) without words; and whether as acting, as art, or as a new sensation, it ought unquestionably to be seen.

"GENTLEMAN JACK" AT DRURY LANE.

No one can deny that the new attraction at the National Theatre is a "strong" one. Mr. Corbett has only to be watched with a respect which deepens into awe, while "punching the bag" in training for a prize-fight and afterwards when engaged summarily "knocking out" his luckless antagonist, and the con-

tention is immediately established. From the dramatic point of view the novelty is hardly perhaps so satisfactory as from the athletic and pugilistic, but no doubt the play and the acting of its omnipotent hero will serve. One is occasionally drawn to the theatre to gaze upon some celebrity whose fame has been acquired in other scenes than those which enclose the stage, and Mr. Corbett's prowess in the prize-ring has attracted the eyes of half the sporting world. To look upon this man of pluck and brawn Young England, as I believe it loves to call itself, will doubtless consent to waive its claims to a drama which shall be a work of art, and to excuse for the sake of the "Champion of the World" any shortcomings noticeable in the "comedy-drama" which now occupies old Drury Lane. If the conjecture be correct, Young England has an opportunity to practice profuse generosity, for which there is some slight return in the unassuming bearing of Mr. Corbett, and the amusing efforts of Miss Florrie West, Mr. Robert Gaylor, and other members of the company.



About Amateurs.

(THE TRUTH ; FROM DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.)

THE
IRVING
CLUB. *Ordinary Being* : Well, the show of most importance seems to have been the Irving "Love's Labour's Lost."
 The Carper : I'm glad you say "of importance," and not "of interest ;" but, anyway, it served to take away the taste of their performance of "Home."

O. B. : Well, that was perhaps a disappointing choice.

T. C. : A disappointing choice ! It was a disappointment all round. I never saw a damp squib fizzle out more lamely. And Mr. Dawson Millward was the most disappointing of all. Coming on the top of his *Pygmalion* and *Borowski*, *Alfred Dorrisson* was a most unwelcome surprise.

O. B. : The audience found him highly amusing, at any rate.

T. C. : Exactly what it should not have found him. Here he had all his work cut out to make the 'Arryish hero presentable, and win to his side the interest and sympathy of the audience, and what does he do ? Treats the whole thing flippantly, is odiously familiar with *Dora*, and absolutely revolting in the scenes with *Pamela*, whom he would not have gulled for two minutes. "No hero, I confess." In an actor of such experience and of such intelligence, so fatal a misconception of character seems almost incredible. For days afterwards I hated him virulently.

O. B. : At least you will allow that Miss Olive Kennett's *Mrs. Pinchbeck* was a striking performance.

T. C. : Well, she certainly kept interest in the performance alive ; but the part did not suit her, and she was painfully alive to its glaring theatricalism.

O. B. : Mr. St. Cuffin rose well to the scene with *Alfred*. I thought him good as *Old Dorrisson*.

T. C. : Needless doddery, and Mr. Brown's *Mountraffe* was simply a tipsy fool.

O. B. : Miss Braithwaite's *Dora* was a pretty performance.

T. C. : Yes, her share of the love scene was very charming, but she couldn't touch the exit in the second act.

O. B. : And Miss Everitt was good as *Lucy*.

T. C.: In the spirit of the part, but needlessly giggly, and Mr. Atkyns wasn't up to much as her lover.

O. B.: Well, was "In Honour Bound" more to your taste?

T. C.: Not much. *Carlyon* isn't one of Mr. Millward's best parts. He makes him emotional—the one thing the *Q. C.* is not—and suspicious almost from the start, though that was scarcely surprising with a *Lady Carlyon* who gave herself away at every turn. A part I should like to see Miss Kennett play.

O. B.: Well, the lovers were all right, Miss Davenant and Mr. Brown; and, really, I think the whole production may be accounted a success.

T. C.: Shall we meet half way, and say a popular success and an artistic failure. By the way, at the close, I wanted to know why Mr. Millward and Mr. Brown got all the fat of the evening, and where the rest of the Club came in; but after "Love's Labour's Lost" I wished that they—at least Mr. Millward—had been again to the fore as the *King*. That a club of the Irving's reputation should be guilty of such an actor as Mr. Percy Varley!

O. B.: Well, well, he was not at his ease in the part. In modern drama he might show to better advantage. The entire performance reflected a lot of credit both on the Club and on the stage manager, I consider.

T. C.: Not a patch upon their production ten years ago.

O. B.: Oh, leave "odorous" comparisons! Besides, there is compensation in all things. In this case Miss Kennett is the compensation. Take the good the stage-manager provides and be thankful.

T. C.: Then there would not be any very severe call upon my gratitude, for, really, with the exception of Miss Kennett's winsome *Princess*, the sparkling spirits of her attendant ladies, Miss Anna Mather, Miss Everitt, and Mrs. Herbert Morris, Mr. Ernest Mead's admirable *Boyet*, little Miss Ashwynne's bright and pretty *Moth*, and the able efforts of the orchestra, there was very little that called for remark—favourable remark, I mean.

O. B.: Oh, come, now, there was a lot to praise in Mr. St. Cuffin's *Biron*. He livened up his scenes well, and he can manage blank verse. Some of his speeches were capital.

T. C.: Oh yes, he *played* the part all right enough, but he couldn't *be* it. No distinction, nothing of the gallant about him. Just recollect Mr. Alan Mackinnon in the part, and contrast the two.

O. B.: Mr. Swears, too, was amusing as *Amano*.

T. C.: Too subdued—if you don't put a spice of melodrama into it, the part becomes awfully tedious.

O. B.: And Mr. Lewin Mannering's *Holofernes* was a humorous bit of work.

T. C.: Certainly the best of the comic relief, though Mr. Charlton's *Costard* was not ineffective. Really not at all a memorable production, looked at all round, though, as I said, an improvement on their "Home;"

but really, unless they are holding an uncommonly strong card up their sleeve, it will have been a pretty tame season for them.

“THE TIMES,”
BY THE
WHITTINGTON
CLUB.

O. B.: Well, now, the Whittington performance?
T. C.: Ah, *that* we'll call the event of the biggest interest.
O. B.: Then you'll pass “The Times” without a dissentient voice?
T. C.: Oh no, I shan't. I've got grounds for a bit of a grumble; but still, nothing very serious. You can have this your own way for the most part.

O. B.: Mr. Clark tackled *Bompas* in splendid style. Heaps of humour, of course, and some really forcible work in the later scenes.

T. C.: A bit uncertain until he had warmed to his work, and perhaps a trifle too much disposed to lean to the farcical side at times; but still a sound performance, and one, I fancy, that only one amateur could beat.

O. B.: And Mr. Dutton—who, by the way, is a wonderful reproduction of Weedon Grossmith—has done nothing better than *Montagu Trimble*. Mr. Ralph Moore was a bit shaky in the brogue, but firm in the character of *MacShane*, and Mr. Graves was almost painfully realistic as *Howard*. As for the ladies, they scored wonderfully. Miss Mary Stuart was quite delightful as *Mrs. Bompas*.

T. C.: Might have given us a glimpse of the ambitious, scheming side of her nature, or where is *Bompas*' justification for accusing her of being a good wife spoiled?

O. B.: As for Miss Lizzie Henderson, she must have been born to play *Mrs. Hooley*. No future performance will be complete without her. And what a heap of character Miss Edith Jordan put into *Honorina*. Miss Kate Adams couldn't easily be improved upon as *Lady Ripstow*, and *Lucy Tuck* was carefully played by Miss Eadie; and how handsome Miss Aimée Adams looked as the lady journalist, and how well she played in the later scenes.

T. C.: I didn't much care for her reading. The audience couldn't get the hang of the part a bit. *Kate Cazalet* is not a languid Society woman—and fancy the part being edited before St. George's Hall could stomach it!

O. B.: Miss Edith Stewart's *Beryl* was pretty and sympathetic; and Mr. Fred Barton was manly and earnest as *Lurgushall*.

T. C.: Yes, they were all right as far as they went, but *Beryl* seemed a bit insipid, and I should have liked Mr. Gordon Taylor for *Lurgushall*.

O. B.: Still, you won't deny that all round it was a performance of unusual excellence.

T. C.: No, I shan't deny that, but I wish the strenuousness of their efforts had not robbed them of distinctness of utterance. Everyone around me was uttering the St. George's Hall equivalent for swear-words over the unintelligibility of more than one of the actors.

“LONDON
ASSURANCE,”
BY THE CLAP-
HAM STROLLERS.

O. B.: This is most probably the Strollers' swan-song, you know. Mr. Marshall's retirement is expected to be the death-warrant of the Club.

T. C.: Amongst amateurs, I have noticed that those whom the critic loves die young—for dramatic purposes, don't some of the incompetents retire?

O. B.: Well, if he's made his exit with *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, he's made it as beautifully as even *Hedda Gabler* could have wished. His Disraelitish make-up was a triumph, and I remember none of his work more full of humour and skill.

T. C.: Yes, it was a sound bit of art, though the elopement scene, I thought, fell rather flat; neither Mr. Marshall nor Mrs. Hamer seemed in the spirit of it. Indeed, it struck me there were several moments of which Mrs. Hamer seemed frightened. She was afraid to let herself go, I think.

O. B.: But he was merry and, as ever, bewitching, and that went a long way.

T. C.: Mr. Morris Ward was amusing, but he wasn't *Dolly Spanker*.

O. B.: And Mr. Capper put plenty of spirit into *Dazzle*, so did Mr. Walther into *Charles*.

T. C.: Yes, but why can't he learn to forget that he's got an audience? I fancy he's improving, though. He didn't direct his love-making at the house.

O. B.: Miss Kate Gordon put some colour and interest into *Grace*, and Mr. Morten Henry got every possible atom of humour out of *Meddle*.

T. C.: But Mr. King was poor. He wasn't a bit the rollicking old dog *Max* should be.

“THE PARVENU,”
AT THE BIJOU
THEATRE.

O. B.: The ladies carried off the laurels this time.

T. C.: It's a marvel that anyone did anything, with one of the actors doing his best to wreck the play. I never saw a more criminal case than Mr. Crowquill's. He was here, there, and everywhere in his part. I momentarily expected to see him swept over the footlights by one of his exasperated companions, and, personally, I should have considered it a just retribution.

O. B.: Mr. Colley Salter is perhaps a wee bit disappointing as *Ledger*.

T. C.: He could play it all right enough, but he takes too grave a view of it. Indeed, I thought the men's work altogether disappointing, for Mr. Philip Deane isn't a bit suited for romantic work, such as *Claud Glynne*; and Mr. Damer Dawson takes no view at all of *Tracey*, and provided no sort of foil for Mrs. Renton's lively *Molly*.

O. B.: Still, Mrs. Lucy Churchill's *Gwendolen* atoned for a good deal—I never remember her playing with so much feeling—and Miss Mary

Stuart's *Lady Pettigrew* for more. She is really admirable in the part, Did you like Mr. Deane better in "Dream Faces"?

T. C.: Well, yes, though he does not exactly realise my idea of *Robert*. Mrs. Renton, too, I thought very tender and womanly. As for the lovers, we won't talk about them.



"SWEET
LAVENDER,"
AT CROYDON.

Going to another subject, I see very clearly that those "Sweet Lavender" actors will have to pick and choose their plays very carefully. They played "The Hobby Horse," and succeeded. They played "The Silver Shield," and didn't. The only ones who scored in that were Mrs. Collett in *Alma's* lighter moods, Mr. Paget Bowman, Miss Whiteside Cook in a tiny part, and Mr. Bartlett. Now they play "Sweet Lavender," and it comes half way between the two. In choosing their play, they have got to bear two or three things in mind. Firstly, their actresses are purely comedy. Secondly, that one of their leading actors, Mr. Cyril Bowman, a comedian of the Hare school, and with very much the same limitations, is restricted to a certain range of parts. He was excellent as *Spencer Jermyn*—amongst amateurs bettered only by Mr. Quintin Twiss—but with *Dr. Dozey* he was less successful; and with *Geoffrey Wedderburn* he is altogether at sea. Then, as I have said, the ladies' powers being of the comedy order, they have no one for either *Ruth Rolt* or *Lavender*, parts in which both Miss Collett and Miss Whiteside Cook are constrained and insincere.

O. B.: Still, there was a lot of good to outweigh these defects. Mr. Hamilton Fyfe's reading of *Dick Phenyl* was new, and, I think, permissible, and it was certainly true to nature.

T. C.: Needlessly ponderous at moments—still, it was only at moments, and his last act was altogether free from the reproach.

O. B.: And Mr. Paget Bowman I liked extremely as *Clement Hale*. There is so much freshness and spontaneity in his style.

T. C.: Nervous as yet of giving his talents the rein, but that he'll get over.

O. B.: As for Miss Clementi Smith, I thought her *Minnie Gilfillian* delightful, lively and piquante, and absolutely natural; and Mr. Vernon Woodhouse made a good deal of her American lover. Mr. Hardisty, too, was well placed as *Dr. Delaney*.

T. C.: And if the whole company had been a star cast, they would scarcely have succeeded in obliterating from the memory of the tortured audience the doings of the orchestra.

“PLOT AND
PASSION,” BY
THE GENESTA
CLUB.

T. C. : Well, more justice was done to the first half of the title than to the second, by a long way. It would be much better if amateurs didn't get meddling with these dramas, though. They generally spell “disaster” in large capitals.

O. B. : I don't agree with you. It's just as well to come out and fight in the open now and then. It tests the grit of an actor, and if only one in the lot manages to make a stand, the experiment is worth while. For the sake of Mr. Fourdrinier's *Desmarets* alone, the Genesta revival was worth seeing. His scenes were really forcible. He isn't afraid of a little strong colour.

T. C. : Certainly his share of the plotting was the best. Mr. Trouncer's villainy wanted depth. His malevolence was only skin-deep. He didn't make his scenes bite. In that first interview with *De Neuville*, for instance, he may be as calm as you please, but it's got to be the calm of a deadly purpose. It's the snake gloating over his victim.

O. B. : Still, his ascetic, authoritative *Minister* wasn't a man to be trifled with. That was something. And the big scene with *Marie* in the last act was effectively worked up. Miss Bigwood was at her best there, too. Her defiance was very spirited.

T. C. : Distinctly creditable for an amateur. But she couldn't get abreast of *De Fontanges*. It's a stiff part for an amateur. So is *De Neuville*. I don't know a single amateur who could manage it. Miss Bigwood was very much nearer the heroine than was Mr. Holberton to the Creole lover. There wasn't a drop of Southern blood in his veins. Everything to do with him should be glowing—his love, his scorn, his despair. Manliness and sincerity don't go far in a part like this. Mr. Windeler, too, didn't make anything like the most of *De Cevennes*.

O. B. : But he was airy, and suggested the butterfly, and lightened the play very fairly. Really, an interesting production.



Notes of the Month.

MR. LEWIS BETTANY wishes to make an explanation and correction in regard to his recent article, "Five Years of Progress." He writes: "In speaking of Mr. Wilde's comedies in last month's number of THE THEATRE, I was led by my haste into an unguarded statement. I intimated that, despite its brilliant dialogue, the dramatist's opening act had no essential connection with the rest of the play. I denied it even expository significance. I was in error. The first act of a Wilde drama is really an act of moral exposition; in barometrical fashion, it forecasts and settles for the piece the state of the ethical atmosphere. So while in 'Lady Windermere's Fan' the *dramatis personæ* discuss, from divergent points of view, the question of adultery in fashionable circles, in 'A Woman of No Importance' seduction and the great demi-mundane movement furnish the topic of conversation. True enough that in this preliminary act the story progresses but slowly; true, too, that these discussions on problems of the day might (as in the masterly first act of 'Mrs. Tanqueray') be dexterously pieced into the general framework of the play. One may admit all this, and yet feel that it were doing Mr. Wilde an injustice to regard his first act as a mere occasion for the utterance of witty sayings and sparkling epigrams."

MISS HALL CAINE, whose portrait appeared in THE THEATRE for May, is the only sister of the distinguished novelist, and began her stage career during the latter years of Mr. Wilson Barrett's management at the Princess's, where she "walked on" in "Claudian" and "Ben-my-Chree" as one of a stage crowd which included many actors and actresses who have

since won a local habitation and a name. Among them were Miss Lily Hanbury, Miss Ada Ferrar, Miss Lillie Belmore, Mr. Bernard Gould, and Mr. James Welch. After this first plunge, Miss Hall Caine for a long time did nothing. Eventually, however, she went on tour with "The Middleman," playing *Nancy Blenkarn*. Again followed a spell of rest, and finally the young actress came to London, resolved to win a footing, or for good and all retire. Mr. William Poel almost immediately offered her *Cariola* in his remarkable revival of "The Duchess of Malfi," and Miss Hall Caine promptly justified his selection by scoring an unmistakable hit. Then came, under the same auspices, a charming performance of *Rosaline* in "Love's Labour's Lost," and a singularly pathetic rendering of *Desdemona*—which, although a gem in an amateur setting, challenged the attention and won the warmest praise of the foremost critics of the day. Miss Hall Caine became further associated with the Independent Theatre Society by acting *Regina* in "Ghosts," and leading parts in "Michael Field's" poetic drama, "A Question of Memory," and Dr. Todhunter's "Black Cat." Finally the Messrs. Gatti offered her an engagement at the Adelphi in "The Cotton King," in which Miss Hall Caine has been recently appearing as one of the most natural and artistically inspired heroines ever seen in modern melodrama.

MR. MURRAY CARSON, the subject of the companion picture in last month's issue, is another of the many actors whom Mr. Wilson Barrett brought to the front. He too began in the ranks of the Princess's "auxiliaries," but only a little time elapsed before his energy and ability secured for him his commission. His first notable success was made as a blackleg jockey in 1889 in "Nowadays," after which his association with the most striking secondary parts in Mr. Barrett's repertoire followed as a matter of course. Perhaps his greatest hits were as *Corkett* in "The Silver King," and the *Tetrarch* in "Claudian," an eloquent testimony to his unusual versatility. Upon leaving Mr. Barrett, Mr. Carson in 1891 entered into management, and at the Globe produced Mr. Louis N. Parker's "The Bohemians" and Mr. James Mortimer's "Gloriana." Mr. Poel's revival of "The Duchess of Malfi" brought Mr. Carson into the very front

rank of rising actors with an exceedingly powerful performance of the arch villain *Bosola*, which heralded a yet more impressive and original study in the same genre in "David," a play of which Mr. Carson and Mr. Parker were joint authors; as they were, too, of the cynical satire, "Gudgeons," in which Mr. Carson, as actor also, returned to Comedy. At the present time, Mr. Carson is playing *Issachar* in "Hypatia," with Miss Fortescue, and making a deep impression in the character created by Mr. Tree.



New Plays

PRODUCED AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS in London, from April 13th to May 17, 1894.

*(Revivals are marked thus *)*

- April 14* "Faust," adapted by W. G. Wills. Lyceum.
 ,, 17 "Sour Grapes," a masque, by John Gray. West Theatre, Albert Hall.
 ,, 19 "Charming Mrs. Gaythorne," comedy, in three acts, by C. S. Cheltnam. Criterion.
 ,, 21 "Gentleman Jack," drama, in five acts, by C. T. Vincent and W. Brady. Drury Lane.
 ,, 21 "Arms and the Man," comedy, in three acts, by G. Bernard Shaw. Avenue.
 ,, 23 "I Pagliacci," Leoncavallo's opera, in English. Grand.
 ,, 25 "A Bunch of Violets," play, in four acts, founded by Sydney Grundy on Feuillet's "Montjoye." Haymarket.
 ,, 28 "The Masqueraders," play, in four acts, by Henry Arthur Jones. St. James's.

- April 30 "A Big Bandit," musical piece, in one act, by Malcolm Watson, music by W. Slaughter. St. George's Hall.
- „ 30 "For the Old Love's Sake," comedy-drama, in three act, by S. Rogers. Neville's Dramatic Studio.
- „ 30* "As You Like It," Shakespeare's comedy, in five acts. Daly's.
- „ 30 "King Kodak," a musical extravaganza, by Arthur Branscombe, music by John Crook, W. Slaughter, E. Solomon, A. Plumpton, M. Wellings, &c. Terry's.
- „ 30* "Hypatia," play, in four acts, by G. Stuart Ogilvie. Grand.
- May 2 "Her Dearest Foe," comedy-drama, in four acts, adapted from Mrs. Alexander's novel by Miss Henrietta Lindley. Criterion.
- „ 7* "La Dame aux Camelias." Eleonora Duse's season. Daly's.
- „ 8 "A Silver Honeymoon," domestic comedy, by Richard-Henry. Trafalgar.
- „ 9 "An Adopted Son," play, in one act, by Cecil Newton. Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court Road.
- „ 10 "A Society Butterfly," comedy, by R. Buchanan and H. Murray. Opera Comique.
- „ 10 "Gentle Ivy," play, in four acts, by Austin Fryers. Strand.
- „ 10 "A Love Letter," drama, in one act, by Mrs. E. Argent-Lonergan. Strand.
- „ 11 "The Wild Duck," play, in five acts, by Henrik Ibsen. Opera Comique.
- „ 12* "The Two Orphans." Adelphi.
- „ 12 "Jean Mayeux," mimo-drama, in three acts, by B. de la Bretesché, music by C. Thony. Princess's.
- „ 14 "The Span of Life," drama, in four acts, by Sutton Vane. Grand.
- „ 14 "The Man in the Street," play, in one act, by Louis N. Parker. Avenue.
- „ 17* "Marriage," play, in three acts, by Brandon Thomas and Henry Keeling. Court.
- „ 17* "The Cape Mail," drama, in one act, by Clement Scott. Court.

In the Provinces, from April 13th to May 14, 1894 :—

- April 13 "The Madcap Prince," an historical play, in three acts, by Miss A. M. Allen. Folkestone Pleasure Gardens-Theatre.
- „ 25 "Devil's Mine," a melodrama, by Fred Darcy. Grand Hall, Maidenhead.
- „ 26 "The Commandant," comic opera, in two acts, by Messrs. L. and H. Trevor, composed by B. Horner. Theatre Royal, Richmond.
- „ 26 "A Bath Roll," operetta, by C. J. Knight and A. W. Youens. Hall, Deal, Kent.
- May 7 "In Old Kentucky," comedy-drama, in four acts, by T. C. Dazey and A. Shirley. New Theatre Royal, Bury.
- „ 9 "A Woman's Secret," comedy-drama, in four acts, by Mrs. E. Argent-Lonergan. For copyright purposes. Clarendon Hall, Watford.
- „ 14 "Fancourt's Folly," a comedy-drama, in one act, by B. W. Findon. Folkestone Pleasure Gardens,

In Paris, from April 14th to May 16th, 1894 :—

- April 14 "Les Deux Noblesses," comedy, in three acts, by M. Henri Lavedan. Odéon.
- „ 12 "Les Chouans," drama, in five acts, by MM. Blavet and Pierre Berton. Ambigu.
- „ 18 "Falstaff," Verdi's lyrical comedy, in three acts, French libretto by M. Paul Sohange and Signor Boito. Opéra Comique.
- „ 19 "Le Bonhomme de Neige," operetta in three acts, by MM. Chivot and Vanloo, music by M. Antoine Banès. Bouffes-Parisiens.
- „ 20 "La Fille de Paillasse," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Armand Liorat and Louis Leloir, music by M. Louis Varney. Folies-Dramatiques.
- „ 27* "La Charbonniere," drama, in five acts, by MM. H. Crémieux and Pierre Decourcelles. Théâtre de la République.
- „ 26 "Le Missionnaire," theatrical novel, in five scenes, by M. Marcel Luguët. Théâtre Libre.

- May 4 "Tibere à Capree," drama, in five acts, by Comte Stanislas Rzewuski. Porte St. Martin.
- „ 8 "Ma Gouvernante," comedy, in four acts, by M. Alexandre Bisson. Gymnase.
- „ 8 "Le Portrait de [Manon," comic opera, in one act, words by M. Georges Boyer, music by M. Massenet. Opéra Comique.
- „ 16 *"Prete-Moi Ta Femme," comedy in two acts, by M. Maurice Desvallières. Palais-Royal.



