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Oscar Wilde  
Scrapbook

Vol. 3

AN OPERA THE KAISER STAGE-MANAGED: "SALOME."

A STEAMER SEE-SAW: THE EXTRAORDINARY PLIGHT OF THE S.S. "CARRINGTON."

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JANUARY 1, 1907.

Oscar Wilde's play, "The Importance of Being Earnest," was to have been produced at the Deutsches Theatre, Berlin, last night, telegraphs our correspondent, but an injunction was served on the management, at the instance of the Kleines Theatre, prohibiting the production under a penalty of £250 for each illegal performance.

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THE BATTLE FOR "BUNBURY."

From Our Berlin Correspondent. It is not yet definitely settled who is entitled to the German rights in Oscar Wilde's "Bunbury: A rival Comedy for Serious People." The question as still got to be threshed out in ordinary sequence before the Courts with that deliberation and delay which the law has ever been famous. But in the meanwhile interim proceedings in connection with the matter have provided dramatic circles in Berlin with a unique sensation. New Year's Eve is celebrated in many ways in Germany, and one of them is the holding of premieres on that day. This is, by the way, a custom of recent introduction, but one which is not difficult to explain, for the last day of the year, or rather the evening of that day, is devoted by Berliners to the pursuit of pleasure with a zest which the utmost attainable in the way of novelty can hardly suffice to satisfy. Among the play-houses which announced novelties for the occasion were the Deutsches Theater and the Kleines Theater, and in both cases the novelty in question was "Bunbury." The first of the two managers to take steps to secure exclusive rights for this particular evening and those that should immediately succeed it was Herr Reinhardt, of the Deutsches Theater, who obtained an injunction restraining his rival from producing the play pending the final decision of the order of the judge. Herr Barnowsky, the director of the Kleines Theater, at once declared his intention of proceeding with his production as if nothing had happened, and for a day or two it was thought that in his opinion the profits from the play would more than counterbalance the fine. However, he knew a game worth two of that, and appealed against the order which Herr Reinhardt had secured. The appeal was allowed on the 27th, and it once more seemed probable that Berlin would see the old year out with two premieres of "Bunbury." But Herr Barnowsky now went over to the offensive, and persuaded a competent Court to grant him an interim injunction against the Deutsches Theater, in which the penalty for disobedience was set as high as £250 for each breach of the order. This was on Saturday, and there still seemed to be a possibility of the decision of the Court not being made effective in the usual forms early enough to stave off the threatened double premiere, for neither side was disposed to budge an inch except on compulsion. At an advanced hour on Monday afternoon, however, the Kleines Theater won at any rate the first round of the game, and Director Reinhardt informed his patrons through the evening papers that he would wind up the year that evening with "Man and Superman." The German rights of the Wilde play will come before the Courts for definitive settlement probably in the course of the present month.

Tribune, 19 Jan. 1907. Richard Strauss's "Salomé" continues to be very successful at Turin, where Bellincioni is said to be wonderfully fine in the title rôle. It is in rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, and a writer from Berlin states that it is probably the most profitable opera ever composed. M. Safonoff has made a remarkable success as a conductor in New York, and Mme. Melba has been received with great applause, though her voice is found by one of the leading critics to have lost some of its earlier beauty.

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Düsseldorf and Elberfeld have been added to the list of German towns in which "Salomé" is creating a sensation. No opera has ever had such a popular success as this. On the strength of these facts some people, who think any stick is good enough to beat a dog with (the dog in this case being Covent Garden) are protesting that it is the height of folly and wickedness on the part of the Syndicate not to produce the work. In the abstract it is a pity that we cannot hear "Salomé"; but does it occur to the over-zealous grumblers that the fault does not lie with the Syndicate, but with the Licensor of Plays, or, rather, the laws which bind him and make it impossible for him to license plays (including operas) with Biblical subjects?

Hunt County, Miss., 5 Jan. 1907. STRAUSS'S "Salomé" is not likely to be heard in this country owing to the state of the law. Its production at the Imperial Opera House, Vienna, is prohibited. It is reported that during one of the rehearsals an altercation took place between Strauss and Herr Blech, the conductor. Greedily excited, Strauss ejaculated, "Am I the composer, or you?" Blech promptly responded, "Thank heaven, you."

Musical Standard.

5 Jan. 1907

"STACCATO," of the "Leader" says: "Düsseldorf and Elberfeld have added to the list of German towns in which 'Salomé' is creating a sensation. No opera has ever had such a popular success as this. On the strength of these facts some people, who think any stick is good enough to beat a dog with (the dog in this case being Covent Garden) are protesting that it is the height of folly and wickedness on the part of the Syndicate not to produce the work. In the abstract it is a pity that we cannot hear 'Salomé'; but does it occur to the over-zealous grumblers that the fault does not lie with the Syndicate, but with the Licensor of plays, or rather, the laws which bind him and make it impossible for him to license plays (including operas) with Biblical subjects? It is not so long ago that this question of the Licensor's powers was fully discussed in connection with Massenet's 'Hérodiade,' which the objectors might have remembered." Nevertheless, "Hérodiade" was performed, with the name of the opera and names of some of the characters altered. We fully imagined in our paragraph last week that the same thing could be done with the Strauss work. Moreover, we have yet to hear at Covent Garden the master's "Feuersnot."

Daily Mail, 21 Jan. 1907.

EXECUTION BY ORCHESTRA.

It takes forty double blows of the full orchestra to sever the head of John the Baptist, said Sir Alexander Mackenzie in a lecture at the Royal Institution on Saturday. His remark was in illustration of the methods of Richard Strauss. No other composers, he said, had ventured to introduce so much of grotesque and burlesque effects into their work as Strauss had into his opera, "Salomé." It was not easy to reconcile such genius as Strauss possessed with his singular choice of impossible or puerile subjects. "Salomé" teemed with musical exaggerations of the most startling character, and some of its passages were the most hideous combination of sounds ever put on paper.

He believed that there was nothing in life which could not be expressed in literature, but that the first essential was, not to cast about for terms, but to go on thinking out an idea till it had been seen clearly from a new, striking point of view. He attained much of his mastery of language by translation from the French, and to that also he, no doubt, owed what he called the "realisation of a Latin style in English."

He was by no means the only Englishman who made this an aim. Walter Pater seems to have introduced into the English language a new manner of writing, the inspiration of which was mainly French; and he has been followed by many other writers—Mr. Arthur Symonds, the late Oscar Wilde, Mr. George Moore, and lesser people, in whom the Latin-English style is a debased thing. Lafcadio Hearn seems to have been drawn in this direction independently, though the inspiring source was the same. What he calls his "Arabesque" quality is due to his eccentric reading in other and stranger departments of literature.

The anonymous translator of Oscar Wilde's "Salomé" and the author of much quite serious verse also indulges in that class of wit and wisdom that goes by the name of "nonsense rhyme." Lord Alfred Douglas is known as the Belgian Hare when he is thus witty and wise; and his book is called "The Placed Pug" (Duckworth). The illustrations are signed "P. P." Not unreasonably we suspect the Placed Pug.

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Daily Express

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"Express" Correspondent. New York, Wednesday, Jan. 23. Richard Strauss' opera "Salomé" was produced at the Metropolitan Opera House here last night. The police did not intervene as was expected, although some of the scenes portrayed a degeneracy never before presented in the American stage. In one of these the depraved woman confesses her passion over a severed head, and finally ecstatically kisses his lips. About a score of people left the theatre after this gruesome incident, but the rest of the vast audience remained to the close. Apart from the story the music was enchanting, and nothing but encomiums are heard for the composer. The music is full of invention, sometimes beautiful, at others full of horror in its effects. Herr Barriani gave a wonderful performance, and the other principals were excellent, while the orchestra, conducted by Herr Alfred Hertz, played perfectly. The music will probably secure the success of the opera in spite of the nastiness of the theme. The bookings at last night's performance amounted to £4,000.

Queen, 5 Jan. 1907.

Richard Strauss's one-act opera "Salomé" (founded on Oscar Wilde's drama of the same name), which was originally brought out in Dresden about twelve months back, its production in Vienna having been previously prohibited by the Censor, and which was also produced in Berlin early last month, when Fil. Destini, who has often been heard at Covent Garden, undertook the title part, was last week performed at the Scala Theatre in Milan, Signor Toscanini conducting, when it was received with much enthusiasm. It has also just been brought out with success at the Teatro Regio in Turin, where the part of Salomé was undertaken by Signora Bellincioni, who was the first to sustain the rôle of Santuzza in Mascanzoni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" when it was originally brought out in Italy, and who sang at Covent Garden in the summer of 1895. Mr. Corried is said to contemplate the production of "Salomé" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York during his present season, and M. Gailhard hopes to give it at the Paris Opera House, with Mlle. Lucienne Brevai in the titular character.

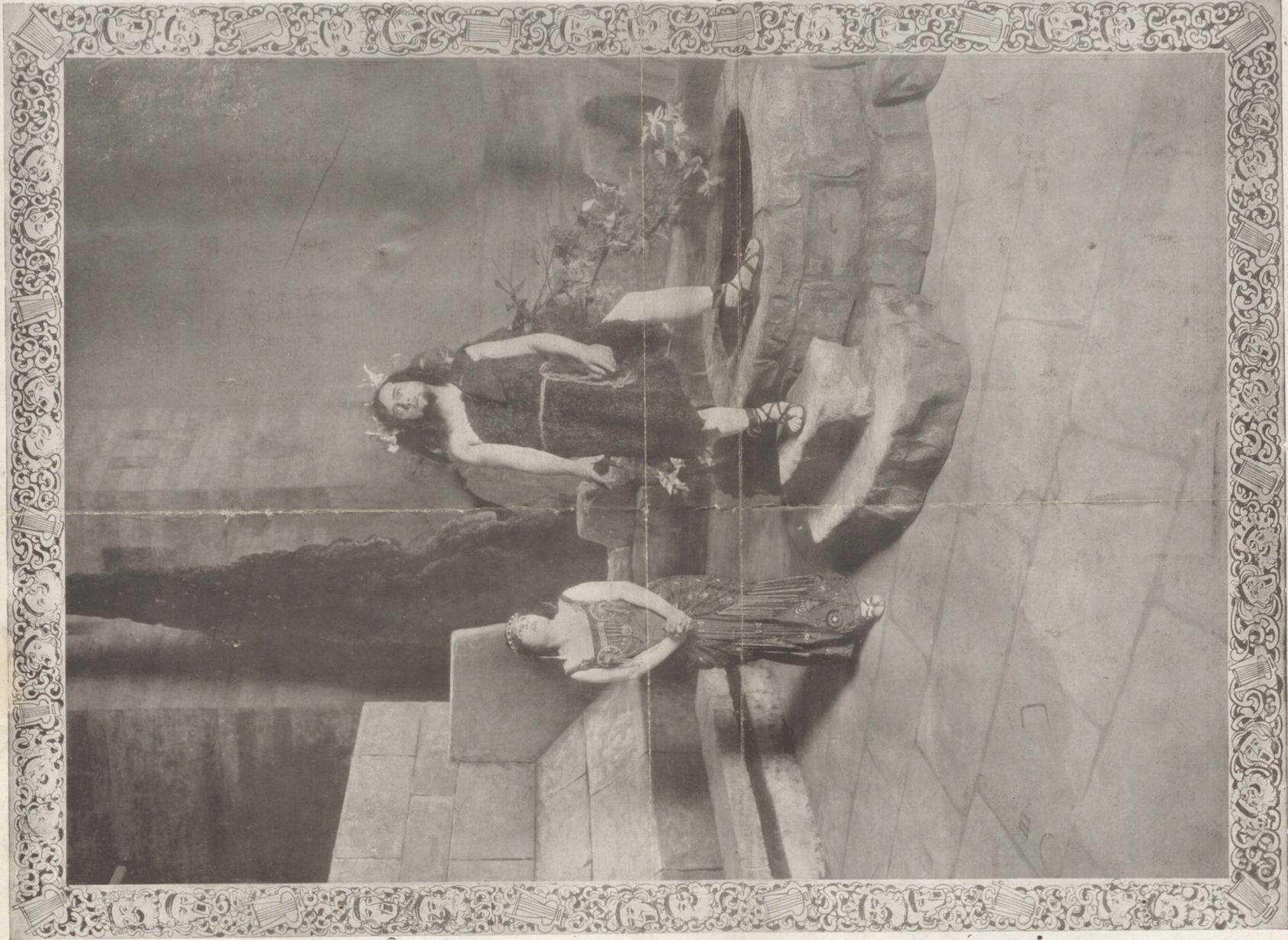
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THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, Dec. 29, 1906.—974

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Salome (Fraulein Dedin),  
 Jeann (Herr Hoffmann),  
**SALOME AND JOHN THE BAPTIST IN RICHARD STRAUSS'S FAMOUS OPERA.**  
 On November 27 Strauss' "Salome," produced last year in Dessau with extraordinary success, was given in Berlin. The Kaiser took the greatest interest in the rehearsals, and made a most effective suggestion for the lighting of a step.

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### THE BATTLE FOR "BUNBURY."

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It is not yet definitely settled who is entitled to the German rights in Oscar Wilde's "Bunbury: A Trivial Comedy for Serious People." The question has still got to be threshed out in ordinary sequence before the Courts with that deliberation and delay for which the law has ever been famous. But in the meanwhile interim proceedings in connection with the matter have provided dramatic circles in Berlin with a unique sensation. New Year's Eve is celebrated in many ways in Germany, and one of them is the holding of premieres on that day. This is, by the way, a custom of recent introduction, but one which is not difficult to explain, for the last day of the year, or rather the evening of that day, is devoted by Berliners to the pursuit of pleasure with a zest which the utmost attainable in the way of novelty can hardly suffice to satisfy. Among the play-houses which announce novelties for the occasion were the Deutsches Theater and the Kleines Theater, and in both cases the novelty in question was "Bunbury." The first of the two managers to take steps to secure exclusive rights for this particular evening was Herr Reinhardt, of the Deutsches Theater, who obtained an injunction restraining his rival from producing the play pending the final decision of the order of the judge. Herr Barnowsky, the director of the Kleines Theater, at once declared his intention of proceeding with his production as if nothing had happened, and for a day or two it was thought that in his opinion the profits from the play would more than counterbalance the fine. However, he knew a game worth two of that, and appealed against the order which Herr Reinhardt had secured. The appeal was allowed on the 27th, and it once more seemed probable that Berlin would see the old year out with two premieres of "Bunbury." But Herr Barnowsky now went over to the offensive, and persuaded a competent Court to grant him an interim injunction against the Deutsches Theater, in which the penalty for disobedience was set as high as £250 for each breach of the order. This was on Saturday, and there still seemed to be a possibility of the decision of the Court not being made effective in the usual forms early enough to stave off the threatened double premiere, for neither side was disposed to budge an inch except on compulsion. At an advanced hour on Monday afternoon, however, the Kleines Theater won at any rate the first round of the game, and Director Reinhardt informed his patrons through the evening papers that he would wind up the year that evening with "Man and Superman." The German rights of the Wilde play will come before the Courts for definitive settlement probably in the course of the present month.

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## "SALOME" IN AMERICA.

### A MIXED RECEPTION.

From Our Own Correspondent. NEW YORK, Wednesday.

Herr Richard Strauss' operatic version of the late Oscar Wilde's play "Salome" was given last night at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time in America, and made a profound sensation, an unpleasant one if you like, and shocking to the average auditor's sensibilities, but a sensation just the same. Nothing of the kind has ever been seen before in America, and, judging by the criticisms, it is safe to say that nothing of the kind will ever be seen again if Comstock, the self-appointed champion of purity in art and morals, should have his way. Eagerness to hear "Salome" the most talked-about opera since Wagner's death, a drama, the alleged impropriety of which has been censured in three European capitals, brought an immense crowd, and the street scenes were remarkable, for a small army of opera-goers, on foot, in carriages, and in automobiles, were moving on the Metropolitan. The one continuous scene of the music drama gave no opportunity for any demonstration until the curtain fell, and only the tense stillness of the darkened house showed the gripping interest of the grisly story and the power of its music. Viewed as a drama "Salome" proved easily the most daring departure from things conventional which the Metropolitan's stage has yet ventured to show. Regarded as music it bewildered even Strauss enthusiasts. The profound impression it made as a whole, in spite of its abiding unpleasantness, was due not only to the skillful wedding of the text to the music, but to the splendid interpretative work of last night's cast. The principals were Miss Olive Fremstad, who assumed the title-rôle for the first time on any stage; Mr. Carl Burian, who sang that of Herod; Mr. Anton Van Rooy, who was John the Baptist; and Miss Marion Weed as Herodias.

To Miss Fremstad fell the chief dramatic burdens of the night, and the way in which she sustained them proved the climax of her American career, and furnished the sensations of the performance. The critics this morning are greatly divided regarding both the music and the story, but all agree that it was "remarkable, sensational, and unparelled." Some of the best writers reserve their judgment. One calls it "an exaltation from the diabolical and polluted will and imagination of the author." Another lashes it as "hideous Salome, quite enough to warrant scores of couples leaving the opera when the heroine embraces and kisses the severed head of John the Baptist."

The average American opera-goer probably summed-up his judgment briefly as follows: "The music was great, prodigious, extraordinary; but the play rather unpleasant, especially when Salome cuddled and kissed the severed head." This dramatic item is generally condemned here as an outrage on the possibilities of the theatre. No commentator, it is argued, who believes in the ennobling and uplifting mission of art can approve of such a disgusting scene. It was Director Kosmick's benefit last night, and nearly \$5,000 was taken at the box-office. Previous to "Salome" there was one of the most remarkable and successful concerts ever heard in America, with all the stars engaged at the Metropolitan shone the impressive benefit. Of all the galaxy of artists, Signor Caruso, Madame Sembrich, Madam Cavallari, and the rest of the brilliant company only Madame Eames, who injured her knee on Monday evening, and M. Flancon, a victim of influenza, failed to appear.

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Daily Telegraph 24/January 1907

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AN OPERA THE KAISER STAGE-MANAGED: "SALOME."



Salome (Fräulein Destinn).

John (Herr Hoffmann).

SALOME AND JOHN THE BAPTIST IN RICHARD STRAUSS'S FAMOUS OPERA.

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DAILY MAIL.

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Jissen Wo 2049-50 University Library

1907

# Morning Leader.

Düsseldorf and Elberfeld have been added to the list of German towns in which "Salome" is creating a sensation. No opera has ever had such a popular success as this. On the strength of these facts some people, who think any stick is good enough to beat a dog with (the dog in this case being Covent Garden) are protesting that it is the height of folly and wickedness on the part of the Syndicate not to produce the work. In the abstract it is a pity that we cannot hear "Salome"; but does it occur to the over-zealous grumblers that the fault does not lie with the Syndicate, but with the Licensor of Plays, or, rather, the laws which bind him to license plays (including operas) with Biblical subjects?

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# Evening News,

2 Jan.  
1907.

The anonymous translator of Oscar Wilde's "Salome" and the author of much quite serious verse also indulges in that class of wit and wisdom that goes by the name of "nonsense rhyme." Lord Alfred Douglas is known as the Belgian Hare when he is thus witty and wise; and his book is called "The Placed Pug" (Duckworth). The illustrations are signed "P. P." Not unreasonably we suspect the Placed Pug.

\* \* \*

As Mr. Hilaire Belloc and Lord Basil Blackwood did in the "Bad Child's Book of Beasts," so, very much, has Lord Alfred Douglas done in "The Placed Pug." We like the "Versicles for Vegetarians" and "The Song of Sidlers," as well as anything in the book. From the last we will quote:

Peace, peace, the Crab adopts a side-long walk,

For reasons still impossible to see,

And if his

To anyone who did not do as he,

His instinct would be probably to balk

The hopes of vulgar curiosity.

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# Daily Telegraph,

4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1907

## THE BATTLE FOR "BUNBURY."

From Our Berlin Correspondent.

4/1/07

It is not yet definitely settled who is entitled to the German rights in Oscar Wilde's "Bunbury: A Trivial Comedy for Serious People." The question has still got to be threshed out in ordinary sequence before the Courts with that deliberation and delay for which the law has ever been famous. But in the meanwhile interim proceedings in connection with the matter have provided dramatic circles in Berlin with a unique sensation. New Year's Eve is celebrated in many ways in Germany, and one of them is the holding of premières on that day. This is, by the way, a custom of recent introduction, but one which is not difficult to explain, for the last day of the year, or rather the evening of that day, is devoted by Berliners to the pursuit of pleasure with a zest which the utmost attainable in the way of novelty can hardly suffice to satisfy. Among the play-houses which announced novelties for the occasion were the Deutsches Theater and the Kleines Theater, and in both cases the novelty in question was "Bunbury." The first of the two managers to take steps to secure exclusive rights for this particular evening and those that should immediately succeed it was Herr Reinhardt, of the Deutsches Theater, who obtained an injunction restraining his rival from producing the play pending the final decision of the suit under a penalty of £75 for every breach of the order of the judge. Herr Barnowsky, the director of the Kleines Theater, at once declared his intention of proceeding with his production as if nothing had happened, and for a day or two it was thought that in his opinion the profits from the play would more than counterbalance the fine. However, he knew a game worth two of that, and appealed against the order which Herr Reinhardt had secured. The appeal was allowed on the 27th, and it once more seemed probable that Berlin would see the old year out with two premières of "Bunbury." But Herr Barnowsky now went over to the offensive, and persuaded a competent Court to grant him an interim injunction against the Deutsches Theater, in which the penalty for disobedience was set as high as £250 for each breach of the order. This was on Saturday, and there still seemed to be a possibility of the decision of the Court not being made effective in the usual forms early enough to stave off the threatened double première, for neither side was disposed to budge an inch except on compulsion. At an advanced hour on Monday afternoon, however, the Kleines Theater won at any rate the first round of the game, and Director Reinhardt informed his patrons through the evening papers that he would wind up the year that evening with "Man and Superman." The result of the Wilde play will come before the Courts for definitive settlement probably in the course of the present month.

Hunts County News.

5 Jan. 1907

STRAUSS' "Salome" is not likely to be heard in this country owing to the state of the law. Its production at the Imperial Opera House, Vienna, is prohibited. It is reported that during one of the rehearsals an altercation took place between Strauss and Heinrich Blech. Greatly excited, Strauss ejaculated, "Am I the composer, or you?" Blech promptly responded, "Thank heaven, you."

Jessen Wolfe University Library

# Musical Standard.

5 Jan. 1907

"STACCATO," of the "Leader" says: "Düsseldorf and Elberfeld have added to the list of German towns in which 'Salome' is creating a sensation. No opera has ever had such a popular success as this. On the strength of these facts some people, who think any stick is good enough to beat a dog with (the dog in this case being Covent Garden) are protesting that it is the height of folly and wickedness on the part of the Syndicate not to produce the work. In the abstract it is a pity that we cannot hear 'Salome'; but does it occur to the over-zealous grumblers that the fault does not lie with the Syndicate, but with the Licensor of plays, or rather, the laws which bind him and make it impossible for him to licence plays (including operas) with Biblical subjects? It is not so long ago that this question of the Licensor's powers was fully discussed in connection with Massenet's 'Hérodiade,' which the objectors might have remembered." Nevertheless, "Hérodiade" was performed, with the name of the opera and names of some of the characters altered. We fully imagined in our paragraph last week that the same had been done with the Strauss work. Moreover, we have yet to hear at Covent Garden the master's "Feuersnot."

# Daily Express

## "SALOME" IN OPERA.

"Express" Correspondent.

NEW YORK, Wednesday, Jan. 23.

Richard Strauss' opera "Salome" was produced at the Metropolitan Opera House here last night.

The police did not intervene as was expected, although some of the scenes portrayed a degeneracy never before presented on the American stage. In one of these the depraved woman confesses her passion over a severed head, and finally ecstatically kisses its lips.

About a score of people left the theatre after this gruesome incident, but the rest of the vast audience remained to the close.

Apart from the story the music was enrancing, and nothing but encomiums are heard for the composer. The music is full of invention, sometimes beautiful, at others full of horror in its effects.

Herr Burrian gave a wonderful performance, and the other principals were excellent, while the orchestra, conducted by Herr Alfred Hertz, played perfectly. The music will probably secure the success of the opera in spite of the nastiness of the theme.

The performance amounted to £4,000.

probably in the course of the present month.

Tribune,

19 Jan. 1907

Richard Strauss's "Salomé" continues to be very successful at Turin, where Bellincioni is said to be wonderfully fine in the title-rôle. It is in rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, and a writer from Berlin states that it is probably the most profitable opera ever composed. M. Safonoff has made a remarkable success as a conductor in New York, and Mme. Melba has been received with great applause, though her voice is found by one of the leading critics to have lost some of its earlier beauty.

Jissan Women's University Library

21 Jan. 1907.

## EXECUTION BY ORCHESTRA.

It takes forty double blows of the full orchestra to sever the head of John the Baptist, said Sir Alexander Mackenzie in a lecture at the Royal Institution on Saturday. His remark was in illustration of the methods of Richard Strauss.

No other composers, he said, had ventured to introduce so much of grotesque and burlesque effects into their work as Strauss had into his opera "Salome." It was not easy to reconcile such genius as Strauss possessed with his singular choice of impossible or puerile subjects. "Salome" teemed with musical exaggerations of some of its passages were the most hideous combination of sounds ever put on paper.

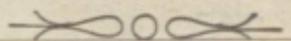
done with the  
Covent Garden the

# Queen.

5 Jan. 1907.

Richard Strauss's one-act opera "Salome," (founded on Oscar Wilde's drama of the same name), which was originally brought out in Dresden about twelve months back, its production in Vienna having been previously prohibited by the Censor, and which was also produced in Berlin early last month, when Fr. Destinn, who has often been heard at Covent Garden, undertook the title part, was last week performed at the Scala Theatre in Milan, Signor Toscanini conducting, when it was received with much enthusiasm. It has also just been brought out with success at the Teatro Regio in Turin, where the part of Salome was undertaken by Signora Bellincioni, who was the first to sustain the rôle of Santuzza in Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" when it was originally brought out in Italy, and who sang at Covent Garden in the summer of 1895. Mr Conried is said to contemplate the production of "Salome" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York during his present season, and M. Gilhard hopes to give it at the Paris Opera House, with Mlle. Lucienne Breval in the titular character.

2013-03-07 Women's University Library 726



"SALOME" IN AMERICA.

## Daily News,

16 Jan.  
1907

Most of the papers have recently been discussing the Letters of Lafcadio Hearn, which were issued last week. One of the most striking points in his career was the way in which, when he was immersed in daily journalism and also suffering from ill-health, he contrived to study and think out for himself the principles of literary style. Sentiment and thought he always professed to put before mere form, and he considered it more important to preserve his emotional force than to develop an individual style. He did both, and it is not hard to see from his letters how he struggled to his own.

He believed that there was nothing in life which could not be expressed in literature, but that the first essential was, not to cast about for terms, but to go on thinking out an idea till it had been seen clearly from a new, striking point of view. He attained much of his mastery of language by translation from the French, and to that also he, no doubt, owed what he called the "realisation of a Latin style in English."

He was by no means the only Englishman who made this an aim. Walter Pater seems to have introduced into the English language a new manner of writing, the inspiration of which was mainly French; and he has been followed by many other writers—Mr. Arthur Symonds, the late Oscar Wilde, Mr. George Moore, and lesser people, in whom the Latin-English style is a debased thing. Lafcadio Hearn seems to have been drawn in this direction independently, though the inspiring source was the same. What he calls his "Arabesque" quality is due to his eccentric

2019-03-17 Jissen Women's University Library 727anger departments of literature.

# "SALOME" IN AMERICA.

## A MIXED RECEPTION.

From Our Own Correspondent.

NEW YORK, Wednesday.

Herr Richard Strauss's operatic version of the late Oscar Wilde's play "Salome" was given last night at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time in America, and made a profound sensation, an unpleasant one if you like, and shocking to the average auditor's sensibilities, but a sensation just the same. Nothing of the kind has ever been seen before in America, and, judging by the criticisms, it is safe to say that nothing of the kind will ever be seen again if Comstock, the self-appointed champion of purity in art and morals," should have his way.

Eagerness to hear "Salome," the most talked-about opera since Wagner's death, a drama the alleged impropriety of which has been censured in three European capitals, brought an immense crowd, and the street scenes were remarkable, for a small army of opera-goers, on foot, in carriages, and in automobiles, were moving on the Metropolitan. The one continuous scene of the music drama gave no opportunity for any demonstration until the curtain fell, and only the tense stillness of the darkened house showed the gripping interest of the grisly story and the power of its music.

Viewed as a drama "Salome" proved easily the most daring departure from things conventional which the Metropolitan's stage has yet ventured to show. Regarded as music it bewildered even Strauss enthusiasts. The profound impression it made as a whole, in spite of its abiding unpleasantness, was due not only to the skilful wedding of the text to the music, but to the splendid interpretative work of last night's cast. The principals were Miss Olive Fremstad, who assumed the title-rôle for the first time on any stage; Mr. Carl Burrian, who sang that of Herod; Mr. Anton Van Rooy, who was John the Baptist; and Miss Marion Weed as Herodias.

To Miss Fremstad fell the chief dramatic burdens of the night, and the way in which she sustained them proved the climax of her American career, and furnished the sensations of the performance.

The critics this morning are greatly divided regarding both the music and the story, but all agree that it was "remarkable, sensational, and unparalleled." Some of the best writers reserve their judgment. One calls it "an exudation from the diseased and polluted will and imagination of the author." Another lashes it as "hideous Salome, quite enough to warrant scores of couples leaving the opera when the heroine embraces and kisses the severed head of John the Baptist."

The average American opera-goer probably summed-up his judgment briefly as follows: "The music was great, prodigious, extraordinary; but the play rather unpleasant, especially when Salome cuddled and kissed the severed head." This dramatic item is generally condemned here as an outrage on the possibilities of the theatre.

No commentator, it is argued, who believes in the ennobling and uplifting mission of art can approve of such a disgusting scene.

It was Director Konrad's benefit last night, and nearly \$5,000 was taken at the box-office. Prior to "Salome" there was one of the most remarkable and successful concerts ever heard in America, where all the stars engaged at the Metropolitan shone at the impresario's benefit. Of all the galaxy of artists, Signor Caruso, Madame Sembrich, Madame Cavalieri, and the rest of the brilliant company only Madame Eames, who injured her knee Monday evening, and M. Plancon, a victim of influenza, failed to appear.

Daily Telegraph

26 January 1907

JANUARY 28, 1907

THE UNITED STATES. THE PRODUCTION OF "SALOME."

[From "The Tribune" Correspondent.]

NEW YORK, Jan. 27th. The owners of the Metropolitan Opera House have protested against the further performances of Richard Strauss's musical drama, "Salome," the libretto of which is by Oscar Wilde. It is stated that this action is due to the objections of Mr. Pierpont Morgan's daughter, who witnessed the initial performance of the play. Mr. Morgan is part owner of the Opera House. The affair is causing some sensation. The directors of the opera company are undecided whether to yield to the protest.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

NEW YORK, Jan. 27th.—Mr. Conried, manager of the Metropolitan Opera, is not disposed to yield to the demand of the owners and directors of the Opera that the production of Richard Strauss's "Salome" should be discontinued. Following upon a consideration of the demand by Mr. Conried and his advisers, a formal statement was issued asking for a reconsideration of the demand. Mr. Conried is of opinion that the production of "Salome" is a great artistic achievement, which has been acknowledged by the musical world to be the most important since the production of Wagner's operas. He says he believes it to be his duty to the musical public of New York to produce the work.

Mr. Haven, president of the board of directors, says that the views of the members of the board on this question are not likely to be changed. All the directors concurred in sending the letter to Mr. Conried, asking for the discontinuance of the opera, and they meant what they said.

Morning Leader.

Jan 29, 1907.

MUSICAL NOTES.

AMERICAN PROTESTS AGAINST "SALOME."

The sensation of the moment is undoubtedly the campaign against "Salome" in New York. At present New York, Vienna, and London seem to be alone in objecting to it—if that is a correct way of describing the state of affairs in London, where we know in advance that a performance is impossible, owing to the Lord Chamberlain's Department, and the rules which govern it. In Vienna there has been a fight between Church and Stage, and the Church has for the present won; but the work will be heard in one of the private theatres of Vienna. In Germany the work has had an unprecedented career of success, the objections to it in high quarters in Berlin having been overcome. It has been the success of the last few years. Italy, too, has now begun to go mad over it, and it is soon to be heard in Paris.

One point in the Purity Party's protest in New York seems to have escaped notice. The opera and the nature of Oscar Wilde's play can have been no secret before the production; so that one wonders why the protest was not made before the production. If it is moral poison the protestors surely put themselves in the wrong by allowing even one dose to be administered. Moreover, they voluntarily weaken their position by having first allowed the management to go to the expense and trouble of such a production. It is hinted that the whole agitation is an advertising manoeuvre on the part of the management. One hesitates to believe that; but if so, it is wonderfully clever.

SALOME WITHDRAWN.

[From Our Correspondent.]

NEW YORK, Monday. Mr. Conried has bowed to the decision of the opera-house directors, and has agreed to withdraw "Salome" from further production. At first it was thought that a compromise might be effected and the objectionable part cut out, but this Mr. Conried absolutely refused to do as he declared it would spoil an artistic whole. Mr. Conried is under contract with Dr. Strauss to pay royalty on ten performances, but if this contract cannot be cancelled it is expected that the objecting directors will make an allowance to Mr. Conried to meet the matter.

Observer 27 Jan. 1907.

DR. RICHARD STRAUSS'S "SALOME." (TO THE EDITOR OF "THE OBSERVER.")

Dear Sir,—In view of the fact that this opera may one day be seen on the English stage—for the superstition against representing Biblical subjects is already moribund, and surely the New Theology must be its death blow—it seems rather unfair that the public should hear only one class of opinion with regard to the musical and dramatic merits of the work—the purely academic and conservative opinion. I am referring, of course, to Sir A. Mackenzie's lecture at the Royal Institution reported in your last issue.

Now, a work like "Salome," full of the richest and most delicate orchestral colouring, full of swift turns and surprises, where the music follows the text with a flexibility that is a great advance, from the dramatic point of view, on Wagnerian methods, is the last thing that can be safely judged from the piano score. Yet from the piano score Sir A. Mackenzie has undoubtedly judged it. I will make a shrewd guess that he has never witnessed a single performance nor even studied carefully the "Purists' statement—utterly absurd to those who know the opera—that it takes "twenty-five blows of the full orchestra to cut off John the Baptist's head." The chief characteristic of that scene is, on the contrary, the restraint of its orchestral accompaniment and the effect of tense stillness, of sheer fright and apprehension that results.

The propriety of choosing such a subject may be doubtful, but of the splendid effectiveness of Strauss's art in this opera there can be no question. And we who know it well, its Oriental mysteriousness, its dark, sumptuous colouring and prodigious force—how, as it were, the creatures that in Wilde's play seem mere masks become Titanic types of passion in Strauss's music—we feel bound to protest against such a cavalier, prejudiced and uninformed attempt to negate its merits in the eyes of the British public.

I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

ONE WHO HAS SEEN.

Star. Jan 29, 1907.

"SALOME" CHAMPIONS TURN TO PRECEDENT.

It is pretty plain that the Strauss-Wilde opera "Salome" will have to go as regards New York, and this despite the fact that there has been only one performance, enormous expense is involved, and there are almost unexampled bookings.

There is a dead set against Oscar Wilde's story, and Dr. Fairchild, a leading Baptist light, says that "Salome" is only a vehicle for the suggestions of demoralised talent.

This view says the New York correspondent of the "Telegraph" is corroborated by the artistic section of Americans, who declare that for that matter "all opera is immoral."

Mr. Meltzer, literary representative of Mr. Conried, managing director of the Metropolitan Opera House, actually defies you to mention a single opera, omitting "Hänsel und Gretel," perhaps, and "Il Trovatore," "that is free from suggestion."

Meanwhile the provincial bookings for "Salome" become heavier and heavier.

Manchester Guardian.

"SALOME" WITHDRAWN.

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JAN. 9, 1907.

THE SKETCH.

399

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S HEAD AS A NEW RÔLE FOR VERY ENTERPRISING ACTORS.



FRAULEIN ANNA SUTTER AS SALOME BEFORE THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, IN RICHARD STRAUSS'S OPERA, "SALOME," AT THE STUTTGART COURT THEATRE.

Photograph by Hildenbrand.

JANUARY 29, 1907

DAILY CHRONICLE

DAILY MAIL, JAN 28, 1907

Strauss's operatic version of Oscar Wilde's "Salome" has been declared by the directors of the New York Metropolitan Opera Company objectionable, telegraphs our New York correspondent, and orders have been issued that it shall not be presented again.

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JANUARY 28, 1907.

## SALOME IN NEW YORK

### INDIGNANT OUTCRY FROM MANY SOURCES.

From Our Own Correspondent.

NEW YORK, Sunday.

For a few brief moments public attention has been diverted from the Central Criminal Court to the Metropolitan Opera House.

"Salome," Dr. Richard Strauss's opera, based upon Oscar Wilde's drama, "the most daring and fiercely-debated work of modern times," was given as an American production by Mr. Conried last Tuesday at his annual benefit performance, and netted for the director of the Opera House the record sum of £5,000.

The critics at first declared that, repulsive as Oscar Wilde's libretto was, Strauss's music swept them off their feet, and they proclaimed him a master worthy of Berlioz and Wagner.

#### Warning Cloud of Protest.

The first ominous note of protest was raised by Mr. Arthur Brisbane, the famous writer of the Hearst editorials. He quoted a passage in German—the book was originally written in French—describing the climax, where Salome, unable to embrace John the Baptist living, kisses the face of the prophet's severed head when served up on a charger, refused to translate it, and demanded the suppression of the most brutal and degrading spectacle which had ever disgraced the opera stage of New York.

This was merely a cloud on the horizon not bigger than a man's hand. But next day opera-goers decorated the correspondence columns of every paper in the city, vying with each other in their vivid phraseology, describing the disgust with which they witnessed the performance.

#### Bursting of the Storm.

The storm burst yesterday afternoon, when the owners of the Opera House, who are the proprietors of the best boxes, and include Mr. August Belmont, Mr. Ogden Mills, Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, asked Mr. Conried, as head of the company leasing the Opera House, comprising Mr. J. H. Hyde, Mr. Alfred Vanderbilt, Mr. Robert Goelet and Mr. George Gould, to discontinue "Salome" on the ground "that it is detrimental to the best interests of the Opera House."

Mr. Conried is in a predicament, for he is under contract to give 10 performances, Dr. Strauss receiving a thousand dollars royalty for each.

Miss Olive Fremstad, who sings the rôle of the Princess of Judea, and has been engrossed in Strauss's score for seven months, is very angry. She says, "America's attitude will be ridiculed by the whole world. It has not begun to scent the meaning of inspired music."

#### Comparison with "Die Walkure."

"The libretto may be extravagant, but certainly it is not more disgusting than the idea in "Die Walkure," where three characters, Wotan, Sieglinde, and Siegmund, are the children of a wolf.

"Dr. Strauss is the world's greatest musical genius, and even Americans will realise it when he is dead."

I think Mr. Conried will compromise by toning down the "Dance of the Seven Veils," and by bowdlerising the scene in which for 20 terrific minutes Salome toys with the gory head which the executioner has sent up from a cistern.

Mr. Conried is ill in bed, suffering in consequence of the shock of the Caruso case. "Salome" it is feared, will make him a permanent invalid.

1907

TRIBUNE,

JANUARY 28, 1907

THE UNITED STATES.

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# Morning Leader.

Jan 29. 1907.

## MUSICAL NOTES.

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### AMERICAN PROTESTS AGAINST "SALOME."

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Jan. 29. 1907.

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This view (says the New York correspondent of the "Telegraph") is pooh-pooed by the artistic section of Americans, who declare that for that matter "all opera is immoral."

Mr. Meltzer, literary representative of Mr. Conried, managing director of the Metropolitan Opera House, actually defies you to mention a single opera, omitting "Hänsel und Gretel," perhaps, and "Il Trovatore," "that is free from suggestion."

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# Manchester Guardian.

24 "SALOME" WITHDRAWN.

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JANUARY 29, 1907.

DAILY CHRONICLE

2019-03-17

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JOHN THE BAPTIST'S HEAD AS A NEW RÔLE  
FOR VERY ENTERPRISING ACTORS.



FRAÛLEIN ANNA SUTTER AS SALOME BEFORE THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST,  
IN RICHARD STRAUSS'S OPERA, "SALOME," AT THE STUTTGART COURT THEATRE.

*Photograph by Hildenbrand.*

## PRISON LIFE.

"My Prison Life." By Jabez Spencer Balfour.  
London: Chapman and Hall (Limited). 6s.

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

Mr. Jabez Balfour, who was released from Parkhurst Prison in April last, has devoted the early months of his freedom to writing an account of his prison life. It is divided into two parts. In the first, after giving a brief account of his early career, and the social and financial success which attended it, the author proceeds to describe the events leading to his ruin, his flight to the Argentine Republic, and subsequent extradition and arrest; his return to England, his trial and sentence, and his experiences of prison life at Wormwood Scrubbs, Parkhurst, Portland, and Pentonville.

This part of the volume embraces the more personal narrative, and includes many interesting experiences. Mr. Jabez Balfour relates how, during his imprisonment in the Argentine, many wild schemes were evolved by various officials for his escape. One of these plans deserves special mention. It is described as follows:—

On a certain day, a particular soldier, a notorious malefactor, was to be posted on sentry duty. I was to be provided by my adviser with a revolver, with which I was to shoot the unfortunate wretch. . . . I was to be tried for killing him, and even to be convicted. . . . I was to remain comfortably in prison until the matter had quietened down in England, when I should be released, and could resume my ordinary life in absolute safety.

The author naturally expressed horror at this suggestion, to the surprise and disappointment of the negotiating official. In recounting his experiences at Holloway whilst awaiting his trial the author makes some interesting comments on the value of human friendship. He describes in detail the various occupations he followed in prison until the day came which brought the news that he was to be released, on hearing which he says "he would have liked to have shouted, screamed, or danced."

### THE CONVICT SYSTEM CRITICIZED.

But it is in the second part of the volume that the greater interest lies. This is devoted chiefly to the expression of the author's views on the working of the penal system. He admits that the convict system is administered, as a whole, economically, and, looking at it from a national point of view, he thinks that is one of its most creditable features. The only detail which seems to him to be merely wasteful is the money which is spent upon travelling expenses.

To send a convict, whose ultimate destination is Parkhurst, in the Isle of Wight, or Portland, in Dorsetshire, in the first instance to out of the way places like Lewes, in Sussex, or Chelmsford, in Essex, is surely a roundabout and extravagant proceeding. There are not only the travelling expenses of the convicts themselves, but also the expenses and the time of the officers who escort them.

As to the constitutional right which prisoners enjoy of petitioning the Home Secretary on any subject connected with their imprisonment, he declares that nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the manner in which this right is hedged in and hampered "to a degree that largely renders the privilege nugatory."

He regrets that the Home Office "doles out the privilege of letter-writing with so niggardly a hand," because he thinks it is clearly to the interest of the State that the prisoner should be encouraged to foster and retain every tie that binds him to the parental roof, the home, and the family, and the only way a prisoner can do this is by frequent and full correspondence. He pleads, therefore, for much more letter writing than is allowed at present. He maintains also that the cells are needlessly dark, and complains that sufficient consideration is not given to the selection of the diet, exercises, and mental occupation provided for prisoners.

There might be seen at Parkhurst tubs of food filled with what the men with small appetites like myself were not able to finish, and the contents of these tubs represent the surplus food of the smaller appetites, which, as it is not allowed to be given to the men who could eat the food, is diverted to the "piggeries." This is a gross and wicked waste, which outrages the moral sense of prisoners and leads to the violation of all the prison rules.

The author condemns the system of treating foreign prisoners. He regards this as a disgrace to our national good fame.

Will it be believed that we are unable, as a nation, to provide a schoolmaster, a chief warden, or, indeed, a subordinate officer of any kind who is capable of speaking to these unfortunate strangers within our gates in their own languages or of listening intelligently to their natural and necessary inquiries and requests?

The concluding chapter is devoted to suggestions for reform, and he submits the following scheme:—

1. A wiser, more intelligent, and more humane treatment of first offenders in a separate prison.
2. A continuance of the present system, with many modifications of its administrative details, for men convicted a second time.
3. The present system minus its concessions, remissions, and favours for men convicted a third time—a last chance, in fact—and
4. For men who refuse that chance perpetual expatriation.

All these should, he thinks, be accompanied by—

5. A greater uniformity, or rather consistency, of sentences for similar offences. Their length should not be so dependent, as it is at present, upon the personal idiosyncrasies of the judges. There should also be provision for the periodical review of all long sentences at stated intervals.

The book is dedicated to Lord Northcliffe, "in recognition of his interest in prison reform and of the sympathy, encouragement, and help he has accorded to the author."

# THE CLUBMAN

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Now it is to be decided whether Mr. Conried and his supporters, who are a distinct corporation, known as the Conried Metropolitan Opera Company, will win against their landlords, or whether "Comstockery," as represented by the landlords, will triumph, as in the case of Mr. G. Bernard Shaw's piece, "Mrs. Warren's Profession," which they were against and slaughtered. It is an interesting fight by Mr. Conried, who champions art against mere landlords, who presumably know more about rent than music and the drama.

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This view is pooh-poohed by the artistic section of Americans, who declare that for that matter "all opera is immoral." Mr. Meltzer, literary representative of Mr. Conried, managing director of the Metropolitan Opera House, actually dares you to mention a single opera, omitting "Hänsel und Gretel," perhaps, and "Il Trovatore," "that is free from suggestion."

To-day the rival forces contending over "Salome," that is to say, the landlords of the Metropolitan and the lessees, renewed their conference to see what can be done. From what I can understand this afternoon it is hardly likely that the music which has startled and thrilled music-lovers in many of the European capitals, and the presentation of which was regarded as Mr. Conried's greatest American achievement—it also netted him nearly £5,000 for his benefit last week—will ever again be heard at New York. Mr. Conried and his friends refuse to admit that Salome's loving dalliance with John the Baptist's head on a charger is bad art, but for the sake of peace they will cover the head with a cloth, and possibly tone down the dancing scene. Further than that they cannot go, they say, or they would insult the composer. But if Salome will not dance for Herod in town, she will out of town, and the provincial bookings for "Salome" become heavier and heavier. By his contract with Herr Strauss, Mr. Conried must give ten performances, and they at least are assured. More conferences will be held between the disputants, but as things look now the landlords and Comstockery have secured a clear victory in the American metropolis.

## Academy, Feb. 16, 1907.

THE SPHINX To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Among the numerous notices of Mr. Beerbohm Tree's production of *Antony and Cleopatra* no reference has been made, so far as I am aware, to Oscar Wilde's poem, "The Sphinx," though that mythical and mystical beast figures—too prominently, some critics hold—in the play as staged at His Majesty's. The poem, it may be remembered, was known in manuscript form to a limited circle for some time before its publication in 1894, the reason assigned by the author for the delay in its appearance being that "it would destroy domesticity in England." Certainly nothing more insolently esoteric, more likely to arouse the wrath of the Philistine had it met his view, issued even from the Bodley Head than this *chef d'œuvre* of Mr. Ricketts's art, which was limited to twenty-five copies, and dedicated to Marcel Schwob.

The metre of this weird poem, whose haunting cadences it is well-nigh impossible to forget, is that of "In Memoriam," though this fact is to some extent disguised by the stanzas being arranged in two long lines, in place of the four short ones of Tennyson.

The poet sitting in his study at dead of night, like Poe in "The Raven," questions a sphinx, which, "with eyes of satin rimmed with gold," "lies couching on the Chinese mat," on the "far-off things" of long ago that it has witnessed:

"O tell me were you standing by when Isis to Osiris knelt, And did you watch the Egyptian melt her union for Antony? And drink the jewel-drunken wine and bend her head in mimic awe To see the huge proconsul draw the salted tunny from the brine?"

Poor Richard Strauss's opera of "Salomé" has given the Americans another of those attacks of prudishness or extreme delicacy which come upon them with great force every now and again. The Americans are worth observing in these cases. It is curious that they always allow the offending play to be produced before they make any objections. Then, when a manager has risked a large sum of money on it, they raise a wall of astonishment and indignation, and demand that it shall be suppressed at once. Our own system, which provides that a censor shall read the play before its production and decide whether it is "respectable," may be very stupid, but it seems, at any rate, a little fairer to managers than that followed in America.

American prudishness, again, is much on a line with that known so well to us in England. You can treat "risky" subjects there if you do so in a frivolous spirit, but if you are serious about them you are at once suppressed. So they allowed the "Girl from Maxim's," a sordid and silly farce about Parisian vice, and condemned "Mrs. Warren's Profession," in which Mr. Bernard Shaw satirises vice. It is all a question, as usual, of gilding the pill! "Salomé," it need hardly be said, was forbidden here in England, not because the head of John the Baptist on a charger frightened the censor's nerves, but because it is our principle—for which, certainly, there is a good deal to be said—not to allow anything approaching a Biblical subject on the stage.

The banishment of his play from the stage was naturally very "tedious" (as he himself would have said) to the late Oscar Wilde. He talked seriously about getting naturalised as a Frenchman, and declared that he would leave England for ever. To this he was inclined by the fact that Mme. Sarah Bernhardt had just accepted the play for production in Paris. At length it was indeed produced there, though not by her, but had no very remarkable success. The Germans were the first to make much of it, and with them it has had an astonishing triumph. The French, after all, may be excused for seeing it as it is—a story of Flaubert in the language of Maeterlinck, both authors they no doubt prefer to read "in the original."

## Academy, Feb. 23, 1907.

THE SPHINX

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Your correspondent is not quite accurate in stating that Oscar Wilde's poem, "The Sphinx," was limited to twenty-five copies. An edition of two hundred copies was issued at 42s., with twenty-five on larger paper at 10s.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this remarkable poem (apart from its remarkable price) is the fact that it was written when the author was still a young man. The date usually assigned to it is about 1883, but I am inclined to think that portions of it, at least, were composed as early as 1878. The lines:

Some twenty summers cast their green for Autumn's gaudy liveries,

are probably strictly autobiographical, and are repeated in "Ravenna," the Newdigate Prize Poem for 1878:

one who scarce has seen  
Some twenty summers cast their doublets green,  
For Autumn's liveries.

I have recently been collating all Wilde's poems for a bibliography, and I find nearly a dozen passages in "Ravenna" taken from sonnets and other poems published before 1878, and not one instance of lines from "Ravenna" being used in poems admittedly of later date.

STUART MASON.  
February 19.



# THE CLUBMAN



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IN SERBIA—"MOVED" BY THE POLICE.

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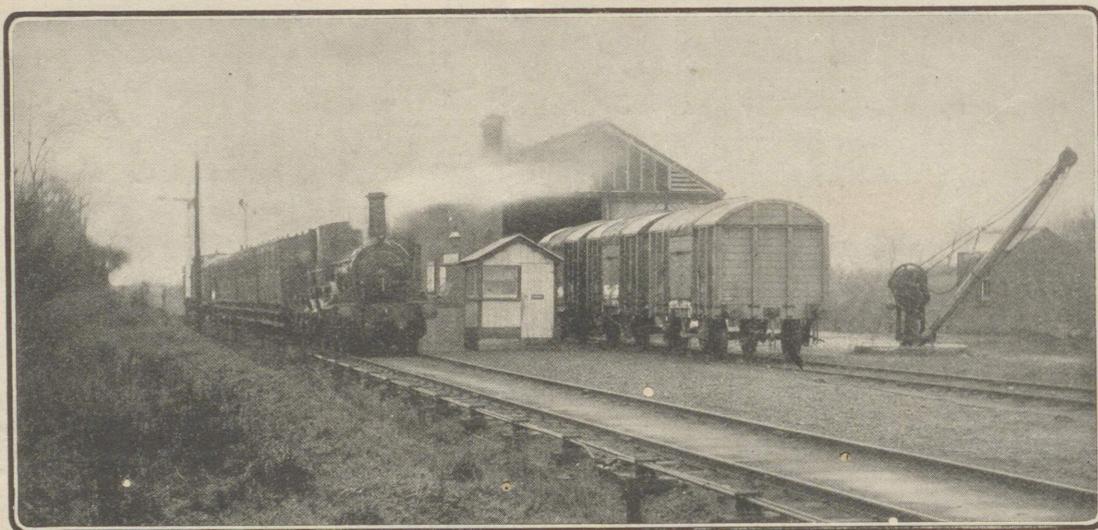
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#### DEMAND FOR WITHDRAWAL.

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NEW YORK, Monday.

It is pretty plain that the Strauss-Wilde opera "Salome" will have to go as regards New York, and this despite the fact that there has been only one performance, enormous expense is involved, and there are almost unexampled bookings. Whatever merit the work may have can hardly stand against the landlords of the Metropolitan Opera House, more especially when the pulpit as well as "Comstockery" upholds them.

There is a dead set against Oscar Wilde's story, and Dr. Fairchild, a leading Baptist light here, says that "Salome" is only a vehicle for the suggestions of demoralised talent. Preaching last night, he said that in the opera of "Salome" there is even worse degeneracy than in the play. When Oscar Wilde wrote the play for Madame Sarah Bernhardt he told her frankly that it was bizarre and sensual, "and the music of Herr Strauss," says Dr. Fairchild, "fits into every nook and cranny with marvellous cunning."

This view is pooh-poohed by the artistic section of Americans, who declare that for that matter "all opera is immoral." Mr. Meltzer, literary representative of Mr. Conried, managing director of the Metropolitan Opera House, actually defies you to mention a single opera, omitting "Hänsel und Gretel," perhaps, and "Il Trovatore," "that is free from suggestion."

To-day the rival forces contending over "Salome," that is to say, the landlords of the Metropolitan and the lessees, renewed their conference to see what can be done. From what I can understand this afternoon it is hardly likely that the music which has startled and thrilled music-lovers in many of the European capitals, and the presentation of which was regarded as Mr. Conried's greatest American achievement—it also netted him nearly £5,000 for his benefit last week—will ever again be heard at New York. Mr. Conried and his friends refuse to admit that Salome's loving dalliance with John the Baptist's head on a charger is bad art, but for the sake of peace they will cover the head with a cloth, and possibly tone down the dancing scene. Further than that they cannot go, they say, or they would insult the composer. But if Salome will not dance for Herod in town, she will out of town, and the provincial bookings for "Salome" become heavier and heavier. By his contract with Herr Strauss, Mr. Conried must give ten performances, and they at least are assured. More conferences will be held between the disputants, but as things look now the landlords and Comstockery have secured a clear victory in the American metropolis.

## Academy, Feb. 16, 1907.

### "THE SPHINX"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Among the numerous notices of Mr. B. production of *Antony and Cleopatra* no reference made, so far as I am aware, to Oscar Wilde's "Sphinx," though that mythical and mystical too prominently, some critics hold—in the play His Majesty's. The poem, it may be remembered in manuscript form to a limited circle for some publication in 1894, the reason assigned by the delay in its appearance being that "it would not be popular in England." Certainly nothing more esoteric, more likely to arouse the wrath of the gods, it met his view, issued even from the Bodley's *chef d'œuvre* of Mr. Ricketts's art, which consists of twenty-five copies, and dedicated to Marcel Schwob.

The metre of this weird poem, whose haunting is well-nigh impossible to forget, is that of a sonnet, though this fact is to some extent disguised by the use of two long lines, in place of ones of ten syllables.

The poet sitting in his study at dead of night "The Raven," questions a sphinx, which, "with its cold" "lies cooing on the wall"

30 Jan  
1907

Poor Richard Strauss's opera of "Salomé" has given the Americans another of those attacks of prudishness or extreme delicacy which come upon them with great force every now and again. The Americans are worth observing in these cases. It is curious that they always allow the offending play to be produced before they make any objections. Then, when a manager has risked a large sum of money on it, they raise a wail of astonishment and indignation, and demand that it shall be suppressed at once. Our own system, which provides that a censor shall read the play before its production and decide whether it is "respectable," may be very stupid, but it seems, at any rate, a little fairer to managers than that followed in America.

\* \* \*

American prudishness, again, is much on a line with that known so well to us in England. You

can treat "risky" subjects there if you do so in a frivolous spirit, but if you are serious about them you are at once suppressed. So they allowed the "Girl from Maxim's," a sordid and silly farce about Parisian vice, and condemned "Mrs. Warren's Profession," in which Mr. Bernard Shaw satirises vice. It is all a question, as usual, of gilding the pill! "Salomé," it need hardly be said, was forbidden here in England, not because the head of John the Baptist on a charger frightened the censor's nerves, but because it is our principle—for which, certainly, there is a good deal to be said—not to allow anything approaching a Biblical subject on the stage.

\* \* \*

The banishment of his play from the stage was naturally very "tedious" (as he himself would have said) to the late Oscar Wilde. He talked seriously about getting naturalised as a Frenchman, and declared that he would leave England for ever. To this he was inclined by the fact that Mme. Sarah Bernhardt had just accepted the play for production in Paris. At length it was indeed produced there, though not by her, but had no very remarkable success. The Germans were the first to make much of it, and with them it has had an astonishing triumph. The French, after all, may be excused for seeing it as it is, a story of Flaubert in the language of Maeterlinck, both authors they no doubt prefer to read "in the original."

\* \* \*

Vol. 22. 1907.



Academy,

Feb. 16. 1907.

## "THE SPHINX"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Among the numerous notices of Mr. Beerbohm Tree's production of *Antony and Cleopatra* no reference has been made, so far as I am aware, to Oscar Wilde's poem, "The Sphinx," though that mythical and mystical beast figures—too prominently, some critics hold—in the play as staged at His Majesty's. The poem, it may be remembered, was known in manuscript form to a limited circle for some time before its publication in 1894, the reason assigned by the author for the delay in its appearance being that "it would destroy domesticity in England." Certainly nothing more insolently esoteric, more likely to arouse the wrath of the Philistine had it met his view, issued even from the Bodley Head than this *chef d'œuvre* of Mr. Ricketts's art, which was limited to twenty-five copies, and dedicated to Marcel Schwob.

The metre of this weird poem, whose haunting cadences it is well-nigh impossible to forget, is that of "In Memoriam," though this fact is to some extent disguised by the stanzas being arranged in two long lines, in place of the four short ones of Tennyson.

The poet sitting in his study at dead of night, like Poe in "The Raven," questions a sphinx, which, "with eyes of satin rimmed with gold," "lies couching on the Chinese mat," on the "far-off things" of long ago that it has witnessed:

"O tell me were you standing by when Isis to Osiris knelt,  
And did you watch the Egyptian melt her union for Antony  
And drink the jewel-drunken wine and bend her head in mimic  
awe

To see the huge  
brine?

Victoria Hall, Ealing, W.

Saturday, December 29th, 1906,  
THE HYOCRITES DRAMATIC COMPANY

Will perform  
**"The Importance of  
being Earnest,"**

A trivial Comedy for serious people.  
By **OSCAR WILDE**  
(Author of "Lady Windermere's Fan").

In aid of the  
**CHILDREN'S LEAGUE OF PITY**  
(Junior Branch of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children).

Preceded at 8 p.m. by  
A ONE-ACT COMEDY.

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF  
**HERBERT NEILD, Esq., M.P., J.P.,**

AND  
His Worship the **MAYOR OF EALING.**

DOORS OPEN 7.30 p.m.

Tickets: 4/6, 3/6, 2/6, and 1/6, may be obtained from—  
Messrs. Alfred Phillips, Ltd., The Mall, Ealing; E. E. Squire, The New  
Broadway, Ealing; and Mrs. P. Stanley Blaker, 37, Creffield Road, Ealing.

The **Ealing Philharmonic Orchestra**  
WILL KINDLY GIVE SELECTIONS DURING THE EVENING  
Under the direction of Mr. E. VICTOR WILLIAMS.

**TO HELP THE CHILDREN.**

BOOKS AND WRITERS.

THE announcement of a complete edition of the works of Oscar Wilde awakens mingled memories, nauseous and regretful. The genius and the perversity of the man stood over against each other in a sharp antagonism, of which the world was an unwilling spectator. It was his pose that offended, and when shame came upon him like a flood there was less pity for him than he deserved, and less sympathy than might have been allowed. It is doubtful whether he had even justice. The evil is past, for there was little enough of it in his writings, where genius had the upper hand; the disgust may be forgotten; and even the wreckage of a wasted life, when gathered up, will be found to have no small value. Like others before him, no better and no worse, let him take his place in the scheme of English Letters.

Other considerations apart, there was something about Oscar Wilde that makes an edition of his collected works seem natural and appropriate. The man was artistically complete, capable of giving unity to diverse material. There are some writers whose work would seem a hotch-potch if brought into one focus, not merely through a disparity of aim like that which distinguishes the writings of the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson from those acknowledged by Lewis Carroll, but in consequence of a more serious decentralization of the writer himself. That is a frequent reason against editions of modern authors in folio.

Yet there are some authors whom one would like to see even in folio. Why is there no collected edition of Pusey's works? Why have we to possess Newman in scattered volumes of all ages and sizes? Why cannot we have Maurice, for the purpose of reference, in royal octavo? They are quite as important as De Quincey, and one of them equalled him as a handler of the English language. But De Quincey was collected immediately after his death. Perhaps he took care that it should be so; why cannot someone care for those who were less egoistic.

DAILY MAIL,

FEBRUARY 2, 1907.

"THE FLORENTINE TRAGEDY."

To the Editor of the "Daily Mail."  
Sir,—In your issue of to-day you inquire whether the "Florentine Tragedy," by Oscar Wilde, is to be included in the forthcoming edition of his works. This fragment will appear in the third or fourth volume along with "Salome" and "Vera." The twelve volumes will contain all the published writings of the author except "Dorian Gray," while several unpublished poems and interesting additions to "De Profundis" are among the new features of the edition, the only one authorised by your obedient servant,  
ROBERT ROSS.  
Jan. 26.

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Pelican, Feb. 1, 1907.

Messrs. Methuen are about to publish for the first time a complete edition of the works of Oscar Wilde, including "The Duchess of Padua," hitherto unprinted in this country, and a full version of the celebrated "De Profundis," of which there are several versions, notably the German translation, completed before the English edition was contemplated. Even that, though it contains some fifty more pages than the edition to which we are accustomed, is probably not complete. This uniform edition of the works of the Irish author and dramatist, who has been described as the greatest master of wit and poignant oral fencing since the days of Sheridan, is sure to receive a cordial welcome.

Messrs. Methuen are on the point of issuing the complete collected edition of Oscar Wilde's works. The long inaccessibility of some of these has doubtless constituted one of the stimulants towards the present interest. The new edition, which will be in about fourteen volumes, will contain, moreover, some hitherto unpublished matter. Too often but the wilful perverter of the principles of Pater's famous "Conclusion," Wilde is at his best one of the most brilliant of English prose writers. His mastery of words and genius for paradox give his essays a place among the choicest of literary *hors d'oeuvres*.

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## "The Publishers' Circular and Booksellers' Record."

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Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Vanity Fair. May 24, 1884  
 Irish Monthly. July 1877  
 Dublin Univ. Mag. Jan. 1876, July 1877  
 Player. March 8, 1892

Nov. 17, 1906

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Dramatic Review. 1885  
 Court and Society Review. 1887

Feb. 17, 1906

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 Dublin Univ. Mag. Nov. 1875, July 1877  
 Player. March 8, 1892

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 Court and Society Review. 1887  
 Dramatic Review. Jan.-June 1885  
 Pall Mall Budget. 1891

Feb. 24, 1906

Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Court and Society Review. 1887  
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 Lady's Pictorial. Feb. 18, 1892  
 Lynch's (Arthur) Oar Posts. 1891

Dec. 1, 1906

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Illustrated Monitor. June, July 1877  
 (Dublin)  
 Dramatic Review. April 11, 1885  
 Book of Jousts, about 1890 (Leadenhall Press)

March 3, 1906

Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Scots Observer. July-Sept. 1890  
 Our Continent, Philadelphia. Vol. 1, No. 1. 1882  
 Miles' Poets and Poetry of the Century. Vol. 8  
 Fortnightly Review. Feb. 1891  
 Lady's Pictorial, Christmas No. 1887

Dec. 8, 1906

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Miles' (A. H.) Poets and Poetry of the Century. Vol. 8, Robert Bridges and Contemporary Poets. Any edit. except 1906

Dec. 15, 1906

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Court and Society Review. 1887  
 Kottabos. 1878 (Dublin)  
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Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Sharp's Sonnets of this Century, 4to. 1885  
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Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
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Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Lynch's (Arthur) Modern Authors. 1891  
 Vanity Fair, May 24, 1884, or vol. containing  
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Jan. 5, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Illus. Mag., London, containing poem in the Forest, before Oct. 1891. 10s. offered

March 24, 1906

Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 White's (Gleeson) Book Song. L.P. 1858 (Elliot Stock)  
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Jan. 12, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
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March 31, 1906

Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Lowry's (J. M.) Book of Jousts. About 1891 (Field & Tuer, Leadenhall Press, E.C.)

Jan. 19, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Court and Society Review. 1887  
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April 7, 1906

Millard, C., Ifley, Oxford  
 Ludgate Monthly, 1892. Part in yellow wrappers containing article on Harrow, pp. 289-96  
 Novel Review. April 1892

Feb. 2, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Miles' Poets and Poetry. Vol. 8, 1898, and L.P. 1891  
 Times. March 2, 1893  
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 Dramatic Review. 1885

Feb. 9, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Sonnets of this Century. Please report binding, size, and date on title, or p. 885

Feb. 16, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Pall Mall Mag. Jan. 1895  
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 Poems and Lyrics of Nature (Walter Scott)

Feb. 23, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Illustrated Monitor. 1876-7 (Dublin)  
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Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
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March 16, 1907

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March 23, 1907

Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.  
 Court and Society Review, 1887  
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Society, Summer No. 1885

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Lynch's (Arthur) Our Poets. 1894

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Millard, S., St. Edmund's, Forest Gate, E.

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Dramatic Review. April 11, 1885

Book of Jousts, about 1890 (Leadenhall

Press)

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**Millard, C.**, Iffley, Oxford

Scots Observer. July-Sept. 1890

Our Continent, Philadelphia. Vol. 1, No. 1.  
1882

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Vol. 8

Fortnightly Review. Feb. 1891

Lady's Pictorial, Christmas No 1887

Dec. 8, 1906

Millard, S. St. Edmund's Forest Gate, E.  
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Dec. 15, 1906

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Kottabos. 1878 (Dublin)  
Players. March 8, 1892

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March 10, 1906

Millard, C., Iffley, Oxford

Sherrin's Snapshots of this Century, 4to, 1886

Queen. Dec. 8, 1888

Kottabos, Dublin, Hilary Term. 1877

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White's (Gleeson) Book Song. L.P. 1893  
(Elliot Stock)

Sharp's Sonnets of this Century 16mo.  
1888

Court and Society Review, bnd. vol. 1887  
Society, July 1885. Double Summer No.

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Jan. 12, 1907

Milnes, J. J. *Journal of the Dublin University Magazine*, E  
Dublin University Mag. Jan. '76, July '77  
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Ludgate Monthly, 1892. Part in yellow

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with parts of Ludgate Monthly, 1892, pp. 289-96

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