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Oscar Wilde
Scrapbook

Vol. 3

807
1905

More controversy as to "Salomé." Here is one hearer telling us that it is "infinitely more complex than anything the composer ever produced before" while another replies that so far from this being the case it is nothing like so complicated as "Ein Heldenleben," "Zarathustra" or "Don Quixote"; and again to the suggestion that the score consists of "a series of hurricanes" the same writer gives it as "the general opinion among musicians in Dresden" that "nowhere has Strauss shown himself so extraordinarily economical with his heavy artillery." Thus we are told that "the beginning is calm and subdued as the moonlight over the Tetrarch's Palace, nor do we encounter any great climax of sound until the moment when Jokaanan descends into the cistern cursing Salomé. This and the final scene of Salomé's exultation and succeeding doom are the only fortissimo passages in the drama." One gathers in fact that this writer is almost aghast at the moderation which Strauss has displayed. "A series of hurricanes" on the other hand undoubtedly sounds more like the authentic Strauss.

Truth,

In musical developments of the past twelve months though this is by no means to imply that the year which is now passing away has been without its feature of interest. In many ways indeed it has been a period of rather exceptional activity. Abroad two events at least of note, of which tidings have reached our insular ears, have been the "Fidelio" centenary celebrations in November and the more recent production of Strauss's "Salomé" at Dresden. Whether our descendants of 2005 will celebrate in turn the centenary of the last-named opera is a matter concerning which it would be rash perhaps to prophesy; but the two works may serve appropriately enough to sum up the amount and nature of the progress, or at any rate development, which has been effected in the art of music in the hundred years which lie between them. And if further there are those who think that the new paths pursued with such ardour by the intrepid Strauss are of a kind which lead no whither or in the wrong direction, one may properly recall that no less was said and thought in 1805 of those which Beethoven was then making for himself. Let us look the Strauss problem fairly in the face therefore—and pass on.

At home we have had nothing so dignified to record as a "Fidelio" centenary or so exciting as a "Salomé" première.

2019-Olsen Women's University Library 447

SOME NEW MUSIC.

TWO NEW OPERAS.

Salome. By RICHARD STRAUSS.

(First produced at Dresden, in December.)

Miarka. By ALEXANDRE GEORGES.

(First produced at the Opéra Comique, Paris, in November.)

HERR STRAUSS has an enviable reputation by now. Everything that he writes becomes famous, stupendous, marvellous—this from his admirers, a full half of the musical world; and unmusical, unintelligible, jargon—this from his detractors, the other full half of the musical world. Thus, between the two, nothing passes unnoticed; so much the better for the eminent composer. Even if the labour of the mountains gives birth to a *ridiculus mus*, half the world provides itself with gigantic opera glasses, and sees a glorious beast of noble proportions.

Salome, the newest work from Herr 'Strauss' pen, had a history long before its production. Battles had to be fought and won. Cæsars were to be appeased, a theatre and an *impresario* secured, and, hardest of all, artists to create the *rôles*. The theatre was the Court Theatre, Dresden; the *impresario* was Count Seebach, and the chief exponents were Frau Wittich, Herren Burrian and Perron. The conductor was Herr Schuch. The orchestra demanded a hundred and twenty players, and included several unusual instruments.

The whole work is revolutionary. Every tradition of music is thrown aside. Metre, measure, beat, time, all are discarded for realism of an order the most advanced. With Richard Strauss, music as an art absolute does not exist. It seems as if he would say, "Let us adapt our daily life, our every action, our thoughts, concretely to music." The *Heldenleben* and the *Sinfonia Domestica* represented this ideal, and here in *Salome* the ideal is carried out. Nothing is logical, one beat is thrown against another, keys are mixed up, and strange melodies unravel themselves from a tangle of rich and wonderful orchestration. Never have such sounds been heard from an orchestra before. The average listener wonders where they come from.

Yet, in spite of it all, in spite of the mess and the muddle, the tangle and the impenetrable undergrowth, admirers find intense beauty, and acclaim the composer to the skies. If they have reason, time will show.

The Dresden performance, the result of heart-breaking rehearsals and long, long tours of uphill work, was a triumph. Report has it that Herr Strauss conducted twenty-five times on the drop of the curtain. A record, we imagine; and, perhaps, a little suggestive of America.

Daily Telegraph. 30 Oct. 1906

Richard Strauss's opera, "Salome," which is composed upon Oscar Wilde's play of that name, was successfully given on Oct. 21 in the Mannheim Court Theatre, and is to be produced in Berlin, where it

was at first looked at askance by the authorities, on Dec. 4. Although the rather "fleshy" colouring of both libretto and music seems to have an attraction for the public, the tendency of the German critics is to think that the composer has gone a little far in his Zc-aesque treatment of the human passions. Strauss's *Salome*, for chorus and orchestra, will be performed for the first time at the Museum Concert at Frankfort on Dec. 10.

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Musical Opinion - March 1906.

IT is understood that a French edition of Richard Strauss's opera "Salomé" will shortly be published. Oscar Wilde's drama, of which the libretto is an abridgement, was originally written by the English author in French and was first published by a Parisian firm.

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2019-10-14

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At home we have had not as a "Fidelio" centenary or premiere.

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Musical Opinion
Jan. 1906

Strauss's "Salomé."

[OCCASIONAL "TIMES" CORRESPONDENT.]

IT is impossible to imagine a work more baffling to a listener who is anxious to make up his mind as to what he hears than Strauss's one act drama, "Salomé," which was produced at the Royal Opera House, Dresden, before one of the most competent audiences of musicians imaginable and with every outward sign of an epoch making success. That the enthusiasm was spontaneous, genuine and deeply felt there can be no doubt; but when we try to consider dispassionately what it means and what augury it has for the future of the work we find ourselves beset with doubt and with difficulty. "Salomé" is certain to give rise to a vast deal of controversy; and, so far as the criticisms which have already appeared afford a means of judging, the attack will be delivered along two lines. Leaving for a moment out of account those who are convinced that all Strauss's music is only a particularly aggressive form of twentieth century lunacy, there are those who find that the music is wholly unsuitable to the text and there are those who find that it is too much and those who say that it expresses too much and those who complain that it expresses too little,

Considerations of space make it necessary to assume that the main outlines of Oscar Wilde's drama, "Salomé," and the nature of his treatment of the subject are generally known. The mysticism and studied *naïveté*, the exuberant Oriental imagery, the deliberately narrow range within which the whole is concerned,—all these things are well reproduced in Frau Hedwig Lachmann's German version, which the composer has slightly abridged. It is worth pausing here a moment to point out that Strauss calls his work a "drama," not *music drama*; and he is one of those who ponder deeply on such things. One must assume, therefore, that he desires words and music to be considered in more than the ordinary sense as being one and indivisible. There is no doubt, too, that the composer has striven—perhaps more consistently than any of his predecessors—to give to each line, to each idea suggested by the text, its appropriate musical setting, regardless of the usual laws of musical form; and that he is an apostle of the gospel of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* who regards the drama as the end and the music as the means. So far, all is plain sailing; but when we consider the net result, we are confronted with one of the strangest puzzles in the history of dramatic music.

The chief impression left by the work on the present writer is one of wonder that such a text could have inspired a composer with such music; and the wonder grows when one considers the theories which we know to be Strauss's. As one of the leading German critics has already said: between text and music there is a great gulf fixed. In effect the gulf is so deep that one can hardly talk of a conflict between the two,—they are too far apart. Or if there is a conflict at all, it is short and sharp; and after twenty bars it ends in the complete rout of the poet. It is Niagara diverted into the bed of a lakelet; and in the twinkling of an eye the banks have disappeared and there is a seething torrent where a few minutes before the placid mirror of the water reflected the surrounding landscape. Strauss, however, does not merely destroy,—he recreates. The skill and power with which he makes an atmosphere and with which he gives to each character in the drama its appropriate idiom, while yet preserving an essential unity, are proofs of real dramatic genius. He has made Salomé, Herod and Jochanaan to live; but the life blood that flows in their veins is that of Strauss,—not that of Wilde. They are as new and as striking types as one can recall in the whole literature of opera.

The complaint that composers of opera stifle and trample on their text is no new one. It has been made consistently ever since Humperdinck wrote "Hänsel und Gretel." There, however, it is obvious that author and musician started from the same view of their theme; here, we are face to face with an essential difference of idea. One expected music such as Fauré, Debussy, Hahn or even Charpentier might have written; we have something which can best be described as "Tristan" raised to a higher power, but without the suggestion of the hothouse which we occasionally find there. To continue the metaphor, the thermometer is higher than at Tintagel or Kareol, but it is the temperature of the open air. Nor is there any chivalry or romance,—it is all crude and violent passion. It has been described as hysterical, but this is only partially true. The passion is closely studied, but the observer keeps his head in the midst of it. And here we come to the limitations of the composer. There are passages where he seems to feel too little with his creations.

To come to specifically musical aspects of the score, it is unmistakably Strauss in his latest developments. He carries one step further than in the Domestic Symphony his economy of thematic material; and there is probably no opera based on *leitmotifs* which has so few of them. The score is a triumph of complexity and of subtlety; but it seems to be a complexity of harmony and of orchestral colour rather than of polyphony. This, from the technical point of view, seems the most remarkable feature of the music; but from one hearing it is too much and those who complain that it expresses too much and those who say that it expresses too little, it is too much and those who say that it expresses too much and those who complain that it expresses too little,

known mastery asserts itself triumphantly. He has written nothing more impressive than the passages for the orchestra which precede and follow the only appearance on the stage of Jochanaan and Salome's final soliloquies over his severed head. Here we have themes subtly interwoven and splendid musical drama. The sardonic humour of Strauss has never been more characteristically shown than in some of the music of Herod and in the *ensemble* of disputing Jews.

The performance at Dresden was masterly. Though Frau Wittich was not a sensuous Salome, her singing was extremely fine, when the composer allowed her to sing; Herr Burrian was splendidly dramatic as Herod; and Herr Perron declaimed nobly as Jochanaan and made the most of the impressive contrast between his broad phrases and the torrential passion of the rest. The orchestra of a hundred and twenty played in a way which will be a model for all to follow. Herr von Schuch's achievements as conductor were beyond words,—remarkable!

By LANDON RONALD.

6
Jan.
1906.

Onlooker,

The production of a new opera by Richard Strauss is an event of great importance in the musical world, and accordingly most of the chief papers of London sent special correspondents to Dresden on the occasion of the first performance of "Salomé" a short time back. Many columns appeared, but, of course, it is always well-nigh impossible to form any opinion of a work from reading about it, and one can get no further than to learn whether it was successful, how it was received, and how it was rendered. All this we know about "Salomé," with the additional particulars that the work is scored for an orchestra of one hundred and twenty men (this being the minimum that it is possible to employ if the score is to be played as written), and that the Kaiser strongly disapproves of the subject having been taken by Strauss for an opera, and that Strauss very much resents the interference of his august King and Emperor. I understand from a very musical friend who was present at the first performance, that the music is ultra-Strauss; so much so that one thinks of his Symphonic Poems as simple, straightforward, tuneful little compositions in comparison with this opera of his. This, I admit, has not prejudiced me in favour of the work. Readers of this column know full well my views on these "little" tone-poems which Strauss has indulged in during the last few years, so it is unnecessary for me to repeat them. I learn, further, from my friend that scarcely one note from any singer was heard during the evening, the orchestra monopolising all the hearing powers that an ordinary individual is blessed with. This, in the case of certain German singers, might be considered a blessing in disguise as far as the audience is concerned; but as a rule, of course, it is more pleasant to hear singing when one goes to the opera, because there are just a few people who pay their money for that express purpose.

All this, however, is history repeating itself. Exactly the same charges were brought against Wagner half a century ago. The "Ring" was supposed to be a work which could only be performed in a theatre that was specially built for the purpose. "Tristan und Isolde," it will be remembered, was rehearsed for weeks and weeks, and eventually the singers threw down their parts and declared it was absolutely impossible to sing such music. To-day, however, we have the "Ring" given in its entirety in almost every opera house in the world, and "Tristan" is continually sung and performed even by English provincial opera companies! Thus it will be seen that the sensations of the fathers are the commonplaces of the children. Wagner was dubbed a musical maniac; Strauss has just been described by a very eminent musical critic as "an enormously clever man, who was once a genius." The differences between the two men, however, are undoubtedly very great. Wagner actually created a new school of opera, whereas Strauss is merely carrying on the Wagnerian traditions with additions that can scarcely be considered improvements. Wagner was a pioneer; Strauss is a disciple possessing originality and talent. Strauss has never had to shake the dust of the old-fashioned Italian opera off his feet and offer in its place a great art-work that was eventually to be acknowledged as such, but not until its creator had been dubbed a madman! Wagner undoubtedly made the path a comparatively easy one for any man of talent to pursue his way. He developed as no other man had ever done the musical intelligence of the public, and to my mind he actually was the creator of the modern school of music.

And yet, withal, one could in no sense compare the music of Strauss with that of Wagner. The reason why I have coupled their names together so much is because I wished to prove, as I have said, that History is repeating itself. I cannot insist enough, however, that the means Strauss employs to attain an end are identically the same as Wagner used before him, and that Wagner was not a copyist, but a creator. All of which brings me back to the interesting point whether or no "Salomé" will ever live to take its place eventually amongst the operatic répertoire. I certainly do not think that because an orchestra of 120 men is required, or because the libretto is disapproved of by Mrs. Grundy, that there are sufficiently potent reasons to prevent its ultimately being given any and every where. Opera houses will eventually have to be altered or built to meet modern-day requirements, and all this will come about when the next musical genius is born, and gives us works which demand different requirements and surroundings to those that are at present used. This occurred when Wagner came on the scene, and, without any doubt, will occur again. England, of course, is operatically so terribly far behind other nations that it is a very moot point whether even in centuries to come she will ever be able to hold her own. But abroad it is quite different; things go on apace there. In France and in Germany great works are not kept in the cupboard or consigned to the flames, because the libretto might shock one's maiden aunt. It is true that "Salomé" has been rejected in Vienna on account of the libretto, but this is only one of those regrettable exceptions that go to prove the rule. The question of moral or immoral operatic libretti is far too big a one to go into in these columns, but as a general principle I consider it preposterous that here in London we are deprived of hearing really great operas because the libretti either deal with a Biblical or a so-called immoral subject.

Standard
15 March 1906

OSCAR WILDE'S WORK VETOED.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, March 10.

Richard Strauss's opera, "Salome," written to Oscar Wilde's words, was down on the list for future production at the Vienna Opera, with changes in parts of the libretto objected to by the censor. It was intended to substitute an Assyrian priest for John the Baptist, with other minor alterations in the text. I learn, however, that it has now been decided by the management that it would be better to give up the piece altogether, and consequently Schilling's "Moloch" will be given in its stead, next season.

During the current season Mozart's "Figaro's Wedding" and Wagner's "Walkyrie" will be reproduced, with new and greatly improved staging.

Daily Telegraph.

13
March
1906

Our Berlin Correspondent writes: It has been decided to present Richard Strauss's "Salome" in Berlin. The Royal Opera House has definitely declined to have anything to do with the work, but the Theater des Westens has been enterprising enough to offer it a home. The singers who took charge of the leading rôles in Dresden, and likewise the principal instrumentalists in the orchestra, will all come to Berlin, and remain here until "Salome" can be transferred without risk to Berlin artists.

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The Star.

"SALOME" NOT WANTED.

Richard Strauss's opera, "Salome," written to Oscar Wilde's words, was down on the list for future production at the Vienna Opera, with changes in parts of the libretto objected to by the Censor.

It has been decided, however, says the "Standard," to give up the piece altogether.

TRIBUNE,

"Salome" has now been given at a second German opera house, viz., at Breslau. Richard Strauss was present, and he had taken an active part in several rehearsals. The public received the opera, which was conducted by Mr. Trüwer, with enthusiasm, but the critics were not unanimously favourable. In two directions this performance has shed some light on the work. The orchestra numbered about eighty only. In a letter to the director of the opera the composer said: "The performance was, indeed, excellent, thanks to the artistic efficiency of the orchestra, which, if it was small, was eminently well trained. If, after the Dresden performance, I doubted whether performances of 'Salome' would always be confined to a few of the largest Court theatres, I now may entertain hopes that they may be given also on stages of lesser importance—performances which shall still do justice to my intentions." The other point regards the greater or lesser importance of the vocal parts. The part of Herod, laid out for a high bariton, was sung by a high tenor, for whom some changes were made into the higher range of his voice were made.

Manchester Courier - 16 March '06

Richard Strauss's opera, "Salome," written to Oscar Wilde's words, was down on the list for production at the Vienna Opera, with changes in parts of the libretto objected to by the censor. It has now been decided by the management that it would be better to give up the piece altogether.

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Newcastle Weekly Chronicle

31 March 1956

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Notwithstanding the Kaiser's disapproval of Strauss's "Salome" a performance is to be given in Berlin. The Royal Opera House has refused to produce the work, which was only to be expected. The management of the Theatre des Westens have taken the work up and all the principal performers and the leading orchestral players who assisted at the Dresden production have been engaged. It is intended to offer the parts subsequently to resident artistes in the German capital, when it can be done without risk to the general performance.

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Morning Leader.

Strauss' "Salome" has been produced at Breslau. The performance had been looked forward to with some anxiety, as the orchestra there numbers only 80 performers. After the production Strauss wrote a letter to the authorities expressing his gratification at the result, and saying that he now felt sure "Salome" could be produced even on the smaller stages of Germany. After the first Dresden performance he still felt that it was impossible without the enlarged orchestra, but all doubts had now been removed. This is a somewhat rash confession, of which the most will be made by certain sections of the musical world. But, after all, the "Ring" is given at places where the orchestra is not so large as it is at Dresden or at Bayreuth, and nobody complains. The only people who have a right to grumble are the Dresden authorities, who thus find themselves deprived of a lucrative monopoly

Musical News.

17 Nov.
1906

With regard to Dr. Richard Strauss's attitude towards the Kaiser, we have been favoured with the following authentic statement by a Berlin correspondent:—"There is a talk in Berlin of Richard Strauss giving up his post as conductor at the Opera House, because of a dispute with the Kaiser, who objects to his new opera, 'Salome,' which he considers 'degrading art.' Richard Strauss refuses to be dictated to even by an Emperor. It will be a blow for the Opera House in Berlin when he resigns."

Musical Standard.

31 March 1906

FROM a private source I learn that "Salome" is still being given every week, at least once, in Dresden, and that the house is invariably sold out. Thus "Staccato" in the "Leader."

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17 April 1906.

ably sold out.

Daily Telegraph,

At the town theatre at Graz on the 16th, 18th, and 20th of next month, Richard Strauss's newest work, the one-act musical drama, "Salome," will be performed, under the personal direction of the composer. On these occasions the orchestra will be strengthened by the addition of ninety instrumentalists. As this will be the first representation in Austria the directors of the theatre, wishing to give foreign music-lovers the opportunity of hearing this much-discussed work, have decided to reserve a number of seats. The text-book of Oscar Wilde will be the version followed. In view of a performance of "Salome," either at Paris or Brussels, the composer has adapted the libretto to suggest the French text of Oscar Wilde. It is hoped that the work will soon appear in this new form.

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Muntz County News. 16 Feb. 1956

ARRANGEMENTS are being made for the performance of "Salome," Richard Strauss' new opera, in Berlin. The Kaiser's Court, it seems, is divided into two camps on the subject. One party will have nothing to say to "Salome," believing it to be an unsuitable subject for opera; while the other, the musical camp, is eager to hear the work. It is believed the Kaiser will decide the question in favour of the anti-"Salome" party.

Jessen Women's University Library

23 July 1976

Morning Post 23 July 1906

FOREIGN NOTES.

Richard Strauss's "Salomé," has been given at Cologne with great success, the composer having been called some fifteen times before the curtain at the close. A special subsidy of 35,000 marks had been voted by the municipality in order to ensure a sufficient number of rehearsals for this very complicated work. Although only in one act "Salomé" takes about an hour and a half to perform. The tenor, Herr Burghard, is said to have been excellent in the part of Herod.

Dissertation 2019 e03 - Universitätsbibliothek Bonn

ORD MACAULAY in one of his essays—a really entertaining, if wrong-headed, body of literature—compared a book which a lady had written dealing with a seventeenth-century subject, and another book written by the same lady in which the materials were furnished by the eighteenth century. She seemed, he declared, to have written about the seventeenth century because she had already studied it, and to have studied the eighteenth century because she wished to write about it. The difference between the two books represents an enduring difference between literature and journalism. Our great authors write out of the fullness of an experience that has been naturally acquired. Our journalists go out and acquire experience of set purpose in order that they may be able to put them in a book. Stevenson—a better author than a fickle-minded criticism at present regards him—wrote *Memories and Portraits* because he had known certain people and places, and had loved them, as we say, with no ulterior motive. George Stevens, on the other hand, went forth and saw London and India and Egypt, because the Editor of the *Daily Mail* wished him to do so, and, consequently, his work was as superficial as it was brilliant, as fleeting in the impression it left as it was immediately striking. Every author almost nowadays believes in this contracted sort of writing. Our novelists, like our descriptive writers, take ship for the uttermost ends of the earth in much the same spirit as that in which a miner sets out for South Africa or the Klondyke. One cannot, unhappily, dig up the gold of literature save in the appointed circle of one's own experience, and in one's own soul. Still, there is a good deal of entertainment to be had outside the boundaries of pure literature. There is an infinite number of books awaiting our interest and laughter, if we do not insist upon forcing a comparison between them and the books of Herodotus or Montaigne or Thoreau.

M. de Guerville's volume on *New Egypt* is such a book. M. de Guerville tells us in a preface that, on the eve of his departure for Egypt, he met a friend. "But tell me," said his friend, "what are you going for—amusement?" "To amuse myself," was the answer. "Rather not. I'm going to write another book." Armed with this admirable intention, M. de Guerville travelled and saw many sights between Alexandria and Fashoda. "I have knocked," he declares, "at all doors, rich and poor, high and low." Oscar Wilde once said of Mr. Kipling that he had seen many queer things through keyholes, and some of M. de Guerville's anecdotes are so piquant, so Continental frank, that they represent what to the English mind remains a keyhole view of the world. Evidently many things happen in Egypt which would only be permitted in England behind locked doors. Even some of the most innocent of the amusements of Cairo would scarcely seem at home in this country.

*New Egypt. By A. B. de Guerville. With 183 illustrations. (Heinemann, 21s. net.)

THE BAZAAR, Dec. 29, 1905.

The Appeal Court in Paris recently had an important case before it—important, that is to say, by reason of a fact which transpired during the course of the hearing, though the suit itself was trivial enough. The former landlord of a hotel had brought an action against the present proprietor for the delivery up of certain boxes, and on being asked why he manifested such great interest in them, replied that they contained unpublished manuscripts of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde, who was his tenant and had died in his house. If the boxes really did contain even no more than two or three manuscripts of the kind suggested, they were worth fighting for to the bitter end. Among English authors of the last days of the nineteenth century Oscar Wilde towered like a giant, a fact which is already fully appreciated, for there is a great demand for everything or anything he wrote, and that demand is increasing daily.

Jan. 12, 1906. In a recent issue we referred to a case heard in the Paris Court of Appeal in connection with some alleged MSS. left behind in Paris by the late Mr. Oscar Wilde. Mr. Stuart Mason, of Oxford, informs us that when he was in Paris about a year-and-a-half ago he stayed at the Hotel d'Alsace, and occupied the very room in which Wilde died. He also spent several hours in going through three large boxes of books which remained in the possession of the landlord. These consisted chiefly of English magazines and novels, but there was little of any great interest. He is quite certain that the boxes did not contain a single line of Wilde's MSS. Mr. Robert Ross and other representatives of Mr. Wilde know of the existence of these boxes of books, but it is quite certain that they removed everything of any interest or value.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

A LITERARY ADVENTURE. Oscar Wilde's "Florentine Tragedy" was produced for the first time at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, on Friday night. It was accorded a favourable reception (says a Reuter message), due rather to the beauties of language and verse than to its merits as a play. Rudolf Schildkraut, whose Shylock was favourably noticed recently, scored a great success in the principal part, that of the Jew who discovers his wife at a rendezvous with a Florentine noble. He also took the leading part in "Der Heilige Brunon" (The Holy Well), a legend written by an Irishman, Mr. John Millington-Syngé. It was unfavourably received.

The interest which is taken in all Wilde's works in Germany was enhanced by the circumstances attending the publication of the "Florentine Tragedy." The play, with a critical essay on Shakespeare's sonnets, disappeared from the author's study, and all efforts made by Wilde to recover it were fruitless. Only ten years after, on an examination of the poet's papers after his death, was a copy of the tragedy discovered among odd fragments of the "Duchess of Padua."

TRIBUNE.

MR. OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

Since the death in Paris on November 30th, 1900, of Mr. Oscar Wilde, there have been numerous conjectures and reports as to the state of his finances at that time. On Saturday, however, letters of administration of his estate were granted. He is described in the grant as "Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wilde, of the Hotel d'Alsace, Paris, who died intestate on the 30th November, 1900, and whose estate, so far as the same can at present be ascertained, does not exceed £100." The letters of administration were granted at the Principal Probate Registry, in accordance with Section 73 of the Courts of Probate Act, 1857, to Mr. Robert Ross, dealer in works of art, of 10, Sheffield-gardens, Campden-hill, W.

FEBRUARY 26, 1906.

DAILY CHRONICLE.

OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

Since the death in Paris in November 1900 of Oscar Wilde, there have been numerous conjectures and reports as to the state of his finances at the time. On Saturday letters of administration were granted, when it was declared that the estate, so far as can at present be ascertained, does not exceed £100.

The Star.

UNIMPORTANCE OF BEING A GENIUS.

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Leicester Post.

OSCAR WILDE'S WILL.

Letters of administration to the estate of Mr. Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wilde, of Hotel d'Alsace, Paris, who died November 30, 1900, have been granted to Mr. Robert Ross, of 10, Sheffield Gardens, Campden Hill, W., the estate, as far as can at present be ascertained, being returned at £100.

OSCAR WILDE'S DEBTS.

EXPECTATION THAT THEY WILL BE PAID IN FULL.

Mr. R. Ross, who took out letters of administration to the estate of Oscar Wilde, writes to the "Chronicle" to explain his position. When Wilde died in November 1900 he was an undischarged bankrupt. Since his death there has been a steady and increasing demand for his works, and the English creditors have been paid 19s. in the pound. In the meantime the bankruptcy officials have seized the profits on "De Profundis," issued last year, and with these and a sum of £400 advanced by a friend the balance will be paid.

TRAGEDY OF GENIUS.

Oscar Wilde's Dying Wish about his Debts.

DISPOSING OF RUMOURS.

We announced, a few days ago, that letters of administration of the estate of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde had been granted to Mr. R. Ross, and that it had been sworn at less than £100. With reference to this Mr. Ross has addressed a letter to us which throws a good deal of light on the end of a tragic career. "May I be allowed," he writes, "to correct an erroneous deduction which has followed the granting of letters of administration to myself for the estate of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde? It is suggested that when the author died he was worth at least £100, and that this settles the various rumours with regard to his finances at the time."

"The facts are these:—In September, 1895, Wilde was adjudicated a bankrupt; the petitioning creditor being the late Marquis of Queensberry, who obtained a verdict against him with costs. The assets consisted mainly of literary and dramatic rights, and a reversionary interest in his brother's and his wife's estates. In November 1900 Wilde died, an undischarged bankrupt. "During the three years following his release from prison (1897) he lived on a small annuity provided for him by his friends. Since his death there has been a steady and increasing demand for his works, due, I believe, to the great interest they have aroused on the Continent, particularly in Germany. The publication of 'De Profundis' stimulated this interest."

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OSCAR WILDE'S AFFAIRS.

POSITION OF HIS CREDITORS.

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DEBTS OF A GENIUS.

TRUTH ABOUT OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

HIS LAST DAYS IN PARIS.

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RANDOM REMARKS. THE GOSPEL OF ART. It is one thing to provoke correspondence and another to reply to it. It is a poor sort of man who pleases everybody, and I should be very foolish and very foolish if I expected everyone to fall in with my ideas.

TRIBUNE. MR. OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE. Since the death in Paris on November 30th, 1900, of Mr. Oscar Wilde, there have been numerous conjectures and reports as to the state of his finances at that time.

FEBRUARY 26, 1906. DAILY CHRONICLE, OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE. Since the death in Paris on November 30th, 1900, of Oscar Wilde, there have been numerous conjectures and reports as to the state of his finances at that time.

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Having said so much I think W. Carter will follow me when I say that when I declared grand opera was not Art I meant it was not Art to me. That is to say, it does not give me the thrill; its incongruities appeal to my sense of humour, but it does not satisfy those cravings which I like to think and believe are a part of my higher self.

THE BAZAAR, Dec. 29, 1905. The Appeal Court in Paris recently had an important case before it—important, that is to say, by reason of a fact which transpired during the course of the hearing, though the suit itself was trivial enough.

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Black and White.

13 Jan.
1906

LORD MACAULAY in one of his essays—a really entertaining, if wrong-headed, body of literature—compared a book which a lady had written dealing with a seventeenth-century subject, and another book written by the same lady in which the materials were furnished by the eighteenth century. She seemed, he declared, to have written about the seventeenth century because she had already studied it, and to have studied the eighteenth century because she wished to write about it. The difference between the two books represents an enduring difference between literature and journalism. Our great authors write out of the fulness of an experience that has been naturally acquired. Our journalists go out and acquire experience of set purpose in order that they may be able to put them in a book. Stevenson—a better author than a fickle-minded criticism at present regards him—wrote *Memories and Portraits* because he had known certain people and places, and had loved them, as we say, with no ulterior motive. George Stevens, on the other hand, went forth and saw London and India and Egypt, because the Editor of the *Daily Mail* wished him to do so, and, consequently, his work was as superficial as it was brilliant, as fleeting in the impression it left as it was immediately striking. Every author almost nowadays believes in this contracted sort of writing. Our novelists, like our descriptive writers, take ship for the uttermost ends of the earth in much the same spirit as that in which a miner sets out for South Africa or the Klondyke. One cannot, unhappily, dig up the gold of literature save in the appointed circle of one's own experience, and in one's own soul. Still, there is a good deal of entertainment to be had outside the boundaries of pure literature. There is an infinite number of books awaiting our interest and laughter, if we do not insist upon forcing a comparison between them and the books of Herodotus or Montaigne or Thoreau.

M. de Guerville's volume on *New Egypt* is such a book. M. de Guerville tells us in a preface that, on the eve of his departure for Egypt, he met a friend. "But tell me," said his friend, "what are you going for—amusement?" "To amuse myself?" was the answer. "Rather not. I'm going to write another book." Armed with this admirable intention, M. de Guerville travelled and saw many sights between Alexandria and Fashoda. "I have knocked," he declares, "at all doors, rich and poor, high and low." Oscar Wilde once said of Mr. Kipling that he had seen many queer things through keyholes, and some of M. de Guerville's anecdotes are so piquant, so Continentally frank, that they represent what to the English mind remains a keyhole view of the world. Evidently many things happen in Egypt which would only be permitted in England behind locked doors. Even some of the most innocent of the amusements of Cairo would scarcely seem at home in this country.

14 Jan. 1906

NEWS IN BRIEF.

A LITERARY ADVENTURE.

Oscar Wilde's "Florentine Tragedy" was produced for the first time at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, on Friday night. It was accorded a favourable reception (says a Reuter message), due rather to the beauties of language and verse than to its merits as a play. Rudolf Schildkraut, whose Shylock was favourably noticed recently, scored a great success in the principal part, that of the Jew who discovers his wife at a rendezvous with a Florentine noble. He also took the leading part in "Der Heilige Brunnen" (The Holy Well), a legend written by an Irishman, Mr. John Millington-Syngé. It was unfavourably received.

The interest which is taken in all Wilde's works in Germany was enhanced by the circumstances attending the publication of the "Florentine Tragedy."

The play, with a critical essay on Shakespeare's sonnets, disappeared from the author's study, and all efforts made by Wilde to recover it were fruitless. Only ten years after, on an examination of the poet's papers after his death, was a copy of the tragedy discovered among odd fragments of the "Duchess of Padua."

TRIBUNE,

MR. OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

Since the death in Paris on November 30th, 1900, of Mr. Oscar Wilde, there have been numerous conjectures and reports as to the state of his finances at that time. On Saturday, however, letters of administration of his estate were granted. He is described in the grant as "Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, of the Hotel d'Alsace, Paris, who died intestate on the 30th November, 1900, and whose estate, so far as the same can at present be ascertained, does not exceed £100." The letters of administration were granted at the Principal Probate Registry, in accordance with Section 73 of the Courts of Probate Act, 1857, to Mr. Robert Ross, dealer in works of art, of 10, Sheffield-gardens, Campden-hill, W.

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FEBRUARY 26, 1906.

DAILY CHRONICLE,

OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

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TRAGEDY OF GENIUS.

Oscar Wilde's Dying Wish
about his Debts.

DISPOSING OF RUMOURS.

We announced, a few days ago, that letters of administration of the estate of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde had been granted to Mr. R. Ross, and that it had been sworn at less than £100. With reference to this Mr. Ross has addressed a letter to us which throws a good deal of light on the end of a tragic career.

"May I be allowed," he writes, "to correct an erroneous deduction which has followed the granting of letters of administration to myself for the estate of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde? It is suggested that when the author died he was worth at least £100, and that this settles the various rumours with regard to his finances at the time.

"The facts are these:—In September, 1895, Wilde was adjudicated a bankrupt; the petitioning creditor being the late Marquis of Queensberry, who obtained a verdict against him with costs. The assets consisted mainly of literary and dramatic rights, and a reversionary interest in his brother's and his wife's estates. In November 1900 Wilde died, an undischarged bankrupt.

"During the three years following his release from prison (1897) he lived on a small annuity provided for him by his friends. Since his death there has been a steady and increasing demand for his works, due, I believe, to the great interest they have aroused on the Continent, particularly in Germany. The publication of 'De Profundis' stimulated this interest.

"The consequence was that, although unscrupulous English and American publishers have pirated most of the works, the English creditors have been paid 19s. in the pound. The remaining 1s. in the pound has been contributed by the seizure of the profits of 'De Profundis,' and about £400 which a friend has advanced in order to clear off the debt.

BANKRUPTCY ANNULLED.

"The bankruptcy, therefore, is annulled, in accordance with the wishes of the late author, and by the order of the Probate Court I have been appointed administrator of the wreck of the copyrights, literary and dramatic. I have resigned my claim to the profits of 'De Profundis,' out of which I had hoped to clear the Paris debts, all of which were incurred by the author after his release from prison while he was still an undischarged bankrupt.

"It was Wilde's last expressed wish that these should be paid, the creditors being people who knew while supplying him with the necessaries of life that they stood no legal chance of being paid at all.

"When Wilde died I gave the French creditors my personal assurance that all their claims would eventually be met, secure as I believed myself to be in the possession of the remarkable MS., 'De Profundis.' The Bankruptcy laws are, however, no less monstrous than all other laws. A bankrupt cannot give even his most intimate friend the work of his own brain for discharging what most of us would call a moral obligation.

"Wilde being a bankrupt his work, though written subsequent to the receiving order being made against him, became liable to seizure not by the French creditors, but by the English creditors, and others who figured so gracefully in his trial at the Old Bailey.

"The English bankruptcy has, however, been annulled, or will be in a few days. Arrangements have been made with Messrs. Methuen to bring out a uniform edition of Wilde's works, and out of the profits arising therefrom I shall be graciously permitted by the Court, I believe, to satisfy the French creditors."

THE BAZAAR, Dec. 29, 1905.

The Appeal Court in Paris recently had an important case before it—important, that is to say, by reason of a fact which transpired during the course of the hearing, though the suit itself was trivial enough. The former landlord of a hotel had brought an action against the present proprietor for the delivery up of certain boxes, and on being asked why he manifested such great interest in them, replied that they contained unpublished manuscripts of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde, who was his tenant and had died in his house.

If the boxes really did contain even no more than two or three manuscripts of the kind suggested, they were worth fighting for to the bitter end. Among English authors of the last days of the nineteenth century Oscar Wilde towered like a giant, a fact which is already fully appreciated, for there is a great demand for everything or anything he wrote, and that demand is increasing daily.

The Star.

UNIMPORTANCE OF BEING A GENIUS.

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On Saturday letters of administration were granted, when it was declared that the estate, so far as can at present be ascertained, does not exceed £100.

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Leicester Post,

OSCAR WILDE'S WILL.

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In a recent issue we referred to a case heard in the Paris Court of Appeal in connection with some alleged MSS. left behind in Paris by the late Mr. Oscar Wilde. Mr. Stuart Mason, of Oxford, informs us that when he was in Paris about a year-and-a-half ago he stayed at the Hôtel d'Alsace, and occupied the very room in which Wilde died. He also spent several hours in going through three large boxes of books which remained in the possession of the landlord. These consisted chiefly of English magazines and novels, but there was little of any great interest. He is quite certain that the boxes did not contain a single line of Wilde's MSS. Mr. Robert Ross and other representatives of Mr. Wilde know of the existence of the MSS. but he is quite certain that they removed everything of any interest or value.

OSCAR WILDE'S DEBTS.

EXPECTATION THAT THEY WILL BE
PAID IN FULL.

Mr. R. Ross, who took out letters of administration to the estate of Oscar Wilde, writes to the "Chronicle" to explain his position.

When Wilde died in November 1900 he was an undischarged bankrupt. Since his death there has been a steady and increasing demand for his works, and the English creditors have been paid 19s. in the pound. In the meantime the bankruptcy officials have seized the profits on "De Profundis," issued last year, and with these and a sum of £400 advanced by a friend the balance will be paid.

Evening Standard St. James's Gazette.

The bankruptcy will then be annulled, and with the profits of a new edition of Wilde's works, which Messrs. Methuen are bringing out, Mr. Ross hopes to obtain sufficient money to pay the French creditors all that is due to them.

"It was Wilde's last expressed wish," he adds, "that these debts should be paid, the creditors being people who knew while supplying him with the necessaries of life that they stood no legal chance of being paid at all."

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OSCAR WILDE'S AFFAIRS.

POSITION OF HIS CREDITORS.

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FEBRUARY 28, 1906.

Dundee Advertiser.

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The letters of administration were granted at the principal probate registry, in accordance with the Section 73 of the Courts of Probate Act, 1857, to Mr Robert Ross, dealer in works of art, at 20, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

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TRUTH ABOUT OSCAR WILDE'S ESTATE.

HIS LAST DAYS IN PARIS.

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RANDOM REMARKS.

THE GOSPEL OF ART.

It is one thing to provoke correspondence and another to reply to it. It is a poor sort of man who pleases everybody, and I should be very feeble and very foolish if I expected everyone to fall in with my ideas. It would, therefore, be a hopeless and thankless task to reply to correspondents who differ from me on the various subjects I may comment upon. If everybody agreed with what I said there would be no need to say anything; I would simply be an echo of a unanimous voice, a thing without soul, initiative, or originality. But occasionally I find among my correspondents a critic who whilst he differs also suggests, or rather inspires; and then I am proportionately grateful. Naturally, I did not expect my reflections on grand opera to be met with universal appreciation, and the criticisms provoked were very much in the spirit I anticipated. But there was one contribution which gave me especial pleasure, and that was the letter signed W. Carter. There was a phrase in that admirable letter that made me pause and think; it was the phrase in which the writer asked what I apprehended and comprehended by the word Art.

* * *

Now, that question is something of a poser. We talk ardently and glibly of Art, but it is only when we are asked to define it that we realise what a vague, shadowy, and yet dominant influence it is. The fact is, there is no such thing as Art in a general sense; it is not so much what Art is, but what Art does. That is to say, it is entirely and essentially an influence on a temperament. Art ceases to exist if it ceases to influence. If a man with no ear for music listened to Chopin's Sonata in A flat minor and was not moved by it, then to that man the composition would not be Art. My contention is that Art must give a thrill, impart a sensation; it must appeal to our higher self which we call soul; it must soothe or stimulate those painful longings, those vague understandings, which every sane man or woman possesses in a more or less acute degree.

* * *

If Art does not fulfil its purpose to the individual it does not exist for that individual; and is a silent voice, a dormant force. Art need not necessarily be beautiful, but it must give the thrill; it must answer those passionate yearnings which come unbidden to elevate and transfigure the souls of men. Art may be cultivated, but not commanded. When Wilde and Whistler created the cult of the aesthetes in the early eighties they were scorned and scoffed at by the conventional artists of the day. What did Ruskin say of "A Nocturne in Blue and Silver"? What was the reception first accorded to the Morris wallpaper? Whistler's impressionist pictures were not Art to Ruskin, the greatest authority of his day on painting, and yet how many modern artists fall down and worship before Whistler's "Miss Alexander." It is the same with literature and music. So long as the individual does not receive the thrill he does not come under the influence of Art. One can coin or quote aphorisms and epigrams by the score, but one does not get nearer the heart of the question. W. Carter will agree with me that the best summing up of Art in a sentence was the phrase of Goethe—I think it was Goethe—"Art is the embodiment of fancy." Personally I should have preferred the word "imagination," but the translation will stand. But if we accept Goethe's epigram, we again come to the question of whose fancy. One man's fancy is another man's abortion, and no man is entitled to dogmatically assert that such and such a thing is or is not Art unless he is speaking in a personal sense.

* * *

Having said so much I think W. Carter will follow me when I say that when I declared grand opera was not Art I meant it was not Art to me. That is to say, it does not give me the thrill; its incongruities appeal to my sense of humour, but it does not satisfy those cravings which I like to think and believe are a part of my higher self. People might find Art in grand opera, just as they might find Art in a barrel organ. It is not so much a matter of culture as of temperament. And that is where a great many people make a mistake. They think and assert that Art and culture are synonymous. I do not hold the same opinion, and I will endeavour to prove it. If Art and culture were synonymous, then it must logically follow that two equally cultured persons would have the same ideas on Art or forms of Art. I have already shown that Whistler and Ruskin, two highly-cultured people, were at complete variance on the point of creative Art. On the other hand, I have seen a so-called uncultured agricultural labourer ploughing a field by the sea bring his horses to a stop whilst he gazed, with his soul in his eyes, at the sun sinking below the horizon. That ploughman was not cultured, but he got the thrill at the sight of a sunset, and therefore he was artistic, and the thing that inspired him was Art.

* * *

Against the inspiration of the uncultured ploughman, let me relate an authenticated story of the cultured Tennyson. He, together with several friends, were taking a country walk in the north of England. They were climbing a mountain, and below them was a green valley dotted with sheep. One of Tennyson's companions, himself a poet of no mean ability, turned in his tracks, and gazing with rapture at the idyllic scene, pointed out its beauties to Tennyson. The then Poet Laureate listened to his friend's enthusiastic eulogy, and quietly remarked: "I cannot see anything beautiful about it. To me the scene resembles nothing so much as fleas on a blanket." There it is again; one poet got the thrill and the other did not. Tennyson saw Art in a running brook, but none in sheep grazing in a green valley.

* * *

But I can hear W. Carter saying: "This is all very well, but how does Roderic Random justify his contention that grand opera is not Art to himself?" W. Carter has been good enough to remind my critics that I do not stand alone in my condemnation of grand opera. Greater intellects than mine have held a similar view, and, therefore, I respectfully submit that, if I am a fool, I err in very good company. And I will go so far as to say that the objections of men like Addison to grand opera are practically the same as my own. Briefly, I contend that anything that appeals to a sense of humour when it is intended to appeal to one's sublimer instincts is not, cannot be, Art, inasmuch as it fails in its mission. I am very sorry, but at the risk of again hurting the feelings of lovers of grand opera I must once more point out its weaknesses. We will again take *Tannhauser*. Let it be understood that I do not quarrel with the music. As I have previously stated, I consider Wagner the greatest dramatic composer the world has ever seen. Nor do I quarrel with the theme of the story; it is a powerful imaginative work. What I do criticise is the manner in which it is presented in grand opera, and I cannot do better than illustrate my case by an analogy.

* * *

Supposing Wagner himself were present in the flesh, seated in the conductor's chair and directing his own music, he would be treated with that reverence and admiration his genius had inspired. But supposing Wagner went down to the sea to bathe, and in addition to the conventional bathing costume he wore a silk hat. What would be the result? The result would be that the incongruity of the sight would irresistibly appeal to anyone with even an apology for a sense of humour. And yet the man in the bathing suit and the silk hat would be the same as the Wagner man in the conductor's chair. It is the same with grand opera. The music is there, the story is there, but the incongruous nature of the presentation deprives the opera of its beauty. To use a well-worn but highly expressive phrase, there is "a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous."

* * *

I am sure I need say no more. Those who have attended performances of grand opera, especially at Covent Garden, will see my point. "Ian Maclaren" has said that in many respects a sense of humour is a curse instead of a blessing. Well, unfortunately for my enjoyment and appreciation of grand opera, I have been cursed with a sense of humour. I expect I am very common and vulgar and unrefined, but I am myself, and being myself I must respectfully, differentially, but none the less emphatically repeat the assertion that

RODERIC RANDOM.

THE LITERARY WEEK

We remarked, the other day, that Cambridge was more prolific of comic verse than Oxford. It is also a common saying and a popular belief that all the great poets and most of the minor poets who have been at any University at all have been at Cambridge.

Table with 2 columns: OXFORD: William Jones, William Gifford, Bowles, Southey, Landor, 'Monk' Lewis, Shelley, Heber, John Wilson ('Christopher North'), Milman, Thomas Haynes Bayly, Keble, Cary. CAMBRIDGE: Erasmus Darwin, Kirke White, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, W. S. Rose.

Table with 2 columns: OXFORD: Hartley Coleridge, Clough, Matthew Arnold, Macaulay, Lord Houghton, Barham, Robert Montgomery, J. H. Newman, R. S. Hawker, Faber, Tupper, John Nichol, J. A. Symonds, Lewis Carroll, Lewis Morris, Edwin Arnold, William Morris, Bridges, Wilde. CAMBRIDGE: Praed, Moultrie, Macaulay, Lord Houghton, Tennyson, Lord Lytton, Trench, Barnes, FitzGerald, Frederick Tennyson, Tennyson-Turner, Cory, Roden Noel, F. W. H. Myers.

Some poets have been omitted on the ground that they were at both Universities—Chaucer and Calverley among the number. Of the one hundred and eight names on a list composed with the strictest impartiality, fifty-nine, it will be seen, belong to Oxford and only forty-nine to Cambridge; but if we limit the competition to poets of the very highest rank Cambridge indubitably has the better of it.

WHAT THE FOLKS ARE SAYING.

THAT the most recent Society Intelligence is a note to the effect That there is something singularly sad in the announcement that the late Oscar Wilde left something less than one hundred pounds.

TRIBUNE, MARCH 20, 1906.

ENGLISH PLAYS ABROAD.

[From "The Tribune" Correspondent.] BUDA-PEST, March 18th. Oscar Wilde's play "A Woman of No Importance" was produced last night on the stage of the National Theatre here. Though but imperfectly translated, it met with great success.

The "Academy" last week published a carefully-compiled list of poets who have been educated at either Oxford or Cambridge. The list, based on poets mentioned in "Chambers' Encyclopaedia of English Literature," totals 108 names, and Oxford has the majority—fifty-nine poets against Cambridge's forty-nine.

Weeks Survey March 10-1906.

Within the last few days the interest in Oscar Wilde has fluttered up again owing to the rumour that letters of administration on Mr. Wilde's estate had been granted to Mr. R. Ross, and that it had been sworn at less than £100.

Sphere, March 10, 1906.

I am much interested in learning that Methuen will shortly publish a collected edition of the works of Oscar Wilde. There has been a great deal of privately-printed work by Mr. Wilde issued to the public of late years, and indeed a number of such books may be found in the last second-hand catalogue of W. T. Pitcher of Manchester, as, for example, Lord Arthur Savile's Crime: a Study of Duty; Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young; The Priest and the Acolyte; Roseleaf and Appleleaf. It is to be hoped that these less-known works of Mr. Wilde will appear in the new edition.

I have received a letter from Mr. Robert Ross in reference to an allusion that I made in a recent letter to the new edition of Mr. Oscar Wilde's works. It would seem that I was wrong in the assumption that the book called The Priest and the Acolyte was the work of Mr. Wilde. This is one of many spurious works not written by Wilde that have been for sale all over Europe during the past few years.

which is the property of Mr. John Lane, and Dorian Grey, which, formerly the property of Ward and Lock, is now owned by Mr. Charrington of Paris.

I have received a letter from Mr. C. S. Millard, who also protests against the suggestion that the story of The Priest and the Acolyte was written by Mr. Oscar Wilde. It was written, he tells me, by an undergraduate of Exeter College who is now a clergyman of the Church of England.

Yorkshire Telegraph (Sheffield) 8 March 1906.

DAILY CHRONICLE, MARCH 28, 1906.

WRITERS AND READERS.

A new edition of Oscar Wilde's works is shortly to be published, and it will include an enlarged issue of his "De Profundis." The additions consist of passages which have only appeared in the German, Russian, and Italian versions of the book, and letters which Wilde wrote to a friend from Reading Gaol.

PRISON REFORM.

THE EDITOR OF "THE TRIBUNE."

Mr. Stead, I think, has said that all and leader-writers should do a month's "Prison Reform" honestly believes the present state of English prisons may be remedied by reference to the works of the Russian Dostoevsky (1818) and the Italian Sillico (1832), you, Sir, should implore him to do a month's "hard."

There are for certain some tolerably fit in the calendar of our goals, and to any of the matter Botany Bay is still a rare. But no English prison has ever resembled any prison in Russia, or unguen of Italy under the Austrian despot. We stand, indeed, almost at the opposites. Nor are we, as your critic whose main argument I venture entirely to seem to think, so destitute of trusty literature on this subject.

The best to-day is probably Lord Willingdon's "Penal Servitude"—a candid straightforward, and, on the whole, an unbiased record. Oscar Wilde and Mr. Beck have had their say, from standpoints what different. Mr. Beck has told us penal servitude is like to one who ought to have been condemned to it. I might add to the list, but will add merely that annual report of the Prison Commissioners, my thinking, far and away the most interesting Blue Book that is issued.

DAILY CHRONICLE, MARCH 17, 1906.

"QUESTION OF TEMPERAMENT."

"I am extremely sorry," writes F. W. Sullivan, from 19, Twyford-mansions, Weymouth, W., "to read in your columns 'Truth's' attack on Mr. Alfred Gilbert, B.A., Wilde sympathising with Mrs. Frankau in her egotistical and sentimental loss, I should like to suggest that Mr. Gilbert is to be classed as one of those eccentric geniuses to whom the world owes more than it has paid. I know either Mrs. Frankau nor Mr. Gilbert personally—have never seen either of them, though I know something of the work and worth of both—and so I have no interest in leading the cause of either."

"But I would remind you that there was once a Francois Villon, and more recently, an Oscar Wilde. Both sinned against Society more than Gilbert. But to-day they are forgiven, and their names will live. Can we not take a charitable view, club together to recoup Mrs. Frankau her loss, and forget this eccentricity of genius? We cannot apply to art the laws of commerce. That which is abomination to 'divine afflatus' will not always rest on the artist, and meanwhile the artist must live. It is largely a question of temperament. Mr. Gilbert has transcending artistic qualities, at they are not always at his beck and call. Perhaps his will is weak—well, I shall be slow to throw a stone. But let us be careful how in this period of our nascent artistic inspiration we pillory one of its foremost pioneers."

"H. E. A. F.'s" suggestion that Mrs. Frankau had been wiser to have employed an average monumental mason is scarcely in good taste, but it is wise; for at least Mrs. Frankau could have been able to place a memorial on her husband's grave. But Mrs. Frankau wanted to honour her dear one's memory with the best work obtainable, which proves to be unobtainable. She was willing to pay for the best, she did pay, some hundreds of pounds, and a clay sketch in Mr. Gilbert's studio is the result."

Mr. Carnegie is credited with a big scheme to put the English language on a good sound business basis. We are to have words spelt in future as they are pronounced, and so forth. One seems to recall something of the sort belonging to Isaac Pitman. The sooner Macaulay's New Zealander stands on London Bridge the better, if this thing is to be. Our language is the best of our possessions, though "natural infirmities of style" prevent many writers and most speakers from making much use of it.

Glasgow Evening News, 15 March 1906

GEORGE MOORE.

When Mr George Moore was writing such rowdy and unpleasant books as "Mike Fletcher," "The Confessions of a Young Man," and "A Mummer's Wife," much was heard of him, and he was assured of an enormous number of readers. Now that he has amended his ways, and is capable of writing real literature with (rarely) nothing in it to compel a taboo on the part of W. H. Smith, I fear his readers are few, as few almost as those of Mr Henry James, another man of genius, who has sacrificed his popularity to his artistic convictions, right or wrong.

"THE LAKE."

Mr Harry Thurston Peck, a very well-known American critic, emphatically declares that "George Moore is the greatest literary artist who has struck the chords of English since the death of Thackeray." That criticism is probably worth as much as Mr Moore's own criticism a good many years ago in "Confessions of a Young Man." Yet there is almost as much rapturous admiration for Mr Moore in an essay by Mr James Huneker, the musical critic. "Without the unfortunate gift for the making of brilliant en-

grams, like the late Oscar Wilde; without the equally brilliant gifts of wit and paradox of the living George Shaw; Mr Moore has dug deeper, planned wider than either of these Irishmen, and so he bids fair to last longer because he is more human." So Mr Huneker concludes. And he finds that Mr Moore, in "The Lake," has discovered that to be truly a cosmopolitan is to know one's own parish. Like Flaubert, in "Madame Bovary," no writer need go outside the limits of his own bailiwick. A little corner of Ireland, two cabins, and a passion—such is "The Lake." It gives further evidence that the subject of priestly celibacy has still got complete possession of Mr Moore's mind, and there are a few unpleasant episodes to show he has not wholly sloughed Mike Fletcher.

T. P. Weekly 6 April 1906

1,200.—Poems Wanted.—(a) In what book of Oscar Wilde's did "Le Jardin des Tuileries" appear?—T. C. C.

Times, 20 April 1906

ENGLISH DRAMA IN GERMANY.—A Reuter telegram from Berlin, dated April 27, says:—"Oscar Wilde's play 'The Importance of Being Earnest' was produced at the Dresden Royal Theatre yesterday evening, under the title of Ernst, with great success. The acting was excellent, and the translation is favourably criticised."

The Church is bringing out of her treasury things new and old. The Maurice Ludlow, Robertson, Kingsley leaven of Anglican Socialism in 1848 and onwards has been at work.

The schoolmen have been remembered, with their doctrines of the right of revolution, the right of hungry men to help themselves, and their condemnation of usury—i.e., of the very foundation of capitalistic society.

The violently revolutionary and anti-property sayings of the Christian Fathers have been recalled; so also has the fact that Communism was upheld as the ideal for Christian men, and its memory was preserved in monastic institutions; so also the fact that the medieval confessional manuals laid more stress on the sins of avarice and interest-mongering than on the more private vices.

It has been remembered that the first interpretation of Christ's Gospel resulted in Communism at Jerusalem, a Communism upheld by the Christian Fathers as the finest kind of Christian life; and that the right to work was not only conceded by the early Church, but enforced.

I have not the space in this article to dwell on these points, but would like in conclusion to point out the method in which the modern Anglican Socialist meets his Individualist opponent. If it is contended that Jesus Christ was not a Socialist, he frankly admits it. Neither was Aristotle, nor Plato. Fresh manuscripts are almost daily discovered throwing light on early Christian practice; but St. Paul's membership card of the Jerusalem Branch of the S.D.F. has not yet been unearthed. Christ was not, in the modern sense, either Socialist or Individualist. He cared intensely for individuals; but that does not prove his Individualism, any more than it would prove Hyndman's. It is precisely because we modern Socialists care not a rap for the abstract State, but care very intensely for individuals, who are robbed of liberty by industrial anarchy, and would gain liberty under a co-operative commonwealth, that we are Socialists at all. It was Oscar Wilde's Individualism, his love of individual freedom, that drove him to write his brilliant defence of Socialism. Christ taught that individual character could only be developed through community. Some say he opposed Socialism because, when two young capitalists came to him wrangling about their private property, he ignored them, saying, "Who made me a divider among you?" I suppose these objectors still think that Socialism means dividing up. When his enemies were closing in upon him, and his life hung in the balance, a woman came and anointed his feet, and wiped them with her hair, and the good people were shocked, and complained of the waste. Might not the ointment have been sold, and the money doled out to the poor? Christ defended her generous impulse, and remarked: "The poor you have always with you. You have plenty of opportunities of helping them. Me you have not always." This is erected into a great pronouncement that we must not attempt to abolish poverty! To such amusing shifts are Christian Individualists driven!

But our contention is that although Christ was not a State Socialist, his spirit, embodied in the Christian Church, inevitably urges men to Socialism; that the political development of the Catholic Faith is along the lines of Socialism; and that, as the State captured the Church in the past, so now it is the business of the Church to recapture the State, and through it to establish God's Kingdom on earth.

Musical Standard

15 Sept 1906

MILAN is to be added to the list of towns where Richard Strauss' "Salome" is to be produced. The director, having heard it at the recent Cologne Festival was "moved to such enthusiasm that he decided on its production."

RICHARD STRAUSS, contrary to former announcements, will not be able to come to New York to conduct the first American performance of his Opera "Salome." Dr. Muck's leave of absence from his duties at the Royal Opera in Berlin, to take charge of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, has necessitated Strauss' staying in Berlin. The two are in charge of the opera performances.

THE LITERARY WEEK

We remarked, the other day, that Cambridge was more prolific of comic verse than Oxford. It is also a common saying and a popular belief that all the great poets and most of the minor poets who have been at any University at all have been at Cambridge.

- FIFTH PERIOD, 1780-1830. OXFORD: William Jones, William Gifford, Bowles, Southey, Coleridge, Landor, "Monk" Lewis, Shelley, Heber, John Wilson ("Christopher North"), Milman, Thomas Haynes Bayly, Keble, Cary.

- SIXTH PERIOD, since 1830. OXFORD: Hartley Coleridge, Clough, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, Barham, Robert Montgomery, J. H. Newman, R. S. Hawker, Faber, Tupper, John Nichol, J. A. Symonds, Lewis Carroll, Lewis Morris, Edwin Arnold, William Morris, Bridges, Wilde.

Some poets have been omitted on the ground that they were at both Universities—Chaucer and Calverley among the number. Of the one hundred and eight names on a list composed with the strictest impartiality, fifty-nine, it will be seen, belong to Oxford and only forty-nine to Cambridge; but if we limit the competition to poets of the very highest rank Cambridge indubitably has the better of it.

Pelican 28 Feb. 1906

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I am much interested in learning that Methuen will shortly publish a collected edition of the works of Oscar Wilde. There has been a great deal of privately-printed work by Mr. Wilde issued to the public of late years, and indeed a number of such books may be found in the last second-hand catalogue of W. T. Pitcher of Manchester, as, for example, Lord Arthur Savile's Crime: a Study of Duty; Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young; The Priest and the Acolyte; Roseleaf and Appleleaf.

24th March 1906

I have received a letter from Mr. Robert Ross in reference to an allusion that I made in a recent letter to the new edition of Mr. Oscar Wilde's works. It would seem that I was wrong in the assumption that the book called The Priest and the Acolyte was the work of Mr. Wilde. This is one of many spurious works not written by Wilde that have been for sale all over Europe during the past few years.

which is the property of Mr. John Lane, and Dorian Grey, which, formerly the property of Ward and Lock, is now owned by Mr. Charrington of Paris.

I have received a letter from Mr. C. S. Millard, who also protests against the suggestion that the story of The Priest and the Acolyte was written by Mr. Oscar Wilde. It was written, he tells me, by an undergraduate of Exeter College who is now a clergyman of the Church of England.

Yorkshire Telegraph (Sheffield) 8 March

Table manners Counted.

Even in the days when he found it earn a living, Oscar Wilde never laid supercilious manner. It was exercised of duke, and cost Wilde a lucrative post. wanted a tutor for his two sons, and recommended. He called, the duke exact and seemed favourably impressed. But very great duke, with a very high opinion self, and his manner grated on Wilde.

DAILY CHRONICLE MARCH 28, 1906

WRITERS AND READERS

A new edition of Oscar Wilde's works is to be published, and it will include an issue of his "De Profundis." The additional list of passages which have only appeared in German, Russian, and Italian versions, book, and letters which Wilde wrote to a from Reading Gaol.

TRIBUNE,

PRISON REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TRIBUNE."

Sir,—Mr. Stead, I think, has said that all editors and leading-writers should do a month's "time." If the writer of the very interesting article on "Prison Reform" honestly believes that the present state of English prisons may be learned by reference to the works of the Russian Dostoevsky (1831) and the Italian Silvio Pellico (1832), you, Sir, should implore him to qualify for one month's "hard."

There are for certain some tolerably fetid pages in the calendar of our goals, and to any student of the matter Botany Bay is still a nightmare. But no English prison has ever remotely resembled any prison in Russia, or any dungeon of Italy under the Austrian despotism. We stand, indeed, almost at the polar opposites. Nor are we, as your critic (with whose main argument I venture entirely to agree) seems to think, so destitute of trustworthy literature on this subject.

Prison changes slowly—partly because we refuse to spend money on it in the most sensible ways, but chiefly because not one person in five hundred cares a pin about the question. None the less, the reforms of the past twelve years (traceable in all instances to the recommendations of a report framed largely by the present Home Secretary) have been, to patient observers, encouraging enough.

DAILY CHRONICLE, MARCH 17, 1906.

"QUESTION OF TEMPERAMENT."

"I am extremely sorry," writes F. W. Sullivan, from 19, Twyford-mansions, Weymouth-street, W., "to read in your columns 'Truth's' attack on Mr. Alfred Gilbert, B.A. While sympathising with Mrs. Frankau in her pecuniary and sentimental loss, I should like to suggest that Mr. Gilbert is to be classed as one of those eccentric geniuses to whom the world owes more than it has paid.

"But I would remind you that there was once a François Villon, and more recently, an Oscar Wilde. Both sinned against Society more than Gilbert. But to-day they are forgiven, and their names will live. Can we not take a charitable view, club together to recoup Mrs. Frankau her loss, and forget this eccentricity of genius? We cannot apply to art the canons of commerce. That fickle abomination the 'divine afflatus' will not always rest on the artist, and meanwhile the artist must live."

"It is largely a question of temperament. Mr. Gilbert has transcending artistic qualities, but they are not always at his beck and call. Perhaps his will is weak—well, I shall be slow to throw a stone. But let us be careful how in this period of our nascent artistic inspiration we pilory one of its foremost pioneers."

"H. E. A. F.'s" suggestion that Mrs. Frankau had been wiser to have employed an average monumental mason is scarcely in good taste, but it is wise; for at least Mrs. Frankau would have been able to place a memorial on her husband's grave. But Mrs. Frankau wanted to honour her dear one's memory with the best work obtainable, which proves to be unobtainable. She was willing to pay for the best, she did pay, some hundreds of pounds, and a clay sketch in Mr. Gilbert's studio is the result."

Saturday Review,

17 March 1906

Mr. Carnegie is credited with a big scheme to put the English language on a good sound business basis. We are to have words spelt in future as they are pronounced, and so forth. One seems to recall something of the sort belonging to Isaac Pitman. The sooner Macaulay's New Zealander stands on London Bridge the better, if this thing is to be. Our language is the best of our possessions, though "natural infirmities of style" prevent many writers and most speakers from making much use of it.

Glasgow Evening News,

15 March 1906

GEORGE MOORE.

When Mr George Moore was writing such rowdy and unpleasant books as "Mike Fletcher," "The Confessions of a Young Man," and "A Mummer's Wife," much was heard of him, and he was assured of an enormous number of readers. Now that he has amended his ways, and is capable of writing real literature with (rarely) nothing in it to compel a taboo on the part of W. H. Smith, I fear his readers are few, as few almost as those of Mr Henry James, another man of genius, who has sacrificed his popularity to his artistic convictions, right or wrong.

"THE LAKE."

Mr Harry Thurston Peck, a very well-known American critic, emphatically declares that "George Moore is the greatest literary artist who has struck the chords of English since the death of Thackeray." That criticism is probably worth as much as Mr Moore's own criticism a good many years ago in "Confessions of a Young Man."

grams, like the late Oscar Wilde; without the equally brilliant gifts of wit and paradox of the living George Shaw; Mr Moore has dug deeper, planned wider than either of these Irishmen, and so he bids fair to last longer because he is more human." So Mr Huneker concludes. And he finds that Mr Moore, in "The Lake," has discovered that to be truly a cosmopolitan is to know one's own parish. Like Flaubert, in "Madame Bovary," no writer need go outside the limits of his own bailiwick. A little corner of Ireland, his own bailiwick. A little corner of Ireland, two cabins, and a passion—such is "The Lake."

T. P. Weekly 6 April 1906

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THE CLARION,

MARCH 16, 1906.

The Church is bringing out of her treasury things new and old. The Maurice Ludlow, Robertson, Kingsley leaven of Anglican Socialism in 1848 and onwards has been at work. The schoolmen have been remembered, with their doctrines of the right of revolution, the right of hungry men to help themselves, and their condemnation of usury—i.e., of the very foundation of capitalistic society.

The violently revolutionary and anti-property sayings of the Christian Fathers have been recalled; so also has the fact that Communism was upheld as the ideal for Christian men, and its memory was preserved in monastic institutions; so also the fact that the medieval confessional manuals laid more stress on the sins of avarice and interest-mongering than on the more private vices.

It has been remembered that the first interpretation of Christ's Gospel resulted in Communism at Jerusalem, a Communism upheld by the Christian Fathers as the finest kind of Christian life; and that the right to work was not only conceded by the early Church, but enforced.

I have not the space in this article to dwell on these points, but would like in conclusion to point out the method in which the modern Anglican Socialist meets his Individualistic opponent. If it is contended that Jesus Christ was not a Socialist, he frankly admits it. Neither was Aristotle, nor Plato. Fresh manuscripts are almost daily discovered throwing light on early Christian practice; but St. Paul's membership card of the Jerusalem Branch of the S.D.F. has not yet been unearthed. Christ was not, in the modern sense, either Socialist or Individualist. He cared intensely for individuals; but that does not prove his Individualism, any more than it would prove Hyndman's. It is precisely because we modern Socialists care not a rap for the abstract State, but care very intensely for individuals, who are robbed of liberty by industrial anarchy, and would gain liberty under a co-operative commonwealth, that we are Socialists at all. It was Oscar Wilde's Individualism, his love of individual freedom, that drove him to write his brilliant defence of Socialism. Christ taught that individual character could only be developed through community. Some say he opposed Socialism because, when two young capitalists came to him wrangling about their private property, he ignored them, saying, "Who made me a divider among you?" I suppose these objectors still think that Socialism means dividing up. When his enemies were closing in upon him, and his life hung in the balance, a woman came and anointed his feet, and wiped them with her hair, and the good people were shocked, and complained of the waste. Might not the ointment have been sold, and the money doled out to the poor? Christ defended her generous impulse, and remarked: "The poor you have always with you. You have plenty of opportunities of helping them. Me you have not always." This is erected into a great pronouncement that we must not attempt to abolish poverty! To such amusing shifts are Christian Individualists driven!

But our contention is that although Christ was not a State Socialist, his spirit, embodied in the Christian Church, inevitably urges men to Socialism; that the political development of the Catholic Faith is along the lines of Socialism; and that, as the State captured the Church in the past, so now it is the business of the Church to recapture the State, and through it to establish God's Kingdom on earth.

15 Sept. 1906

MILAN is to be added to the list of towns where Richard Strauss' "Salome" is to be produced. The director, having heard it at the recent Cologne Festival was "moved to such enthusiasm that he decided on its production."

Musical Standard.

RICHARD STRAUSS, contrary to former announcements, will not be able to come to New York to conduct the first American performance of his Opera "Salome." Dr. Muck's leave of absence from his duties at the Royal Opera in Berlin, to take charge of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, has necessitated Strauss' staying in Berlin. The two are in charge of the opera performances.

THE LITERARY WEEK

WE remarked, the other day, that Cambridge was more prolific of comic verse than Oxford. It is also a common saying and a popular belief that all the great poets and most of the minor poets who have been at any University at all have been at Cambridge. One can only settle the point by making out a list; and as there is always room for argument as to whether certain men of letters are rightly classed as poets or not, the essential thing is to have a principle of selection which is at least fair as between the two seats of learning. We will therefore place a Scotch critic in the judgment seat, and include in our list all the Oxford and Cambridge poets who are recognised as poets in "Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature," and about whom the necessary educational information is there given. Most of the names will thus be those of the illustrious dead, and of the illustrious living only the seniors will be included. Such poets as Mr. Owen Seaman of Cambridge and Mr. Laurence Binyon of Oxford are omitted for that reason, and for no other. I have added that we adopt Chambers's division into periods. And now for the lists:

March 9th, 1906.

THE POETS AND THE
UNIVERSITIES.

The "Academy" last week published a carefully-compiled list of poets who have been educated at either Oxford or Cambridge. The list, based on poets mentioned in "Chambers' Encyclopædia of English Literature," totals 108 names, and Oxford has the majority—fifty-nine poets against Cambridge's forty-nine. But if Oxford has the larger number, Cambridge has the weightier names. Spenser, Ben Jonson, Marlowe, Milton, Dryden, Gray, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson—here we have ten poets in the first or high in the second rank all Cambridge men, against whom Oxford can only set six—Collins, Landor, Shelley, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne and William Morris. An exacting advocate for Cambridge might claim that neither Landor nor William Morris can be placed in the first or high in the second rank, and that Cambridge can set against them Herrick, Suckling, Cowley, and Fitzgerald. In the period since 1831 Oxford, however, wins some decided advantage. Its list is the longer, and against Cambridge's one great name—Tennyson—it can set Matthew Arnold and Swinburne, while in the second rank it can boast Clough, Newman, William Morris, J. A. Symonds, Robert Bridges, and Oscar Wilde. Both Universities are credited with a great many versifiers of the type described by Plato—that of one who, without the true "madness from the Muses," "approaches the poetical gates, having persuaded himself that by art alone he may become sufficiently a poet." Their names are still found in encyclopædias, but the dust lies thick on their works.

Yorkshire Telegraph
(Sheffield) 6 March 1906.

Table Manners Counted

Even in the days when he found it difficult to earn a living, Oscar Wilde never laid aside his supercilious manner. It was exercised once upon a duke, and cost Wilde a lucrative post. The duke wanted a tutor for his two sons, and Wilde was recommended. He called, the duke examined him, and seemed favourably impressed. But he was a very great duke, with a very high opinion of himself, and his manner grated on Wilde. The last question he asked the young man was: "And would you—ah—expect to eat with the family?" "That," Wilde answered, "would depend altogether on how the family behaved at meals."

DAILY CHRONICLE,

MARCH 28, 1906.

WRITERS AND READERS.

A new edition of Oscar Wilde's works is shortly to be published, and it will include an enlarged issue of his "De Profundis." The additions consist of passages which have only appeared in the German, Russian, and Italian versions of the book, and which were written by Wilde to a friend from Reading Gaol.

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FIFTH PERIOD, 1780-1830.

OXFORD :

William Jones
 William Gifford
 Bowles
 Southey
 Landor
 "Monk" Lewis
 Shelley
 Heber
 John Wilson ("Christopher
 North")
 Milman
 Thomas Haynes Bayly
 Keble
 Cary

CAMBRIDGE:

Erasmus Darwin
 Kirke White
 Wordsworth
 Coleridge
 Byron
 W. S. Rose

SIXTH PERIOD, since 1830.

OXFORD :

Hartley Coleridge
 Clough
 Matthew Arnold
 Swinburne
 Barham
 Robert Montgomery
 J. H. Newman
 R. S. Hawker
 Faber
 Tupper
 John Nichol
 J. A. Symonds
 Lewis Carroll
 Lewis Morris
 Edwin Arnold
 William Morris
 Bridges
 Wilde

CAMBRIDGE :

Praed
 Moultrie
 Macaulay
 Lord Houghton
 Tennyson
 Lord Lytton
 Trench
 Barnes
 FitzGerald
 Frederick Tennyson
 Tennyson-Turner
 Cory
 Roden Noel
 F. W. H. Myers

Some poets have been omitted on the ground that they were at both Universities—Chaucer and Calverley among the number. Of the one hundred and eight names on a list composed with the strictest impartiality, fifty-nine, it will be seen, belong to Oxford and only forty-nine to Cambridge; but if we limit the competition to poets of the very highest rank Cambridge indubitably has the better of it. Suppose we imagine such a thing as a poetical Tripos. The names in the First Class would presumably be those of Spenser, Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson, Shelley, Matthew Arnold, William Morris, and Swinburne. Cambridge, that is to say, would take seven firsts to Oxford's four; and, if Oxford should claim an additional first for Landor, Cambridge would make the same claim for FitzGerald and Gray. A comparison of the periods shows, however, that the Oxford standard is improving. The last two Oxford lists are both the longest and the strongest.

Weeks Survey March 10. 1906.

Within the last few days the interest in Oscar Wilde has fluttered up again owing to the rumour that letters of administration on Mr. Wilde's estate had been granted to Mr. R. Ross, and that it had been sworn at less than £100. Mr. Ross, who was, as everybody knows, *fidus Achates* to Oscar Wilde, has given the whole story to the "Daily Chronicle," and the facts shed a painful light on the later years of a man of singular genius. The chief facts of interest that emerge are that during the three years following his release from prison Wilde lived on a small annuity provided for him by his friends; and the other that the copyright of "De Profundis" which Mr. Ross believed to be his own, and the profits from which he intended to devote to paying the French creditors, has been seized by the Bankruptcy Court to meet the claims of the English creditors Messrs. Methuen. This is the first uniform edition of Oscar Wilde's works, which still seem to be in steady demand.

Pelican 28 Feb. 1906

WHAT THE FOLKS ARE SAYING.

THAT the most recent Society Intelligence is a note to the effect

That there is something singularly sad in the announcement that the late Oscar Wilde left something less than one hundred pounds.

2019-03 Women's University Library 492

TRIBUNE,

MARCH 20, 1906.

ENGLISH PLAYS ABROAD.

[From "The Tribune" Correspondent.]

BUDA-PEST, March 18th.

Oscar Wilde's play "A Woman of no Importance" was produced last night on the stage of the National Theatre here. Though but imperfectly translated, it met with great success.

Sphere, March 10. 1906.

I am much interested in learning that Methuen will shortly publish a collected edition of the works of Oscar Wilde. There has been a great deal of privately-printed work by Mr. Wilde issued to the public of late years, and indeed a number of such books may be found in the last second-hand catalogue of W. T. Pitcher of Manchester, as, for example, *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime: a Study of Duty; Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young; The Priest and the Acolyte; Roseleaf and Appleleaf*. It is to be hoped that these less-known works of Mr. Wilde will appear in the new edition.
C. K. S.

24th
March
1906
I have received a letter from Mr. Robert Ross in reference to an allusion that I made in a recent letter to the new edition of Mr. Oscar Wilde's works. It would seem that I was wrong in the assumption that the book called *The Priest and the Acolyte* was the work of Mr. Wilde. This is one of many spurious works not written by Wilde that have been for sale all over Europe during the past few years. I understand further from Mr. Ross that the edition of Wilde's works published by the Methuens will be all but complete, containing the fugitive poems and papers from magazines, including the *Florentine Tragedy* and *The Duchess of Padua*, this last a play in five acts, performed in America but neither published nor acted in England. Only two of Mr. Wilde's works will not appear at first in the edition, although negotiations are being made for their ultimate inclusion. These are *The Sphinx*,

which is the property of Mr. John Lane, and *Dorian Grey*, which, formerly the property of Ward and Lock, is now owned by Mr. Charrington of Paris.

I have received a letter from Mr. C. S. Millard, who also protests against the suggestion that the story of *The Priest and the Acolyte* was written by Mr. Oscar Wilde. It was written, he tells me, by an undergraduate of Exeter College who is now a clergyman of the Church of England. Mr. Millard implies that in the bibliography attached to his interesting little book, *Oscar Wilde: a Study*, he had, he thought, effectively disposed of the suggestion that *The Priest and the Acolyte* was written by Oscar Wilde. I apologise to my two correspondents for what was a piece of sheer ignorance on my part.

TRIBUNE,

PRISON REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TRIBUNE."

Sir,—Mr. Stead, I think, has said that all editors and leader-writers should do a month's "time." If the writer of the very interesting article on "Prison Reform" honestly believes that the present state of English prisons may be learned by reference to the works of the Russian Dostoieffsky (1831) and the Italian Silvio Pellico (1832), you, Sir, should implore him to qualify for one month's "hard." The comparison which such a statement contemplates is almost petrifying. It would have been a good deal less wide of the mark to cite, as the penological authority up to date, John Howard himself, who has been dead but 116 years, and who did, anyhow, write on the prisons of this country.

There are for certain some tolerably fetid pages in the calendar of our gaols, and to any student of the matter Botany Bay is still a nightmare. But no English prison has ever remotely resembled any prison in Russia, or any dungeon of Italy under the Austrian despotism. We stand, indeed, almost at the polar opposites. Nor are we, as your critic (with whose main argument I venture entirely to agree) seems to think, so destitute of trustworthy literature on this subject. There is any reasonable amount of it. Thirty years ago the best book on prisons was the anonymous "Five Years' Penal Servitude." Twenty years ago the best was Mr. Michael Davitt's "Leaves from a Prison Diary"—still a most fascinating work. The best to-day is probably Lord William Nevill's "Penal Servitude"—a candid and straightforward, and, on the whole, a quite unbiassed record. Oscar Wilde and Mrs. Maybrick have had their say, from standpoints somewhat different. Mr. Beck has told us what penal servitude is like to one who ought never to have been condemned to it. I might stretch out the list, but will add merely that the annual report of the Prison Commissioners is, to my thinking, far and away the most interesting Blue Book that is issued.

Prison changes slowly—partly because we refuse to spend money on it in the most sensible ways, but chiefly because not one person in five hundred cares a pin about the question. None the less, the reforms of the past twelve years (traceable in all instances to the recommendations of a report framed largely by the present Home Secretary) have been, to patient observers, encouraging enough. I could very easily fill with them two columns of THE TRIBUNE.

Frayne, Herne Bay, March 13th.

MARCH 15, 1906

Saturday Review,

17 March 1906

Mr. Carnegie is credited with a big scheme to put the English language on a good sound business basis. We are to have words spelt in future as they are pronounced, and so forth. One seems to recall something of the sort belonging to Isaac Pitman. The sooner Macaulay's New Zealander stands on London Bridge the better, if this thing is to be. Our language is the best of our possessions, though "natural infirmities of style" prevent many writers and most speakers from making much use of it. The man who takes the u out of "honour" is most guilty or most ignorant. Anyhow we could not allow Mr. Carnegie to take the English language in hand: he is an American and one recalls what Oscar Wilde said when asked to say how America differed from England. In nothing, he replied, except the language—that of course is so entirely different.

15 March 1906

GEORGE MOORE.

When Mr George Moore was writing such rowdy and unpleasant books as "Mike Fletcher," "The Confessions of a Young Man," and "A Mummer's Wife," much was heard of him, and he was assured of an enormous number of readers. Now that he has amended his ways, and is capable of writing real literature with (rarely) nothing in it to compel a taboo on the part of W. H. Smith, I fear his readers are few, as few almost as those of Mr Henry James, another man of genius, who has sacrificed his popularity to his artistic convictions, right or wrong. "The Lake," Mr Moore's new book, is of the description to which the too facile reviewer is prone to apply such terms as "subtly psychological" and "masterly in its description of landscape," and no sort of reviewing is more certain to discourage the public interest.

* * *

"THE LAKE."

Mr Harry Thurston Peck, a very well-known American critic, emphatically declares that "George Moore is the greatest literary artist who has struck the chords of English since the death of Thackeray." That criticism is probably worth as much as Mr Moore's own criticism a good many years ago in "Confessions of a Young Man." Yet there is almost as much rapturous admiration for Mr Moore in an essay by Mr James Huneker, the musical critic. "Without the unfortunate gift for the making of brilliant epi-

grams, like the late Oscar Wilde; without the equally brilliant gifts of wit and paradox of the living George Shaw; Mr Moore has dug deeper, planned wider than either of these Irishmen, and so he bids fair to last longer because he is more human." So Mr Huneker concludes. And he finds that Mr Moore, in "The Lake," has discovered that to be truly a cosmopolitan is to know one's own parish. Like Flaubert, in "Madame Bovary," no writer need go outside the limits of his own bailiwick. A little corner of Ireland, two cabins, and a passion—such is "The Lake." It gives further evidence that the subject of priestly celibacy has still got complete possession of Mr Moore's mind, and there are a few unpleasant episodes to show he has not wholly sloughed Mike Fletcher.

THE CLARION,

MARCH 16, 1906.

The Church is bringing out of her treasury things new and old. The Maurice, Ludlow, Robertson, Kingsley leaven of Anglican Socialism in 1848 and onwards has been at work.

The schoolmen have been remembered, with their doctrines of the right of revolution, the right of hungry men to help themselves, and their condemnation of usury—*i.e.*, of the very foundation of capitalistic society.

The violently revolutionary and anti-property sayings of the Christian Fathers have been recalled; so also has the fact that Communism was upheld as the ideal for Christian men, and its memory was preserved in monastic institutions; so also the fact that the mediæval confessional manuals laid more stress on the sins of avarice and interest-mongering than on the more private vices.

It has been remembered that the first interpretation of Christ's Gospel resulted in Communism at Jerusalem, a Communism upheld by the Christian Fathers as the finest kind of Christian life; and that the right to work was not only conceded by the early Church, but enforced.

I have not the space in this article to dwell on these points, but would like in conclusion to point out the method in which the modern Anglican Socialist meets his Individualistic opponent. If it is contended that Jesus Christ was not a Socialist, he frankly admits it. Neither was Aristotle, nor Plato. Fresh manuscripts are almost daily discovered throwing light on early Christian practice; but St. Paul's membership card of the Jerusalem Branch of the S.D.F. has not yet been unearthed. Christ was not, in the modern sense, either Socialist or Individualist. He cared intensely for individuals; but that does not prove his Individualism, any more than it would prove Hyndman's. It is precisely because we modern Socialists care not a rap for the abstract State, but care very intensely for individuals, who are robbed of liberty by industrial anarchy, and would gain liberty under a co-operative commonwealth, that we are Socialists at all. It was Oscar Wilde's Individualism, his love of individual freedom, that drove him to write his brilliant defence of Socialism. Christ taught that individual character could only be developed through community. Some say he opposed Socialism because, when two young capitalists came to him wrangling about their private property, he ignored them, saying, "Who made me a divider among you?" I suppose these objectors still think that Socialism means dividing up. When his enemies were closing in upon him, and his life hung in the balance, a woman came and anointed his feet, and wiped them with her hair, and the good people were shocked, and complained of the waste. Might not the ointment have been sold, and the money doled out to the poor? Christ defended her generous impulse, and remarked: "The poor you have always with you. You have plenty of opportunities of helping them. Me you have not always." This is erected into a great pronouncement that we must not attempt to abolish poverty! To such amusing shifts are Christian Individualists driven!

But our contention is that although Christ was not a State Socialist, his spirit, embodied in the Christian Church, inevitably urges men to Socialism; that the political development of the Catholic Faith is along the lines of Socialism; and that, as the State captured the Church in the past, so now it is the business of the Church to recapture the State, and through it to bring about the Kingdom on earth.

DAILY CHRONICLE,

MARCH 17, 1906.

"QUESTION OF TEMPERAMENT."

"I am extremely sorry," writes F. W. Sullivan, from 19, Twyford-mansions, Weymouth-street, W., "to read in your columns 'Truth's' attack on Mr. Alfred Gilbert, R.A. While sympathising with Mrs. Frankau in her pecuniary and sentimental loss, I should like to suggest that Mr. Gilbert is to be classed as one of those eccentric geniuses to whom the world owes more than it has paid. I know neither Mrs. Frankau nor Mr. Gilbert personally—have never seen either of them, though I know something of the work and worth of both—and so I have no interest in pleading the cause of either.

"But I would remind you that there was once a François Villon, and, more recently, an Oscar Wilde. Both sinned against Society more than Gilbert. But to-day they are forgiven, and their names will live. Can we not take a charitable view, club together to recoup Mrs. Frankau her loss, and forget this eccentricity of genius? We cannot apply to art the canons of commerce. That fickle abomination the 'divine afflatus' will not always rest on the artist, and meanwhile the artist must live.

"It is largely a question of temperament. Mr. Gilbert has transcending artistic qualities, but they are not always at his beck and call. Perhaps his will is weak—well, I shall be slow to throw a stone. But let us be careful how in this period of our nascent artistic inspiration we pillory one of its foremost pioneers."

"H. E. A. F.'s' suggestion that Mrs. Frankau had been wiser to have employed an average monumental mason is scarcely in good taste, but it is wise; for at least Mrs. Frankau would have been able to place a memorial on her husband's grave. But Mrs. Frankau wanted to honour her dear one's memory with the best work obtainable, which proves to be unobtainable. She had to pay for the best, she did pay, some hundreds of pounds, and a clay sketch in Mr. Gilbert's studio is the result."

T. P. 's Weekly 6 April 1956

1,203. Jissen Women's College Library
Oscar Wilde's did "Le Jardin des Tuileries"
appear?—T. C. C.

roves to be
pay for the
of pounds,
's studio is

Times.

28 April 1906

ENGLISH DRAMA IN GERMANY.—A Reuter telegram from Berlin, dated April 27, says:—"Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* was produced at the Dresden Royal Theatre yesterday evening, under the title of *Das Wichtigste der Welt*. The acting was excellent, and the translation is favourably criticized."

Jissen 2019-03- University Library

15 Sept: 1956

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