

Jissen Women's University Rare Books
Honma Hisao Collection

Digital Archives of Mason Library

Oscar Wilde
Scrapbook

Vol. 8

JOHN BULL. OCTOBER 10TH, 1908.

AMONG THE BOOKS.

BY HERBERT VIVIAN.

"Echoes from Kottabos," edited by R. Y. Tyrrell and Sir Edward Sullivan (Richards: 7s. 6d. net), is a collection of poems which were brought out in instalments some thirty years ago at Trinity College, Dublin. Few of the contributors have since become famous, and one of them is now justly forgotten. The humour which one would expect from young Irishmen is not much in evidence, and the poems are, for the most part, so childish and trivial that there cannot be any pleasure in publishing them. The general effect is one of abortive attempts at the exhibition of non-existent cleverness.

Oct. 3. 1908.

County Express.

Stourbridge, Worcestershire.

SOCIALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "COUNTY EXPRESS."

Sir,—It is kind of Mr. Williams to make so clever an attempt to simplify Mr. Shaw's ideas, but one will prefer to obtain the information from the source.

In the "Clarion" some time ago Mr. Bernard Shaw said he had great hopes of "persuading the Fabian Society to organise a real Socialistic party openly bent on abolishing property, breaking up the family, annihilating militarism by refusing to renew the Mutiny Act, and making our domesticity decent by stamping out marriage and other legal forms of prostitution and chattel slavery."

Mr. Oscar Wilde, Mr. William Morris, and Mr. Belfort Bax tells us: "With the abolition of private property marriage must disappear."

I respectfully ask your readers to compare your Dudley correspondent's statements with the foregoing, and I ask him to be more honourable, and less prone to beguile the workers with sophistries. My letters do not give Socialism credit for the silly idea of abolishing money. We will take another extract, which shows where the foolishness lies:—

Mr. Robert Blatchford (in "Merrie England") writes:—"Under Socialism there would be no money at all; no wages. The industry of the country would be organised

and managed by the State. Goods of all kinds would be produced and distributed for use—and not for sale—in such quantities as were needed; hours of labour would be fixed, and every citizen would take what he or she desired from the common stock. Food, clothing, lodging, fuel, transit, amusement, and all things would be absolutely free."

After Jissen 2019-03-16 University Library
Mr. Williams that the State would be milk vendors, may I ask on which side is the "delirium"?

SUNDAY TIMES, OCTOBER 18, 1908.

Mr. Frohman's season with "Pantaloons," at the Theatre des Arts, Paris, ends on Tuesday night, and the company will return on Wednesday. The management of the house are so satisfied with their experiment that they have made arrangements to present at the Theatre des Arts during the coming season French translations of "Lady Windermere's Fan," "The Lash," and "The Board's play," "The Latch."

AMONG THE MUMMERS.

"THE DIVINE MAHATMA."

Last week, as stated in this column, I received from Mr. Lion Margrave a printed copy of a strange play called "The Divine Mahatma," which, it was stated, would be produced on Saturday evening at the Bijou Theatre, Bayswater. After all, it was not actually staged, as I had assumed would be the case, despite the excited protests of the *Daily Chronicle*. I did not know that the police in this country could be as despotic as they are in Russia; I assumed that any dramatist is allowed to stage privately in London any play he may care to write and that he can get actors to act. I believe that is the law; and I am anxious to know exactly how it is that Mr. Margrave has been deprived of his right. True, his play is, as I suggested, a repulsive play; but it is no more repulsive than Wilde's "Salome" which I saw in the same hall where Mr. Margrave said "The Divine Mahatma" was to be done. Wilde's "Salomé" was redeemed, to some extent, possibly, by the fact that it is a work of art of a kind, whilst "The Divine Mahatma" is not. True, also, Mr. Margrave's request that the Press should not comment on the play before production, so as to avoid all risk of prohibition, was, as they say down east, "askin' for it." Nevertheless, I do not quite understand on what legal grounds the prohibition was carried out, unless, perchance, the licensee of the hall invoked the aid of the police at the last moment to relieve him of a responsibility.

This may have been so, for Mr. A. S. George, the licensee in question, writes me indignantly that "there was neither rehearsal or performance."

John Bull

Oct. 4, 1908

SEPTEMBER 28, 1908.

DAILY NEWS,

TABLE TALK.

We see in the current issue of "The Schoolmaster" a protest against the recommendation of the United States Education Department that fairy tales and fables be no longer read in the schools. "Will children prohibited from reading fairy tales and fables," our contemporary pertinently asks, "be permitted to read the American newspapers? If they are, what is the utility of the prohibition? If the fairy tale and fable have to go because they violate the standard of truth which the Education Department wishes to set up, what is to become of history and literature in general?"

Oscar Wilde once traced the dead and unimaginative materialism that is so common in America to the fact that the Americans have for their national hero a man who was unable to tell a lie. Certainly, there are lies *and* lies, and, if we are going to confine the intellectual interests of children to mathematical facts such as that two and two make four, we shall have to send by the board not only "Jack the Giant-Killer" and "The Ugly Duckling," but "Paradise Lost," "David Copperfield," and the penny stories which children are given to read on Sunday. Besides, the belief that two and two make four is, with nearly everybody, not a statement capable of proof, but the merest superstition. So are most of a child's beliefs about its father and its grandfather and kings and queens and the various people it is taught to admire. If in future children are to have nothing but the truth, we confess we tremble for George Washington himself. May not he, too, be a fable and a fairy tale, and a pleasant ghost!

Oct. 7. 1908

A BOOK OF THE DAY.

LADY RANDOLPH.

(PUBLISHED TO-DAY.)

"The Reminiscences of Lady Randolph Churchill." By Mrs. George Cornwallis-West. With illustrations. Arnold. 15s. net.

Lady Randolph, however, has anecdotes about all sorts of people—Royalties, politicians, and authors. One of them recalls the almost too ready wit of Oscar Wilde:

An argument arose between him and Lord Ribblesdale on after-dinner speeches, Mr. Wilde declaring that there was no subject on which he could not speak at a moment's notice. Taking him at his word, Lord Ribblesdale, holding up his glass, said, "The Queen." "She is not a subject," answered Wilde, as quick as lightning.

Better still are the two pages devoted to Mr. Bernard Shaw, who refused, in reply to an invitation, to go and eat "dead animals" with Lady Randolph. The volume is full of gossip and comment that will delight everybody. It is sure to be one of the most widely-read books of the season.

CHESTNUT!

It has been said of 'Oscar Wilde—as, indeed, it is said with more or less truth of all purveyors of literary bon-bons—that success in this sphere is due as much to memory as to imagination, and to the happy knack of putting wares which others have manufactured on a responsive market. Wasn't it of Wilde that the story is told that, after listening to the orouscation of a witty intimate, he remarked with becoming modesty and regret—"I wish I had said that," whereupon came the retort—"Never mind, Oscar, dear boy, you will." Knowing the world and its ways so well, and especially the ways of the world of smart people, Mrs Cornwallis West, it may be thought, would have been among the last to give us as a "sparkle" of Wilde's a chestnut of quite respectable antiquity. But here it is. Oscar was boasting at a London dinner party that he could make a speech on any subject under the sun. "Taking him at his word, Lord Ribblesdale, holding up his glass, said 'The Queen.' 'She is not a subject,' answered Wilde as quick as lightning." Had Mrs Cornwallis West known, however, that the jest had currency in Scotland, where a surgical operation is required to get jokes into people's heads, long before Wilde was born, she would not, perhaps, have been surprised at the celerity with

which it was uttered. This, however, may be said. It is generally put into the mouth of a punster who boasted that he could exercise his art on any "subject." This, however, only shows Wilde's remarkable skill in adaptation.

Daily Mail

Oct. 7. 1908

Birmingham.

A STORY OF OSCAR WILDE.

In her book of reminiscences (just published) Lady Randolph Churchill tells a delightful story of Oscar Wilde boasting at a London dinner-party that he could make a speech on any subject under the sun. Taking him at his word, Lord Lubbock, holding up his glass, said, "The Queen." "She is not a subject," answered Wilde, as quick as lightning.

Issued 2019-03-18 University of Birmingham Library

Once upon a time any man who had a joke of doubtful parentage put it upon Sydney Smith. It looks as if the new scapegoat is to be Oscar Wilde. At any rate I find in Mrs. Cornwallis-West's reminiscences a witty retort attributed to Wilde which years and years ago I saw attributed to one of the wits of a much earlier generation. Wilde may have said it, but if he did he borrowed it. The story is to the effect that during an after-dinner conversation Wilde engaged to make a speech instantly on any given subject. Someone therefore gave him the Queen. He replied, "The Queen is no subject." Now in my version Porson (I think), or Sydney Smith, or Jerrold, backed himself to make a pun on any subject. They gave him the King, and he replied, "The King is no subject." It is a good story and may as well be a serial as not.

V. V. V.

Oct. 24
1908

Sphere.

A correspondent tells me that "the King is no subject" joke, which Mrs. Cornwallis-West attributes to Oscar Wilde and I to Porson, is in Joe Miller.

V. V. V.

Nov. 14.
1908

MAUD ALLAN.

"MY LIFE AND DANCING."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

THE VISION OF SALOME.

It is curious that in matters of this kind we have now gone back to the oldest of the plastic arts. To the Greeks, and probably to the Egyptians before them, dancing was not merely a matter of studied movements, but from beginning to end was something symbolic and interpretative; a grace, a glory, a wonder, that could express not only fancy or imagination, but intellectual and moral ideas. In this connection it is worth while to correct some of the mistaken views that have been formed of Maud Allan's "Salome" dance. As she points out, in the final chapter of her book, she does not call it "The Dance of Salome," but "The Vision of Salome." As a young girl, perhaps of some 14 or 15 years, the daughter of Herodias had been summoned to dance before Herod. And partly to please her mother, and partly to satisfy her own hardly realised ambitions, she had given of her best to satisfy the Tetrarch and his Court. Then came the moment when Herod turned to her, and begged her to demand anything she wanted, and he would give it, even to the half of his kingdom. Her mother knew what to suggest to the child; it was the head of her enemy, John the Baptist, the man who had fearlessly upbraided both her

and Herod for what he deemed an immoral union. All that scene had already been enacted, and now the child, left to herself, with all the weird experience of a great artistic success, succeeded by the grim and horrible tragedy, hears from the distance the music, bringing back to her, in all its vivid detail, the strange experience. And in a sort of dreamlike stupor she goes through it all again. Her imagination calls up the head of John the Baptist, while all the peculiar horror of a dance which had been rewarded in so brutal a fashion thrills through her nature. But it is not a real head; it is the head that came to her in a sort of waking vision. She turned to it with wonder and awe. Perhaps it could inspire her with some large thoughts about 'Fa and truth. She was half drawn to it, half repelled. Then, by a new turn or twist of fancy, the scene has changed. The head has disappeared, and the girl, with the weight upon her conscience of a good man's death, sinks upon the floor, wearied and outworn, overcharged with all the morbid incidents of an unforgettable day. That is the "Vision of Salome" which Maud Allan seeks to interpret; not the dance which we connect mainly with the play of Oscar Wilde, or with the fantastic and somewhat clumsy imaginings of the German dramatist, Sudermann.

THE PALACE PIER THEATRE.

Oscar Wilde's brilliant comedy, "The Importance of Being Earnest," is holding the boards of the Palace Pier Theatre this week. The announcement upon the programme that this was a revival of "the most brilliant farce ever written" may sound, perhaps, a trifle far-fetched, but certainly within our memory we can hardly recall its equal for brilliant dialogue, piquant epigrams, and good humoured cynicism. The piece was first produced at the St. James's Theatre, London, by Mr. George Alexander, many years ago, and it was the writer's privilege to witness a performance of the comedy at the noted playhouse at that time. Though the march of time has altered men and manners, "The Importance of Being Earnest" is as equally applicable in its tone to-day as it was when first written, and, may we add, the present exponents bear favourable comparison with the famed company of actors and actresses responsible for its first production. The plot, if plot it can be called, is too simple to be worth mentioning. The theme of having convenient mythical relatives in far removed localities in order that a visit to the "unknown" may provide an excuse for a surreptitious holiday has been worn threadbare by dramatists of all ages. The real attraction of the play is the series of what may be perhaps termed "conversational duels" between the different dramatic personae. And what an intellectual treat these "duels" provide, and with what enthusiasm they are received by an appreciative audience. Monday's performance found the Palace Pier Theatre well filled by such an audience, and it says much for the acting that throughout the whole performance not the slightest hitch was observed, despite the fact that upon only one occasion had the company been able to rehearse the piece in its entirety. The costumes are really exquisite, whilst the stage manager and his assistants deserve high commendation for their arrangement of the scenic effects, especially the Garden Scene in Act II. Mr. Arthur Hare plays the lead in the part of Jack Worthing, whose parentage is buried deep in the mysteries of a handbag found at a London Terminus. Mr. Hare is excellent in the rôle, catching the author's moods and tenors to a nicety. As a stage picture his entry in Act III, dressed in mourning in memory of the phantom brother, is too funny for words, and throughout the play Mr. Hare earns the success which we are sure his enterprise in reviving an old favourite comedy will receive. In the personage of Miss Olive Wilton as Miss Fairfax, Mr. Hare has been wise in his choice. This vivacious actress does all that is required of her, and her impersonation is an artistic triumph. As Lady Bracknell Miss Elspeth Dudgeon adds to the golden opinions already won in Brighton for her high histrionic gifts, whilst the small part of Miss Prism is admirably rendered by Miss Kate Wingfield, another old Brighton favourite. Miss Una Mainwaring catches the right vein in her playing of Cecily Cardew, although a little lifting of the voice would undoubtedly be appreciated by the holders of the back seats. Mr. Cyril Scott finds plenty of work in the part of Algy Moncrieff, and such good use does he make of his opportunity that it will not be surprising to find him occupying a high position in the dramatic world. The following capable exponents were also in the cast:—Canon Chasuble, Mr. Morton Francis; Lane (Algy's butler), Mr. J. Albert Edward; Merriman (Jack's servant), Mr. Nevill Scott; Charlotte, Miss Irene Stanhope.

Matinees have been arranged for to-day and Saturday at three, with evening performances each day at eight.

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind."—ADDISON.

Messrs. Methuen have now ready their New Illustrated Announcement List, which is full of interesting matter. Kindly write for it.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day is published the following books: HER INFINITE VARIETY: a Feminine Portrait Gallery, By E. V. LUCAS. Fcap. 8vo. 5s. This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 to 1905. Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 16s. net. This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies. These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Vol. XIII. contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Oct. 10. 1908

Newsagent & Booksellers Review

The last two volumes of the edition of Oscar Wilde's works which Messrs. Methuen are publishing will be ready on October 15th.

Daily Chronicle

If the International Congress on "Roads," now assembled in Paris will for an hour or so forsake their highly technical discussions to consider and recall certain roads and their builders, their deliberations will be lightened by real human, not to say literary interest. There is the road from Oxford to Hinksey Ferry, which Ruskin set himself and his pupils to build as an assertion of the dignity of labour. Lord Milner was one of Ruskin's labourers in the work, while Oscar Wilde boasted that he trundled the professor's own wheelbarrow. Or, again, there is that Road of the Loving Heart which the Samoans cut and made for Robert Louis Stevenson. ***

DAILY TELEGRAPH, 1908.

THE SWORD OF WELLERAN.

(GEORGE ALLEN. 6s net.) Of these twelve stories by Lord Dunsany two have appeared in the "Saturday Review" and most of the others in various magazines. They make a...

"Times" Literary Supplement

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Reviews. 555 pp. MISCELLANIES. xvi. + 344 pp., 8 1/2 x 5 1/2. Methuen. 12s. 6d. n. each vol. [In this edition of 13 volumes these are vols. 12 and 13. The reviews are mainly from the Pall Mall Gazette. The "Miscellanies" contains, inter alia, the larger and newly discovered conclusion of the Essay on "Historical Criticism," never before printed; the first fragmentary draft of a lost play; and lectures reprinted for the first time from M.S.]

THE TIMES LIST OF NEW BOOKS and NEW EDITIONS.

*This column is restricted to books published during the last six months.

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind."—ADDISON.

Messrs. Methuen have now ready their New Illustrated Announcement List, which is full of interesting matter. Kindly write for it.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day are published the following books: HER INFINITE VARIETY: A Feminine Portrait Gallery. By E. V. LUCAS. Fcap 8vo. 5s. This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 TO 1905. Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 16s. net. This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies. These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Vol. 13 contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Vanity Fair

Messrs. Methuen have just announced the complete works of Oscar Wilde in thirteen volumes. The books are reprinted from the last editions issued under the superintendence of the author, and in many cases they contain his last corrections. Several of the books have been out of print for years, and others are almost unobtainable.

We owe much to Mr. Methuen and to Mr. Robert Ross, the editor, for these excellent books; but we are sorry that a great many reviews and articles, merely ephemeral in nature, have here been reprinted. The publishers say that these journalist writings prove "the author's capacity for anticipating the better literary taste and judgment of the new century." This is, of course, mere bunkum and futile self-praise. There is no better literary taste and judgment in the new century than there was in the past century. High criticism is a faculty as rare as high creative work, and as individual, and Hazlitt and Lamb were as good critics as any living in England to-day. The idea that we are better judges of literature than our fathers is a vulgarity which Mr. Methuen should not have committed; he should leave that sort of high falutin' to the Daily Express.

The announcement upon the program that this was a revival of "the most brilliant farce ever written" may sound, perhaps, a trifle far-fetched, but certainly within our memory we can hardly recall its equal for brilliant dialogue, piquant epigrams, and good humoured cynicism. The piece was first produced at the St. James's Theatre, London, by Mr. George Alexander, many years ago, and it was the writer's privilege to witness a performance of the comedy at the noted playhouse at that time. Though the march of time has altered men and manners, "The Importance of Being Earnest" is as equally applicable in its tone to-day as it was when first written, and, may we add, the present exponents bear favourable comparison with the famed company of actors and actresses responsible for its first production. The plot, if plot it can be called, is too simple to be worth mentioning. The theme of having convenient mythical relatives in far removed localities in order that a visit to the "unknown" may provide an excuse for a surreptitious holiday has been worn threadbare by dramatists of all ages. The real attraction of the play is the series of what may be perhaps termed "conversational duels" between the different *dramatis personae*. And what an intellectual treat these "duels" provide, and with what enthusiasm they are received by an appreciative audience. Monday's performance found the Palace Pier Theatre well filled by such an audience, and it says much for the acting that throughout the whole performance not the slightest hitch was observed, despite the fact that upon only one occasion had the company been able to rehearse the piece in its entirety. The costumes are really exquisite, whilst the stage manager and his assistants deserve high commendation for their arrangement of the scenic effects, especially the Garden Scene in Act II. Mr. Arthur Hare plays the lead in the part of Jack Worthing, whose parentage is buried deep in the mysteries of a handbag found at a London Terminus. Mr. Hare is excellent in the rôle, catching the author's moods and tenses to a nicety. As a stage picture his entry in Act III, dressed in mourning in memory of the phantom brother, is too funny for words, and throughout the play Mr. Hare earns the success which we are sure his enterprise in reviving an old favourite comedy will receive. In the personage of Miss Olive Wilton as Miss Fairfax, Mr. Hare has been wise in his choice. This vivacious actress does all that is required of her, and her impersonation is an artistic triumph. As Lady Bracknell Miss Elspeth Dudgeon adds to the golden opinions already won in Brighton for her high histrionic gifts, whilst the small part of Miss Prism is admirably rendered by Miss Kate Wingfield, another old Brighton favourite. Miss Una Mainwaring catches the right vein in her playing of Cecily Cardew, although a little lifting of the voice would undoubtedly be appreciated by the holders of the back seats. Mr. Cyril Scott finds plenty of work in the part of Algy Moncrieff, and such good use does he make of his opportunity that it will not be surprising to find him occupying a high position in the dramatic world. The following capable exponents were also in the cast:—Canon Chasuble, Mr. Morton Francis; Lane (Algy's butler), Mr. J. Albert Edward; Merriman (Jack's servant), Mr. Nevill Scott; Charlotte, Miss Irene Stanhope.

Matinees have been arranged for to-day and Saturday at three, with evening performances each day at eight.

"MY LIFE AND DANCING."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

THE VISION OF SALOME.

It is curious that in matters of this kind we have now gone back to the oldest of the plastic arts. To the Greeks, and probably to the Egyptians before them, dancing was not merely a matter of studied movements, but from beginning to end was something symbolic and interpretative; a grace, a glory, a wonder, that could express not only fancy or imagination, but intellectual and moral ideas. In this connection it is worth while to correct some of the mistaken views that have been formed of Maud Allan's "Salome" dance. As she points out, in the final chapter of her book, she does not call it "The Dance of Salome," but "The Vision of Salome." As a young girl, perhaps of some 14 or 15 years, the daughter of Herodias had been summoned to dance before Herod. And partly to please her mother, and partly to satisfy her own hardly realised ambitions, she had given of her best to satisfy the Tetrarch and his Court. Then came the moment when Herod turned to her, and begged her to demand anything she wanted, and he would give it, even to the half of his kingdom. Her mother knew what to suggest to the child; it was the head of her enemy, John the Baptist, the man who had fearlessly upbraided both her

and Herod for what he deemed an immoral union. All that scene had already been enacted, and now the child, left to herself, with all the weird experience of a great artistic success, succeeded by the grim and horrible tragedy, hears from the distance the music, bringing back to her, in all its vivid detail, the strange experience. And in a sort of dreamlike stupor she goes through it all again. Her imagination calls up the head of John the Baptist, while all the peculiar horror of a dance which had been rewarded in so brutal a fashion thrills through her nature. But it is not a real head; it is the head that came to her in a sort of waking vision. She turned to it with wonder and awe. Perhaps it could inspire her with some large thoughts about 'fo and truth. She was half drawn to it, half repelled. Then, by a new turn or twist of fancy, the scene has changed. The head has disappeared, and the girl, with the weight upon her conscience of a good man's death, sinks upon the floor, wearied and outworn, overcharged with all the morbid incidents of an unforgettable day. That is the "Vision of Salome" which Maud Allan seeks to interpret; not the dance which we connect mainly with the play of Oscar Wilde, or with the fantastic and somewhat clumsy imaginings of the German dramatist, Sudermann.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day is published the following books:
HER INFINITE VARIETY: a Feminine Portrait Gallery. By E. V. LUCAS.
Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 to 1905. Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 16s. net.

This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies.

These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Vol. XIII. contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Oct. 10. 1905

Newsagent & Booksellers Review

The last two volumes of the edition of Oscar Wilde's works which Messrs. Methuen are publishing will be ready on October 15th.

Daily Chronicle

If the International Congress on "Roads," now assembled in Paris will for an hour or so forego their highly technical discussions to consider and recall certain roads and their builders, their deliberations will be lightened by real human, not to say literary interest. There is the road from Oxford to Hinksey Ferry, which Ruskin set himself and his pupils to build as an assertion of the dignity of labour. Lord Milner was one of Ruskin's labourers in the work, while Oscar Wilde boasted that he trundled the professor's own wheelbarrow. Or, again, there is that Road of the Loving Heart which the Samoans cut and made for Robert Louis Stevenson. ***

DAILY TELEGRAPH, Oct. 28, 1905.

THE SWORD OF WELLERAN.

(GEORGE ALLEN. 6s net.)

Of these twelve stories by Lord Dunsany two have appeared in the "Saturday Review" and most of the others in various magazines. They make a pretty and welcome volume, and the illustrations by Mr. S. H. Sime add to their attraction. They are imaginative sketches, supposed to be dreams, and, indeed, they are dreamlike, intangible fairy-tales, which strike a note of beauty and pathos for the most part, though in some of them humour is not lacking. Of them all, "The Kith of the Elf-Folk" strikes us as the most fascinating. It is the tale of "The Wild Thing" of the Marshes which desires a human soul. Its comrades procure a soul for it, but warn the Wild Thing that, should it desire to have back again its elfin nature, it must pass on its soul to a human who does not possess one. Amusing and suggestive are the adventures of the Wild Thing among mortals. It takes the form of a young girl, and tells a curate that it loves him after hearing him preach, to the great scandal of the congregation. For this breach of manners it is sent to a manufacturing town, where it becomes a "hand," and lives a dreary life. Then it is discovered by an impresario, and makes its debut at Covent Garden, where by the unearthly beauty of its voice it subdues all save Cecilia, Countess of Birmingham. To this lady the Wild Thing gives her soul and goes back gladly to her beloved marshes. This and several other of the stories in this volume are rather hard to class; they may best be put beside Oscar Wilde's "House of Pomegranates," which in some of their ideas and phrases they recall. A very imaginative tale is "The Doom of La Traviata," in which her soul is placed just outside hell by angels who were unwilling to fulfil to the utmost the commands of God. There is much that is beautiful in these carefully-written tales. They are full of poetry, pathos, and a sense of fairyland. The imagination which has inspired them is real and, if a little forced, very acceptable.

Reviews are mainly *inter alia*, the larger and newly discovered conclusion of the Essay on "Historical Criticism," never before printed; the first fragmentary draft of a lost play; and lectures reprinted for the first time from M.S.]

THE TIMES LIST OF

NEW BOOKS and NEW EDITIONS.

*This column is restricted to books published during the last six months.

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind."—ADDISON.

Messrs. Methuen have now ready their New Illustrated Announcement List, which is full of interesting matter. Kindly write for it.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day are published the following books:

HER INFINITE VARIETY: A Feminine Portrait Gallery. By E. V. LUCAS. Fcap 8vo. 5s.
This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 TO 1905. Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 16s. net.
This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies.
These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Vol. 13 contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Vanity Fair

Messrs. Methuen have just announced the complete works of Oscar Wilde in thirteen volumes. The books are reprinted from the last editions issued under the superintendence of the author, and in many cases they contain his last corrections. Several of the books have been out of print for years, and others are almost unobtainable.

We owe much to Mr. Methuen and to Mr. Robert Ross, the editor, for these excellent books; but we are sorry that a great many reviews and articles, merely ephemeral in nature, have here been reprinted. The publishers say that these journalist writings prove "the author's capacity for anticipating the better literary taste and judgment of the new century." This is, of course, mere bunkum and futile self-praise. There is no better literary taste and judgment in the new century than there was in the past century. High criticism is a faculty as rare as high creative work, and as individual, and Hazlitt and Lamb were as good critics as any living in England to-day. The idea that we are better judges of literature than our fathers is a vulgarism which Mr. Methuen should not have committed; he should leave that sort of high falutin' to the *Daily Express*.

THE PALACE PIER THEATRE.

Oscar Wilde's brilliant comedy, "The Importance of Being Earnest," is holding the boards of the Palace Pier Theatre this week. The announcement upon the programme that this was a revival of "the most brilliant farce ever written" may sound, perhaps, a trifle far-fetched, but certainly within our memory we can hardly recall its equal for brilliant dialogue, piquant epigrams, and good humoured cynicism. The piece was first produced at the St. James's Theatre, London, by Mr. George Alexander, many years ago, and it was the writer's privilege to witness a performance of the comedy at the noted playhouse at that time. Though the march of time has altered men and manners, "The Importance of Being Earnest" is as equally applicable in its tone to-day as it was when first written, and, may we add, the present exponents bear favourable comparison with the famed company of actors and actresses responsible for its first production. The plot, if plot it can be called, is too simple to be worth mentioning. The theme of having convenient mythical relatives in far removed localities in order that a visit to the "unknown" may provide an excuse for a surreptitious holiday has been worn threadbare by dramatists of all ages. The real attraction of the play is the series of what may be perhaps termed "conversational duels" between the different *dramatis personae*. And what an intellectual treat these "duels" provide, and with what enthusiasm they are received by an appreciative audience. Monday's performance found the Palace Pier Theatre well filled by such an audience, and it says much for the acting that throughout the whole performance not the slightest hitch was observed, despite the fact that upon only one occasion had the company been able to rehearse the piece in its entirety. The costumes are really exquisite, whilst the stage manager and his assistants deserve high commendation for their arrangement of the scenic effects, especially the Garden Scene in Act II. Mr. Arthur Hare plays the lead in the part of Jack Worthing, whose parentage is buried deep in the mysteries of a handbag found at a London Terminus. Mr. Hare is excellent in the rôle, catching the author's moods and tenses to a nicety. As a stage picture his entry in Act II, dressed in mourning in memory of the phantom brother, is too funny for words, and throughout the play Mr. Hare earns the success which we are sure his enterprise in reviving an old favourite comedy will receive. In the personage of Miss Olive Wilton as Miss Fairfax, Mr. Hare has been wise in his choice. This vivacious actress does all that is required of her, and her impersonation is an artistic triumph. As Lady Bracknell Miss Elspeth Dudgeon adds to the golden opinions already won in Brighton for her high histrionic gifts, whilst the small part of Miss Prism is admirably rendered by Miss Kate Wingfield, another old Brighton favourite. Miss Una Mainwaring catches the right vein in her playing of Cecily Cardew, although a little lifting of the voice would undoubtedly be appreciated by the holders of the back seats. Mr. Cyril Scott finds plenty of work in the part of Algy Moncrieff, and such good use does he make of his opportunity that it will not be surprising to find him occupying a high position in the dramatic world. The following capable exponents were also in the cast:—Canon Chasuble, Mr. Morton Francis; Lane (Algy's butler), Mr. J. Albert Edward; Merriman (Jack's servant), Mr. Nevill Scott; Charlotte, Miss Irene Stanhope.

Matinee performances will be arranged for to-day and Saturday at three, with evening performances each day at eight.

MAUD ALLAN.

"MY LIFE AND DANCING."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

THE VISION OF SALOME.

It is curious that in matters of this kind we have now gone back to the oldest of the plastic arts. To the Greeks, and probably to the Egyptians before them, dancing was not merely a matter of studied movements, but from beginning to end was something symbolic and interpretative; a grace, a glory, a wonder, that could express not only fancy or imagination, but intellectual and moral ideas. In this connection it is worth while to correct some of the mistaken views that have been formed of Maud Allan's "Salome" dance. As she points out, in the final chapter of her book, she does not call it "The Dance of Salome," but "The Vision of Salome." As a young girl, perhaps of some 14 or 15 years, the daughter of Herodias had been summoned to dance before Herod. And partly to please her mother, and partly to satisfy her own hardly realised ambitions, she had given of her best to satisfy the Tetrarch and his Court. Then came the moment when Herod turned to her, and begged her to demand anything she wanted, and he would give it, even to the half of his kingdom. Her mother knew what to suggest to the child; it was the head of her enemy, John the Baptist, the man who had fearlessly upbraided both her

and Herod for what he deemed an immoral union. All that scene had already been enacted, and now the child, left to herself, with all the weird experience of a great artistic success, succeeded by the grim and horrible tragedy, hears from the distance the music, bringing back to her, in all its vivid detail, the strange experience. And in a sort of dreamlike stupor she goes through it all again. Her imagination calls up the head of John the Baptist, while all the peculiar horror of a dance which had been rewarded in so brutal a fashion thrills through her nature. But it is not a real head; it is the head that came to her in a sort of waking vision. She turned to it with wonder and awe. Perhaps it could inspire her with some large thoughts about life and truth. She was half drawn to it, half repelled. Then, by a new turn or twist of fancy, the scene has changed. The head has disappeared, and the girl, with the weight upon her conscience of a good man's death, sinks upon the floor, wearied and outworn, overcharged with all the morbid incidents of an unforgettable day. That is the "Vision of Salome" which Maud Allan seeks to interpret; not the dance which we connect mainly with the play of *Queen Salome* with the fantastic and somewhat clumsy imaginings of the German dramatist, Sudermann.

Oct. 15. 1908

Daily Express,

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind."—ADDISON.

Messrs. Methuen have now ready their New Illustrated Announcement List, which is full of interesting matter. Kindly write for it.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day is published the following books:

HER INFINITE VARIETY: a Feminine Portrait Gallery. By E. V. LUCAS.
Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 to 1905, Illustrated. Demy 8vo, 16s. net.

This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE, Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies.

These are the final volumes of the edition, which will be complete. The latter have never appeared in book form before. Vol. XIII. contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Jissen Woz 2019-03-187 University Library

Oct. 10. 1908

Newsagent & Booksellers Review.

2019 Josephine Women's University Library 458

The last two volumes of the edition of Oscar Wilde's works which Messrs. Methuen are publishing will be ready on October 15th.

Daily Chronicle

Oct. 15
1908

If the International Congress on "Roads," now assembled in Paris will for an hour or so forsake their highly technical discussions to consider and recall certain roads and their builders, their deliberations will be lightened by real human, not to say literary interest. There is the road from Oxford to Hinksey Ferry, which Ruskin set himself and his pupils to build as an assertion of the dignity of labour. Lord Milner was one of Ruskin's labourers in the work, while Oscar Wilde boasted that he trundled the professor's own wheelbarrow. Or, again, there is that Road of the Loving Heart which the Samoans cut and made for Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE SWORD OF WELLERAN.

(GEORGE ALLEN. 6s net.)

Of these twelve stories by Lord Dunsany two have appeared in the "Saturday Review" and most of the others in various magazines. They make a pretty and welcome volume, and the illustrations by Mr. S. H. Sime add to their attraction. They are imaginative sketches, supposed to be dreams, and, indeed, they are dreamlike, intangible fairy-tales, which strike a note of beauty and pathos for the most part, though in some of them humour is not lacking. Of them all, "The Kith of the Elf-Folk" strikes us as the most fascinating. It is the tale of "The Wild Thing" of the Marshes which desires a human soul. Its comrades procure a soul for it, but warn the Wild Thing that, should it desire to have back again its elfin nature, it must pass on its soul to a human who does not possess one. Amusing and suggestive are the adventures of the Wild Thing among mortals. It takes the form of a young girl, and tells a curate that it loves him after hearing him preach, to the great scandal of the congregation. For this breach of manners it is sent to a manufacturing town, where it becomes a "hand," and lives a dreary life. Then it is discovered by an impresario, and makes its debut at Covent Garden, where by the unearthly beauty of its voice it subdues all save Cecilia, Countess of Birmingham. To this lady the Wild Thing gives her soul and goes back gladly to her beloved marshes. This and several other of the stories in this volume are rather hard to class; they may best be put beside Oscar Wilde's "House of Pomegranates," which in some of their ideas and phrases they recall. A very imaginative tale is "The Doom of La Traviata," in which her soul is placed just outside hell by angels who were unwilling to fulfil to the utmost the commands of God. There is much that is beautiful in these carefully-written tales. They are full of poetry, pathos, and a sense of fairyland. The imagination which has inspired them is real and, if a little forced, very acceptable.

October 15. 1908

"Times" Literary Supplement

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Reviews. 555 pp. MISCELLANIES. xvi. + 344 pp., $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. Methuen, 12s. 6d. n. each vol.

[In this edition of 13 volumes these are vols. 12 and 13. The reviews are mainly from the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The "Miscellanies" contains, *inter alia*, the larger and newly discovered concluding scene of *Salome*, on the historical occasion, never before printed; the first fragmentary draft of a lost play; and lectures reprinted for the first time from M.S.]

2019-03-08 Women's University Library 461

THE TIMES LIST OF
NEW BOOKS and NEW EDITIONS.

* * * This column is restricted to books published during the last six months.

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind."—ADDISON.

Messrs. Methuen have now ready their New Illustrated Announcement List, which is full of interesting matter. Kindly write for it.

METHUEN'S POPULAR BOOKS.
IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To-day are published the following books :

HER INFINITE VARIETY: A Feminine Portrait Gallery. By E. V. LUCAS. F'cap 8vo, 5s.
This is uniform with "The Open Road."

FORTY YEARS OF MUSIC, 1865 TO 1905. Illustrated. Demy 8vo, 16s. net.

This is a delightful retrospect of the busy life of a great musical critic.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

Vol. 12, Reviews; and Vol. 13, Miscellanies.

These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Vol. 13 is the first time in book form before. Vol. 13 contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Vanity Fair

Oct. 14. 1900

Messrs. Methuen have just announced the complete works of Oscar Wilde in thirteen volumes. The books are reprinted from the last editions issued under the superintendence of the author, and in many cases they contain his last corrections. Several of the books have been out of print for years, and others are almost unobtainable.

We owe much to Mr. Methuen and to Mr. Robert Ross, the editor, for these excellent books; but we are sorry that a great many reviews and articles, merely ephemeral in nature, have here been reprinted. The publishers say that these journalist writings prove "the author's capacity for anticipating the better literary taste and judgment of the new century." This is, of course, mere bunkum and futile self-praise. There is no better literary taste and judgment in the new century than there was in the past century. High criticism is a faculty as rare as high creative work, and as individual, and Hazlitt and Lamb were as good critics as any living in England to-day. The idea that we are better judges of literature than our fathers is a vulgarism which Mr. Methuen should not have committed; he should have continued to the *Daily Express*.

REVIEW.

THE LAST TRIBUTE.*

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

There is no doubt that Mr. Ross had great provocation to reprint Mr. Wilde's miscellaneous journalistic work. From time to time pirate publishers, in different countries, have reproduced volumes purporting to contain most or all of Mr. Wilde's unpublished critical writing; also some printers have issued as Wilde's work volumes that had no true connection with his name. It was almost necessary, then, to guard against these unscrupulous defamers of the dead. There will, in the future, be no excuse for any of the second-hand book-shelves to catalogue as Wilde's writings that are not his; reference to this complete edition will speedily settle the authenticity of any doubtful book or article. Necessary as Mr. Ross's work was, it could hardly have been more successfully carried out: here in two final volumes we have Wilde's reviews and literary notes, his lectures, and such fragments of more mature work as were not included in former volumes.

Of the reviews the great majority are from the columns of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and many of them contain sentences and judgments that betray the acute critical mind which the author possessed. Of course, his amazing command of strangely beautiful English is not often laid under contribution: in these critical notices Wilde fairly often walks in paradox, but rarely in purple. There are a few noteworthy opinions about contemporary writers, opinions in which we think posterity will acquiesce. For instance, the notice of Henley is both acute and generous, while that of Mr. Yeats's "Wanderings of Oisín" is far-seeing and judicious. Mr. Wilde was also one of the first and few critics to speak the truth about Mr. Swinburne's work; and he does it in the neatest way possible. "It has been said of Mr. Swinburne, and with truth, that he is a master of language, but with still greater truth it may be said that language is his master"; the judgment is none the less true for being antithetical. Again, the last review contributed to the "Pall Mall Gazette" (in May, 1890) was a notice of "Primavera," a slim book of verse by Mr. Stephen Phillips, Mr. Laurence Binyon, Mr. Manmohun Ghose, and Mr. Arthur Cripps; and it is pleasant to notice with what kindness the older man welcomed the undergraduate volume. The notice ends with a characteristic sentence: "Undergraduates might read it with advantage during lecture hours."

The volume entitled "Miscellanies" contains more mature work. Of first importance and interest is the fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtisane," or "The Woman Covered with Jewels." The story is a mixture of that of S. Mary of Egypt—whose church Wilde had probably seen in Rome—with Wilde's theory that to convince another often meant loss to yourself. From the few passages here printed the reader can see that the play belongs to the period of Salome and the Poems in Prose, to the author's interest in the dramatic side of things religious. Of the miscellaneous articles none is very amusing or notable, except, possibly, the report of Mr. Whistler's lecture, and the entertaining, insolent essay on a leading lady, Miss Dorothea Baird. In the part of Janette she has not taken us back to the old magic nights. Mr. Irving is also happy in his we saw Mr. Meredith Ball conducting the orchestra?—another name that public as it must be to himself. (And may we say here with what pleasure presence under the flag of his old chief's son will be as agreeable to the He was one of Henry Irving's loveliest and most trusted confidants, and his part of the elder Lesurques, and to find him playing it as well as ever. It was a great pleasure to see Mr. Frank Tvars once more in his old element of his exceedingly fine Lesurques. When that is done the full value of his fine acting will be attained, and the purpose will be a worthy artistic complement of his exceeding fine Lesurques. This little defect will be remedied, and no doubt in future performances mutterings should be distinctly heard; and no doubt in future part of the play. It is important that every word of his denuded quite so audible early in this scene as he had been through the preceding effect may possibly have been caused by the fact that Mr. Irving was not

OSCAR WILDE'S MEMORIAL.

"REVIEWS" AND "MISCELLANIES." By Oscar Wilde. Edited by Robert Ross. London: Methuen and Company. 12s 6d. net each.

To-day sees the completion of the handsome, definitive edition of the works of Oscar Wilde, a noble memorial, due to the friendship of Mr. Robert Ross, who has done so much to ensure an appreciation of this wayward genius. The edition is printed on hand-made paper by Messrs. T. and A. Constable, and is artistically bound; and it is limited to a thousand copies for the United Kingdom and America; while there is also an edition of eighty copies on Japanese vellum. Consequently, it is worthy of a place in any great library, and is likely to become a bibliographical treasure. The last two volumes are especially interesting, because they contain many reviews published anonymously, a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on "Historical Criticism," a first fragmentary draft of a lost play, and lectures reprinted from manuscript for the first time. In the dedication of "Reviews," Mr. Ross mentions "the apparently endless difficulties against which I have contended, and am contending, in the management of Oscar Wilde's literary and dramatic property." Of his triumph over all obstacles this volume affords convincing proof, for here he reprints reviews from the "Pall Mall Gazette," most of which were published anonymously, and all of which contain amusing and caustic criticisms of present-day writers. The conspicuous feature of these reviews is their anticipation of the better literary taste and judgment of the new century. Permission to reproduce them is confined to the present edition. "Miscellanies" is dedicated to Mr. Walter Ledger, and Mr. Ross writes: "I look forward to your bibliography of the author, in which you will be at liberty to criticise my capacity for anything except regard and friendship for yourself." The volume is full of interest, as the conclusion to the essay on "Historical Criticism" appears for the first time in print, as is the case also with the draft of the lost play, "La Sainte Courtisane," and the lectures on various art subjects. It also gives the author's remaining signed and anonymous contributions to the Press. The volumes impress one more than ever with the brilliant gifts of Mr. Wilde, and with the tribute paid to his memory by Mr. Ross, who deserves the thanks of all lovers of letters for his present work.

Oct. 17, 1908

Evening Standard and St. James's

"Reviews" and "Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. Methuen.

(Two volumes of the collected edition of Wilde's work. One includes reviews of books, many of which are not important; the other contains the essay on "Historical Criticism," a fragmentary draft of a lost play, the manuscript of lectures, and various contributions to the Press. Mr. Ross, the editor of the edition, has "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include everything . . . that could be identified as genuine." We question whether this was a wise course, for some of the reviews are, as even Mr. Ross allows, colourless. What good end was to be served by reprinting, for instance, the short letter to the "Pall Mall Gazette" on Professor Saintsbury's grammar? We must add, lest it be thought there is an overwhelming proportion of negligible stuff in the volume, that many of the reviews are good, sound criticism. All we complain of is the tendency to conceal the good by allowing entrance to the commonplace.)

Glasgow Herald.

OSCAR WILDE: JOURNALIST AND CRITIC.

"Reviews," By Oscar Wilde.—"Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. (Vols. xii. and xiii. of the Uniform Edition of Oscar Wilde's Works). 12s 6d net per volume. (London: Methuen and Co.)

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

It is almost impossible to conceive of a brilliant, self-willed, winged creature like Oscar Wilde ever having come through what he, when his powers of original flight were recognised, no doubt looked back upon as the grub—or Grub Street—stage of journalism. Yet that he did come through it, these two volumes, the first containing all his reviews (now first identified with his name) from 1885 to 1889, and the second his prose miscellanies for the same period, afford the strongest possible kind of testimony. In the second volume, of course, Wilde is always openly himself. But even in the first volume he never once succeeds in disguising himself as a genuine caterpillar; nay, the very obscurity of anonymity tempts this butterfly-wasp to flash out the brightest of his colours and dart forth the fiercest of his stings. The editor of the edition completed by these beautiful and admirably arranged volumes has been more than justified in his determination to include every fragment that could be held as genuine. Oscar Wilde was one of those few authors (their names could be written on a postage stamp) who never write badly, and who cannot write for a whole page without writing superlatively well.

But let us "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses," as the late Mr. Astley used to say to his too voluble clowns. Let us turn to the Reviews. The first thing that strikes us is the number of forgotten authors—mostly poets—whose works are conscientiously and, in the case of verse writers, considerably dealt with by this as yet unrecognised "lord of language." Happy flies (or unhappy, as the case may be), preserved in such amber! We certainly do not envy Professor Saintsbury his place under "Half-Hours with the Worst Authors"—though here, indeed, Wilde is perhaps over fastidious. A very bad quarter of an hour is reserved, also, for "Days of the Year: A Poetic Calendar from the Works of Alfred Austin," which, "if published as a broadsheet, with a picture of Mr. Austin 'conversing with Æneas,' might gladden many a simple cottage home and prove a source of innocent amusement to the Conservative working man." In the mid-region between praise and blame—a sort of mitigated Purgatory—hang Henley, "through the reeds and pipes" of whose lyric poetry "blows the very breath of life," but whose hospital verses, "some of them like bright, vivid pastels, others like etchings with deeply bitten lines," are after all only "preludes, experiments, inspired jottings in a note-book," and Sir Edwin Arnold, whose use of Hindoo words Wilde finely describes as "not local colour, but a sort of local discolouration," and whom he damns with the very faintest of praise. To turn to "Common Sense in Art," is to dive at once to the very sink-hole of the Inferno of criticism, where we find the Hon. John Collier, the idol of artistic Brixton, being slowly flayed by an irony so fine as to be totally invisible to Brixtonian eyes. For example:—

Portrait painting, Mr. Collier tells us, "makes no demands on the imagination." As is the sitter, so is the work of art. If the sitter be commonplace, for instance, it would be "contrary to the fundamental principles of portraiture to make the picture other than commonplace." . . . The artist should always consult his sitter's relations before he begins the picture. . . . As regards landscape painting, Mr. Collier tells us that "a great deal of nonsense has been talked about

THE LAST TRIBUTE.*

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

There is no doubt that Mr. Ross had great provocation to reprint Mr. Wilde's miscellaneous journalistic work. From time to time pirate publishers, in different countries, have reproduced volumes purporting to contain most or all of Mr. Wilde's unpublished critical writing; also some printers have issued as Wilde's work volumes that had no true connection with his name. It was almost necessary, then, to guard against these unscrupulous defamers of the dead. There will, in the future, be no excuse for any of the second-hand book-shelves to catalogue as Wilde's writings that are not his; reference to this complete edition will speedily settle the authenticity of any doubtful book or article. Necessary as Mr. Ross's work was, it could hardly have been more successfully carried out: here in two final volumes we have Wilde's reviews and literary notes, his lectures, and such fragments of more mature work as were not included in former volumes.

Of the reviews the great majority are from the columns of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and many of them contain sentences and judgments that betray the acute critical mind which the author possessed. Of course, his amazing command of strangely beautiful English is not often laid under contribution: in these critical notices Wilde fairly often walks in paradox, but rarely in purple. There are a few noteworthy opinions about contemporary writers, opinions in which we think posterity will acquiesce. For instance, the notice of Henley is both acute and generous, while that of Mr. Yeats's "Wanderings of Oisín" is far-seeing and judicious. Mr. Wilde was also one of the first and few critics to speak the truth about Mr. Swinburne's work; and he does it in the neatest way possible. "It has been said of Mr. Swinburne, and with truth, that he is a master of language, but with still greater truth it may be said that language is his master"; the judgment is none the less true for being antithetical. Again, the last review contributed to the "Pall Mall Gazette" (in May, 1890) was a notice of "Primavera," a slim book of verse by Mr. Stephen Phillips, Mr. Laurence Binyon, Mr. Manmohun Ghose, and Mr. Arthur Cripps; and it is pleasant to notice with what kindness the older man welcomed the undergraduate volume. The notice ends with a characteristic sentence: "Undergraduates might read it with advantage during lecture hours."

The volume entitled "Miscellanies" contains more mature work. Of first importance and interest is the fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtisane," or "The Woman Covered with Jewels." The story is a mixture of that of S. Mary of Egypt—whose church Wilde had probably seen in Rome—with Wilde's theory that to convince another often meant loss to yourself. From the few passages here printed the reader can see that the play belongs to the period of Salome and the Poems in Prose, to the author's interest in the dramatic side of things religious. Of the miscellaneous articles none is very amusing or notable, except, possibly, the report of Mr. Whistler's lecture, and the entertaining, insolent essay on a certain "Invasion." Several letters to the papers are reprinted; and those on "Dorian Gray" were worth it; particularly acute is Wilde's own criticism of the book. A reviewer in the "St. James's Gazette" had accused the book of being dull, and Wilde replies: "Now, if I were criticising my book, which I have some thoughts of doing, I think I would consider it my duty to point out that it is far too crowded with sensational incident, and far too paradoxical in style, as far, at any rate, as the dialogue goes. I feel that from a standpoint of art these are true defects in the book. But tedious and dull the book is not." This passage is of value as illustrating Wilde's astonishing capacity for detachment—a capacity that just prevented him from being a really great artist or a really great man.

At the end of the volume are reprinted the lectures Wilde delivered in America. These, again, are of real value historically; they will prove very useful to the student of manners, and they should serve to correct the one-sided view of the aesthetic movement that is gathered from "Punch" and "Patience." These volumes confirm us in our verdict that Wilde was by nature revolutionary, a reformer. He wanted many things, but he always desired change; he sought for many things, but he never sought for peace. His Irish blood ached for the fight, for rebellion, for alteration; and it may be that a wider and later criticism than is possible to-day will see both in his successes and in his failures the same spirit working for the same ends.

*"Reviews. Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. 2 vols. (completing the set of 14). 12s. 6d. net each. (London; Methuen.)

OSCAR WILDE'S MEMORIAL.

"REVIEWS" AND "MISCELLANIES." By Oscar Wilde. Edited by Robert Ross. London: Methuen and Company. 12s. 6d. net each.

To-day sees the completion of the handsome, definitive edition of the works of Oscar Wilde, a noble memorial, due to the friendship of Mr. Robert Ross, who has done so much to ensure an appreciation of this wayward genius. The edition is printed on hand-made paper by Messrs. T. and A. Constable, and is artistically bound; and it is limited to a thousand copies for the United Kingdom and America; while there is also an edition of eighty copies on Japanese vellum. Consequently, it is worthy of a place in any great library, and is likely to become a bibliographical treasure. The last two volumes are especially interesting, because they contain many reviews published anonymously, a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on "Historical Criticism," a first fragmentary draft of a lost play, and lectures reprinted from manuscript for the first time. In the dedication of "Reviews," Mr. Ross mentions "the apparently endless difficulties against which I have contended, and am contending, in the management of Oscar Wilde's literary and dramatic property." Of his triumph over all obstacles this volume affords convincing proof, for here he reprints reviews from the "Pall Mall Gazette," most of which were published anonymously, and all of which contain amusing and caustic criticisms of present-day writers. The conspicuous feature of these reviews is their anticipation of the better literary taste and judgment of the new century. Permission to reproduce them is confined to the present edition. "Miscellanies" is dedicated to Mr. Walter Ledger, and Mr. Ross writes: "I look forward to your bibliography of the author, in which you will be at liberty to criticise my capacity for anything except regard and friendship for yourself." The volume is full of interest, as the conclusion to the essay on "Historical Criticism" appears for the first time in print, as is the case also with the draft of the lost play, "La Sainte Courtisane," and the lectures on various art subjects. It also gives the author's remaining signed and anonymous contributions to the Press. The volumes impress one more than ever with the brilliant gifts of Mr. Wilde, and with the tribute paid to his memory by Mr. Ross, who deserves the thanks of all lovers of letters for his present work.

Oct. 17, 1908

Evening Standard and St. James's

"Reviews" and "Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. Methuen.

(Two volumes of the collected edition of Wilde's work. One includes reviews of books, many of which are not important; the other contains the essay on "Historical Criticism," a fragmentary draft of a lost play, the manuscript of lectures, and various contributions to the Press. Mr. Ross, the editor of the edition, has "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include everything . . . that could be identified as genuine." We question whether this was a wise course, for some of the reviews are, as even Mr. Ross allows, colourless. What good end was to be served by reprinting, for instance, the short letter to the "Pall Mall Gazette" on Professor Saintsbury's grammar? We must add, lest it be thought there is an overwhelming proportion of negligible stuff in the volume, that many of the reviews are good, sound criticism. All we complain of is the tendency to conceal the good by allowing entrance to the commonplace.)

OSCAR WILDE: JOURNALIST AND CRITIC.

"Reviews." By Oscar Wilde.—"Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. (Vols. xii. and xiii. of the Uniform Edition of Oscar Wilde's Works). 12s. 6d. net per volume. (London: Methuen and Co.)

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

It is almost impossible to conceive of a brilliant, self-willed, winged creature like Oscar Wilde ever having come through what he, when his powers of original flight were recognised, no doubt looked back upon as the grub—or Grub Street—stage of journalism. Yet that he did come through it, these two volumes, the first containing all his reviews (now first identified with his name) from 1885 to 1889, and the second his prose miscellanies for the same period, afford the strongest possible kind of testimony. In the second volume, of course, Wilde is always openly himself. But even in the first volume he never once succeeds in disguising himself as a genuine caterpillar; nay, the very obscurity of anonymity tempts this butterfly-wasp to flash out the brightest of his colours and dart forth the fiercest of his stings. The editor of the edition completed by these beautiful and admirably arranged volumes has been more than justified in his determination to include every fragment that could be held as genuine. Oscar Wilde was one of these few authors (their names could be written on a postage stamp) who never write badly, and who cannot write for a whole page without writing superlatively well.

But let us "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses," as the late Mr Astley used to say to his too voluble clowns. Let us turn to the Reviews. The first thing that strikes us is the number of forgotten authors—mostly poets—whose works are conscientiously and, in the case of verse writers, considerably dealt with by this as yet unrecognised "lord of language." Happy flies (or unhappy, as the case may be), preserved in such amber! We certainly do not envy Professor Saintsbury his place under "Half-Hours with the Worst Authors"—though here, indeed, Wilde is perhaps over fastidious. A very bad quarter of an hour is reserved, also, for "Days of the Year: A Poetic Calendar from the Works of Alfred Austin," which, "if published as a broadsheet, with a picture of Mr Austin 'conversing with Æneas,' might gladden many a simple cottage home and prove a source of innocent amusement to the Conservative working man." In the mid-region between praise and blame—a sort of mitigated Purgatory—hang Henley, "through the reeds and pipes of whose lyric poetry 'blows the very breath of life,' but whose hospital verses, 'some of them like bright, vivid pastels, others like etchings with deeply bitten lines,' are after all only 'preludes, experiments, inspired jottings in a note-book," and Sir Edwin Arnold, whose use of Hindoo words Wilde finely describes as "not local colour, but a sort of local discolouration," and whom he damns with the very faintest of praise. To turn to "Common Sense in Art" is to dive at once to the very sink-hole of the Inferno of criticism, where we find the Hon. John Collier, the idol of artistic Brixton, being slowly flayed by an irony so fine as to be totally invisible to Brixtonian eyes. For example:—

Portrait painting, Mr Collier tells us, "makes no demands on the imagination." As is the sitter, so is the work of art. If the sitter be commonplace, for instance, it would be "contrary to the fundamental principles of portraiture to make the picture other than commonplace." . . . The artist should always consult his sitter's relations before he begins the picture. . . . As regards landscape painting, Mr Collier tells us that "a great deal of nonsense has been talked about

THE LAST TRIBUTE.*

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

There is no doubt that Mr. Ross had great provocation to reprint Mr. Wilde's miscellaneous journalistic work. From time to time pirate publishers, in different countries, have reproduced volumes purporting to contain most or all of Mr. Wilde's unpublished critical writing; also some printers have issued as Wilde's work volumes that had no true connection with his name. It was almost necessary, then, to guard against these unscrupulous defamers of the dead. There will, in the future, be no excuse for any of the second-hand book-shelves to catalogue as Wilde's writings that are not his; reference to this complete edition will speedily settle the authenticity of any doubtful book or article. Necessary as Mr. Ross's work was, it could hardly have been more successfully carried out: here in two final volumes we have Wilde's reviews and literary notes, his lectures, and such fragments of more mature work as were not included in former volumes.

Of the reviews the great majority are from the columns of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and many of them contain sentences and judgments that betray the acute critical mind which the author possessed. Of course, his amazing command of strangely beautiful English is not often laid under contribution: in these critical notices Wilde fairly often walks in paradox, but rarely in purple. There are a few noteworthy opinions about contemporary writers, opinions in which we think posterity will acquiesce. For instance, the notice of Henley is both acute and generous, while that of Mr. Yeats's "Wanderings of Oisín" is far-seeing and judicious. Mr. Wilde was also one of the first and few critics to speak the truth about Mr. Swinburne's work; and he does it in the neatest way possible. "It has been said of Mr. Swinburne, and with truth, that he is a master of language, but with still greater truth it may be said that language is his master"; the judgment is none the less true for being antithetical. Again, the last review contributed to the "Pall Mall Gazette," (in May, 1890) was a notice of "Primavera," a slim book of verse by Mr. Stephen Phillips, Mr. Laurence Binyon, Mr. Manmohun Ghose, and Mr. Arthur Cripps; and it is pleasant to notice with what kindness the older man welcomed the undergraduate volume. The notice ends with a characteristic sentence: "Undergraduates might read it with advantage during lecture hours."

The volume entitled "Miscellanies" contains more mature work. Of first importance and interest is the fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtisane," or "The Woman Covered with Jewels." The story is a mixture of that of S. Mary of Egypt—whose church Wilde had probably seen in Rome—with Wilde's theory that to convince another often meant loss to yourself. From the few passages here printed the reader can see that the play belongs to the period of *Salome* and the *Poems in Prose*, to the author's interest in the dramatic side of things religious. Of the miscellaneous articles none is very amusing or notable, except, possibly, the report of Mr. Whistler's lecture, and the entertaining, insolent essay on a certain "Invasion." Several letters to the papers are reprinted; and those on "Dorian Gray" were worth it; particularly acute is Wilde's own criticism of the book. A reviewer in the "St. James's Gazette" had accused the book of being dull, and Wilde replies: "Now, if I were criticising my book, which I have some thoughts of doing, I think I would consider it my duty to point out that it is far too crowded with sensational incident, and far too paradoxical in style, as far, at any rate, as the dialogue goes. I feel that from a standpoint of art these are true defects in the book. But tedious and dull the book is not." This passage is of value as illustrating Wilde's astonishing capacity for detachment—a capacity that just prevented him from being a really great artist or a really great man.

At the end of the volume are reprinted the lectures Wilde delivered in America. These, again, are of real value historically; they will prove very useful to the student of manners, and they should serve to correct the one-sided view of the æsthetic movement that is gathered from "Punch" and "Patience." These volumes confirm us in our verdict that Wilde was by nature revolutionary, a reformer. He wanted many things, but he always desired change; he sought for many things, but he never sought for ease. His Irish blood ached for the fight, for rebellion, for alteration; and it may be that a wider and later criticism than is possible to-day will see both in his successes and in his failures the same spirit working for the same ends.

*"Reviews. Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. 2 vols. (completing the set of 14). 12s. 6d. net each. (London: Methuen.)

OCTOBER 16, 1908,

Manchester Courier.

OSCAR WILDE'S MEMORIAL.

"REVIEWS" AND "MISCELLANIES." By Oscar Wilde. Edited by Robert Ross. London: Methuen and Company. 12s 6d. net each.

To-day sees the completion of the handsome, definitive edition of the works of Oscar Wilde, a noble memorial, due to the friendship of Mr. Robert Ross, who has done so much to ensure an appreciation of this wayward genius. The edition is printed on hand-made paper by Messrs. T. and A. Constable, and is artistically bound; and it is limited to a thousand copies for the United Kingdom and America; while there is also an edition of eighty copies on Japanese vellum. Consequently, it is worthy of a place in any great library, and is likely to become a bibliographical treasure. The last two volumes are especially interesting, because they contain many reviews published anonymously, a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on "Historical Criticism," a first fragmentary draft of a lost play, and lectures reprinted from manuscript for the first time. In the dedication of "Reviews," Mr. Ross mentions "the apparently endless difficulties against which I have contended, and am contending, in the management of Oscar Wilde's literary and dramatic property." Of his triumph over all obstacles this volume affords convincing proof, for here he reprints reviews from the "Pall Mall Gazette," most of which were published anonymously, and all of which contain amusing and caustic criticisms of present-day writers. The conspicuous feature of these reviews is their anticipation of the better literary taste and judgment of the new century. Permission to reproduce them is confined to the present edition. "Miscellanies" is dedicated to Mr. Walter Ledger, and Mr. Ross writes: "I look forward to your bibliography of the author, in which you will be at liberty to criticise my capacity for anything except regard and friendship for yourself." The volume is full of interest, as the conclusion to the essay on "Historical Criticism" appears for the first time in print, as is the case also with the draft of the lost play, "La Sainte Courtisane," and the lectures on various art subjects. It also gives the author's remaining signed and anonymous contributions to the Press. The volumes impress one more than ever with the brilliant gifts of Mr. Wilde, and with the tribute paid to his memory by Mr. Ross, who deserves the thanks of all lovers of letters for his present work.

Oct: 17. 1908

Evening Standard and St. James's

"Reviews" and "Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde.
Methuen.

(Two volumes of the collected edition of Wilde's work. One includes reviews of books, many of which are not important; the other contains the essay on "Historical Criticism," a fragmentary draft of a lost play, the manuscript of lectures, and various contributions to the Press. Mr. Ross, the editor of the edition, has "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include everything . . . that could be identified as genuine." We question whether this was a wise course, for some of the reviews are, as even Mr. Ross allows, colourless. What good end was to be served by reprinting, for instance, the short letter to the "Pall Mall Gazette" on Professor Saintsbury's grammar? We must add, lest it be thought there is an overwhelming proportion of negligible stuff in the volume, that many of the reviews are good, sound criticism. All we complain of is the tendency to conceal the good by allowing entrance to the commonplace.)

Oct. 16. 1908

Glasgow Herald.

OSCAR WILDE: JOURNALIST AND CRITIC.

"Reviews." By Oscar Wilde.—"Miscellanies."
By Oscar Wilde. (Vols. xii. and xiii. of
the Uniform Edition of Oscar Wilde's
Works). 12s 6d net per volume. (London:
Methuen and Co.).

[PUBLISHED TO-DAY.]

It is almost impossible to conceive of a brilliant, self-willed, winged creature like Oscar Wilde ever having come through what he, when his powers of original flight were recognised, no doubt looked back upon as the grub—or Grub Street—stage of journalism. Yet that he did come through it, these two volumes, the first containing all his reviews (now first identified with his name) from 1885 to 1889, and the second his prose miscellanies for the same period, afford the strongest possible kind of testimony. In the second volume, of course, Wilde is always openly himself. But even in the first volume he never once succeeds in disguising himself as a genuine caterpillar; nay, the very obscurity of anonymity tempts this butterfly-wasp to flash out the brightest of his colours and dart forth the fiercest of his stings. The editor of the edition completed by these beautiful and admirably arranged volumes has been more than justified in his determination to include every fragment that could be held as genuine. Oscar Wilde was one of those few authors (their names could be written on a postage stamp) who never write badly, and who cannot write for a whole page without writing superlatively well.

But let us "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses," as the late Mr Astley used to say to his too voluble clowns. Let us turn to the Reviews. The first thing that strikes us is the number of forgotten authors—mostly poets—whose works are conscientiously and, in the case of verse writers, considerably dealt with by this as yet unrecognised "lord of language." Happy flies (or unhappy, as the case may be), preserved in such amber! We certainly do not envy Professor Saintsbury his place under "Half-Hours with the Worst Authors"—though here, indeed, Wilde is perhaps over fastidious. A very bad quarter of an hour is reserved, also, for "Days of the Year: A Poetic Calendar from the Works of Alfred Austin," which, "if published as a broadsheet, with a picture of Mr Austin 'conversing with Æneas,' might gladden many a simple cottage home and prove a source of innocent amusement to the Conservative working man." In the mid-region between praise and blame—a sort of mitigated Purgatory—hang Henley, "through the reeds and pipes" of whose lyric poetry "blows the very breath of life," but whose hospital verses, "some of them like bright, vivid pastels, others like etchings with deeply bitten lines," are after all only "preludes, experiments, inspired jottings in a note-book;" and Sir Edwin Arnold, whose use of Hindoo words Wilde finely describes as "not local colour, but a sort of local discolouration," and whom he damns with the very faintest of praise. To turn to "Common Sense in Art" is to dive at once to the very sink-hole of the Inferno of criticism, where we find the Hon. John Collier, the idol of artistic Brixton, being slowly flayed by an irony so fine as to be totally invisible to Brixtonian eyes. For example:—

Portrait painting, Mr Collier tells us, "makes no demands on the imagination." As is the sitter, so is the work of art. If the sitter be commonplace, for instance, it would be "contrary to the fundamental principles of portraiture to make the picture other than commonplace." . . . The artist should always consult his sitter's relations before he begins the picture. . . . As regards landscape painting, Mr Collier tells us that "a great deal of nonsense has been talked about

the impossibility of reproducing nature," but that there is nothing really to prevent a picture giving to the eye exactly the same impression that an actual scene gives, for that when he visited "the celebrated panorama of the Siege of Paris" he could hardly distinguish the painted from the real cannons! . . . Nothing but the most conscientious seriousness, combined with real labour, could have produced such a book.

There is no suspicion of irony, there is good, sound, strong criticism, in the review of Mr Swinburne's 1889 volume of verse:—

His song is nearly always too loud for his subject. His magnificent rhetoric . . . conceals rather than reveals. It has been said of him, and with truth, that he is a master of language, but with still greater truth it may be said that language is his master. . . . Mere sound often becomes his lord. He is so eloquent that whatever he touches becomes unreal.

There is a curious prophetic note in the opening sentence of the very sympathetic review of Mr Wilfrid Blunt's "Love Sonnets of Proteus":—"Prison has had an admirable effect on Mr Wilfrid Blunt as a poet." It had had, also, in this case, an indirectly favourable effect on the reviewer; for Mr Blunt was sent to prison by Mr Balfour, whom Wilde, for some reason or other, particularly disliked, and whose "Defence of Philosophic Doubt" he refers to as "one of the dullest books we know." It is interesting to observe that on the appearance of "Imaginary Portraits," in 1887, Wilde hailed Pater as "if not among the greatest prose writers of our literature . . . at least our greatest artist in prose"; also, that he gives serious and sympathetic attention to Professor Veitch's "Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry"—of Wilde's own ignorance of which we have presumptive evidence in his praise (at p. 411) of Allingham's "The Fairies," whose first stanza is a poor echo of a verse of "Charlie is My Darling." Before dragging ourselves away from these fascinating Reviews, we note that Wilde defines a fashion in dress as, "from the artistic point of view, a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months;" and that among "Books not to read at all" are "Thomson's 'Seasons,' Rogers's 'Italy,' Paley's 'Evidences,' all Voltaire's plays, . . . all argumentative books, and books that try to prove anything."

Like a schoolboy at a Christmas dinner, we have used up nearly all our available space before the feast is half over. The second volume of course is, from a literary point of view, much the more important, but of pieces printed for the first time it contains only a complete rendering of the highly erudite and very closely reasoned Essay on Historical Criticism; a minute fragment of a play which was to illustrate, in a most passionate and realistic fashion, "Wilde's favourite theory that when you convert some one to an idea you lose your faith in it"; and several American lectures, remarkable for the sweet reasonableness with which they defend such main positions as:—

Do you think, for instance, that we object to machinery? I tell you we reverence it; we reverence it when it does its proper work, when it relieves man from ignoble and soulless labour, not when it seeks to do that which is valuable only when wrought by the hands and hearts of men. Let us have no machine-made ornament at all; it is all bad and worthless and ugly. . . . What you must do is to bring artists and handicraftsmen together. Handicraftsmen cannot live, certainly cannot thrive, without such companionship. Separate these two and you rob art of all spiritual motive.

As, to the other contents of this opulently interesting volume, we can only remark that they include the Grosvenor Gallery articles, distinguished by their catholic praise of Burne-Jones, Hunt, and Watts; an "Envoi" in which Wilde sets forth the art-for-art's-sake tenets as against Ruskin's ethical criticism; papers on dress reform, proving the zenith of taste in male costume to have been reached at the Restoration; letters combating Mr Whistler's assertion that the uglier society is the more beauty the artist can extract from it; amusing essays on London art models and on American women, whose "patriotic feelings are limited to an admiration for Niagara Falls and a regret for the Elevated Railroad," and who "adore titles and are a permanent blow to Republican principles"; art lectures on Morris, Crane, etc.; an amazingly encyclopedic article on "English Poetesses," not forgetting "the admirable Mrs Chapone, whose 'Ode to Solitude' always fills me with the wildest passion for society"; a crescendo of justificatory letters on "Dorian Grey"; and a collection of epigrams, to which might have been added, but that it appears in a letter to Mr Whistler, the immortal description of Mrs Grundy as "that amusing old lady who represents the only original form of humour that the middle classes of this country have been able to produce." Not the least valuable thing in the volume is the dictum of a "lord of language" on his literary peers:—

French prose, even in the hands of the most ordinary writers, is always readable, but English prose is detestable. We have a few, a very few, masters, such as they are. We have Carlyle, who should not be imitated; and Mr Pater, who, through the subtle perfection of his form, is inimitable absolutely; and Mr Froude, who is useful; and Matthew Arnold, who is a model; and Mr George Meredith, who is a warning; and Mr Lang, who is the divine amateur; and Mr Stevenson, who is the humane artist; and Mr Ruskin, whose rhythm and colour and fine rhetoric and marvellous music of words are entirely unattainable.

A glorious company, in which this one volume alone would entitle Oscar Wilde to a high and distinctive place.

Outlook. Oct. 17. 1908.

OSCAR WILDE AS JOURNALIST.

REVIEWS. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

MISCELLANIES. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

THESE are the last two volumes of Mr. Robert Ross' collected edition of the writings of Oscar Wilde. They mark the close of a notable achievement of editorship, embracing (Mr. Ross is able to claim) everything that could be identified as genuine. Mr. Ross expects to be "censured sooner or later for errors of omission and commission," and has decided to err on the side of commission. It is the only tolerable line to take if one has any strong sense of the value of truth. Whether Wilde was or was not a great writer is a question upon which Mr. Ross takes one side and a great body of unprejudiced critical opinion another; but there is no question about his prominence as a literary phenomenon in our times, about his having exerted influence. "If," says Mr. Ross—and the facts fully entitle him to say as much—"according to Lord Beaconsfield, the verdict of a Continental nation may be regarded as that of posterity, Wilde is a much greater force in our literature than even friendly contemporaries ever supposed he would become."

it is the mere fact that the verdict of Continental nations is strongly upon Mr. Ross' side. Hauptmann, when he visited Oxford to take his degree *honoris causa*, was asked whom he considered to be the greatest modern English writers. Of the two he named, Wilde was one; and in the literary coteries of Germany—to a less extent in those of France—his view would find agreement. It is plain that English critics who take another view are forced into an attitude of more open insularity, of more candid distrust of Continental taste and Continental literary standards of the present time, than is ever pleasant to people of intelligence. For our part we must say in few words that Wilde impresses us as a finished wit and literary artist without real profundity of mind or any other attribute of grandeur. But that he has been a force cannot be gainsaid; and history is the study of personal forces. Mr. Ross has collected, he

believes, the whole of the data for a study of Wilde the man of letters. He has discharged a heavy task faithfully and well.

The reviews in the first of these two terminal volumes date from March 1885, a review of a book on dining, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to May 1890, a review in the same paper of the volume in which the first published work of Mr. Laurence Binyon and Mr. Stephen Phillips appeared. They remind the reader of what is not too well realised: that Wilde was a journalist, and a good one. In his own way he could make a review as interesting as any man could who ever took up a pen. How arresting are his first words on some unfortunate poetaster's book! "*Women Must Weep* has the most dreadful cover of any book that we have come across for some time past. It is possibly intended to symbolise the sorrow of the world, but it merely suggests the decorative tendencies of an undertaker." Wilde could "slate" with an amusing vigour. On the other hand he could produce workaday criticism that was brilliant without either the impudence or the affectation that appears in his elaborated work. His article on Walt Whitman's last book is a thoughtful and remarkably penetrating estimate of that writer's work and influence. The last words of it may be quoted:—

He stands apart, and the chief value of his work is in its prophecy, not in its performance. He has begun a prelude to larger themes. He is the herald to a new era. As a man he is the precursor of a fresh type. He is a factor in the heroic and spiritual evolution of the human being. If Poetry has passed him by, Philosophy will take note of him.

How good!—and how unlike the Wilde of Wilde's books!

The volume of *Miscellanies* contains some immature writing, to the publication of which, Mr. Ross remarks, Wilde would hardly have consented; also a number of newspaper articles, the text of those of his lectures which exist in manuscript, some fragments of serious work, and the few letters which he wrote to the papers. The newspaper work is full of wit. "In Boston culture is an accomplishment rather than an atmosphere"; "a truth ceases to be true when more than one person believes in it"; "never talk of an artistic people; there never has been such a thing." Such sentences catch the eye wherever one opens the book; they have the familiar flavour. At the end is a list, compiled by Mr. Stuart Mason, of every genuine and authorised English edition of Wilde's writings. As Mr. Ross points out, a complete bibliography, including all the foreign translations and American piracies, would make a large volume by itself; and we may add that in the existing state of interest in Wilde's work abroad such a bibliography would have no finality.

The Works of Oscar Wilde: Reviews and Miscellanies. (Methuen. 8½ x 6. Two vols. Pp. xiv + 556 and xvi + 344. 12s. 6d. net each.) Reviewed this week.

Daily Express, Oct. 20 1908

"Reviews, Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. Two vols. (Methuen. 12s. 6d.) "There is No Decay." By Robert Ross. (Northern Publishing Co. 1s.)

Edition Completed.

Messrs. Methuen have completed their comely edition of the works of Oscar Wilde with two interesting volumes of Reviews and Miscellanies, the latter including the lectures delivered in America.

The editor of the edition, Mr. Robert Ross, may be warmly congratulated on the worthy completion of his task.

By the way, Mr. Ross has written an admirable and timely little brochure which he calls "There is No Decay," a protest against the persons who are always bewailing modern decadence in the arts.

"Do not greet the dawn," says Mr. Ross, "as though it were a lowering sunset."

Mr. Ross' words should be widely read. He writes wisely and well.

Daily Chronicle. Oct. 23 1908

A correspondent is reminded, by the publication of Whistler's Biography, of an incident, known only to one or two of a circle, in connection with the great artist's name and that of his one-time friend, Wilde. A certain man of influence and repute (who shall be nameless) suggested, not to Sir W. S. Gilbert but to Sullivan, with whom he, the said nameless one, was intimate, the following amended version to the famous song of the "singularly good young man" in "Patience":—

And everyone will say,
As I Whistler long my way,
What a very, very singularly Wilde young man
This Wilde young man must be!
Needless to add, this extra blow was not dealt upon the much-suffering "aesthetes."

*** Oct. 22. 1908.

"THE LIFE OF JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER." By E. R. and J. Pennell. Two volumes. Illustrated. London: William Heinemann.

In 1884 a fine collection of his pictures was exhibited in Dublin; in 1885 he began his "Ten o'clock" lectures, astonishing the public by the sanity and beauty of his criticisms, but eventually losing the friendship of Swinburne, who questioned his seriousness. With Oscar Wilde he had already quarrelled:

When it was a question of wit, there was no one to whom Wilde could go, as his equal or, rather, as his superior, except Whistler. A characteristic story of their relations in this respect has often been told. After one of Whistler's brilliant sallies Wilde said, "I wish I had said that, Whistler." "You will, Oscar, you will," was Whistler's answer. In matters of art, Wilde had everything to learn from Whistler, who, though ever generous to his friends, resented Wilde's preaching as his original doctrines the truths which Whistler had taught for years.

Manchester Courier

the impossibility of reproducing nature," but that there is nothing really to prevent a picture giving to the eye exactly the same impression that an actual scene gives, for that when he visited "the celebrated panorama of the Siege of Paris" he could hardly distinguish the painted from the real cannons! . . . Nothing but the most conscientious seriousness, combined with real labour, could have produced such a book.

There is no suspicion of irony, there is good, sound, strong criticism, in the review of Mr Swinburne's 1889 volume of verse:—

His song is nearly always too loud for his subject. His magnificent rhetoric . . . conceals rather than reveals. It has been said of him, and with truth, that he is a master of language, but with still greater truth it may be said that language is his master. . . . Mere sound often becomes his lord. He is so eloquent that whatever he touches becomes unreal.

There is a curious prophetic note in the opening sentence of the very sympathetic review of Mr Wilfrid Blunt's "Love Sonnets of Proteus"—"Prison has had an admirable effect on Mr Wilfrid Blunt as a poet." It had had, also, in this case, an indirectly favourable effect on the reviewer; for Mr Blunt was sent to prison by Mr Balfour, whom Wilde, for some reason or other, particularly disliked, and whose "Defence of Philosophic Doubt" he refers to as "one of the dullest books we know." It is interesting to observe that on the appearance of "Imaginary Portraits," in 1887, Wilde hailed Pater as "if not among the greatest prose writers of our literature . . . at least our greatest artist in prose"; also, that he gives serious and sympathetic attention to Professor Veitch's "Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry"—of Wilde's own ignorance of which we have presumptive evidence in his praise (at p. 411) of Allingham's "The Fairies," whose first stanza is a poor echo of a verse of "Charlie is My Darling." Before dragging ourselves away from these fascinating Reviews, we note that Wilde defines a fashion in dress as, "from the artistic point of view, a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months;" and that among "Books not to read at all" are "Thomson's 'Seasons,' Rogers's 'Italy,' Paley's 'Evidences,' all Voltaire's plays, . . . all argumentative books, and books that try to prove anything."

Like a schoolboy at a Christmas dinner, we have used up nearly all our available space before the feast is half over. The second volume of course is, from a literary point of view, much the more important, but of pieces printed for the first time it contains only a complete rendering of the highly erudite and very closely reasoned Essay on Historical Criticism; a minute fragment of a play which was to illustrate, in a most passionate and realistic fashion, "Wilde's favourite theory that when you convert some one to an idea you lose your faith in it"; and several American lectures, remarkable for the sweet reasonableness with which they defend such main positions as:—

Do you think, for instance, that we object to machinery? I tell you we reverence it; we reverence it when it does its proper work, when it relieves man from ignoble and soulless labour, not when it seeks to do that which is valuable only when wrought by the hands and hearts of men. Let us have no machine-made ornament at all; it is all bad and worthless and ugly. . . . What you must do is to bring artists and handicraftsmen together. Handicraftsmen cannot live, certainly, but to thrive, on such companionship. Separate these two and you rob art of all spiritual motive.

As to the other contents of this opulently interesting volume, we can only remark that they include the Grosvenor Gallery articles, distinguished by their catholic praise of Burne-Jones, Hunt, and Watts; an "Envoi" in which Wilde sets forth the art-for-art's-sake tenets as against Ruskin's ethical criticism; papers on dress reform, proving the zenith of taste in male costume to have been reached at the Restoration; letters combating Mr Whistler's assertion that the uglier society is the more beauty the artist can extract from it; amusing essays on London art models and on American women, whose "patriotic feelings are limited to an admiration for Niagara Falls and a regret for the Elevated Railroad," and who "adore titles and are a permanent blow to Republican principles"; art lectures on Morris, Crane, etc.; an amazingly encyclopædic article on "English Poetesses," not forgetting "the admirable Mrs Chapone, whose 'Ode to Solitude' always fills me with the wildest passion for society"; a crescendo of justificatory letters on "Dorian Grey"; and a collection of epigrams, to which might have been added, but that it appears in a letter to Mr Whistler, the immortal description of Mrs Grundy as "that amusing old lady who represents the only original form of humour that the middle classes of this country have been able to produce." Not the least valuable thing in the volume is the diction of a "lord of language" on his literary peers:—

French prose, even in the hands of the most ordinary writers, is always readable, but English prose is detestable. We have a few, a very few, masters, such as they are. We have Carlyle, who should not be imitated; and Mr Pater, who, through the subtle perfection of his form, is inimitable absolutely; and Mr Froude, who is useful; and Matthew Arnold, who is a model; and Mr George Meredith, who is a warning; and Mr Lang, who is the divine amateur; and Mr Stevenson, who is the humane artist; and Mr Ruskin, whose rhythm and colour and fine rhetoric and marvellous music of words are entirely unattainable.

A glorious company, in which this one volume alone would entitle Oscar Wilde to a high and distinctive place.

Outlook.

Oct. 17. 1908

OSCAR WILDE AS JOURNALIST.

REVIEWS. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen net.

MISCELLANIES. By Oscar Wilde. London: 12s. 6d. net.

THESE are the last two volumes of Mr. Ross's collected edition of the writings of Oscar Wilde. They mark the close of a notable achievement of embracing (Mr. Ross is able to claim) everything that can be identified as genuine. Mr. Ross expects to be sooner or later for errors of omission and commission has decided to err on the side of commission. It is only a tolerable line to take if one has any strong sense of the value of truth. Whether Wilde was or was not a great question upon which Mr. Ross takes a great body of unprejudiced critical opinion, but there is no question about his prominence as a writer in our times, about his having exerted

OSCAR WILDE AS JOURNALIST.

REVIEWS. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

MISCELLANIES. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

THESE are the last two volumes of Mr. Robert Ross' collected edition of the writings of Oscar Wilde. They mark the close of a notable achievement of editorship, embracing (Mr. Ross is able to claim) everything that could be identified as genuine. Mr. Ross expects to be "censured sooner or later for errors of omission and commission," and has decided to err on the side of commission. It is the only tolerable line to take if one has any strong sense of the value of truth. Whether Wilde was or was not a great writer is a question upon which Mr. Ross takes one side and a great body of unprejudiced critical opinion another; but there is no question about his prominence as a literary phenomenon in our times, about his having exerted influence. "If," says Mr. Ross—and the facts fully entitle him to say as much—"according to Lord Beaconsfield, the verdict of a Continental nation may be regarded as that of posterity, Wilde is a much greater force in our literature than even friendly contemporaries ever supposed he would become."

It is the mere fact that the verdict of Continental nations is strongly upon Mr. Ross' side. Hauptmann, when he visited Oxford to take his degree *honoris causa*, was asked whom he considered to be the greatest modern English writers. Of the two he named, Wilde was one; and in the literary coteries of Germany—to a less extent in those of France—his view would find agreement. It is plain that English critics who take another view are forced into an attitude of more open insularity, of more candid distrust of Continental taste and Continental literary standards of the present time, than is ever pleasant to people of intelligence. For our part we must say in few words that Wilde impresses us as a finished wit and literary artist without real profundity of mind or any other attribute of grandeur. But that he has been a force cannot be gainsaid; and history is the study of personal forces. Mr. Ross has collected, he

believes, the whole of the data for a study of Wilde the man of letters. He has discharged a heavy task faithfully and well.

The reviews in the first of these two terminal volumes date from March 1885, a review of a book on dining, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to May 1890, a review in the same paper of the volume in which the first published work of Mr. Laurence Binyon and Mr. Stephen Phillips appeared. They remind the reader of what is not too well realised: that Wilde was a journalist, and a good one. In his own way he could make a review as interesting as any man could who ever took up a pen. How arresting are his first words on some unfortunate poetaster's book! "*Women Must Weep* has the most dreadful cover of any book that we have come across for some time past. It is possibly intended to symbolise the sorrow of the world, but it merely suggests the decorative tendencies of an undertaker." Wilde could "slate" with an amusing vigour. On the other hand he could produce workaday criticism that was brilliant without either the impudence or the affectation that appears in his elaborated work. His article on Walt Whitman's last book is a thoughtful and remarkably penetrating estimate of that writer's work and influence. The last words of it may be quoted:—

He stands apart, and the chief value of his work is in its prophecy, not in its performance. He has begun a prelude to larger themes. He is the herald to a new era. As a man he is the precursor of a fresh type. He is a factor in the heroic and spiritual evolution of the human being. If Poetry has passed him by, Philosophy will take note of him.

How good!—and how unlike the Wilde of Wilde's books!

The volume of *Miscellanies* contains some immature writing, to the publication of which, Mr. Ross remarks, Wilde would hardly have consented; also a number of newspaper articles, the text of those of his lectures which exist in manuscript, some fragments of serious work, and the few letters which he wrote to the papers. The newspaper work is full of wit. "In Boston culture is an accomplishment rather than an atmosphere"; "a truth ceases to be true when more than one person believes in it"; "never talk of an artistic people; there never has been such a thing." Such sentences catch the eye wherever one opens the book; they have the familiar flavour. At the end is a list, compiled by Mr. Stuart Mason, of every genuine and authorised English edition of Wilde's writings. As Mr. Ross points out, a complete bibliography, including all the foreign translations and American piracies, would make a large volume by itself; and we may add that in the existing state of interest in Wilde's work such a bibliography would be a finality.

The Works of Oscar Wilde: Reviews and Miscellanies. (Methuen. 8½ x 6. Two vols. Pp. xiv + 556 and xvi + 344. 12s. 6d. net each.)
Reviewed this week.

Daily Express, Oct. 20 1908

"Reviews, Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. Two vols. (Methuen. 12s. 6d.)
"There is No Decay." By Robert Ross. (Northern Publishing Co. 1s.)

Edition Completed.

Messrs. Methuen have completed their comely edition of the works of Oscar Wilde with two interesting volumes of Reviews and Miscellanies, the latter including the lectures delivered in America.

The editor of the edition, Mr. Robert Ross, may be warmly congratulated on the worthy completion of his task.

By the way, Mr. Ross has written an admirable and timely little brochure which he calls "There is No Decay," a protest against the persons who are always bewailing modern decadence in the arts.

"Do not greet the dawn," says Mr. Ross, "as though it were a lowering sunset."

Mr. Ross' words should be widely read. He writes wisely and well.

Daily Chronicle. Oct. 23 1908

Correspondent is reminded, by the publication of Whistler's Biography, of an incident, known only to one or two of a circle, in connection with the great artist's name and that of his one-time friend, Wilde. A certain man of influence and repute (who shall be nameless) suggested, not to Sir W. S. Gilbert but to Sullivan, with whom he, the said nameless one, was intimate, the

following amended version to the famous song of the "singularly good young man" in "Patience":—

And everyone will say,

As I Whistler long my way,

What a very, very singularly Wilde young man

This Wilde young man must be!

Needless to add, this extra blow was not dealt upon the much-suffering "aesthetes."

Oct. 22. 1908.

"THE LIFE OF JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER."
By E. R. and J. Pennell. Two volumes. Illustrated. London: William Heinemann.

In 1884 a fine collection of his pictures was exhibited in Dublin; in 1885 he began his "Ten o'clock" lectures, astonishing the public by the sanity and beauty of his criticisms, but eventually losing the friendship of Swinburne, who questioned his seriousness. With Oscar Wilde he had already quarrelled:

When it was a question of wit, there was no one to whom Wilde could go, as his equal or, rather, as his superior, except Whistler. A characteristic story of their relations in this respect has often been told. After one of Whistler's brilliant sallies Wilde said, "I wish I had said that, Whistler." "You will, Oscar, you will," was Whistler's answer. In matters of art, Wilde had everything to learn from Whistler, who, though ever generous to his friends, resented Wilde's preaching as his original doctrines the truths which Whistler had taught for years.

Daily Express,

Oct. 20
1908

"Reviews, Miscellanies." By Oscar Wilde. Two vols. (Methuen. 12s. 6d.)

"There is No Decay." By Robert Ross. (Northern Publishing Co. 1s.)

Edition Completed.

Messrs. Methuen have completed their comely edition of the works of Oscar Wilde with two interesting volumes of Reviews and Miscellanies, the latter including the lectures delivered in America.

The editor of the edition, Mr. Robert Ross, may be warmly congratulated on the worthy completion of his task.

By the way, Mr. Ross has written an admirable and timely little brochure which he calls "There Is No Decay," a protest against the persons who are always bewailing modern decadence in the arts.

"Do not greet the dawn," says Mr. Ross, "as though it were a lowering sunset."

Mr. Ross is a member of the University Library. He writes wisely and well.

Daily Chronicle.

Oct. 23

1908

Correspondent is reminded, by the publication of Whistler's Biography, of an incident, known only to one or two of a circle, in connection with the great artist's name and that of his one-time friend, Wilde. A certain man of influence and repute (who shall be nameless) suggested, not to Sir W. S. Gilbert but to Sullivan, with whom he, the said nameless one, was intimate, the following amended version to the famous song of the "singularly good young man" in "Patience":—

And everyone will say,

As I Whistler long my way,

What a very, very singularly Wilde young
man

This Wilde young man must be!

Needless to add, this extra blow was not dealt upon the much-suffering "aesthetes."

Oct. 22. 1908.

"THE LIFE OF JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER."

By E. R. and J. Pennell. Two volumes.
Illustrated. London: William Heinemann.

In 1884 a fine collection of his pictures was exhibited in Dublin; in 1885 he began his "Ten o'clock" lectures, astonishing the public by the sanity and beauty of his criticisms, but eventually losing the friendship of Swinburne, who questioned his seriousness. With Oscar Wilde he had already quarrelled:

When it was a question of wit, there was no one to whom Wilde could go, as his equal or, rather, as his superior, except Whistler. A characteristic story of their relations in this respect has often been told. After one of Whistler's brilliant sallies Wilde said, "I wish I had said that, Whistler." "You will, Oscar, you will," was Whistler's answer. In matters of art, Wilde had everything to learn from Whistler, who was generous to his friends, resented Wilde's preaching as his original doctrines the truths which Whistler had taught for years.

Digitized by Jisc 2016 on behalf of University of Liverpool Library

NEWEST B

MR. WILDE'S JOURNALISM.

"THE COMPLETE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE." Two Concluding Volumes. (Methuen. 12s. 6d. each.)

The two concluding volumes in this handsomely printed edition of Mr. Wilde's works are entitled respectively "Reviews" and "Miscellanies"; and they consist mainly of reprints of lectures and of fugitive contributions to the Press. As usual, each one is accompanied by a foreword written by the editor, Mr. Robert Ross, and also by a dedication that is at one and the same time an advertisement and a panegyric; and, truth to tell, we find ourselves getting rather tired of both these things. "Let the man speak for himself." This would have been a good, sound editorial principle in a literary affair of this magnitude. Instead of that, Mr. Ross pops in and out the volumes in a most irritating fashion; for instance, thus:—

"The editor of writings by any author not long deceased is censured sooner or later for his errors of omission or commission. I have decided to err on the side of commission, and to include in the uniform edition of Wilde's works everything that could be identified as genuine. Wilde's literary reputation has survived so much that I think it proof against any exhumation of articles which he or his admirers would have preferred to forget."

"I would draw special attention to those reviews of Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, Mr. Alfred Austin, the Hon. John Collier, Mr. Brander Matthews, and Sir Edwin Arnold, Rossetti, Pater, Henley, and Morris; they have more permanent value than the others, and are in accord with the wiser critical judgments of to-day."

After all, these observations are really the commonplaces of his craft, and they might well have been left out of books of this description, for they are of a character that would have certainly set Mr. Wilde's own teeth on edge. Mr. Ross is on safer ground when he confides to us plain statements of fact—for example, how Mr. Wilde told him that, apart from mere scholarship, his literary and dramatic talents had developed slowly; that he was never regarded as a particularly clever or precocious youth, and that many old family friends and contemporary journalists maintained sturdily that the talent of his elder brother William was much more remarkable than his gifts. Mr. Ross is also happy in his explanation of how the manuscript of the nearly completed drama, "La Sainte Courtisane," was left in a cab in Paris and never recovered. The consequence of that accident, however, was that the passages of the play now reprinted in these books are small and fragmentary, and have been taken, of necessity, from some odd leaves of a first draft. The editor adds:—

"The play is, of course, not unlike 'Salomé,' though it was written in English. It expanded Wilde's favourite theory that when you convert some one to an idea you lose your faith in it; the same motive runs through 'Mr. W. H. Honorius, the hermit, so far as I recollect the story, falls in love with the courtesan, who has come to tempt him, and he reveals to her the secret of the Love of God. She immediately becomes a Christian, and is murdered by robbers; Honorius, the hermit, goes back to Alexandria to pursue a life of pleasure. Two other similar plays Wilde invented in prison, 'Ahab and Isabel' and 'Pharaoh'; he would never write them down, though often importuned to do so. 'Pharaoh' was intensely dramatic, and, perhaps, more original than any of the group. None of these works must be confused with the manuscripts stolen from 16, Tite-street in 1895—namely, the enlarged version of 'Mr. W. H.,' the completed form of 'A Florentine Tragedy,' and 'The Duchess of Padua' (which existing in a prompt copy was of less importance than the others); nor with 'The Cardinal of Arragon,' the manuscript of which I never saw. I scarcely think it ever existed, though Wilde used to recite proposed passages from it."

It is also interesting to learn that the fact that Mr. Wilde's name "appeared at the end of poems and articles was not always a proof of authenticity even in his lifetime," but we wish that Mr. Ross had given better grounds for his assertion than that single instance where, in a poem entitled "The Shamrock" was inadvertently attributed by a Sunday newspaper to Mr. Wilde. Surely that was not a very serious matter, although Mr. Wilde lashed himself into a great fury over it! There are, however, many unimportant things like that set out in these books; and, viewed dispassionately as a whole, they make us wish that Mr. Ross had exercised greater self-restraint in the multitude of his selections. One of the most sparkling contributions, however, is the chapter on "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young," in which is set out:—"The first duty of life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has as yet discovered"; "Wickedness is a myth invented by good people to account for the curious attractiveness of others"; "Dulness is the coming of age of seriousness"; "Industry is the root of all ugliness"; "The old believe everything; the middle-aged suspect everything; the young know everything"; and, finally, "There is something tragic about the enormous number of young men there are in England at the present moment who start life with perfect profiles, and end by adopting some useful profession." . . .

Madame Oct. 26, 1908

A Fine Play.

"John the Baptist," a play by Hermann Sudermann, translated by Beatrice Marshall, has just been published by Mr. John Lane, of The Bodley Head (price 5s. net.). The subject has attracted many, notably Oscar Wilde in his "Salomé," and Edgar Saltus in "Mary of Magdala," but it remained for the German dramatist to write a play which is not fantastic and which is truly impressive. The tragedy of John is finely depicted, and the end is a climax full of pathos and sublimity.

THE CLIMB FOR THE EAGLETS

SOME years ago a poor peasant lay very dangerously ill in a small hut in the mountain valleys of Switzerland. He was greatly in need of medicine, but the cost of it was far more than he or his family could afford.

There happened at the time to be an English traveller staying at a neighbouring hotel who was very anxious to secure some eaglets. Eaglets were very rare in the neighbouring districts, and he accordingly offered a large sum of money for a couple. But the only eyrie,

as the nest of the eagle is called, was on a high crag which was supposed to be inaccessible, and no one ventured to attempt to reach it.

When William and Louis, the two young sons of the sick peasant, heard of the traveller's offer, however, they roped themselves together, scaled the high crag after risking their lives for three long hours, captured the birds, and took them to the traveller, who gave them the reward. They then hurried off to get the medicine, which saved their father's life.

THE TALLOW DIP AND THE "BLACK SALT"

RATHER more than two hundred years since, Lady Edgeworth, the wife of Sir John Edgeworth, lived at a place called Castle Lissard. Now, in those days, there was much disturbance in Ireland and little law; and though there, were guests staying at Castle Lissard they knew that the house might be attacked, so that a barrel of gunpowder was always kept in a loft.

One evening there was an alarm. The men got their guns, and Lady Edgeworth hurried up to the loft to bring down some powder, for in those days there were no cartridges, but you had to drop the powder into the barrel of the musket and ram the bullet down with a ramrod. She took with her a young servant to carry the light, which was nothing better than a spluttering tallow candle, without a candlestick, as was common enough at that time. But Biddy the maid knew nothing about gunpowder, and when Lady Edgeworth

had got half-way down the stairs again there was Biddy coming behind her with no candle.

"Biddy," said Lady Edgeworth, "where's the candle?" "Sure, and I left it," says Biddy, "sticking in the barrel of black salt."

Now, even the kind of wax candle that we use would have been dangerous enough, but the old tallow candles shed sparks much more easily. If a spark from that candle reached the "black salt," there would be a fearful explosion; half the house would be blown down, and many lives lost. Straight into the danger sped Lady Edgeworth. She darted upstairs to where the candle stood spluttering and flaring, lifted it with firm fingers, and carried it out of the room. Neither she nor anyone else got any hurt, so her golden deed was by no means in vain. The heroine herself lived to be ninety years old and was the ancestress of Marie Edgeworth.

A LOOK THAT HELPED A FALLEN FRIEND

MANY deeds of kindness and love are associated with the prison. Here is a story of one very simple little act of love which helped a poor, disgraced prisoner to bear up against despair through the weary years he had to spend in the solitude of a prison.

A well-educated Englishman had disgraced his fair name and been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, and knew that all his former companions would never speak to him again when he came out of gaol. After he had been in prison for a few months he had to appear at the Bankruptcy Court in

London to answer the questions of the judge with reference to his debts. A former friend of his saw in the morning paper that his case would be settled on the following day at the Law Courts, so he went and stood in the passage leading to the Bankruptcy Court.

As the prisoner, escorted by two prison warders, passed through, with eyes ashamed and cast down, this friend just silently raised his hat to him. The unhappy prisoner saw and never forgot that act. He felt that there was one friend who had not decided to ignore him for the future, which had seemed so hopeless.

THE NEXT GOLDEN DEEDS BEGIN ON PAGE 153

1558

erable judges of the te pays al' fax, oresses to be es, nor his own of all levels. hardest ofessor views on wholly sledge-critical, a per- a mere s there any stir ay that phrases o great lect, to d. But a man e doing ong the literary onscien- tunities justice r. Wilde ost men that we most in- volumes. te task given us se many

Oct. 28, 1908

correspon- was "pro- stery. With nity which is identity, he and his names he He shows on a reli- will make ceian. His es a warm the Church beer in the

Oct. 28, 1908

ger son has been nelite monastery. d is engaged on a se much stir.

cular

Oct. 26, 1908

E.C.

Edr- LEY, OSCAR WILDE (Methuen), RICHARD- SON (Heinemann).

WILDE (Methuen), RICHARD- SON (Heinemann).

NEW MR. WILDE

"THE COMPLETE
Two Concluding
each.)

The two concluding volumes of the complete edition of the works of Oscar Wilde, entitled respectively "The Complete Letters" and "The Complete Speeches," are now published by Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd. As usual, a foreword is written by Mr. Ross, and also by the same time panegyric; and, in fact, the man speaks for himself rather than for the editor. Let the man speak. There has been a good deal of literary affair of that, Mr. Ross's volumes in a moment of instance, thus:—

"The editor of the works of Oscar Wilde is censured for omission or commission on the side of a complete uniform edition of the works of Oscar Wilde. The editor could be identified with the reputation has survived proof against any exposure of his admirers would be identified with the reputation of Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Anstey, the Hon. Mr. Matthews, and Sir B. Henley, and Morris. The value than the other is a wiser critical judgment.

After all, these are commonplaces of his life have been left out of the edition, for they are of value certainly set on edge. Mr. Ross is confident to us plain example, how Mr. Wilde from mere scholarly dramatic talents had he was never regarded or precocious youth, friends and contemporaries sturdily that brother William was than his gifts. Mr. Wilde's explanation of how nearly completed "Courtisane" was never recovered. The incident, however, was play now reprinted in a fragmentary way, and necessity, from some. The editor adds:—

The Child's Book of GOLDEN DEEDS



KATE BARLASS OF THE BROKEN ARM

KING JAMES the First of Scotland was a good king; but when he came to the throne, nearly 500 years ago, the country was in such disorder that he had to be very stern and severe to keep the powerful nobles from wrong-doing; therefore many of them were full of hatred towards him. Then certain of these, headed by Sir Robert Grahame, conspired together to slay the king.

Now, it happened that the king went one winter to the town of Perth to hold high festival, with his queen and some of her ladies, and abode in the Abbey of Perth, while his followers were scattered over the city; and here the traitors got their chance of catching him unguarded. To make matters easier, some servants were bribed to remove the bolts and bars from the doors. And so it befell one night, when all the king's men had gone from the abbey, and he was sitting unarmed with the queen and her ladies, that a great clatter of weapons was heard without. Thereupon he guessed that his foes had gathered to murder him, nor could he fight them, being himself unarmed. But, as he knew that there was a vault under the chamber where he was, he wrenched up boards from the floor, and leaped down; and the ladies quickly put back the boards and covered them just before the traitors rushed into the room. And they, not finding him, searched for him high and low. Then the king and the ladies in the chamber, seeing that the danger was passed, began to move the boards, so that James might come out again. And, even at that moment, they heard the clatter and clash of arms again. For one of the traitors had bethought himself of that vault, and they were hurrying back. What chance of escape was there for the king? There would be no time to cover all up before the conspirators broke in; and on the door was no lock or bolt to stay them—only the iron rings where the bolt should be. Quick as thought, one of the queen's maidens, named Katherine Douglas, sprang to the door and thrust her arm through the rings on the door, crying out that the men must not enter, since there were none in the room but ladies who were disrobing. But the fierce men outside paid no heed to that, and beat upon the door; and how should a maiden's frail arm suffice for a bolt against their battering? Alas, poor Katherine's arm was snapped, and the wicked men burst in, and, seeing where the floor had been disturbed, leaped down and slew the king. For that brave deed of hers, all in vain though it was, the name of Katherine Douglas was repeated in story and song through the land, and men called her Kate Barlass—the maid who barred the door with her tender arm, that so, if it were possible, she might save the good king's life.

1557

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

(METHUEN. Two Vols., 12s 6d net each.)

With these two volumes the publication of the Uniform Edition of the Complete Works of Oscar Wilde is brought to a finish. They are of particular interest, as they contain literary work which has never before been published in book form, and for the most part consist of the author's anonymous opinions of the work of his contemporaries. The volume of Miscellanies includes the second part of the Essay on "The Use of Historical Criticism," the first portion of which appeared in the volume labelled "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," and has been discovered by Mr. Ross since that volume was produced; the various lectures the author delivered; a fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtisane," hitherto unpublished; many articles on various subjects, letters written to the Press; and the volume concludes with a bibliography, compiled by Mr. Stuart Mason, which contains every genuine and authorised English edition. This brief description is enough to show the reader how full of interest is the volume.

But to our mind the other volume, that of anonymous reviews, is the most interesting of all, as throwing a light on the author which most authors of repute would shrink from. If a man can be judged from his letters, how much more can he be judged from his unsigned contributions to journals. Mr. Robert Ross, in a lively and ably-written preface, shows that he is quite conscious of the temerity of his action in the matter. But he "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include in the uniform edition of Wilde's works everything that could be identified as genuine." Certain it is that this volume contains work which the author never intended should be taken from the pages in which it was buried, and published under his name, and for that very reason we are particularly grateful to the editor for having rescued them. The reviews appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Woman's World* during a period of five years—1885-1890—years when the author was publishing much of his own creative work, which was certainly not spared by the critics of the day. How did such a man—sensitive to criticism, gifted with a rare power of retort, fully conscious of his own merit in comparison with that of his contemporaries—use his opportunity of anonymity? Under his own name he hit hard and unsparingly. How did he treat his fellow-workers when he had the chance of saying what he thought without signing his name? In the whole course of this vastly interesting volume we find no trace of malice, no stabbing in the dark, no unkindness, no injustice, and no desire to break a fly on the wheel. On the contrary, we find kindness, justice, encouragement, quick and generous appreciation of any merit, and a joy in any gleam amid the darkness, which does our heart good and a lesson to all critics. Mr. Ross is a success financially; he was grudgingly recognised; he shows no bitterness, no desire to "score" at the expense of his contemporaries. It is a lesson, and it is a noble one. When he does strike, he reserves his blows for the deserving. To minor poets and authors, sometimes even one of heart leads him to the any rate, to the finding of the chaff. Almost every notice of W. G. Wills's "The Rembrandt," followed by a great tribute to that author for his play "Olivia." It is the fashion to sneer at Wills. Mr. Wilde found high praise for him.

But we have no room to mention the innumerable people for whom he has a good word. He judges books on their merits, not from the height of the superior person or the "precious" critic. He pays a noble compliment to the author of "John Halfax, Gentleman," and to many authors and authoresses with whom one might have expected him to be entirely out of sympathy. He never grumbles, nor seeks to mislead the public taste and betray his own standard, but he recognises that literature is of all sorts, and that good is to be found on various levels. Professor Mahaffey comes in for some of his hardest knocks, chiefly because in literature the professor tried to enforce unfairly his own particular views on politics. There is an amusing attack—but wholly genial and justified—on Harry Quilter, that sledgehammer among critics who had no special critical faculty. There is a splendid article on Henley, a perfect appreciation of Walter Pater, not at all a mere act of worship; and scattered through the pages there is mention of most of the books which made any stir during those five years. It is needless to say that the volume teems with good things, crisp phrases which vividly recall the author. He was too great an artist, and had far too acute an intellect, to encourage fustian or lose his head over tinsel. But it is good to find that he was also too large a man to sneer at and crush the little ones who were doing their best, and not to recognise the gold among the glitter. This volume will keep alive the literary history of those five years, and show us the conscientious use a great writer made of his opportunities for pronouncing on his contemporaries. Full of justice and full of laughter, is this volume in which Mr. Wilde comes triumphantly through an ordeal most men would fear to face. It is for this reason that we consider the "Reviews" in some ways the most interesting of all the fourteen magnificent volumes. Mr. Robert Ross has performed his intricate task boldly and well, and in his indiscretion has given us an insight into the author which will surprise many people and delight all.

The next volume in Mr. John Lane's "Living Masters of Music" series will be a biography of Richard Strauss, one of the most talked-of composers of the present day. This has been written by that conscientious and erudite critic, Mr. Ernest Newman. Born at Munich in 1864, Strauss was the son of an instrumentalist in the Court Orchestra of that city. In 1894 he married Fraulein Pauline de Ahna, a young singer who had created the principal part in his opera, "Guntram." His last big work was "Salome," a setting of Oscar Wilde's drama, which was produced at Dresden in 1905.

story notice of W. G. Wills's "The Rembrandt," followed by a great tribute to that author for his play "Olivia." It is the fashion to sneer at Wills. Mr. Wilde found high praise for him.

North Western Mail (Barrow) Oct. 28, 1908

A few weeks ago, writes a London correspondent, the younger son of Oscar Wilde was "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. With the exception of the prior the community which he has joined is quite ignorant of his identity. As soon as he left the school at which he and his brother were educated under assumed names he decided to adopt a religious life. He shews great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which, it is anticipated, will make much stir. He is also gifted as a musician. His fame has reached the Pope, who takes a warm interest in this brilliant young son of the Church of Rome. His elder brother is an officer in the Army.

Newcastle Chronicle, Oct. 28, 1908

The late Oscar Wilde's younger son has been "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. He has great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which will make much stir.

Publishers' Circular

JOHN JEFFERY,
115a, City Rd., London, E.C.
Any vols. of the LIMITED EDITIONS of PATER, KINGSLEY, KIPLING (Macmillan), OSCAR WILDE (Methuen), RICHARDSON (Heinemann).

Oct. 26, 1908

NEW MR. WILDE

"THE COMPLETE V Two Concluding each.)

The two concluding volumes printed editions entitled respectively "Lectures and of full Press. As usual, a foreword written by Mr. Ross, and also by the same time panegyric; and, the man speaks rather than getting rather. Let the man speak have been a good, in a literary affair of that, Mr. Ross volumes in a most instance, thus:—

"The editor of who deceased is censured of omission or commission on the side of commission uniform edition of W could be identified a reputation has survived proof against any exploit or his admirers would "I would draw special of Mr. Swinburne, M Austin, the Hon. Matthews, and Sir E Henley, and Morris; value than the others wiser critical judgment

After all, these ob commonplaces of his have been left out tion, for they are of have certainly set M edge. Mr. Ross is c confides to us plain example, how Mr. W from mere scholar dramatic talents had he was never regarde or precocious youth, friends and contemp tained sturdily that brother William was than his gifts. Mr. explanation of how nearly completed Courtesane," was left never recovered. The dent, however, was t play now reprinted and fragmentary, an necessity, from some The editor adds:—

The Child's Book of GOLDEN DEEDS



KATE BARLASS OF THE BROKEN ARM

KING JAMES the First of Scotland was a good king; but when he came to the throne, nearly 500 years ago, the country was in such disorder that he had to be very stern and severe to keep the powerful nobles from wrong-doing; therefore many of them were full of hatred towards him. Then certain of these, headed by Sir Robert Grahame, conspired together to slay the king.

Now, it happened that the king went one winter to the town of Perth to hold high festival, with his queen and some of her ladies, and abode in the Abbey of Perth, while his followers were scattered over the city; and here the traitors got their chance of catching him unguarded. To make matters easier, some servants were bribed to remove the bolts and bars from the doors. And so it befell one night, when all the king's men had gone from the abbey, and he was sitting unarmed with the queen and her ladies, that a great clatter of weapons was heard without. Thereupon he guessed that his foes had gathered to murder him, nor could he fight them, being himself unarmed. But, as he knew that there was a vault under the chamber where he was, he wrenched up boards from the floor, and leaped down; and the ladies quickly put back the boards and covered them just before the traitors rushed into the room. And they, not finding him, searched for

him high and low. Then the king and the ladies in the chamber, seeing that the danger was passed, began to move the boards, so that James might come out again. And, even at that moment, they heard the clatter and clash of arms again. For one of the traitors had bethought himself of that vault, and they were hurrying back. What chance of escape was there for the king? There would be no time to cover all up before the conspirators broke in; and on the door was no lock or bolt to stay them—only the iron rings where the bolt should be.

Quick as thought, one of the queen's maidens, named Katherine Douglas, sprang to the door and thrust her arm through the rings on the door, crying out that the men must not enter, since there were none in the room but ladies who were disrobing. But the fierce men outside paid no heed to that, and beat upon the door; and how should a maiden's frail arm suffice for a bolt against their battering? Alas, poor Katherine's arm was snapped, and the wicked men burst in, and seeing the floor had been broken down and slew the king. For that brave deed in vain though it was Katherine Douglas's story and song through men called her Kate Barlass who barred the door with her arm, that so, if it were not for her, the king might save the good king.

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

(METHUEN. Two Vols., 12s 6d net each.)
With these two volumes the publication of the Uniform Edition of the Complete Works of Oscar Wilde is brought to a finish. They are of particular interest, as they contain literary work which has never before been published in book form, and for the most part consist of the author's anonymous opinions of the work of his contemporaries. The volume of Miscellanies includes the second part of the Essay on "The Use of Historical Criticism," the first portion of which appeared in the volume labelled "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," and has been discovered by Mr. Ross since that volume was produced; the various lectures the author delivered; a fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtesane," hitherto unpublished; many articles on various subjects, letters written to the Press; and the volume concludes with a bibliography, compiled by Mr. Stuart Mason, which contains every genuine and authorised English edition. This brief description is enough to show the reader how full of interest is the volume.

But to our mind the other volume, that of anonymous reviews, is the most interesting of all, as throwing a light on the author which most authors of repute would shrink from. If a man can be judged from his letters, how much more can he be judged from his unsigned contributions to journals. Mr. Robert Ross, in a lively and ably-written preface, shows that he is quite conscious of the temerity of his action in the matter. But he "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include in the uniform edition of Wilde's works everything that could be identified as genuine." Certain it is that this volume contains work which the author never intended should be taken from the pages in which it was buried, and published under his name, and for that very reason we are particularly grateful to the editor for having rescued them. The reviews appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Woman's World* during a period of five years—1885-1890—years when the author was publishing much of his own creative work, which was certainly not spared by the critics of the day. How did such a man—sensitive to criticism, gifted with a rare power of retort, fully conscious of his own merit in comparison with that of his contemporaries—use his opportunity of anonymity? Under his own name he hit hard and unsparingly. How did he treat his fellow-workers when he had the chance of saying what he thought without signing his name? In the whole course of this vastly interesting volume we find no trace of malice, no stabbing in the dark, no unkindness, no injustice, and no desire to break a fly on the wheel. On the contrary, we find kindness, justice, encouragement, quick and generous appreciation of any merit, a gentleness in censure, and a joy in any gleam amid dulness and incompetence, which does our heart good and should be a salutary lesson to all critics. Mr. Wilde was not at that time a success financially; he was bitterly attacked, he was grudgingly recognised; yet this Triton among the minnows shows no bitterness, no impatience, and no desire to "score" at the expense of other workers. It is a lesson, and it is something of a revelation. When he does strike, he does so courteously, and he reserves his blows for those who are able to stand them. To minor poets and to women he is ever generous, sometimes even one feels that his kindness of heart leads him to the "suppressio veri"; at any rate, to the finding of the wheat and ignoring of the chaff. Almost the first review is a laudatory notice of W. G. Wills's "Melchior," followed by a great tribute to that author for his play "Olivia." It is the fashion to sneer at Wills. Mr. Wilde found high praise for him.

But we have no room to mention the innumerable people for whom he has a good word. He judges books on their merits, not from the height of the superior person or the "precious" critic. He pays a noble compliment to the author of "John Halfax, Gentleman," and to many authors and authoresses with whom one might have expected him to be entirely out of sympathy. He never grumbles, nor seeks to mislead the public taste and betray his own standard, but he recognises that literature is of all sorts, and that good is to be found on various levels. Professor Mahaffey comes in for some of his hardest knocks, chiefly because in literature the professor tried to enforce unfairly his own particular views on politics. There is an amusing attack—but wholly genial and justified—on Harry Quilter, that sledgehammer among critics who had no special critical faculty. There is a splendid article on Henley, a perfect appreciation of Walter Pater, not at all a mere act of worship; and scattered through the pages there is mention of most of the books which made any stir during those five years. It is needless to say that the volume teems with good things, crisp phrases which vividly recall the author. He was too great an artist, and had far too acute an intellect, to encourage fustian or lose his head over tinsel. But it is good to find that he was also too large a man to sneer at and crush the little ones who were doing their best, and not to recognise the gold among the glitter. This volume will keep alive the literary history of those five years, and show us the conscientious use a great writer made of his opportunities for pronouncing on his contemporaries. Full of justice and full of laughter, is this volume in which Mr. Wilde comes triumphantly through an ordeal most men would fear to face. It is for this reason that we consider the "Reviews" in some ways the most interesting of all the fourteen magnificent volumes. Mr. Robert Ross has performed his intricate task boldly and well, and in his indiscretion has given us an insight into the author which will surprise many people and delight all.

North Western Mail (Barrow) Oct. 28, 1908

A few weeks ago, writes a London correspondent, the younger son of Oscar Wilde was "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. With the exception of the prior the community which he has joined is quite ignorant of his identity. As soon as he left the school at which he and his brother were educated under assumed names he decided to adopt a religious life. He shews great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which, it is anticipated, will make much stir. He is also gifted as a musician. His fame has reached the Pope, who takes a warm interest in this brilliant young son of the Church of Rome. His elder brother is an officer in the Army.

Newcastle Chronicle, Oct. 28, 1908

The late Oscar Wilde's younger son has been "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. He has great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which will make much stir.

Publishers' Circular

JOHN JEFFERY,
115a, City Rd., London, E.C.
Any vols. of the LIMITED EDITIONS OF PATER, KINGSLEY, KIPLING (Macmillan), OSCAR WILDE (Methuen), RICHARDSON (Heinemann).

Oct. 26, 1908

NEWEST B

MR. WILDE'S JOURNALISM.

"THE COMPLETE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE."
Two Concluding Volumes. (Methuen, 12s. 6d. each.)

The two concluding volumes in this handsomely printed edition of Mr. Wilde's works are entitled respectively "Reviews" and "Miscellanies"; and they consist mainly of reprints of lectures and of fugitive contributions to the Press. As usual, each one is accompanied by a foreword written by the editor, Mr. Robert Ross, and also by a dedication that is at one and the same time an advertisement and a panegyric; and, truth to tell, we find ourselves getting rather tired of both these things. "Let the man speak for himself." This would have been a good, sound editorial principle in a literary affair of this magnitude. Instead of that, Mr. Ross pops in and out the volumes in a most irritating fashion; for instance, thus:—

"The editor of writings by any author not long deceased is censured sooner or later for his errors of omission or commission. I have decided to err on the side of commission, and to include in the uniform edition of Wilde's works everything that could be identified as genuine. Wilde's literary reputation has survived so much that I think it proof against any exhumation of articles which he or his admirers would have preferred to forget."

"I would draw special attention to those reviews of Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, Mr. Alfred Austin, the Hon. John Collier, Mr. Brander Matthews, and Sir Edwin Arnold, Rossetti, Pater, Henley, and Morris; they have more permanent value than the others, and are in accord with the wiser critical judgments of to-day."

After all, these observations are really the commonplaces of his craft, and they might well have been left out of books of this description, for they are of a character that would have certainly set Mr. Wilde's own teeth on edge. Mr. Ross is on safer ground when he confides to us plain statements of fact—for example, how Mr. Wilde told him that, apart from mere scholarship, his literary and dramatic talents had developed slowly; that he was never regarded as a particularly clever or precocious youth, and that many old family friends and contemporary journalists maintained sturdily that the talent of his elder brother William was much more remarkable than his gifts. Mr. Ross is also happy in his explanation of how the manuscript of the nearly completed drama, "La Sainte Courtisane," was left in a cab in Paris and never recovered. The consequence of that accident, however, was that the passages of the play now reprinted in these books are small and fragmentary. They have been taken, of necessity, from some odd leaves of a first draft. The editor adds:—

"The play is, of course, not unlike 'Salomé,' though it was written in English. It expanded Wilde's favourite theory that when you convert some one to an idea you lose your faith in it; the same motive runs through 'Mr. W. H.' Honorius, the hermit, so far as I recollect the story, falls in love with the courtesan, who has come to tempt him, and he reveals to her the secret of the Love of God. She immediately becomes a Christian, and is murdered by robbers; Honorius, the hermit, goes back to Alexandria to pursue a life of pleasure. Two other similar plays Wilde invented in prison, 'Ahab and Isabel' and 'Pharaoh'; he would never write them down, though often importuned to do so. 'Pharaoh' was intensely dramatic, and, perhaps, more original than any of the group. None of these works must be confused with the manuscripts stolen from 16, Tite-street in 1895—namely, the enlarged version of 'Mr. W. H.,' the completed form of 'A Florentine Tragedy,' and 'The Duchess of Padua' (which existing in a prompt copy was of less importance than the others); nor with 'The Cardinal of Arragon,' the manuscript of which I never saw. I scarcely think it ever existed, though Wilde used to recite proposed passages from it."

It is also interesting to learn that the fact that Mr. Wilde's name "appeared at the end of poems and articles was not always a proof of authenticity even in his lifetime," but we wish that Mr. Ross had given better grounds for his assertion than that single instance where in a poem entitled "The Shamrock" was inadvertently attributed by a Sunday newspaper to Mr. Wilde. Surely that was not a very serious matter, although Mr. Wilde lashed himself into a great fury over it! There are, however, many unimportant things like that set out in these books; and, viewed dispassionately as a whole, they make us wish that Mr. Ross had exercised greater self-restraint in the multitude of his selections. One of the most sparkling contributions, however, is the chapter on "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young," in which is set out:—
"The first duty of life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has as yet discovered"; "Wickedness is a myth invented by good people to account for the curious attractiveness of others"; "Dulness is the coming of age of seriousness"; "Industry is the root of all ugliness"; "The old believe everything; the middle-aged suspect everything; the young know everything"; and, finally, "There is something tragic about the enormous number of young men there are in England at the present moment who start life with perfect profiles, and end by adopting some useful profession." . . .

Madame

Oct. 26. 1908

A Fine Play.

"John the Baptist," a play by Hermann Sudermann, translated by Beatrice Marshall, has just been published by Mr. John Lane, of The Bodley Head (price 5s. net.). The subject has attracted many, notably Oscar Wilde in his "Salome," and Edgar Saltus in "Mary of Magdala," but it remained for the German dramatist to write a play which is not fantastic and which is truly impressive. The tragedy of John is finely depicted, and the end is a climax full of pathos and sublimity.

2019-03-18
Lissen Women's University Library 481

THE CLIMB FOR THE EAGLETS

SOME years ago a poor peasant lay very dangerously ill in a small hut in the mountain valleys of Switzerland. He was greatly in need of medicine, but the cost of it was far more than he or his family could afford.

There happened at the time to be an English traveller staying at a neighbouring hotel who was very anxious to secure some eaglets. Eaglets were very rare in the neighbouring districts, and he accordingly offered a large sum of money for a couple. But the only eyrie,

as the nest of the eagle is called, was on a high crag which was supposed to be inaccessible, and no one ventured to attempt to reach it.

When William and Louis, the two young sons of the sick peasant, heard of the traveller's offer, however, they roped themselves together, scaled the high crag after risking their lives for three long hours, captured the birds, and took them to the traveller, who gave them the reward. They then hurried off to get the medicine, which saved their father's life.

THE TALLOW DIP AND THE "BLACK SALT"

RATHER more than two hundred years since, Lady Edgeworth, the wife of Sir John Edgeworth, lived at a place called Castle Lissard. Now, in those days, there was much disturbance in Ireland and little law; and though there were guests staying at Castle Lissard they knew that the house might be attacked, so that a barrel of gunpowder was always kept in a loft.

One evening there was an alarm. The men got their guns, and Lady Edgeworth hurried up to the loft to bring down some powder, for in those days there were no cartridges, but you had to drop the powder into the barrel of the musket and ram the bullet down with a ramrod. She took with her a young servant to carry the light, which was nothing better than a spluttering tallow candle, without a candlestick, as was common enough at that time. But Biddy the maid knew nothing about gunpowder, and when Lady Edgeworth

had got half-way down the stairs again there was Biddy coming behind her with no candle.

"Biddy," said Lady Edgeworth, "where's the candle?"

"Sure, and I left it," says Biddy, "sticking in the barrel of black salt."

Now, even the kind of wax candle that we use would have been dangerous enough, but the old tallow candles shed sparks much more easily. If a spark from that candle reached the "black salt," there would be a fearful explosion; half the house would be blown down, and many lives lost. Straight into the danger sped Lady Edgeworth. She darted upstairs to where the candle stood spluttering and flaring, lifted it with firm fingers, and carried it out of the room. Neither she nor anyone else got any hurt, so her golden deed was by no means in vain. The heroine herself lived to be ninety years old and was the ancestress of Marie Edgeworth.

A LOOK THAT HELPED A FALLEN FRIEND

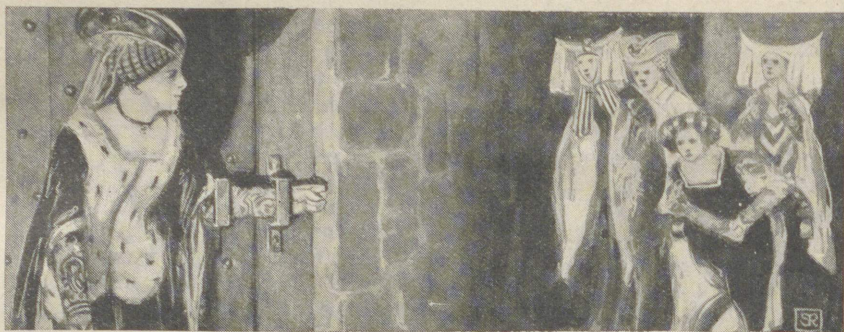
MANY deeds of kindness and love are associated with the prison. Here is a story of one very simple little act of love which helped a poor, disgraced prisoner to bear up against despair through the weary years he had to spend in the solitude of a prison.

A well-educated Englishman had disgraced his fair name and been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, and knew that all his former companions would never speak to him again when he came out of gaol. After he had been in prison for a few months he had to appear at the Bankruptcy Court in

London to answer the questions of the judge with reference to his debts. A former friend of his saw in the morning paper that his case would be settled on the following day at the Law Courts, so he went and stood in the passage leading to the Bankruptcy Court.

As the prisoner, escorted by two prison warders, passed through, with eyes ashamed and cast down, this friend just silently raised his hat to him. The unhappy prisoner saw and never forgot that act. He felt that there was one friend who had not decided to ignore him for the future, which had seemed so hopeless.

THE NEXT GOLDEN DEEDS BEGIN ON PAGE 1653



KATE BARLASS OF THE BROKEN ARM

KING JAMES the First of Scotland was a good king; but when he came to the throne, nearly 500 years ago, the country was in such disorder that he had to be very stern and severe to keep the powerful nobles from wrong-doing; therefore many of them were full of hatred towards him. Then certain of these, headed by Sir Robert Grahame, conspired together to slay the king.

Now, it happened that the king went one winter to the town of Perth to hold high festival, with his queen and some of her ladies, and abode in the Abbey of Perth, while his followers were scattered over the city; and here the traitors got their chance of catching him unguarded. To makematters easier, some servants were bribed to remove the bolts and bars from the doors. And so it befell one night, when all the king's men had gone from the abbey, and he was sitting unarmed with the queen and her ladies, that a great clatter of weapons was heard without. Thereupon he guessed that his foes had gathered to murder him, nor could he fight them, being himself unarmed. But, as he knew that there was a vault under the chamber where he was, he wrenched up boards from the floor, and leaped down; and the ladies quickly put back the boards and covered them just before the traitors rushed into the room. And they, not finding him, searched for

CONTINUED FROM 1476

him high and low. Then the king and the ladies in the chamber, seeing that the danger was passed, began to move the boards, so that James might come out again. And, even at that moment, they heard the clatter and clash of arms again. For one of the traitors had bethought himself of that vault, and they were hurrying back. What chance of escape was there for the king? There would be no time to cover all up before the conspirators broke in; and on the door was no lock or bolt to stay them—only the iron rings where the bolt should be.

Quick as thought, one of the queen's maidens, named Katherine Douglas, sprang to the door and thrust her arm through the rings on the door, crying out that the men must not enter, since there were none in the room but ladies who were disrobing. But the fierce men outside paid no heed to that, and beat upon the door; and how should a maiden's frail arm suffice for a bolt against their battering? Alas, poor Katherine's arm was snapped, and the wicked men burst in, and, seeing where the floor had been disturbed, leaped down and slew the king.

For that brave deed of hers, all in vain though it was, the name of Katherine Douglas was repeated in story and song through the land, and men called her Kate Barlass—the maid who barred the door with her tender arm, that so, if it were possible, she might save the good king's life.

The next volume in Mr. John Lane's "Living Masters of Music" series will be a biography of Richard Strauss, one of the most talked-of composers of the present day. This has been written by that conscientious and erudite critic, Mr. Ernest Newman. Born at Munich in 1864, Strauss was the son of an instrumentalist in the Court Orchestra of that city. In 1894 he married Fraulein Pauline de Ahna, a young singer who had created the principal part in his opera, "Guntram." His last big work was "Salome," a setting of Oscar Wilde's drama, which was produced at Dresden in 1905.

Jessen Womer 2014-03-18 by Library

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE.

(METHUEN. Two Vols., 12s 6d net each.)

With these two volumes the publication of the Uniform Edition of the Complete Works of Oscar Wilde is brought to a finish. They are of particular interest, as they contain literary work which has never before been published in book form, and for the most part consist of the author's anonymous opinions of the work of his contemporaries. The volume of Miscellanies includes the second part of the Essay on "The Use of Historical Criticism," the first portion of which appeared in the volume labelled "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," and has been discovered by Mr. Ross since that volume was produced; the various lectures the author delivered; a fragment of a play, "La Sainte Courtesane," hitherto unpublished; many articles on various subjects, letters written to the Press; and the volume concludes with a bibliography, compiled by Mr. Stuart Mason, which contains every genuine and authorised English edition. This brief description is enough to show the reader how full of interest is the volume.

But to our mind the other volume, that of anonymous reviews, is the most interesting of all, as throwing a light on the author which most authors of repute would shrink from. If a man can be judged from his letters, how much more can he be judged from his unsigned contributions to journals. Mr. Robert Ross, in a lively and ably-written preface, shows that he is quite conscious of the temerity of his action in the matter. But he "decided to err on the side of commission, and to include in the uniform edition of Wilde's works everything that could be identified as genuine." Certain it is that this volume contains work which the author never intended should be taken from the pages in which it was buried, and published under his name, and for that very reason we are particularly grateful to the editor for having rescued them. The reviews appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the "Woman's World" during a period of five years—1885-1890—years when the author was publishing much of his own creative work, which was certainly not spared by the critics of the day. How did such a man—sensitive to criticism, gifted with a rare power of retort, fully conscious of his own merit in comparison with that of his contemporaries—use his opportunity of anonymity? Under his own name he hit hard and unsparingly. How did he treat his fellow-workers when he had the chance of saying what he thought without signing his name? In the whole course of this vastly interesting volume we find no trace of malice, no stabbing in the dark, no unkindness, no injustice, and no desire to break a fly on the wheel. On the contrary, we find kindness, justice, encouragement, quick and generous appreciation of any merit, a gentleness in censure, and a joy in any gleam amid dulness and incompetence, which does our heart good and should be a salutary lesson to all critics. Mr. Wilde was not at that time a success financially; he was bitterly attacked, he was grudgingly recognised; yet this Triton among the minnows shows no bitterness, no impatience, and no desire to "score" at the expense of other workers. It is a lesson, and it is something of a revelation. When he does strike, he does so courteously, and he reserves his blows for those who are able to stand them. To minor poets and to women he is ever generous, sometimes even one feels that his kindness of heart leads him to the "suppressive veri"; at any rate, to the finding of the wheat and ignoring of the chaff. Almost the first review is a laudatory notice of W. G. Wills's "Melchior," followed by a great tribute to that author for his "Ray of Light." It is interesting to sneer at Wills. Mr. Wilde found high praise for him.

But we have no room to mention the innumerable people for whom he has a good word. He judges books on their merits, not from the height of the superior person or the "precious" critic. He pays a noble compliment to the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," and to many authors and authoresses with whom one might have expected him to be entirely out of sympathy. He never grumbles, nor seeks to mislead the public taste and betray his own standard, but he recognises that literature is of all sorts, and that good is to be found on various levels. Professor Mahaffey comes in for some of his hardest knocks, chiefly because in literature the professor tried to enforce unfairly his own particular views on politics. There is an amusing attack—but wholly genial and justified—on Harry Quilter, that sledgehammer among critics who had no special critical faculty. There is a splendid article on Henley, a perfect appreciation of Walter Pater, not at all a mere act of worship; and scattered through the pages there is mention of most of the books which made any stir during those five years. It is needless to say that the volume teems with good things, crisp phrases which vividly recall the author. He was too great an artist, and had far too acute an intellect, to encourage fustian or lose his head over tinsel. But it is good to find that he was also too large a man to sneer at and crush the little ones who were doing their best, and not to recognise the gold among the glitter. This volume will keep alive the literary history of those five years, and show us the conscientious use a great writer made of his opportunities for pronouncing on his contemporaries. Full of justice, full of laughter, is this volume in which Mr. Wilde comes triumphantly through an ordeal most men would fear to face. It is for this reason that we consider the "Reviews" in some ways the most interesting of all the fourteen magnificent volumes. Mr. Robert Ross has performed his intricate task boldly and well, and in his indiscretion has given us an insight into the author which will surprise many people and delight all.

North Western Mail (Barnes) Oct. 2

A few weeks ago, writes a London correspondent, the younger son of Oscar Wilde was "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. With the exception of the prior the community which he has joined is quite ignorant of his identity. As soon as he left the school at which he and his brother were educated under assumed names he decided to adopt a religious life. He shows great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which, it is anticipated, will make much stir. He is also gifted as a musician. His fame has reached the Pope, who takes a warm interest in this brilliant young son of the Church of Rome. His elder brother is an officer in the Army.

Newcastle Chronicle. Oct. 28

The late Oscar Wilde's younger son has "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite mon. He has great literary ability, and is engaged religious treatise which will make much st

Publishers' Circular

JOHN JAFFERY,
115a, City Rd., London, E.C.

Any vols. of the LIMITED EDITIONS OF PATER, KINGSLEY,

North Western Mail (Barrow) Oct. 28. 1908

A few weeks ago, writes a London correspondent, the younger son of Oscar Wilde was "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. With the exception of the prior the community which he has joined is quite ignorant of his identity. As soon as he left the school at which he and his brother were educated under assumed names he decided to adopt a religious life. He shews great literary ability, and is engaged on a religious treatise which, it is anticipated, will make much stir. He is also gifted as a musician. His fame has reached the Pope, who takes a warm interest in the brilliant conversion of the Church of Rome. His elder brother is an officer in the Army.

Newcastle Chronicle. Oct. 28. 1908

The late Oscar Wilde's younger son has been "professed" as a monk in a Carmelite monastery. He has great ability and is engaged on a religious treatise which will make much stir.

X!

~~2050000~~ Women's University Library

Publishers' Circular

JOHN JEFFERY,
115a, City Rd., London, E.C.

Any vols. of the LIMITED EDITIONS of PATER, KINGSLEY, KILMER, MORRIS, WILDE (Methuen), RICHARDSON (Heinemann).

Oct. 24
1908

Jesse 2019 from the University of California Library

Oct. 26-1908

REVIEWS. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen and Co. Pp. xiv. 555. 12s. 6d. net.

MISCELLANIES. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen and Co. Pp. xvi. 344. 12s. 6d. net.

This fine edition of all (except "Dorian Gray") that Wilde wrote has just been closed with a twelfth volume, containing reprinted reviews and newspaper articles, mainly from the old "Pall Mall Gazette," and a thirteenth, filled with "miscellanies"—to wit, (1) a longer conclusion, lately discovered, to Wilde's unsuccessful Oxford prize essay on "The Rise of Historical Criticism"; (2) a fragment of a first draft of a play the rest of which is lost; (3) some lectures now first printed; and (4) a further mass of journalism and of signed letters to the press. The prize essay, like most prize essays, is not flesh of its author's flesh, but unassimilated chyme, and not attractive. The fragment of a play shows, to our mind, little of Wilde's quality, and some of the letters to editors are deplorably laden with the banal incivilities of the correspondence column; e.g., "It is a trouble for any gentleman to have to notice the lucubrations of so ill-bred and ignorant a person as Mr. Whistler, but your publication of his insolent letter left me no option in the matter." In the lectures, notably the one "To Art Students," the effect is often that of overdone bluff—of the blowing of too many horns and breaking of too many pitchers in the attempt to cover up a want of relevant knowledge or completed thought. But the journalism, like that of so many men of genius who have girded at that craft, is capital, especially where it was anonymous and Wilde could peacefully remain himself and not flog and spur himself into that other Wilde whom he chose to set before the world. Some of the judgments, no doubt, are extravagantly partial; Wilde would puff a friend with the unrestraint of a hurricane; he speaks of the verses of our present Ambassador at Rome as if he were a Keats, and

it always seems to have turned his critical head to enter the Lyceum in Irving's time—the calico flowers of W. G. Wills's poetry struck him as "very exquisite work of art." Wilde, of course, did not pretend to be judicial, and so these partialities were not lapses from an attempted standard of equity, but rather indications of the limits of the value of a certain deliberately chosen critical method. To set against them there are many shrewd and sure valuations of things to which critics had then to address themselves with no recorded verdict of competent criticism to prompt them—the earlier verses of Henley and of Mr. Yeats, the acting of Mr. Arthur Bouchier as an undergraduate and of Mr. Alexander at an age that seems almost impossible, he looks so young now; and the art of Whistler—the Carlyle portrait among other things—at a time when it was the correct thing in London to pelt Whistler with scurrilities. In their combination of lightness in hand with available richness of pertinent knowledge the best of these reviews are almost perfect models for critical journalists.

It is impossible to praise too warmly the devotion and industry, informed by a sound and bold judgment, with which Mr. Robert Ross has carried through the huge task of perfecting this edition.

REVIEWS.

Miscellanies. By Oscar Wilde. Reviews by Oscar Wilde. Being the concluding volumes of the complete works. Edited by Robert Ross. Methuen. 12s. 6d. net each.)

Of Oscar Wilde it appears to be true that his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he has written shall be republished. In these two handsome volumes, which close the completest edition our generation will see of the works of one of the rarest geniuses of any generation, have been collected with the meticulous care of the perfect connoisseur the scattered crumbs from the table of a lord of words. We do not complain that no selection has been made by the editor, since we are among those who demand in a complete edition the works, the whole works, and as far as possible, nothing but the works.

Oscar Wilde was often, strictly speaking, unrepresentable in his loose literary form. Some of the reviews here reprinted from the "Pall Mall Gazette," for example, are thick with clichés and insincere platitudes. A good deal of his writing for the "Woman's World" is also banal to the last degree. We may even admit that the essay on "The Rise of Historical Criticism," here published in full for the first time, is scrupulously colourless. Neither by personality nor by perfection, Wilde's two canons of art, does the essay rise beyond the lower slopes of the peak on which Wilde's risen genius has its abode.

But these volumes contain little gems of reviewing as well as here and there passages of such beauty as no other English writer has surpassed. Nothing Wilde ever did in the light vein is superior, for instance, to his letters in defence of "Dorian Gray." They will certainly be read as long as the story is remembered. Here also are Wilde's first criticisms of Whistler, Morris, Crane, Burne-Jones, and all his brightest contemporaries. Here, too, are his American lectures, for Wilde, like Matthew Arnold, engaged the Philistines in their own stronghold.

On the whole, therefore, even for the eclectic, the seam of gold in these volumes is rich; rich enough to repay handsomely the labour of extraction. As for the rest of us, possessed with the desire to know all there is to be known, we are indebted to Mr. Ross for the pleasure and responsibility of making our own choice. We can be trusted to disentangle the artist from the journalist.

World Oct. 20, 1908

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Vol. 12,

Reviews; and Vol. 13. Miscellanies. These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Volume XIII contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Oct. 27, 1908

Messrs. Methuen & Co. are producing the last volumes of their "uniform edition" of the works of Oscar Wilde. These books are published under the supervision, and by the authority, of the author's literary executor. The edition is limited to a thousand copies for the United States and America, and is printed on hand-made paper. The price of each volume is 12s. 6d. There is also an edition, printed on Japanese vellum, limited to eighty copies, at the price of 2l. 2s. a volume. The edition is sold in sets only.

Oct. 23, 1908

Liverpool.

WILDE BEFORE THE CURTAIN—

The fact that one of Wilde's plays is to be produced at the Court Theatre to-night recalls some of the hundred and one theatrical anecdotes in which the author of "The Importance of Being Earnest" figures as the superbly nonchalant hero. There was his appearance at the close of the brilliant first night of "Lady Windermere's Fan," for instance—one of the most remarkable premieres London ever witnessed—when he lounged indolently before the curtain in response to the enthusiastic call coolly smoking a cigarette. There was the speech he made on that occasion ("A Wilde Tag to a Tame Play," "Punch" called it), when he indifferently assured the packed and brilliant house that he was quite glad they had enjoyed themselves, and thought they might be glad to hear that he, too, had spent quite a tolerable evening. And there was his attitude towards the enthusiastic interviewers next morning. "Congratulations? A great success? Surely you are making some mistake. It is the audience you ought to congratulate. It is they who were successful. Had the dimensions of the stage admitted it I would have had them called before the curtain. . . . Most managers, I believe, call them behind it."

—AND BEHIND THE SCENES.

That was his invariable out-of-door attitude. "My plays are not great," he yawned on another occasion; "I think nothing of them. But if you only knew how much they amuse me. . . . Most of them are the result of bets." But there does exist none the less a certain less widely known anecdote which shows that behind the scenes he could drop that cavalier attitude, roll up his sleeves, and hammer away at the details of his plays a good deal harder than even the actors themselves had any stomach for. It was at the rehearsal of "Lady Windermere's Fan." At a certain crisis in the second act, it will be remembered, Lord Windermere has to start significantly. And the actor who was studying the part was (in Wilde's opinion) a bad starter. He tried starting violently and he tried starting subtly; he started pensively and he started passionately; he started gracefully and he started jerkily; he ran through the whole gamut of startling emotions; but Wilde remained discontented. At last the perspiring person lost all patience. "Look here, Mr. Wilde," he cried, "you can't lead a horse to the brook, you know; but you can't make him drink." "No," said Wilde, wistfully, "but you can make him pretend to."

Freeholder, Nov. 1, 1908

We clip the following from the Westminster Gazette:— "The controlling interest in the Academy has been acquired by Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas, who will continue to edit the paper as heretofore. Lord Alfred's editorship dates from June, 1907." This gentleman, who edits the Academy in such a violently pious manner, is, we presume, a son of the late Marquis of Queensberry, who was a professed Agnostic. Lord Queensberry was responsible for the hunting down of Oscar Wilde. We understand that Lord Alfred Douglas was one of Oscar Wilde's bosom friends. He appears to belong to the religion that Oscar Wilde died in.

MORE WILDE WORDS.

In your Passing Hour of yesterday (writes a correspondent) you tell a good story—and, so far as I know, quite a new one—which illustrates the scrupulous energy with which Wilde was accustomed to polish the tiniest details of his plays, an energy no less great, and just as carefully concealed, as that which inspired his friend and enemy Whistler. But there is another tale which reveals the great poet and flaneur in an equally meticulous mood, and does it more characteristically. The scene was a country house—the time, dinner—and Wilde's hostess had just asked him how he had spent the day. "I have been correcting the proofs of my poems," said he, with a sigh; "in the morning, after hard work, I took a comma out of one sentence." "And in the afternoon?" "In the afternoon I put it back again." Your readers may also be interested to learn (our correspondent continues) that Wilde's affectation of contempt for the poor dramatic critic ("English dramatic criticism," he once said, "has never had a single success in spite of the fact that it goes to all the first nights") did not prevent him from forming one of that despised profession himself. His critiques, I remember, used to appear in "The Dramatic Review" of 1885, and they were invariably laudatory. They were also curiously perceptive; and to turn to them now is to be surprised by the prophetic rightness of his judgments.

DIVESTED OF HIS MOTLEY.

There is certainly no trace in these criticisms of that contemptuous arrogance which is commonly supposed to be Wilde's invariable attitude towards his contemporaries. The most immediately interesting perhaps are those which relate to Miss Terry and to Mr. Beerbohm Tree. Over the first he grows positively dithyrambic. "She is one of those rare artists," he says, "who needs for her dramatic effects no elaborate dialogue, and for whom the simplest words are sufficient. To whatever character she plays she brings the infinite charm of her beauty, and the marvellous grace of her movements and gestures. It is impossible to escape from the sweet tyranny of her personality. She dominates her audience by the secret of Cleopatra." And his praise of Mr. Tree is just as pertinent and scarcely less enthusiastic: "He is the perfect Proteus of actors. He can wear the dress of any century and

the appearance of any age, and has a marvellous capacity of absorbing his personality into the character he is creating. To have method without mannerism is given only to a few, but among the few is Mr. Tree." Hardly in other words would the critic of 1908 express himself—if only he, too, were an equal "lord of language." And to read these little, forgotten eulogies will no doubt surprise the many who never think of Wilde save as an insolent epigrammatist or a man of mordant wit. It is strange to recall, by the way, that Wilde was actually the editor (and the entirely competent and satisfactory editor) of a chatty magazine of feminine modes known as "The Woman's World." He, too, no less than Mr. Beerbohm Tree, was surely "the perfect Proteus of actors."

Manchester Guardian

REVIEWS. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen and Co. Pp. xiv. 555. 12s. 6d. net.

MISCELLANIES. By Oscar Wilde. London: Methuen and Co. Pp. xvi. 344. 12s. 6d. net.

This fine edition of all (except "Dorian Gray") that Wilde wrote has just been closed with a twelfth volume, containing reprinted reviews and newspaper articles, mainly from the old "Pall Mall Gazette," and a thirteenth, filled with "miscellanies"—to wit, (1) a longer conclusion, lately discovered, to Wilde's unsuccessful Oxford prize essay on "The Rise of Historical Criticism"; (2) a fragment of a first draft of a play the rest of which is lost; (3) some lectures now first printed; and (4) a further mass of journalism and of signed letters to the press. The prize essay, like most prize essays, is not flesh of its author's flesh, but unassimilated chyme, and not attractive. The fragment of a play shows, to our mind, little of Wilde's quality, and some of the letters to editors are deplorably laden with the banal incivilities of the correspondence column; e.g., "It is a trouble for any gentleman to have to notice the lucubrations of so ill-bred and ignorant a person as Mr. Whistler, but your publication of his insolent letter left me no option in the matter." In the lectures, notably the one "To Art Students," the effect is often that of overdone bluff—of the blowing of too many horns and breaking of too many pitchers in the attempt to cover up a want of relevant knowledge or completed thought. But the journalism, like that of so many men of genius who have girded at that craft, is capital, especially where it was anonymous and Wilde could peacefully remain himself and not flog and spur himself into that other Wilde whom he chose to set before the world. Some of the judgments, no doubt, are extravagantly partial; Wilde would puff a friend with the unrestraint of a hurricane; he speaks of the verses of our present Ambassador at Rome as if he were a Keats, and

it always seems to have turned his critical head to enter the Lyceum in Irving's time—the calico flowers of W. G. Wills's poetry struck him as "very exquisite work of art." Wilde, of course, did not pretend to be judicial, and so these partialities were not lapses from an attempted standard of equity, but rather indications of the limits of the value of a certain deliberately chosen critical method. To set against them there are many shrewd and sure valuations of things to which critics had then to address themselves with no recorded verdict of competent criticism to prompt them—the earlier verses of Henley and of Mr. Yeats, the acting of Mr. Arthur Bourchier as an undergraduate and of Mr. Alexander at an age that seems almost impossible, he looks so young now; and the art of Whistler—the Carlyle portrait among other things—at a time when it was the correct thing in London to pelt Whistler with scurrilities. In their combination of lightness in hand with available richness of pertinent knowledge the best of these reviews are almost perfect models for critical journalists.

It is impossible to praise too warmly the devotion and industry, informed by a sound and bold judgment, with which Mr. Robert Ross has carried through the huge task of perfecting this edition.

Misc
W
wo
ne

Of

also s
shall
which
see of
genera
care o
from
plain
since
edition
sible,

Osc

able i

here

exampl

tudes.

World

even

Critic

scrup

perfect

rise l

Wilde

But

as we

no o

Wilde

stanc

They

remer

Whis

bright

lectur

Philis

On

seam

repay

rest o

is to

pleas

We

journal

THE

Revi

These are
have never
conclusion o

Messrs

"uniform

published

literary e

the Unite

The price

on Japan

a volume.

REVIEWS.

Miscellanies. By Oscar Wilde. **Reviews** by Oscar Wilde. Being the concluding volumes of the complete works. Edited by Robert Ross. Methuen. 12s. 6d. net each.)

Of Oscar Wilde it appears to be true that his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he has written shall be republished. In these two handsome volumes, which close the completest edition our generation will see of the works of one of the rarest geniuses of any generation, have been collected with the meticulous care of the perfect connoisseur the scattered crumbs from the table of a lord of words. We do not complain that no selection has been made by the editor, since we are among those who demand in a complete edition the works, the whole works, and as far as possible, nothing but the works.

Oscar Wilde was often, strictly speaking, unrepresentable in his loose literary form. Some of the reviews here reprinted from the "Pall Mall Gazette," for example, are thick with clichés and insincere platitudes. A good deal of his writing for the "Woman's World" is also banal to the last degree. We may even admit that the essay on "The Rise of Historical Criticism," here published in full for the first time, is scrupulously colourless. Neither by personality nor by perfection, Wilde's two canons of art, does the essay rise beyond the lower slopes of the peak on which Wilde's risen genius has its abode.

But these volumes contain little gems of reviewing as well as here and there passages of such beauty as no other English writer has surpassed. Nothing Wilde ever did in the light vein is superior, for instance, to his letters in defence of "Dorian Gray." They will certainly be read as long as the story is remembered. Here also are Wilde's first criticisms of Whistler, Morris, Crane, Burne-Jones, and all his brightest contemporaries. Here, too, are his American lectures, for Wilde, like Matthew Arnold, engaged the Philistines in their own stronghold.

On the whole, therefore, even for the eclectic, the seam of gold in these volumes is rich; rich enough to repay handsomely the labour of extraction. As for the rest of us, possessed with the desire to know all there is to be known, we are indebted to Mr. Ross for the pleasure and responsibility of making our own choice. We can be trusted to disentangle the artist from the journalist.

World

Oct: 20. 1908

THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE. Vol. 12,

Reviews; and Vol. 13. Miscellanies.

2019-03-18
Hilfen Women's University Library 492

These are the final volumes of the edition, which is now complete. Their contents have never appeared in book form before. Volume XIII. contains a newly discovered conclusion of the essay on Historical Criticism.

Oct: 27. 1908

Messrs. Methuen & Co. are producing the last volumes of their "uniform edition" of the works of Oscar Wilde. These books are published under the supervision, and by the authority, of the author's literary executor. The edition is limited to a thousand copies for the United States and America, and is printed on hand-made paper. The price of each volume is 12s. 6d. There is also an edition, printed on Japanese vellum, limited to eighty copies, at the price of 2l. 2s. a volume. The edition is sold in sets only.

2019-03-18
Issen Women's University Library 493

Liverpool Courier, Oct. 21, 1908

WILDE BEFORE THE CURTAIN—

The fact that one of Wilde's plays is to be produced at the Court Theatre to-night recalls some of the hundred and one theatrical anecdotes in which the author of "The Importance of Being Earnest" figures as the superbly nonchalant hero. There was his appearance at the close of the brilliant first night of "Lady Windermere's Fan," for instance—one of the most remarkable premieres London ever witnessed—when he lounged indolently before the curtain in response to the enthusiastic call coolly smoking a cigarette. There was the speech he made on that occasion ("A Wilde Tag to a Tame Play," "Punch" called it), when he indifferently assured the packed and brilliant house that he was quite glad they had enjoyed themselves, and thought they might be glad to hear that he, too, had spent quite a tolerable evening. And there was his attitude towards the enthusiastic interviewers next morning. "Congratulations? A great success? Surely you are making some mistake. It is the audience you ought to congratulate. It is they who were successful. Had the dimensions of the stage admitted it I would have had them called before the curtain. . . . Most managers, I believe, call them behind it."

—AND BEHIND THE SCENES.

That was his invariable out-of-door attitude. "My plays are not great," he yawned on another occasion; "I think nothing of them. But if you only knew how much they amuse me. . . . Most of them are the result of bets." But there does exist none the less a certain less widely known anecdote which shows that behind the scenes he could drop that cavalier attitude, roll up his sleeves, and hammer away at the details of his plays a good deal harder than even the actors themselves had any stomach for. It was at the rehearsal of "Lady Windermere's Fan." At a certain crisis in the second act, it will be remembered, Lord Windermere has to start significantly. And the actor who was studying the part was (in Wilde's opinion) a bad starter. He tried starting violently and he tried starting subtly; he started pensively and he started passionately; he started gracefully and he started jerkily; he ran through the whole gamut of startling emotions; but Wilde remained discontented. At last the perspiring person lost all patience. "Look here, Mr. Wilde," he cried, "you can lead a horse to the brook, but you can't make him drink." "No," said Wilde, wistfully, "but you can make him pretend to."

Free thinker. Nov. 1. 1908

We clip the following from the *Westminster Gazette* :—

“The controlling interest in the *Academy* has been acquired by Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas, who will continue to edit the paper as heretofore. Lord Alfred's editorship dates from June, 1907.”

This gentleman, who edits the *Academy* in such a violently pious manner, is, we presume, a son of the late Marquis of Queensberry, who was a professed Agnostic. Lord Queensberry was responsible for the hunting down of Oscar Wilde. We understand that Lord Alfred Douglas was one of Oscar Wilde's bosom friends. He appears to belong to the religion that Oscar Wilde died in.

MORE WILDE WORDS.

In your *Passing Hour* of yesterday (writes a correspondent) you tell a good story—and, so far as I know, quite a new one—which illustrates the scrupulous energy with which Wilde was accustomed to polish the tiniest details of his plays, an energy no less great, and just as carefully concealed, as that which inspired his friend and enemy Whistler. But there is another tale which reveals the great poet and flaneur in an equally meticulous mood, and does it more characteristically. The scene was a country house—the time, dinner—and Wilde's hostess had just asked him how he had spent the day. "I have been correcting the proofs of my poems," said he, with a sigh; "in the morning, after hard work, I took a comma out of one sentence." "And in the afternoon?" "In the afternoon I put it back again." Your readers may also be interested to learn (our correspondent continues) that Wilde's affectation of contempt for the poor dramatic critic ("English dramatic criticism," he once said, "has never had a single success in spite of the fact that it goes to all the first nights") did not prevent him from forming one of that despised profession himself. His critiques, I remember, used to appear in "The Dramatic Review" of 1885, and they were invariably laudatory. They were also curiously perceptive; and to turn to them now is to be surprised by the prophetic rightness of his judgments.

DIVESTED OF HIS MOTLEY.

There is certainly no trace in these criticisms of that contemptuous arrogance which is commonly supposed to be Wilde's invariable attitude towards his contemporaries. The most immediately interesting perhaps are those which relate to Miss Terry and to Mr. Beerbohm Tree. Over the first he grows positively dithyrambic. "She is one of those rare artists," he says, "who needs for her dramatic effects no elaborate dialogue, and for whom the simplest words are sufficient. To whatever character she plays she brings the infinite charm of her beauty, and the marvellous grace of her movements and gestures. It is impossible to escape from the sweet tyranny of her personality. She dominates her audience by the secret of Cleopatra." And his praise of Mr. Tree is just as pertinent and scarcely less enthusiastic: "He is the perfect Proteus of actors. He can wear the dress of any century and

the appearance of any age, and has a marvellous capacity of absorbing his personality into the character he is creating. To have method without mannerism is given only to a few, but among the few is Mr. Tree." Hardly in other words would the critic of 1908 express himself—if only he, too, were an equal "lord of language." And to read these little, forgotten eulogies will no doubt surprise the many who never think of Wilde save as an insolent epigrammatist or a man of mordant wit. It is strange to recall, by the way, that Wilde was actually the editor (and the entirely competent and satisfactory editor) of a chatty magazine of feminine modes known as "The Woman's World." Beerbohm Tree, was surely "the perfect Proteus of actors."

er Gazette:—

has been acquired
continue to edit the
rship dates from

such a violently
late Marquis of
Lord Queens-
of Oscar Wilde.
s one of Oscar
g to the religion