



Jissen Women's University Rare Books
Honma Hisao Collection

Digital Archives of Mason Library

Oscar Wilde
Scrapbook

Vol. 9

On Music

RICHARD STRAUSS
(An Analysis)

By Dr. F. FEIGES AND "V."

"Richard Strauss, the master, the greatest living musician!" Many—nay, most—critics will have it so; we hear it daily, insistently, and importantly; and the masses follow and shout in unison. And yet *musicians* are dubious but silent. A few, let it be duly noted, started to remonstrate and were promptly regarded as heretics, if not ignoramuses. "Our idol must remain intact. Who dares to suggest feet of clay?" Thus criticism. In the following we, having the courage of our convictions, venture to essay an anti-criticism and show that Strauss is not quite what fashion would have him be; that he is neither the "first" musician of the present time nor the legitimate mental heir of the immortal Richard Wagner—in fine, not one of the Great in musical history. We shall endeavour to assign to him that place in music to which his endowments and merits entitle him, relying not alone upon our own convictions and opinions, but also upon those of numerous *real* musicians and qualified musical experts.

We may safely postulate that the basis of art (or the artistic) is personality and specific talent for a certain art. The historical value of the creator of a work of art depends upon the proportion and relation of these two elements. Only where a natural balance between the two exists is greatness possible. Mind, merely possible, extant only where a personality of extraordinary significance and extraordinary talent is concerned—for instance, Beethoven. In the absence of a harmonious balance, the stronger development of one or the other of the two factors makes the deficiency of the other more conspicuous. Richard Strauss is a typical example in this respect. It is a well-known fact that he started writing music at a very early period of his life. He grew up on music, so to speak, and forming, and reproducing new impressions. His gift for absorption and assimilation is eminent; he goes with the times and instinctively absorbs whatever may come within his scope. His first works were still dominated over by the spirit of Mendelssohn and Schumann; next we find Brahms in office; then Liszt and Wagner hold their sway. During the latter epoch, being somewhat of a favourite in Bayreuth, he makes an experiment with a work à la "Parsifal" ("Güntram"), but finds that his assimilation is not quite equal to the task. Friedrich Nietzsche then became the fashion, and promptly inspired Strauss to compose his "Zarathustra." Eventually we arrive at the Oscar Wilde craze which opportunely suggests the "Salomé" motif, and its exhaustive employment. Compare with all this the development of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and men of similar calibre!

But let us first deal with the musician Strauss. His extraordinary musical propensity is undeniable. He shapes anything that he happens upon without much choice or originality. His weakest point is inventiveness, his strongest his sense of colour and sound, his technique and dexterous handling of his material. And it is really on account of his technique that Strauss is idolised and deified.

It repays to investigate whether adoption (or assimilation) does not also play an important part in this respect. Does he denote a new departure in harmonics? Is he a more original path-finder than other modern German, Italian, or French composers? Is he as natural and grateful as they? In 1890—only to mention one example—Hugo Wolff finished his "Spanisches Liederbuch." It is prolific with sincere endeavours to heighten the musical expression

by means of artistically chosen harmonic material. From 1894-96 Strauss wrote his Op. 27, 29, and 31. What a wealth of harmonic commonplaces! In order to write modern music, he has adopted the habit of accumulating dissonances which aim simply at producing tricky effects by far-fetched, exaggerated means. To us it appears that Art can very well dispense with this kind of pyrotechnics. They have nothing to do with the soul of Art, but constitute merely a kind of mental or witty sport. We leave it to the expert to inquire into the extent of Strauss's originality as regards instrumentation. It must be pointed out, however, that his instrumentation has become typical for modern times, and that his command over the most complex orchestral machinery is unique. In this respect Strauss is a prototype for posterity.

Super-saturation of sound and potency of the entire orchestral body are plainly evident on perusing his scores. The so-called Strauss contrapunctics is, after all, a technically very simple matter, and is so much inferior to the achievements of the classics and some modern Italians or Germans, such as Bossi and Reger respectively, that it would be better to pass over Strauss's talent in that respect in silence. Strauss, beside his instrumentation, owns two specialities: musical sensuality and musical humour. Instances for the former—i.e., ability to represent realistically certain passionate climaxes and erotic sensuousness—are his songs "Cécilie," "Heimliche Aufforderung," "Und wärst du mein Weib," likewise "Don Juan," the love scenes in "Ein Heldenleben," and the "Domestica," also in the "Feuersnot," and "Salomé." It is a sensually most effective trick (by no means always free from triviality and commonplaceness) and it certainly has made Strauss popular with the masses.

(To be Continued.)

Musical Standard.

185, Fleet Street, E.C.

Issue dated.....1907

"Judy" on Richard Strauss.

We must confess we seldom purchase "Judy: The London Serio-Comic Journal." We received, however, the issue of August 14, and suppose it is hoped we shall make some comment on the first instalment of a series of articles by "Dr. F. Feiges and V." on the German composer, Richard Strauss. We must certainly congratulate "Judy" on giving music an intended *serious* attention. It is a very laudable thing indeed. We cannot say, however, we are favourably impressed by the so-called Strauss "Analysis." It opens as follows: "Richard Strauss, the master, the greatest living musician!" Many—nay, most—critics will have it so; we hear it daily, insistently and importantly; and the masses follow and shout in unison. And yet *musicians* are dubious but silent. A few, let it be duly noted, started to remonstrate and were promptly regarded as heretics, if not ignoramuses. "Our idol must remain intact. Who dares to suggest feet of clay?" Thus criticism. In the following we, having the courage of our convictions, venture to essay an anti-criticism and show that Strauss is not quite what fashion would have him be, that he is neither the "first" musician of the present time nor the legitimate mental heir of the immortal Richard Wagner—in fine, not one of the Great in musical history. We shall endeavour to assign to him that place in music to which his endowments and merits entitle him, relying not alone upon our own convictions and opinions, but also upon those of numerous *real* musicians and qualified musical experts." We see the writers of the article admit that most critics insist that Strauss is the greatest living musician. In purely orchestral writing and in opera he holds at the present time a position we honestly believe is second to none, dismissing from the question his great distinction as a writer of songs. It will be interesting to know who *is* the legitimate heir of Richard Wagner! It may be mentioned that he need not necessarily be as great as that master. Critics name Strauss as successor because he is the best of the known living composers. "His [Strauss'] first works were still dominated over by the spirit of Mendelssohn and Schumann; next we find Brahms in office; then Liszt and Wagner hold their sway. During the latter epoch, being somewhat of a favourite in Bayreuth, he makes an experiment with a work à la 'Parsifal' ('Güntram'), but finds that his assimilation is not quite equal to the task. Friedrich Nietzsche then became the fashion, and promptly inspired Strauss to compose his 'Zarathustra.'" "Güntram" is Wagnerian, but we venture to say it is grossly erroneous to describe the music of the opera as "à la 'Parsifal.'" We do know something of its character. "Eventually," we are told, "we arrive at the Oscar Wilde craze which opportunely suggests the 'Salomé' motif, and its exhaustive employment. Compare with all this the development of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner and men of similar calibre!" No doubt that is intended to be a very withering observation: for our part, we do not quite see the point of it. We should imagine a composer may be allowed to be free in choice of subject. If a certain subject interests him he will surely treat it more effectively than if he were forced to deal with another that had no interest to him. The marvellous "Judy" writers go on: "But let us first deal with the musician Strauss. His extraordinary musical propensity is undeniable. He writes effective music with fluency and ease and knocks into shape anything that he happens upon without much choice or originality. His weakest point is inventiveness, his strongest his sense of colour and sound, his technique and dexterous handling of his material. And it is really on account of his technique that Strauss is idolised and deified." Strauss' "inventiveness" surely compares strikingly with the great masters. We have never said his present compositions show an originality

equal to Bach, Beethoven or Wagner: but these men were giants in the art. All we contend is that Strauss is the best thing since Wagner. And we challenge "Judy"—of course, it is deliciously comic challenging "Judy"—to produce his superior in emotional strength, poetic insight and workmanship. "From 1894-96 Strauss wrote his Op. 27, 29, and 31." What a wealth of harmonic commonplaces! In order to write modern music, he has adopted the habit of accumulating dissonances, which aim simply at producing tricky effects by far-fetched, exaggerated means. To us it appears that Art can very well dispense with this kind of pyrotechnics. They have nothing to do with the soul of Art, but constitute merely a kind of mental or witty sport. We leave it to the expert to inquire into the extent of Strauss's originality as regards instrumentation. It must be pointed out, however, that his instrumentation has become typical for modern times, and that his command over the most complex orchestral machinery is unique. In this respect Strauss is a prototype for posterity.

Super-saturation of sound and potency of the entire orchestral body are plainly evident on perusing his scores. The so-called Strauss contrapunctics is, after all, a technically very simple matter, and is so much inferior to the achievements of the classics and some modern Italians or Germans, such as Bossi and Reger respectively, that it would be better to pass over Strauss's talent in that respect in silence. Strauss, beside his instrumentation, owns two specialities: musical sensuality and musical humour. Instances for the former—i.e., ability to represent realistically certain passionate climaxes and erotic sensuousness—are his songs. 'Cécilie,' 'Heimliche Aufforderung,' 'Und wärst du mein Weib,' likewise 'Don Juan,' the love scenes in 'Ein Heldenleben' and the 'Domestica,' also in the 'Feuersnot' and 'Salomé.' It is a sensually most effective trick (by no means always free from triviality and commonplaceness) and it certainly has made Strauss popular with the masses." We should like to see "Dr. F. Feiges" in the flesh, not to speak of "V."

QUEEN'S THEATRE.

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN.

One has often wondered how it was that Oscar Wilde came so near to writing a great comedy without actually achieving one. A little more attention to construction, a defter handling of stage techniques, a trifle more originality of plot—one goes through the stale category of critical commonplaces without finding a satisfactory explanation. Wilde's essays in tragic drama, poetry, and the novel should, however, help one to an explanation of his failure to write a series of plays that should be something more than the wittiest known to the modern stage. Wilde's other work showed that he had little to say, but that he could say it little excellently in a hundred ways. There was Maeterlinck's way, for instance, on which he depended for "Salomé." Then there was Gautier, upon whom he drew for his symbolism, Baudelaire for his horror; while the subtle poison of "Dorian Gray" is undiluted Huguenotism. Of course he had an extraordinary power of assimilation, and succeeded in giving a personal and individual form to his thefts.

The borrowing habit stuck closely to Wilde when it came to writing comedies for the London stage. The comedies were not the outcome of a conviction that the writer had certain things which he must express and could only express in terms of the theatre. One always has the feeling that Wilde's play-writing was a great piece of good fortune for the public, due to the fact that the dinner-table was not quite big enough for the extravagance of his wit. His wit was not concerned with men but with their manners, not with life but with its prattle. The old-fashioned discarded technique of Scribe, Sardou, and the dove-tailers was ready to hand, and Wilde borrowed it because it was of supreme indifference to him what the sum-total of his sayings amounted to so long as each thing was said supremely. Consequently we got from him plays in which bracelets turn into brooches, chairs opportunely topple, and sofas are strewn with incriminating fans. The characters colloquise to their hearts' content. Lord Windermere's apostrophe, "Great Heavens, I dare not tell my wife that Mrs. Erylne is her mother!" is the first intimation to the audience of the fact. To drop the curtain on such a speech is reminiscent of the plays in which gentlemen gallantly turned their backs whilst embarrassed ladies slipped out of inner rooms, as, of course, happens in this play. Wilde would do this sort of thing with the greatest complacency, although it sets our teeth on edge. Of course it must not be imagined that he was unconscious of his defects. Unable to remedy them, he exalted them into virtues, and the translation gave his wit its peculiar colouring. Unable to hold the mirror up to nature, he declared that nature held the mirror up to art. Incapable of artistic sincerity or conviction, he denied their existence. To Wilde paradox was more than an empty witicism; it was his existence as an artist, and the plays are the artist's brilliant admission of defeat.

The performance at the Queen's Theatre last night was quite good enough to be pleasurable, although there was a good deal to which it is not hypercritical to object. The Duchess of Berwick made points elaborately and with emphasis, whereas the whole virtue of the play lies in its serene unconsciousness. Perhaps Miss Maudie Henderson was afraid of her audience, and imitated the French actresses who speak more slowly for our benefit. We did not think that Miss Lydia Busch quite got into Mrs. Erylne's skin in the first act. Underneath the *sang froid* of the woman of the world there is the woman striving to creep back and the mother drawn towards her daughter, ever so slightly. We did not quite get this, but the part is very badly written.

Miss Nona Hoffe, as Lady Windermere, was excellent in the difficult scene in which she has to listen in silence to long emotional speeches, but the scene should go much faster. Miss Hoffe played intelligently all through. Mr. Lane-Bayliff and Mr. Monckton Hoffe were always in exactly the right key. It is a pity we sometimes lost the tone of the society Wilde drew so well, but that was not the fault of the actors we have mentioned. J. E. A.

Sunday Chronicle.

Aug. 25-1907 Manchester.

Mordant Humour.

I was one of a sparse audience at the Queen's Theatre, Manchester, during a performance of Lady Windermere's Fan. Whilst I enjoyed the sparkling epigrams, which courtesied until they became a farce, I recalled an Oscar Wilde story, which, I believe, is not generally known. During the height of his fame Wilde let it be known that he had created the play of his life—the very play for the British public. The play was so remarkable that there were conditions attached to its production, and these conditions were that the play should be locked away unopened in a safe, and neither read nor produced before his death. An enterprising American manager accepted the conditions, and bought the play for £200. When Wilde ultimately died in Paris the manager and several bosom friends repaired to the safe, and with trembling fingers unopened the precious manuscript. They found a score or so of type-written sheets, neatly stitched together, and containing not a scrap of writing. That was Oscar Wilde's opinion of the British public!

Umpire (Manchester) Aug. 25

PROVINCIAL PARS.

It cannot be said that the autumn season has opened sensationally, so far as novelties are concerned. Of course, the season is young, the holidays are not yet over, and there is promise of more striking fare shortly. But the opening weeks, with one or two exceptions, failed to disclose any remarkable show of enterprise in the way of new goods. Leading provincial houses last week entertained such old friends as "The Silver King," "The Sign of the Cross," "Walker, London," "Florodora," "Charley's Aunt," and revivals of Hall Caine, Oscar Wilde, and Sir P. G. Burnand. Doubtless this is a tribute to the vitality of these productions, and I have no wish to detract from their merits. At the same time, it seems to me their longevity illustrates once more the prevailing dearth of capable playwrights. The market for "good old 'uns" is fairly steady. But we should appreciate a more generous sprinkling of "good new 'uns."

Staffordshire Sentinel August 30

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Hottingham Daily Express August 31

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Glasgow Daily Record & Mail August 31

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

DAILY TELEGRAPH,

AUGUST 23, 1907.

HARRIS BURLAND'S NEW NOVEL.

MR. GREENING beg to announce the publication of a Novel by the Author of "The Financier," entitled

Love the Criminal

"It seems to me that love is the only possible explanation of the extraordinary amount of suffering that there is in the world."—De Profundis.

appears on the title-page of "Love the Criminal," giving the key-note to the story.

Tribune August 26-1907

SAVOY FAREWELL

END OF SULLIVAN SEASON.

MEMORABLE SCENES.

Gilbert and Sullivan opera, according to present arrangements, bade a last, long farewell to its ancient home, the Savoy, on Saturday. It was a memorable scene—a scene of extraordinarily sustained enthusiasm. Yet in the brilliant tapestry of the moment there were always interwoven some grey threads of regret. It was a festive, illuminating, sparkling scene, charged with melody, laughter, and song, and yet always there was the consciousness that it was a time of parting.

It had been arranged, with admirable discretion by the management that the last performance of the present season of Gilbert and Sullivan revivals at the Savoy should be composed of selections from at least four of the most popular operas. The day should be one long grand concert. The performance would begin at four o'clock, and, allowing for an interval between 6.45 and eight o'clock, would last until eleven. As was only to be expected, so rich and bountiful a banquet was all to the taste of ardent Savoyards. Actors and actresses, too, played their parts well up to expectations. They made a magnificent last rally round the theatre of their affections. They drew crowds to pit, gallery, and amphitheatre, and to every other part of the house. They were all Savoyards. They knew every song; they laughed with the pleasure of long acquaintance at every joke; and they gave the gallant band of young artists, who have so worthily upheld the traditions of their forebears, an uproarious reception.

SONGS IN THE INTERVAL.

The programme began with the first act from "The Yeomen of the Guard." The appearance of each artist was a signal for salvos of applause, and Mr. C. H. Workman was greeted with a remarkable demonstration. His duet with Miss Clara Dow, "I have a Song to Sing," was twice encored. Thus early it became evident that the freshening breeze of enthusiasm was blowing strongly; that, in fact, tempest and hurricane were to descend upon us. One looked with anxiety towards the conductor's baton, alive to the fact that nothing but the magic of that wand stood between one and what is termed in "another place" an all-night sitting. Act two from "The Gondoliers" followed "The Yeomen of the Guard." Miss Jessie Rose here scored a fine individual triumph; but again there was applause and some to spare for all concerned. One may just mention in passing the work of Mr. Workman as the Duke of Plaza-Toro and that of Mr. John Clulow as the Grand Inquisitor. Here followed the interval. The majority of people from the stalls and boxes filed out of the theatre. Those in the pit and gallery sent prospecting parties out to forage for refreshments. Other parties remained as stern sentinels of vacated seats. Then suddenly someone started singing, and the next instant practically everyone in the house had joined with lusty accord in the refrain. The singing continued for more than an hour, when it seemed that nearly every song in the full Savoy repertoire had been exhausted. The audience demonstrated its character. It proved beyond question that it was composed of ardent and accomplished Savoyards, whose enthusiasm for Mr. Gilbert's lyrics and the tunes of Sir Arthur Sullivan must have been of life-long duration.

One thing was peculiarly noticeable. The great chorus of playgoers was resolved on lifting the roof of the theatre once again with the familiar strains of "The Mikado." They succeeded—then sang it all over again. They were singing still when the curtain rose on the second act from "Patience." Again the rapturous applause broke out on every possible occasion. Mr. Workman, made up somewhat to resemble Mr. Maurice Parkes, scored a further success as the fleshly Bunthorne. The "Pooh Pooh to you" duet was twice encored, and the antics of the "aesthetic" maidens received their just meed of laughter.

SCENE FROM "THE MIKADO."

Still one could not help reflecting with a glance back at the high priest of the "movement," which "Patience" was especially designed to ridicule, that the next season at the Savoy is to be dedicated to the plays of Mr. Bernard Shaw and other dramatists, who have all in some measure profited much from the works of Oscar Wilde.

Immediately after "Patience" came the event of the evening. We had a scene from "The Mikado." We had not been informed of this by the advertisement, and the audience, delighted at so happy an event, surpassed itself in the vigorous arts of applause. Mr. Workman, in the "Willow, Tit Willow" song, reached the zenith of quite a wonderful day's work. Encores were demanded. Shouts of "Workman" became loud and insistent. Finally, amid continued uproar, the fire-proof curtain descended on the stage, and the orchestra struck up merrily into the "Iolanthe" overture. The first act of this brightly light opera concluded the day's performance, during which Mr. Workman and Miss Louie René had appeared in no fewer than five different characters. Then came the National Anthem, sung by the entire company, while the military band from "Iolanthe" joined forces with the orchestra. It was a grand and impressive finale to a memorable performance.

Still the audience appeared not entirely satisfied. They called their favourites again and again. People seemed reluctant to depart from the theatre, perhaps realizing that they could never attend here again in quite the same circumstances or, indeed, ever again meet all together.

44 7 Judy August 14 1907

On Music

RICHARD STRAUSS

(An Analysis)

By Dr. F. FEIGES AND "V."

"Richard Strauss, the master, the greatest living musician!" Many—nay, most—critics will have it so; we hear it daily, insistently, and importunately: and the masses follow and shout in unison. And yet *musicians* are dubious but silent. A few, let it be duly noted, started to remonstrate and were promptly regarded as heretics, if not ignoramuses. "Our idol must remain intact. Who dares to suggest feet of clay?" Thus criticism. In the following we, having the courage of our convictions, venture to essay an anti-criticism and show that Strauss is not quite what fashion would have him be, that he is neither the "first" musician of the present time nor the legitimate heir of the immortal Richard Wagner—in fine, not one of the Great in musical history. We shall endeavour to assign to him that place in music to which his endowments and merits entitle him, relying not alone upon our own convictions and opinions, but also upon those of numerous *real* musicians and qualified musical experts.

We may safely postulate that the basis of art (or the artistic) is personality and specific talent for a certain art. The historical value of the creator of a work of art depends upon the proportion and relation of these two elements. Only where a natural balance between the two exists is greatness possible. Mind, merely possible, extant only where a personality of extraordinary significance and extraordinary talent is concerned—for instance, Beethoven. In the absence of a harmonious balance, the stronger development of one or the other of the two factors makes the deficiency of the other more conspicuous. Richard Strauss is a typical example in this respect. It is a well-known fact that he started writing music at a very early period of his life. He grew up on music, so to speak, and always had, and retained, the gift of assimilating, transforming, and reproducing new impressions. His gift for absorption and assimilation is eminent; he goes with the times and instinctively absorbs whatever may come within his scope. His first works were still domineered over by the spirit of Mendelssohn and Schumann; next we find Brahms in office; then Liszt and Wagner hold their sway. During the latter epoch, being somewhat of a favourite in Bayreuth, he makes an experiment with a work à la "Parsifal" ("Guntram"), but finds that his assimilation is not quite equal to the task. Friedrich Nietzsche then became the fashion, and promptly inspired Strauss to compose his "Zarathustra." Eventually we arrive at the Oscar Wilde craze which opportunely suggests the "Salomé" *motif*, and its exhaustive employment. Compare with all this the development of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and men of similar calibre!

But let us first deal with the *musician* Strauss. His extraordinary musical propensity is undeniable. He writes effective music with fluency and ease and knocks into shape anything that he happens upon without much choice or originality. His weakest point is inventiveness, his strongest his sense of colour and sound, his technique and dexterous handling of his material. And it is really on account of his technique that Strauss is idolised and deified.

It repays to investigate whether adoption (or assimilation) does not also play an important part in this respect. Does he denote a new departure in harmonics? Is he a more original path-finder than other modern German, Italian, or French composers? Is he as natural and grateful as they? In 1890—only to mention one example—Hugo Wolff finished his "Spanisches Liederbuch." It is prolific with sincere endeavours to heighten the musical expression

by means of artistically chosen harmonic material. From 1894-96 Strauss wrote his Op. 27, 29, and 31. What a wealth of harmonic commonplaces! In order to write *modern* music, he has adopted the habit of accumulating dissonances which aim simply at producing tricky effects by far-fetched, exaggerated means. To us it appears that Art can very well dispense with this kind of pyrotechnics. They have nothing to do with the soul of Art, but constitute merely a kind of mental or witty sport. We leave it to the expert to inquire into the extent of Strauss's originality as regards instrumentation. It must be pointed out, however, that his instrumentation has become typical for modern times, and that his command over the most complex orchestral machinery is unique. In this respect Strauss is a prototype for posterity.

Super-saturation of sound and potency of the entire orchestral body are plainly evident on perusing his scores.

The so-called Strauss contrapuntics is, after all, a technically very simple matter, and is so much inferior to the achievements of the classics and some modern Italians or Germans, such as Bossi and Reger respectively, that it would be better to pass over Strauss's talent in that respect in silence. Strauss, beside his instrumentation, owns two specialities: musical sensuality and musical humour. Instances for the former—i.e., ability to represent realistically certain passionate climaxes and erotic sensuousness—are his songs "Cäcilie," "Heimliche Aufforderung," "Und wärest du mein Weib," likewise "Don Juan," the love scenes in "Ein Heldenleben," and the "Domestica," also in the "Feuersnot," and "Salomé." It is a sensually most effective trick (by no means always free from triviality and commonplaceness) and it certainly has made Strauss popular with the masses.

(To be Continued.)

Musical Standard.

185, Fleet Street, E.C.

issue dated.....17 Aug.....1907

'Judy' on Richard Strauss.

We must confess we seldom purchase "Judy: The London Serio-Comic Journal." We received, however, the issue of August 14, and suppose it is hoped we shall make some comment on the first instalment of a series of articles by "Dr. F. Feiges and V." on the German composer, Richard Strauss. We must certainly congratulate "Judy" on giving music an intended *serious* attention. It is a very laudable thing indeed. We cannot say, however, we are favourably impressed by the so-called Strauss "Analysis." It opens as follows: "Richard Strauss, the master, the greatest living musician!" Many—nay, most—critics will have it so; we hear it daily, insistently and importunately; and the masses follow and shout in unison. And yet *musicians* are dubious but silent. A few, let it be duly noted, started to remonstrate and were promptly regarded as heretics, if not ignoramuses. 'Our idol must remain intact. Who dares to suggest feet of clay?' Thus criticism. In the following we, having the courage of our convictions, venture to essay an anti-criticism and show that Strauss is not quite what fashion would have him be, that he is neither the 'first' musician of the present time nor the legitimate mental heir of the immortal Richard Wagner—in fine, not one of the Great in musical history. We shall endeavour to assign to him that place in music to which his endowments and merits entitle him, relying not alone upon our own convictions and opinions, but also upon those of numerous *real* musicians and qualified musical experts." We see the writers of the article admit that most critics insist that Strauss is the greatest living musician. In purely orchestral writing and in opera he holds at the present time a position we honestly believe is second to none, dismissing from the question his great distinction as a writer of songs. It will be interesting to know who *is* the legitimate heir of Richard Wagner! It may be mentioned that he need not necessarily be as great as that master. Critics name Strauss as successor because he is the best of the known living composers. "His [Strauss'] first works were still domineered over by the spirit of Mendelssohn and Schumann; next we find Brahms in office; then Liszt and Wagner hold their sway. During the latter epoch, being somewhat of a favourite in Bayreuth, he makes an experiment with a work *à la* 'Parsifal' ('Guntram'), but finds that his assimilation is not quite equal to the task. Friedrich Nietzsche then became the fashion, and promptly inspired Strauss to compose his 'Zarathustra.'" "Guntram" is Wagnerian, but we venture to say it is grossly erroneous to describe the music of the opera as "*à la* 'Parsifal.'" We do know something of its character. "Eventually," we are told, "we arrive at the Oscar Wilde craze which opportunely suggests the 'Salome' *motif*, and its exhaustive employment. Compare with all this the development of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner and men of similar calibre!" No doubt that is intended to be a very withering observation: for our part, we do not quite see the point of it. We should imagine a composer may be allowed to be free in choice of subject. If a certain subject interests him he will surely treat it more effectively than if he were forced to deal with another that had no interest to him. The marvellous "Judy" writers go on: "But let us first deal with the *musician* Strauss. His extraordinary musical propensity is undeniable. He writes effective music with fluency and ease and knocks into shape anything that he happens upon without much choice or originality. His weakest point is inventiveness, his strongest his sense of colour and sound, his technique and dexterous handling of his material. And it is really on account of his technique that Strauss is idolised and deified." Strauss' "inventiveness" surely compares strikingly with the great masters. We have never said his present compositions show an originality

equal to Bach, Beethoven or Wagner: but these men were giants in the art. All we contend is that Strauss is the best thing since Wagner. And we challenge "Judy"—of course, it is deliciously comic challenging "Judy"—to produce his superior in emotional strength, poetic insight and workmanship. "From 1894-96 Strauss wrote his Op. 27, 29 and 31.*" What a wealth of harmonic common-places! In order to write *modern* music, he has adopted the habit of accumulating dissonances, which aim simply at producing tricky effects by far-fetched, exaggerated means. To us it appears that Art can very well dispense with this kind of pyrotechnics." Verily do we wonder if the musical readers of "Judy" have yet discovered any meaning in these lines. We also wonder if the writers of the article—beg pardon! Analysis—can help them and us. We thought those precious writers were experts, but they blandly leave the said expert to inquire into the extent of Strauss' originality as regards instrumentation! We fear we shall *not* consider it our duty to refer to further instalments of this precious Analysis. Why should we when, for example, we read the following: "Super-saturation of sound and potency of the entire orchestral body are plainly evident on perusing his scores. The so-called Strauss contrapuntics is, after all, a technically very simple matter, and is so much inferior to the achievements of the classics and some modern Italians or Germans, such as Bossi and Reger respectively, that it would be better to pass over Strauss' talent in that respect in silence. Strauss, beside his instrumentation, owns two specialities: musical sensuality and musical humour. Instances for the former—*i.e.*, ability to represent realistically certain passionate climaxes and erotic sensuousness—are his songs. 'Cäcilie,' 'Heimliche Aufforderung,' 'Und wärest du mein Weib,' likewise 'Don Juan,' the love scenes in 'Ein Heldenleben' and the 'Domestica,' also in the 'Feuersnot' and 'Salome.' It is a sensually most effective trick (by no means always free from triviality and commonplaceness) and it certainly has made Strauss popular with the masses." We should like to see "Dr. F. Feiges" in the *London Women's University Library*

S. Wales Post, 15 Aug. 1907

A SUCCESSFUL ACTRESS.



MISS LYDIA BUSCH,
who enacts in fascinating style the role of
"Mrs. Erlynne" in Oscar Wilde's play,
"Lady Windermere's Fan," at the Grand
Theatre, London, this week.

Jissen Wor2013-03-18 University Library

AMUSEMENTS.

THEATRES.

QUEEN'S.—It appears that Oscar Wilde's society comedies are coming into fashion again. In Manchester two of them have recently been revived, and a third is this week being played at the Queen's Theatre. "Lady Windermere's Fan," the work of a brilliant and witty writer, might be expected to be very entertaining, and Mr. Monckton Hoffe's company perform it with much success.

Manchester
Evening
News

Aug. 20. 1907

2019-03-18 Women's University Library

London Opinion 24 Aug. 1907

Jesse W. Brown's University Library

Don't be moderate; nothing succeeds like excess.
-Oscar Wilde.

August 21 1907

QUEEN'S THEATRE.

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN.

One has often wondered how it was that Oscar Wilde came so near to writing a great comedy without actually achieving one. A little more attention to construction, a defter handling of stage technics, a trifle more originality of plot—one goes through the stale category of critical commonplaces without finding a satisfactory explanation. Wilde's essays in tragic drama, poetry, and the novel should, however, help one to an explanation of his failure to write a series of plays that should be something more than the wittiest known to the modern stage. Wilde's other work showed that he had little to say, but that he could say that little excellently in a hundred ways. There was Maeterlinck's way, for instance, on which he depended for "Salome." Then there was Gautier, upon whom he drew for his exoticism, Baudelaire for his horror; while the subtle poison of "Dorian Gray" is undiluted Huysmans. Of course he had an extraordinary power of assimilation, and succeeded in giving a personal and individual form to his thefts.

The borrowing habit stuck closely to Wilde when it came to writing comedies for the London stage. The comedies were not the outcome of a conviction that the writer had certain things which he must express and could only express in terms of the theatre. One always has the feeling that Wilde's play-writing was a great piece of good fortune for the public, due to the fact that the dinner-table was not quite big enough for the extravagance of his wit. His wit was not concerned with men but with their manners, not with life but with its prattle. The old-fashioned discarded technique of Scribe, Sardou, and the dove-tailers was ready to hand, and Wilde borrowed it because it was of supreme indifference to him what the sum-total of his sayings amounted to so long as each thing was said supremely. Consequently we got from him plays in which bracelets turn into brooches, chairs opportunely topple, and sofas are strewn with incriminating fans. The characters soliloquise to their hearts' content. Lord Windermere's apostrophe, "Great Heavens, I dare not tell my wife that Mrs. Erlynne is her mother!" is the first intimation to the audience of the fact. To drop the curtain on such a speech is reminiscent of the plays in which gentlemen gallantly turned their backs whilst embarrassed ladies slipped out of inner rooms, as, of course, happens in this play. Wilde could do this sort of thing with the greatest complacency, although it sets our teeth on edge. Of course it must not be imagined that he was unconscious of his defects. Unable to remedy them, he exalted them into virtues, and the translation gave his wit its peculiar colouring. Unable to hold the mirror up to nature, he declared that nature held the mirror up to art. Incapable of artistic sincerity or conviction, he denied their existence. To Wilde paradox was more than an empty witticism; it was his existence as an artist, and the plays are the artist's brilliant admission of defeat.

The performance at the Queen's Theatre last night was quite good enough to be pleasurable, although there was a good deal to which it is not hypercritical to object. The Duchess of Berwick made points elaborately and with emphasis, whereas the whole virtue of the part lies in its serene unconsciousness. Perhaps Miss Maude Henderson was afraid of her audience, and imitated the French actresses who speak more slowly for our benefit. We did not think that Miss Lydia Busch quite got into Mrs. Erlynne's skin in the first act. Underneath the *sang froid* of the woman of the world there is the woman striving to creep back and the mother drawn towards her daughter, ever so slightly. We did not quite get this, but the part is very badly written.

Miss Nona Hoffe, as Lady Windermere, was excellent in the difficult scene in which she has to listen in silence to long emotional speeches, but the scene should go much faster. Miss Hoffe played intelligently all through. Mr. Lane-Bayliff and Mr. Monckton Hoffe were always in exactly the right key. It is a pity we sometimes lost the tone of the society Wilde drew so well, but that was not the fault of the actors we have mentioned. J. E. A.

"LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN" REVIVED AT THE QUEEN'S.

An interesting performance was given at the Queen's Theatre last night, when, as a curtain raiser to Oscar Wilde's brilliant play, "Lady Windermere's Fan," a dramatic little sketch entitled "The Heritage" was presented. It is the work of an unknown author, but in plot, construction, and treatment it is far superior to most productions of the kind, and is well worthy of a place in the same programme as more famous and ambitious plays.

Little that is new can be said of "Lady Windermere's Fan," but it retains all its old charm, and, although last night's audience was not nearly so large as the excellence of the performance deserved, the scintillating wit and sparkling epigram were not less appreciated.

The members of Mr. Monckton Hoffe's company gave a thoroughly efficient interpretation of both plays.

Sunday Chronicle.

Aug. 25-1907 Manchester.

Mordant Humour.

I was one of a sparse audience at the Queen's Theatre, Manchester, during a performance of Lady Windermere's Fan. Whilst I enjoyed the sparkling epigrams, which coruscated until they became a flame, I recalled an Oscar Wilde story, which, I believe, is not generally known. During the height of his fame Wilde let it be known that he had created the play of his life—the very play for the British public. The play was so remarkable that there were conditions attached to its production, and these conditions were that the play should be locked away unopened in a safe, and neither read nor produced before his death. An enterprising American manager accepted the conditions, and bought the play for £200. When Wilde ultimately died in Paris the manager and several bosom friends repaired to the safe and with trembling fingers unopened the precious manuscript. They found a score or so of sheets of paper, each stitched together, and containing not a scrap of writing. That was Oscar Wilde's opinion of the British public!

Umpire (Manchester) Aug. 25

PROVINCIAL PARS.

It cannot be said that the autumn season has opened sensationally, so far as novelties are concerned. Of course, the season is young, the holidays are not yet over, and there is promise of more striking fare shortly. But the opening weeks, with one or two exceptions, failed to disclose any remarkable show of enterprise in the way of new goods. Leading provincial houses last week entertained such old friends as "The Silver King," "The Sign of the Cross," "Walker, London," "Florodora," "Charley's Aunt," and revivals of Hall Caine, Oscar Wilde, and Sir F. C. Burnand. Doubtless this is a tribute to the vitality of these productions, and I have no wish to detract from their merits. At the same time, it seems to me their longevity illustrates once more the prevailing dearth of capable playwrights. The market for "good old 'uns" is fairly good. But we should appreciate a more generous sprinkling of "good new 'uns."

Staffordshire Sentinel August 30

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's one of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Jissen Women's Union Library
2019-03-18

Notting Ham Daily Express
August 31

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Jissen 2019-03-16ivers447 Library

Glasgow Daily Record & Mail
Aug 31

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr L. C. Ingleby. Jissen Women's University Library
and will be complementary to Mr Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Feb Aug-20.

FAN" REVIVED
EN'S.

DAILY TELEGRAPH,

AUGUST 28, 1907.

MR. HARRIS BURLAND'S NEW NOVEL.

Messrs. GREENING beg to announce the publication of a New Novel by the Author of "The Financier," entitled

Love the Criminal

"It seems to me that love is the only possible explanation of the extraordinary amount of suffering that there is in the world."—De Profundis.

appears on the title-page of "Love the Criminal," giving
the key-note to the story.

2019-03-18

Jissen Women's University Library

449

SAVOY FAREWELL

END OF SULLIVAN
SEASON.

MEMORABLE SCENES.

Gilbert and Sullivan opera, according to present arrangements, bade a last, long farewell to its ancient home, the Savoy, on Saturday. It was a memorable scene—a scene of extraordinarily sustained enthusiasm. Yet in the brilliant tapestry of the moment there were always interwoven some grey threads of regret. It was a festive, illuminating, sparkling scene, charged with melody, laughter, and song, and yet always there was the consciousness that it was a time of parting.

It had been arranged with admirable discretion by the management that the last performance of the present season of Gilbert and Sullivan revivals at the Savoy should be composed of selections from at least four of the most popular operas. The day should be one long grand concerto. The performance would begin at four o'clock, and, allowing for an interval between 6.45 and eight o'clock, would last until eleven. As was only to be expected, so rich and bountiful a banquet was all to the taste of ardent Savoyards. Actors and actresses, too, played their parts well up to expectations. They made a magnificent last rally round the theatre of their affections. They drew crowds to pit, gallery, and amphitheatre, and to every other part of the house. They were all Savoyards. They knew every song; they laughed with the pleasure of long acquaintance at every joke; and they gave the gallant band of young artists, who have so worthily upheld the traditions of their forebears, an uproarious reception.

SONGS IN THE INTERVAL.

The programme began with the first act from "The Yeomen of the Guard." The appearance of each artist was a signal for salvoes of applause, and Mr. C. H. Workman was greeted with a remarkable demonstration. His duet with Miss Clara Dow, "I have a Song to Sing," was twice encored. Thus early it became evident that the freshening breeze of enthusiasm was blowing strongly; that, in fact, tempest and hurricane were to descend upon us. One looked with anxiety towards the conductor's bâton, alive to the fact that nothing but the magic of that wand stood between one and what is termed in "another place" an all-night sitting. Act two from "The Gondoliers" followed "The Yeomen of the Guard." Miss Jessie Rose here scored a fine individual triumph; but again there was applause and some to spare for all concerned. One may just mention in passing the work of Mr. Workman as the Duke of Plaza-Toro and that of Mr. John Clulow as the Grand Inquisitor.

Here followed the interval. The majority of people from the stalls and boxes filed out of the theatre. Those in the pit and gallery sent prospecting parties out to forage for refreshments. Other parties remained as stern sentinels of vacated seats. Then suddenly someone started singing, and the next instant practically everyone in the house had joined with lusty accord in the refrain. The singing continued for more than an hour, when it seemed that nearly every song in the full Savoy repertoire had been exhausted. The audience demonstrated its character. It proved beyond question that it was composed of ardent and accomplished Savoyards, whose enthusiasm for Mr. Gilbert's lyrics and the tunes of Sir Arthur Sullivan must have been of life-long duration.

One thing was peculiarly noticeable. The great chorus of playgoers was resolved on lifting the roof of the theatre once again with the familiar strains of "The Mikado." They succeeded—then sang it all over again. They were singing still when the curtain rose on the second act from "Patience." Again the rapturous applause broke out on every possible occasion. Mr. Workman, made up somewhat to resemble Mr. Maurice Farkoa, scored a further success as the fleshly Bunthorne. The "Pooh Pooh to you" duet was twice encored, and the antics of the "æsthetic" maidens received their just meed of laughter.

SCENE FROM "THE MIKADO."

Still one could not help reflecting with a glance back at the high priest of the "movement," which "Patience" was especially designed to ridicule, that the next season at the Savoy is to be dedicated to the plays of Mr. Bernard Shaw and other dramatists, who have all in some measure profited much from the works of Oscar Wilde.

Immediately after "Patience" came the event of the evening. We had a scene from "The Mikado." We had not been informed of this by the advertisement, and the audience, delighted at so happy an event, surpassed itself in the vigorous arts of applause. Mr. Workman, in the "Willow, Tit Willow" song, reached the zenith of quite a wonderful day's work. Encores were demanded. Shouts of "Workman" became loud and insistent. Finally, amid continued uproar, the fire-proof curtain descended on the stage, and the orchestra struck merrily into the "Iolanthe" overture. The first act of this sprightly light opera concluded the day's performance, during which Mr. Workman and Miss Louie René had appeared in no fewer than five different characters. Then came the National Anthem, sung by the entire company, while the military band from "Iolanthe" joined forces with the orchestra. It was a grand and impressive finale to a memorable performance.

Still the audience appeared not entirely satisfied. They called their favourites again and again. People seemed reluctant to depart from the theatre, perhaps realizing that they could never attend here again in quite the same manner. They will, however, ever again meet all together.

Daily Chronicle. Daily Chronicle.

Aug. UNIVERSITY WITS.

26.1907

BOHOS FROM KOTTABOS. Edited by R. Y. Tyrrell and Sir Edward Sullivan, Bart. London, E. Grant Richards, 7s. 6d. net.

"Kottabos" is the name of a Miscellany of English, Greek and Latin verse and English prose, which was started in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1864, by Dr. R. Y. Tyrrell; in this book is a selection made chiefly from the English verse—fifty-two men are represented, and among these Drs. Edward Dowden, John Todhunter, R. Y. Tyrrell, and Oscar Wilde. To those who know anything of university magazines it contains little that is surprising in quality.

Talent to Genius.

Here they will find the same humour, the same parodies of "Locksley Hall" and "Our Lady of Pain," the same hard neatness which suggests that either the writers have never cared for anything in poetry except its clothes, or that they are content, like other minor versifiers, to forget or at least ignore what they have cared for in great poetry. It is to be hoped that there is some truth in the theory that to have practised the writing of verse is to have made a long step towards reverence for poetry, and that these parodies and imitations are really the compliment that talent pays to genius.

We may seem to be falling into a solemnity which ill suits the company of a book that was probably composed in a different atmosphere, in the genial and shameless reticence of a university. But that reticence seems to be unknown at Dublin, and after the Oxford collection of this kind it is delightful to see senior members of a university writing very much as if they were plain men. The editors rightly claim that many of their pieces are, unlike the "Echoes from the Oxford Magazine," not at all comic, and are less deeply tinged with "the local colour and academic spirit."

Another distinguishing feature of the present collection is the series called "Poems Written in Disobedience," which were composed as affectionate studies or sketches in the manner of some of the best-known English poets, but in which the element of parody has no place.

THE IRISH GENIUS.

30.1907

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH ABILITY, by D. J. O'Donoghue. Dublin, O'Donoghue, 5s.

"One is almost tempted," says Mr. D. J. O'Donoghue, "to believe in the presence of a microbe of genius, which fixes itself in a special locality, and fastens upon a predisposed nature, where it develops and thrives exceedingly." The purpose of this book is to show how desperately busy the microbe has always been in Ireland. Genius, indeed, has seized on the country like a plague, and Celt and Norman and Saxon alike have had greatness thrust upon them in so favourable an environment. Ultimately, commenting upon the number of great men of non-Celtic or semi-Celtic origin that Ireland has produced, Mr. O'Donoghue is driven to adopt Mrs. Oliphant's suggestion, "that not only Irish blood, but Irish air, has collaborated in the product."

"K. O. K."

His ingenuousness in following out this idea is sometimes very delightful, as, for example, when he comes to the case of Lord Kitchener:

Though born and brought up in Kerry, Lord Kitchener has apparently no Irish blood in his veins, and his Kerry birth may be described as an accident. Still, it is interesting to speculate whether if he had been born in England he would have been a soldier at all, or whether, if he "belonged" to Limerick, for example, he would not have been a greater soldier.

Certainly, Ireland has been prolific in military genius. Her Anglo-Irish and Norman-Irish soldiers have, as a rule, been content to distinguish themselves in the British Army. Celtic Irishmen, on the other hand, have often preferred to go further abroad as "soldiers of fortune," and have won honoured names for themselves in almost every army in the civilised world. Consider, for example, the romantic case of the O'Higinnes, who came from county Meath:

Probably Ambrose O'Higgins, Marquis d'Osorio, was more of an administrator in Mexico than a soldier. . . . He began life as a labourer in county Meath, and rose to be Viceroy of Mexico, while his son, Bernardo O'Higgins, was the liberator of Chili, and the finest monument in Santiago is erected in his honour.

Et anger than Fiction.

Another book on Oscar Wilde. It is by Mr. L. C. Ingleby, is announced by Mr. Werner Laurie, and will be complementary to Mr. Sherard's life of Wilde. The book has much new material, and a long study of Wilde's complex personality.

Daily Chronicle.

4 Sept. 07

There reaches us from Mr. Robert H. Sherard a letter, in which he says:—

I see from a paragraph in your paper that a new book on the late Mr. Wilde is to be issued. You describe it as supplementary to my biography of my friend. People are so very stupid that they may possibly think that this means that I have something to do with this book. This is not the case. I am rather anxious to make that clear because, come people say that I am exploiting my friendship with the dead poet for the production of literary wares. Literary England is so entirely commercial that people cannot understand that a man may have other motives than that of gain. For my part I cannot understand how it can be supposed of any man of average intelligence that he should engage in literary pursuits of any kind with hopes of pecuniary advantage.

Wilde and his friends were not men of average intelligence. They were men of exceptional intelligence. They were men of exceptional talent. They were men of exceptional character. They were men of exceptional life. They were men of exceptional death. They were men of exceptional everything.

Dublin Express.

31 Aug 1907

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. Oscar Wilde's comedy, "A Woman of No Importance," did not seem to fill the frame at His Majesty's Theatre. It was sumptuously staged, quite in Mr. Tree's grand vein, but the play is better suited to a smaller stage and a smaller auditorium. Much of the fragile humour of the dialogue and something of the intimate relation in which an audience stands to effective situation on the stage seemed to evaporate in that large atmosphere. And I think Mr. Tree rather emphasised the deliberate nonchalance of Lord Illingworth to the point of jeopardising its vitality altogether. He looked the part; he walked the part; he acted the part; but he spoke it as though utterly bored by it. At all events, he individualised it. He made its cold, calculating cynicism stand out in repulsive contrast to Miss Marion Terry's tender, emotional, womanly rendering of Mrs. Arbuthnot. How strong the characterisation is in "A Woman of No Importance"! They are not exceptional characters—not exceptionally base or exceptionally worthy, not too wise or too foolish for this commonplace world, but each is distinct. They are all human beings and conform to codes of recognised human conduct, each after its kind. And Wilde could write a pathetic scene with as unerring a touch as he could pen the light persiflage of a group of society dames. The scene between Mrs. Arbuthnot and her son is one that plays upon every chord of our sympathies. It was consummately acted, of course, but the author knew how to

Illustrated London News.

31 Aug 1907

MUSIC.

WHILE our censor refuses resolutely to permit the Strauss-Wilde opera, "Salomé," to be performed on the British stage, the work continues to enjoy a very considerable measure of popularity on the Continent. It has conquered Paris, where the conventions of Camille Saint-Saëns and Massenet are still the most potent of all musical forces, whether for good or evil. The German opera-houses have welcomed "Salomé" as a masterpiece, and even the Italians have insisted upon its presentation in cities that lie right off the beaten track. For example, when the writer was in Italy during the spring, he heard of a spirited attempt made by the community of Ravenna, the little city in which Dante is buried, near the Adriatic seaboard, to secure performances of "Salomé" in their four-weeks season; and although the project could not be carried through, owing to the expense involved, the attempt spoke volumes for the musical enterprise of Italy. In Turin, where that distinguished singer Bellincioni took the name-part, and in Milan, where it was entrusted to the gifted Salomea Kruceniczka, the opera has been received with extraordinary favour, although it is quite unlike anything to which the melody-loving Italians are accustomed.

It is needless, perhaps, to say anything about the book, because most educated people have read "Salomé," and may even be supposed to accept Wilde's drama as a singularly powerful presentation of a horrible story. It must be apparent to most students of music that the modern scale, now little more than three hundred years old as far as this country is concerned, cannot cope realistically with scenes and emotions that are nearly two thousand years old. The man who tries to interpret a Bible story in the terms of melodies that modulate from tonic to dominant and back again after the manner of cheap ballads is doomed to failure. He may achieve a simple and pleasing failure, as M. Saint-Saëns has done with his "Samson and Delilah," a failure that comes near to being a success by reason of the inclusion of melodies that are singularly pleasing to the ear, though they have nothing at all to do with people or period. Richard Strauss makes no mistake in this direction. For a barbarous story enacted in barbarous times he has written barbarous music; he seems to have given to Oscar Wilde's play just the touch of strength and savagery required to endow it with permanent dramatic significance. It may be doubted whether the operatic stage holds any work that goes farther to create a startling and overwhelming atmosphere.

At a first hearing the general discordance is overpowering, but after a time the strength of the music persuades the listener that realism in music has said its latest if not its last word.

Before dealing with the final sale of the season it is necessary to mention a number of important works sold by different auctioneers between the 18th and the 25th of July. These comprise, *inter alia*, Oscar Wilde's *Vera*, or the *Nihilists*, the original privately printed first draft of the play, interleaved, and having numerous MS. erasures, alterations, and additions in the author's handwriting, 1882, 8vo, £26; *Commissaire* Sept. 1907

English Illustrated Magazine

Oscar Wilde's comedy, "A Woman of No Importance," did not seem to fill the frame at His Majesty's Theatre. It was sumptuously staged, quite in Mr. Tree's grand vein, but the play is better suited to a smaller stage and a smaller auditorium. Much of the fragile humour of the dialogue and something of the intimate relation in which an audience stands to effective situation on the stage seemed to evaporate in that large atmosphere. And I think Mr. Tree rather emphasised the deliberate nonchalance of Lord Illingworth to the point of jeopardising its vitality altogether. He looked the part; he walked the part; he acted the part; but he spoke it as though utterly bored by it. At all events, he individualised it. He made its cold, calculating cynicism stand out in repulsive contrast to Miss Marion Terry's tender, emotional, womanly rendering of Mrs. Arbuthnot. How strong the characterisation is in "A Woman of No Importance"! They are not exceptional characters—not exceptionally base or exceptionally worthy, not too wise or too foolish for this commonplace world, but each is distinct. They are all human beings and conform to codes of recognised human conduct, each after its kind. And Wilde could write a pathetic scene with as unerring a touch as he could pen the light persiflage of a group of society dames. The scene between Mrs. Arbuthnot and her son is one that plays upon every chord of our sympathies. It was consummately acted, of course, but the author knew how to

lay the train for the action. His epigrams seem stale only because we have heard them before. It is a kind of wit that stimulates only on the first hearing; give time for analysis, and the effervescence is gone. But Wilde was not an epigrammatist only; we shall always wonder what he might have become had he been less of an egoist. "The Door upon the Latch," dramatized by Mr. F. Kinsey Peile from R. L. Stevenson's "Le Sire de Maletroit," played as a curtain raiser to "A Woman of No Importance," was disappointing. We missed the fine delicate flavour of Stevenson's story. The qualities which fascinate in the tale are too purely intellectual for transmission to the stage; they require too much dramatic stiffening; and, moreover, the improbabilities of the story become annoyingly glaring in drama.

Referee. Sept. 1. 1907

GOSSIP FROM THE GAY CITY.

LOIE FULLER AS SALOME.

"LA REVUE DE LA FEMME."

FATE is hard on us sometimes. I had not met Miss Loie Fuller since the Exhibition. I met her a couple of days ago on her return from London, and found her looking fully seven years younger. So that Fate is not always hard on us. But Miss Loie Fuller was not altogether happy. She had been to see the first performance of "The Little Japanese Girl" in London, and it had upset her a little. "It was beautifully stage-managed and produced," she said, "but until I saw it I had thought that I had been the author of the piece. I know a good deal about Japanese people and the prettily poetic way in which they talk, and I had tried to make my Princess talk as they really do. But somebody made her and the rest of them talk pidgin-English. I shall never drink tea again without remembering my poor little mutilated play. Well, well!" And Miss Loie Fuller began to talk about "Salome."

It had nothing whatever to do with Strauss or Oscar Wilde. It is a new "Salome"—a "Salome" with fresh music and without any words at all, which latter fact, I cannot help believing, makes things much pleasanter for Herod. "Salome" has been composed by a new musician who is to startle Paris. I murmured gently that new musicians always did this in one way or another, and Miss Fuller frowned, which made me change the subject. The book of her new "Salome" is by M. Robert d'Humières, who, Referees will remember, has done "The Second Mrs. Tanguer."

into French, and has written a very clever book on England. He is altogether a clever fellow, this aristocratic young Frenchman, and he is one of the few Anglophile Frenchmen I know whose English can be understood without a thorough knowledge of French. His "Salome" promises to be a fascinating work, and you shall hear more, Referees, when the time comes, about the wonderful light effects which Miss Loie Fuller is creating, and of Salome's serpent dance, which threatens to astonish.

"Salome" and other things are to be produced at the Théâtre des Arts, which that tireless American lady Miss Daisy Andrews has acquired and is turning into an

International Entente Cordiale Theatre. It is to open on the 11th with a bill in which "one-acters" by well-known Frenchmen will alternate with Japanese masterpieces written and played by Mme. Hanako and her troupe. Those of you who are more than seven and remember Sada Yacco at the Loie Fuller Theatre in the 1900 Exhibition will have an idea of the artistic treat in store. I am sorry to say that I have been too lazy to learn Japanese yet, but I shall go and see Hanako and Co.—and in the meanwhile Banzai!

Dublin — ? Sept. 3. 1907

BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS.

THE GAIETY THEATRE.

The performance of "Lady Windermere's Fan," which was reproduced in the Gaiety Theatre last night by the Monckton Hoffs Comedy Company, was followed with deep interest by a very full house. The play has already been more than once presented on the Dublin stage, and though it has not been produced for some considerable time past, its outlines and the general idea of the plot are quite familiar to playgoers here. The staging was excellently arranged, and the performance elicited general admiration and satisfaction. Miss Nora Hoffs as Lady Windermere, acted very effectively, especially so in her interview with Lord Windermere (Mr. Monckton Hoffs) in the first act, and in that with her supposed rival in the second act, in which the latter implores her to return home without, at the same time, revealing her identity. Miss Lydia Busch, as Mrs. Erynn, gave an interesting rendering of the part. The other leading roles were well filled. They include Lord Darlington (Mr. Lane Bayliff), Lord Augustus Lorton (Mr. Ralph W. Hutton), Lord Augustus Lorton (Mr. Lane Bayliff), Lord Augustus Lorton (Mr. Ralph W. Hutton), Lady Agatha Carlisle (Miss Maina Hearne).

Tonight the company will present another well-known play by the same author, "The Importance of Being Earnest."

The plays will be preceded each evening during the week by an interesting one-act play, "The Heritage."

Dublin Express Sept. 3 1907

THE GAIETY THEATRE

"LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN."

Last night a very crowded and appreciative audience filled the Gaiety Theatre in all its parts to witness the presentation by the Monckton Hoffs Comedy Company of "Lady Windermere's Fan," a society play which its first run of popularity showed a dramatic genius and an intensity and vividness of character portrayed which marked out the author for distinction beyond any of his contemporaries who wrote for the modern stage. Theatre goes whose memories are not yet too old to recall the success which this work as well as "The Importance of Being in Earnest," by the same author, which will be played to-night, won on their first presentation to the public, and now when time has mellowed tragic and ever to be regretted memories, and the public mind in its charitable forgiveness thinks principally of the merits of the writer, and leaves his faults forgotten, these plays come back with their wealth of sparkling merit to remind us of a meteoric career which shot athwart the literary sky, leaving only the trail of its brilliance behind. The propriety of reviving this author's works at the present day need hardly be questioned. As studies of life they are superb in their human interest. They are vivid in their depiction of the shortcomings and foibles of society as it exists, of its ambitions, its temptations, and its misunderstandings, and in splendid contrast they display alongside each other the natural and the artificial elements which are forever meeting in fierce conflict, and alternately gaining the mastery, revealing one day the story of dramatic tragedy, and though less frequently because less sensationally the picture of social peace and tranquillity as the happy ending to the stage story. "Lady Windermere's Fan" gives us a presentation of social life the actuality of which is apparent on the surface. One looks at it and feels that there is no getting away from its hard reality. With consummate art the author constructs his story, and the natural flow of events as they are vivid and described by his pen reveals the marvellous study of the life which he mirrors in his play. The audience look on and listen and are obliged to feel that soft fancy forms no part of the author's mental composition as he develops his plot. The dialogue, witty and scintillating though it may be, is the reflex of modern thought amongst the men and women whom he brings together; and the characters which he puts on the stage do not vanish when the footlights are extinguished. The play contains a story which cannot be blotted from the mind when the following one comes along the next day. It is something haunting, which the memory carries away with it stubbornly and will not forget, and in this way the author by the aid of his art, which is that of the highest quality, and the sheer impress of his character will in the long run make his name permanent in the annals of English dramatic literature. This play to receive adequate justice would require to be interpreted by a company of the highest attainments. As it is it receives a good all-round presentation which is the next best thing to perfection. Miss Nora Hoffs as Lady Windermere succeeded well in a most exacting part, and the Lord Windermere of Mr. Monckton Hoffs, although showing many shortcomings, was on the whole fairly acceptable. Lord Darlington, as played by Mr. J. Lane Bayliff, exhibited a good deal of naturalness, and the minor parts of Lord Augustus Lorton, Mr. Charles Dumbly, Mr. Cecil Graham, and Mr. Hopper were intelligently filled by Mr. Ralph W. Hutton, Mr. Arthur Forbes Watts, Mr. Aubrey Fitzmaurice, Mr. A. W. Barker, and Mr. Reginald M. Field. Miss Lydia Busch as Mrs. Erynn acted with a great deal of dramatic force, and Miss Maude Henderson as the Duchess of Berwick acquitted herself with credit. The other female parts were capably sustained by Miss Amy Lloyd Desmond, Miss Ella Kitson, Miss Maina Hearne, Miss Winifred Vallant, and Miss Audrey Fitzgibbon. The "Heritage" as a curtain raiser was well received.

Tonight the company will be seen in the "Importance of Being in Earnest."

A new operatic version of Oscar Wilde's "Salome," composed by M. Mariotte, a French musician, is to be produced during the winter at the Grand Theatre at Lyons. M. Mariotte first read "Salome" in 1895, when he was a naval officer and on his way to China. Later he left the service, and studied music under the most modern masters in Paris.

Daily Chronicle. Daily Chronicle.

Aug. UNIVERSITY WITS.

26-1907
ECHOES FROM KOTTABOS. Edited by R. Y. Tyrrell and Sir Edward Sullivan, Bart. London, E. Grant Richards, 7s. 6d. net.

"Kottabos" is the name of a Miscellany of English, Greek and Latin verse and English prose, which was started in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1864, by Dr. R. Y. Tyrrell, in this book is a selection made chiefly from the English verse—fifty-two men are represented, and among these Drs. Edward Dowden, John Todhunter, R. Y. Tyrrell, and Oscar Wilde. To those who know anything of university magazines it contains little that is surprising in quality.

Talent to Genius.

Here they will find the same humour, the same parodies of "Locksley Hall" and "Our Lady of Pain," the same hard neatness which suggests that either the writers have never cared for anything in poetry except its clothes, or that they are content, like other minor versifiers, to forget or at least ignore what they have cared for in great poetry. It is to be hoped that there is some truth in the theory that to have practised the writing of verse is to have made a long step towards reverence for poetry, and that these parodies and imitations are really the compliment that talent pays to genius.

We may seem to be falling into a solemnity which ill suits the company of a book that was probably composed in a different atmosphere, in the genial and shameless reticence of a university. But that reticence seems to be unknown at Dublin, and after the Oxford collection of this kind it is delightful to see senior members of a university writing very much as if they were plain men. The editors rightly claim that many of their pieces are, unlike the "Echoes from the Oxford Magazine," not at all comic, and are less deeply tinged with "the local colour and academic spirit."

Another distinguishing feature of the present collection is the series called "Poems Written in Discipline," which were composed as discipline studies or sketches in the manner of some of the best-known English poets, but in which the element of parody has no place.

Poetic Qualities.

In what other University magazine could be found passion as in C. P. Mulvany's "Swift on Stella," voluptuous imagery like W. Williams' "Aetion," graceful amorosness like C. P. Mulvany's "L'amour qui passe"? Or where the enthusiasm of these lines "on reading the fragments of early Greek lyric poetry"?

But where are you, whose broken harmony makes music seem to flow, clear stars of song, to whom our best can be Nought but loose clouds, that shift and tell below; That leap and flash and flash, and have no peers, Bound by darkness; waifs of strange melody, Heard in the lone, wild night of wasteful years? Ah, bleeding mouths! ah, smitten tuneful lips!...

The name below them is Standish O'Grady. As to the poems "written in discipline," by Prof. Dowden, we confess to seeing in them the worst kind of parody which is unconscious of itself, though they are no worse than the Greek and Latin verses of good scholars; here, e.g.—

O sweet and sad, and wildly clear,
Through summer air it sinks and swells,
Sweet with a measureless desire,
And sad with all farewells.

Dr. Todhunter's Whitmanisms and poems after Blake are no better. But J. E. Martin's "Bugle Band," with its "Yer soul is bound to follow where the bugles lead the way," is as good as its model.

Translated.
There are some charming translations, one, for example, of Beranger's "Rosette" in this style:—

She had not charms like yours, in youth,
Her heart less tender was, perchance;
A lover's pains she could not soothe
With such a fascinating glance.
What age could weary me, will you know?
—Twas youth, which vainly I regret;
Ah! would that I could love you now
As, long ago, I loved Rosette!

That is by John F. Townsend. Oscar Wilde's half-dozen poems are in his finished manner, and are easily the best things in the book.

Of the pieces which compete with the usual College verses, parodies, and satires, &c., there are many that are very good; for example, Hubert J. de Burgh's "Half Hours with the Classics," which, or something like it, is already well known for its facetious rhyme of "tides" and "Euripides"; a "William and Dora," by S. K. Cowan; and a "Deserted City."

It fares the Town, to hastening ill a prey,
Where councillors the part of statesmen play—
By John Martley; and there is a "Caliban upon Kottabos" by Dr. Tyrrell, vastly inferior to Mr. Quiller Couch's parody of the same poem. The prose pieces include passages after Thucydides, Herodotus and Aristotle, no worse than the usual school or undergraduate mockeries of this kind, and a "contribution to comparative mythology" by R. F. Littledale which is exceptionally good. Fooling, Thomas Maguire's "The Lambkin's Remains." No date is appended to this or any of the other pieces. One of the best things in the book is the epitaph on an attorney by J. S. Drennan:—

Here lies Mister Quirk—
Still at the old work!

It is quite as good as Byron's attempt at the same thing:—

With death doomed to grapple,
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who fled in the chapel
Now lies in the Abbey.

E. T.

THE IRISH GENIUS.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH ABILITY, by D. J. O'Donoghue. Dublin, O'Donoghue, 5s.

"One is almost tempted," says Mr. D. J. O'Donoghue, "to believe in the presence of a microbe of genius, which fixes itself in a special locality, and fastens upon a predisposed nature, where it develops and thrives exceedingly." The purpose of this book is to show how desperately busy the microbe has always been in Ireland. Genius, indeed, has seized on the country like a plague, and Celt and Norman and Saxon alike have had greatness thrust upon them in so favourable an environment. Ultimately, commenting upon the number of great men of non-Celtic or semi-Celtic origin that Ireland has produced, Mr. O'Donoghue is driven to adopt Mrs. Oliphant's suggestion, "that not only Irish blood, but Irish air, has collaborated in the product."

"K. O' K."

His ingenuousness in following out this idea is sometimes very delightful, as, for example, when he comes to the case of Lord Kitchener:

Though born and brought up in Kerry, Lord Kitchener has apparently no Irish blood in his veins, and his Kerry birth may be described as an accident. Still, it is interesting to speculate whether if he had been born in England he would have been a soldier at all, or whether, if he "belonged" to Limerick, for example, he would not have been a greater soldier.

Certainly, Ireland has been prolific in military genius. Her Anglo-Irish and Norman-Irish soldiers have, as a rule, been content to distinguish themselves in the British Army. Celtic Irishmen, on the other hand, have often preferred to go further abroad as "soldiers of fortune," and have won honoured names for themselves in almost every army in the civilised world. Consider, for example, the romantic case of the O'Higginses, who came from county Meath:

Probably Ambrose O'Higgins, Marquis d'Osorio, was more of an administrator in Mexico than a soldier. . . . He began life as a labourer in county Meath, and rose to be Vicar of Mexico, while his son, Bernardo O'Higgins, was the liberator of Chili, and the finest monument in Santiago is erected in his honour.

Stanger than Fiction.

Anyone wishing to write romances may be recommended to get hold of Mr. O'Donoghue's volume. Fanciful Kelly and the Chevalier Wogan—two of the famous Irishmen mentioned in it—have already been appropriated, we believe, as heroes by Mr. Mason. Then there is Redmond O'Hanlon, the Irish Rapparee, "whose career interested Sir Walter Scott sufficiently to induce him to seek for materials which he could utilise in an Irish historical novel." Or, take the case of Colonel Thomas Blood, for Mr. O'Donoghue does not shrink on occasion from pointing to a criminal as an example of "Irish ability."

It is pretty certain that the notorious Colonel Thomas Blood, who stole the Crown Jewels from the Tower of London, and did other daring deeds, military and predatory, was a Clare man. Such a desperado might have done wonders with an army if he had not developed a passion for burglary and highway robbery.

The chapter on Clare provides us with another fascinating theme for romance, which is especially interesting in view of the fact that Mr. Anthony Hope has just been telling us how Sophy Grouch, the English kitchenmaid, rose to be Queen of Kravonia:

This is the occasion to mention the notorious Lola Montez—otherwise Elizabeth Rosanna Gilbert—who was everything by turns and nothing long—at one time ruling a kingdom—and she ruled Bavaria very well—at another time dancing in a third-rate hall for a livelihood. Except her beauty and a certain power of fascination, she had nothing to recommend her to the great personages whom she seems to have twisted round her finger. Her life was, everything considered, a miserable one.

W. O. S. of Conolly.

We do not wish to leave the impression, however, that all the three thousand or so names that Mr. O'Donoghue mentions are the names of soldiers and adventurers. In nothing, for example, has Ireland been more remarkable than in her contribution to comic literature. Almost every great comic writer for the English stage—Farquhar, Steele, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Oscar Wilde, Mr. Bernard Shaw—has been an Irishman, and Congreve had at least the advantage of being brought up in Irish air. Swift, too, was High-mores Irish than we Englishmen remember—and Sterne, by a happy accident, was born among the microbes in Tipperary. It was an Irishman, moreover, who wrote one of the most famous comic lines in the English language:

A Kildare man, who was hardly a poet, but a couplet by whom has made his name famous, was Barrington (otherwise Waldron, his real name). He began his public career by pocket-picking in England, and after some particularly daring thefts was transported to Australia. There he became an exemplary personage, and obtained an excellent official position. In a prologue which he wrote in the Antipodes for a certain play occur these immortal lines: True patriots we, for be it understood, We left our country for our country's good.

It will be seen that Mr. O'Donoghue's book contains a great deal of entertaining and interesting matter. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that the geniuses should have been grouped merely according to the counties in which they were born. It would have been more instructive if they had been classified according to their professions; for justice has scarcely been done to Ireland as the birthplace of artists and men of science. By the way, the names of living people of ability seem to have been chosen rather at random. Professor Samuel Dill, for example, the historian of the decline of Roman civilisation, is not mentioned; nor is Dr. J. P. Henry, the Irish grammarian, or Mr. J. M. Synge, the playwright, whose "Well of the Saints" was recently considered good enough to be translated into German and produced in a Berlin theatre.

THE GAIETY THEATRE

VISIT OF THE MONCKTON HOFFE COMEDY CO.

An interesting engagement is announced for next week at the Gaiety, when the Monckton Hoffs Comedy Company will produce, by arrangement with Mr. George Alexander, two of Oscar Wilde's brilliant plays, "Lady Windermere's Fan" and "The Importance of Being Earnest." The Monckton Hoffs Company has been organised to present modern masterpieces of comedy in the provinces according to the high standard of acting that holds good on the Continent. Both the famous comedies to be played during this visit rank very high indeed in dramatic literature, and met with instantaneous success at the recent revival by Mr. George Alexander at the St. James's Theatre, and it is Mr. Hoffe's intention to present them in a manner fully worthy of their great reputation, and to this end he has given the greatest attention to the selection of his artists. The Company is probably one of the best-organised combinations touring at the present time. "Lady Windermere's Fan" will be produced on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, and "The Importance of Being Earnest" on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday matinee. They will be preceded each evening by a one-act play entitled "The Heritage."

Illustrated London News.

31 August 1907 MUSIC.

WHILE our Censor refuses resolutely to permit the Strauss-Wilde opera, "Salomé," to be performed on the British stage, the work continues to enjoy a very considerable measure of popularity on the Continent. It has conquered Paris, where the conventions of Camille Saint-Saëns and Massenet are still the most potent of all musical forces, whether for good or evil. The German opera-houses have welcomed "Salomé" as a masterpiece, and even the Italians have insisted upon its presentation in cities that lie right off the beaten track. For example, when the writer was in Italy during the spring, he heard of a spirited attempt made by the community of Ravenna, the little city in which

its presentation in cities that lie right off the beaten track. For example, when the writer was in Italy during the spring, he heard of a spirited attempt made by the community of Ravenna, the little city in which

Date is buried, near the Adriatic sea, board, to secure performances of "Salomé" in their four-weeks season; and although the project could not be carried through, owing to the expense involved, the attempt spoke volumes for the musical enterprise of Italy. In Turin, where that distinguished singer Bellini took the name-part, and in Milan, where it was entrusted to the gifted Salomėja Krucelniczka, the opera has been received with extraordinary favour, although it is quite unlike anything to which the melody-loving Italians are accustomed.

It is needless, perhaps, to say anything about the book, because most educated people have read "Salomé," and may even be supposed to accept Wilde's drama as a singularly powerful presentation of a horrible story. It must be apparent to most students of music that the modern scale, now little more than three hundred years old as far as this country is concerned, cannot cope realistically with scenes and emotions that are nearly two thousand years old. The man who tries to interpret a Bible story in the terms of melodies that modulate from tonic to dominant and back again after the manner of cheap ballads is doomed to failure. He may achieve a simple and pleasing failure, as M. Saint-Saëns has done with his "Samson and Delilah," a failure that comes near to being a success by reason of the inclusion of melodies that are singularly pleasing to the ear, though they have nothing at all to do with people or period. Richard Strauss makes no mistake in this direction. For a barbarous story enacted in barbarous times he has written barbarous music; he seems to have given to Oscar Wilde's play just the touch of strength and savagery required to endow it with permanent dramatic significance. It may be doubted whether the operatic stage holds any work that goes farther to create a startling and overwhelming atmosphere.

At a first hearing the general discordance is overpowering, but after a time the strength of the music persuades the listener that realism in music has said its latest if not its last word.

Before dealing with the final sale of the season it is necessary to mention a number of important works sold by different auctioneers between the 18th and the 25th of July. These comprise, *inter alia*, Oscar Wilde's *Vera, or the Nihilists*, the original privately printed first draft of the play, interleaved, and having numerous MS. erasures, alterations, and additions in the author's handwriting, 1882, 8vo, £26; *Compassion* Sept. 1907

English Illustrated Magazine

Oscar Wilde's comedy, "A Woman of No Importance," did not seem to fill the frame at His Majesty's Theatre. It was sumptuously staged, quite in Mr. Tree's grand vein, but the play is better suited to a smaller stage and a smaller auditorium. Much of the fragile humour of the dialogue and something of the intimate relation in which an audience stands to effective situation on the stage seemed to evaporate in that large atmosphere. And I think Mr. Tree rather emphasised the deliberate nonchalance of Lord Illingworth to the point of jeopardising its vitality altogether. He looked the part; he walked the part; he acted the part; but he spoke it as though utterly bored by it. At all events, he individualised it. He made its cold, calculating cynicism stand out in repulsive contrast to Miss Marion Terry's tender, emotional, womanly rendering of Mrs. Arbuthnot. How strong the characterisation is in "A Woman of No Importance"! They are not exceptional characters—not exceptionally base or exceptionally worthy, not too wise or too foolish for this commonplace world, but each is distinct. They are all human beings and conform to codes of recognised human conduct, each after its kind. And Wilde could write a pathetic scene with as unerring a touch as he could pen the light persiflage of a group of society dames. The scene between Mrs. Arbuthnot and her son is one that plays upon every chord of our sympathies. It was consummately acted, of course, but the author knew how to

lay the train for the action. His epigrams seem stale only because we have heard them before. It is a kind of wit that stimulates only on the first hearing; give time for analysis, and the effervescence is gone. But Wilde was not an epigrammatist only; we shall always wonder what he might have become had he been less of an egoist. "The Door upon the Latch," dramatised by Mr. F. Kinsey Peile from R. L. Stevenson's "Le Sire de Maletroit," played as a curtain raiser to "A Woman of No Importance," was disappointing. We missed the fine delicate flavour of Stevenson's story. The qualities which fascinate in the tale are too purely intellectual for transmission to the stage; they require too much dramatic stiffening; and, moreover, the improbabilities of the story become annoyingly glaring in drama.

Referee. Sept. 1 1907

GOSSIP FROM THE GAY CITY.

LOIE FULLER AS SALOME.

"LA REVUE DE LA FEMME."

FATE is hard on us sometimes. I had not met Miss Loie Fuller since the Exhibition. I met her a couple of days ago on her return from London, and found her looking fully seven years younger. So that Fate is not always hard on us. But Miss Loie Fuller was not altogether happy. She had been to see the first performance of "The Little Japanese Girl" in London, and it had upset her a little. "It was beautifully stage-managed and produced," she said, "but until I saw it I had thought that I had been the author of the piece. I know a good deal about Japanese people and the prettily poetic way in which they talk, and I had tried to make my Princess talk as they really do. But somebody made her and the rest of them talk pidgin-English. I shall never drink tea again without remembering my poor little mutilated play. Well, well!" And Miss Loie Fuller began to talk about "Salomé."

It had nothing whatever to do with Strauss or Oscar Wilde. It is a new "Salomé"—a "Salomé" with fresh music and without any words at all, which latter fact, I cannot help believing, makes things much pleasanter for Herod. "Salomé" has been composed by a new musician who is to startle Paris. I murmured gently that new musicians always did this in one way or another, and Miss Fuller frowned, which made me change the subject. The book of her new "Salomé" is by M. Robert d'Humieres, who, Referees will remember, has done

"The Second Mrs. Tanqueray"

into French, and has written a very clever book on England. He is altogether a clever fellow, this aristocratic young Frenchman, and he is one of the few Anglophile Frenchmen I know whose English can be understood without a thorough knowledge of French. His "Salomé" promises to be a fascinating work, and you shall hear more, Referees, when the time comes, about the wonderful light effects which Miss Loie Fuller is creating, and of Salomé's serpent dance, which threatens to astonish.

"Salomé" and other things are to be produced at the Théâtre des Arts, which that tireless American lady Miss Daisy Andrews has acquired and is turning into an

International Entente Cordiale Theatre.

It is to open on the 11th with a bill in which "one-acters" by well-known Frenchmen will alternate with Japanese masterpieces written and played by Mme. Hanako and her troupe. Those of you who are more than seven and remember Sada Yacco at the Loie Fuller Theatre in the 1900 Exhibition will have an idea of the artistic treat in store. I am sorry to say that I have been too lazy to learn Japanese yet, but I shall go and see Hanako and Co.—and in the meanwhile Banzai!

Dublin — ? Sept. 3 1907

BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS.

THE GAIETY THEATRE.

The performance of "Lady Windermere's Fan," which was reproduced in the Gaiety Theatre last night by the Monckton Hoffs Comedy Company, was followed with deep interest by a very full house. The play has already been more than once presented on the Dublin stage, and though it has not been produced for some considerable time past, its outlines and the general idea of the plot are quite familiar to playgoers here. The staging was excellently arranged, and the performance elicited general admiration and satisfaction. Miss Nora Hoffe as Lady Windermere, acted very effectively, especially so in her interview with Lord Windermere (Mr. Monckton Hoffe) in the first act, and in that with her supposed rival in the second act, in which the latter implores her to return home without, at the same time, revealing her identity. Miss Lydia Busch, as Mrs. Erylne, gave an interesting rendering of the part. The other leading roles were well filled. They include Lord Darlington (Mr. Lane Bayliff), Lord Augustus Lorton (Mr. Ralph W. Hutton), Lady Agatha Carlisle (Miss Marna Hearne).

Tonight the company will present another well-known play by the same author, "The Importance of Being Earnest."

The plays will be preceded each evening during the week by an interesting one-act play, "The Heritage."

THE GAIETY THEATRE

"LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN."

Last night a very crowded and appreciative audience filled the Gaiety Theatre in all its parts to witness the presentation by the Monckton Hoffs Comedy Company of "Lady Windermere's Fan," a society play which its first run of popularity showed a dramatic genius and an intensity and vividness of character portrayed which marked out the author for distinction beyond any of his contemporaries who wrote for the modern stage. Theatre goes whose memories are not yet too old can recall the success which this work as well as "The Importance of Being Earnest," by the same author, which will be played to-night, won on their first presentation to the public, and now when time has mellowed tragic and ever to be regretted memories, and the public mind in its charitable forgiveness thinks principally of the merits of the author, and leaves his faults forgotten, these plays come back with their wealth of sparkling merit to remind us of a meteoric career which shot althwart the literary sky, leaving only the trail of its brilliance behind. The propriety of reviving this author's works at the present day need hardly be questioned. As students of life they are superb in their human interest. They are vivid in their depiction of the shortcomings and foibles of society as it exists, of its ambitions, its temptations, and its mis-understandings, and in its splendid contrast they display alongside each other the natural and the artificial elements which are forever meeting in fierce conflict, and alternately gaining the mastery, revealing one day the story of dramatic tragedy, and though less frequently become less sensationally the picture of social peace and tranquility as the happy ending to the stage story. "Lady Windermere's Fan" gives us a presentation of social life the actuality of which is apparent on the surface. One looks at it and feels that there is no getting away from its hard reality. With consummate art the author constructs his story, and the natural flow of events as they are guided and described by his pen reveals the marvellous study of the life which he mirrors in his play. The audience look on and listen and are obliged to feel that soft fancy forms no part of the author's mental composition as he develops his plot. The dialogue, witty and scintillating though it may be, is the reflex of modern thought amongst the men and women whom he brings together; and the characters which he puts on the stage do not vanish when the footlights are extinguished. The play contains a story which cannot be blotted from the mind when the following one comes along the next day. It is something haunting, which the memory carries away with it stubbornly and will not forget, and in this way the author by the aid of his art, which is that of the highest quality, and the sheer impress of his character will in the long run make his name permanent in the annals of English dramatic literature. This play to receive adequate justice would require to be interpreted by a company of the highest attainments. As it is it receives a good all-round presentation which is the next best thing to perfection. Miss Nora Hoffe as Lady Windermere succeeded well in a most exacting part, and the Lord Windermere of Mr. Monckton Hoffe, although showing many shortcomings, was on the whole fairly acceptable. Lord Darlington, as played by Mr. Lane Bayliff, exhibited a good deal of naturalness, and the minor parts of Lord Augustus Lorton, Mr. Charles Dumbly, Mr. Cecil Graham, and Mr. Hopper were intelligently filled by Mr. Ralph W. Hutton, Mr. Arthur Forbes Watts, Mr. Aubrey Fitzmaurice, Mr. A. W. Barker, and Mr. Reginald M. Field. Miss Lydia Busch as Mrs. Erylne acted with a great deal of dramatic force, and Miss Marna Hearne as the Duchess of Berwick acquitted herself with credit. The other female parts were capably sustained by Miss Amy Lloyd-Desmond, Miss Ella Kitson, Miss Marna Hearne, Miss Winifred Vallian, and Miss Audrey Fitzgibbon. The "Heritage" as a curtain raiser was well received.

To-night the company will be seen in the "Importance of Being Earnest."

A new operatic version of Oscar Wilde's "Salomé," composed by M. Mariotte, a French musician, is to be produced during the winter at the Grand Théâtre at Lyons. M. Mariotte first read "Salomé" in 1895, when he was a naval officer and on his way to China. Later he left the service, and studied music under the most modern masters in Paris.

26-1907

ECHOES FROM KOTTABOS. Edited by R. Y. Tyrrell and Sir Edward Sullivan, Bart. London, E. Grant Richards, 7s. 6d. net.

"Kottabos" is the name of a Miscellany of English, Greek and Latin verse and English prose, which was started in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1864, by Dr. R. Y. Tyrrell; in this book is a selection made chiefly from the English verse—fifty-two men are represented, and among these Drs. Edward Dowden, John Todhunter, R. Y. Tyrrell, and Oscar Wilde. To those who know anything of university magazines it contains little that is surprising in quality.

Talent to Genius.

Here they will find the same humour, the same parodies of "Locksley Hall" and "Our Lady of Pain," the same hard neatness which suggests that either the writers have never cared for anything in poetry except its clothes, or that they are content, like other minor versifiers, to forget or at least ignore what they have cared for in great poetry. It is to be hoped that there is some truth in the theory that to have practised the writing of verse is to have made a long step towards reverence for poetry, and that these parodies and imitations are really the compliment that talent pays to genius.

We may seem to be falling into a solemnity which ill suits the company of a book that was probably composed in a different atmosphere, in the genial and shameless reticence of a university. But that reticence seems to be unknown at Dublin, and after the Oxford collection of this kind it is delightful to see senior members of a university writing very much as if they were plain men. The editors rightly claim that many of their pieces are, unlike the "Echoes from the Oxford Magazine," not at all comic, and are less deeply tinged with "the local colour and academic spirit."

Another distinguishing feature of the present collection is the series called "Poems Written in Discipleship," which were composed as affectionate studies or sketches in the manner of some of the best-known English poets, but in which the element of parody has no place.

Poetic Qualities.

In what other University magazine could be found passion as in C. P. Mulvany's "Swift on Stella," voluptuous imagery like W. Wilkins's "Actæon," graceful amorousness like C. P. Mulvany's "L'amour qui passe"? Or where the enthusiasm of these lines "on reading the fragments of early Greek lyric poetry"—

But where are ye, whose broken harmony
Makes discord shriek where music seem'd to flow,
Clear stars of song, to whom our best can be
Nought but loose clouds, that shift and toil below;
Handbreadths of wondrous streams, joyous and free,
That leap and foam and flash, and have no peers,
Bounded by darkness; wafts of strange melody
Heard in the loud, wild night of wasteful years?
Ah, bleeding mouths! ah, smitten tuneful lips! . . .

The name below them is Standish O'Grady.

As to the poems "written in discipleship," by Prof. Dowden, we confess to seeing in them the worst kind of parody which is unconscious of itself, though they are no worse than the Greek and Latin verses of good scholars; here, e.g.—

O sweet and sad, and wildly clear,
Through summer air it sinks and swells.
Sweet with a measureless desire,
And sad with all farewells.

Dr. Todhunter's Whitmanisms and poems after Blake are no better. But J. E. Martin's "Bugle Band," with its "Yer soul is bound to follow where the bugles lead the way," is as good as its model.

Translated.

There are some charming translations, one, for example, of Beranger's "Rosette" in this style:—

She had not charms like yours, in truth,
Her heart less tender was, perchance;
A lover's pains she could not soothe
With such a fascinating glance.
What spell enslaved me, will you know?
'Twas youth, which vainly I regret;
Ah! would that I could love you now
As, long ago, I loved Rosette!

That is by John F. Townsend. Oscar Wilde's half-dozen poems are in his finished manner, and are easily the best things in the book.

Of the pieces which compete with the usual College verses, parodies, and satires, &c., there are many that are very good; for example, Hubert J. de Burgh's "Half Hours with the Classics" which, or something like it, is already well known for its facetious rhyme of "tides" and "Euripides"; a "William and Dora," by S. K. Cowan; and a "Deserted City"—

Ill fares the Town, to hastening ills a prey,
Where councillors the part of statesmen play—

by John Martley; and there is a "Caliban upon Kottabos" by Dr. Tyrrell, vastly inferior to Mr. Quiller Couch's parody of the same poem. The prose pieces include passages after Thucydides, Herodotus and Aristotle, no worse than the usual school or undergraduate mockeries of this kind, and a "contribution to comparative mythology" by R. F. Littledale which is exceptionally good fooling. Thomas Maguire's "The Cambridge Man" reminds us of Mr. Belloc's "Lambkin's Remains." No date is appended to this or any of the other pieces. One of the best things in the book is the epitaph on an attorney by J. S. Drennan:—

Here lies Mистер Quirk,—
Still at the ould work!

It is quite as good as Byron's attempt at the same thing:—

With death doomed to grapple,
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who lied in the chapel

THE IRISH GENIUS.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH ABILITY, by D. J. O'Donoghue. Dublin, O'Donoghue 5s.

"One is almost tempted," says Mr. D. J. O'Donoghue, "to believe in the presence of a microbe of genius, which fixes itself in a special locality, and fastens upon a predisposed nature, where it develops and thrives exceedingly." The purpose of this book is to show how desperately busy the microbe has always been in Ireland. Genius, indeed, has seized on the country like a plague, and Celt and Norman and Saxon alike have had greatness thrust upon them in so favourable an environment. Ultimately, commenting upon the number of great men of non-Celtic or semi-Celtic origin that Ireland has produced, Mr. O'Donoghue is driven to adopt Mrs. Oliphant's suggestion, "that not only Irish blood, but Irish air, has collaborated in the product."

"K. o' K."

His ingenuousness in following out this idea is sometimes very delightful, as, for example, when he comes to the case of Lord Kitchener:

Though born and brought up in Kerry, Lord Kitchener has apparently no Irish blood in his veins, and his Kerry birth may be described as an accident. Still, it is interesting to speculate whether if he had been born in England he would have been a soldier at all, or whether, if he "belonged" to Limerick, for example, he would not have been a greater soldier.

Certainly, Ireland has been prolific in military genius. Her Anglo-Irish and Norman-Irish soldiers have, as a rule, been content to distinguish themselves in the British Army. Celtic Irishmen, on the other hand, have often preferred to go further abroad as "soldiers of fortune," and have won honoured names for themselves in almost every army in the civilised world. Consider, for example, the romantic case of the O'Higginses, who came from county Meath:

Probably Ambrose O'Higgins, Marquis d'Osorio, was more of an administrator in Mexico than a soldier. . . . He began life as a labourer in county Meath, and rose to be Viceroy of Mexico, while his son, Bernardo O'Higgins, was the liberator of Chili, and the finest monument in Santiago is erected in his honour.

Stronger than Fiction.

30

Anyone wishing to write romances may be recommended to get hold of Mr. O'Donoghue's volume. Parson Kelly and the Chevalier Wogan—two of the famous Irishmen mentioned in it—have already been appropriated, we believe, as heroes by Mr. Mason. Then there is Redmond O'Hanlon, the Irish Rapparee, "whose career interested Sir Walter Scott sufficiently to induce him to seek for materials which he could utilise in an Irish historical novel." Or, take the case of Colonel Thomas Blood, for Mr. O'Donoghue does not shrink on occasion from pointing to a criminal as an example of "Irish ability":

It is pretty certain that the notorious Colonel Thomas Blood, who stole the Crown jewels from the Tower of London, and did other daring deeds, military and predatory, was a Clare man. Such a desperado might have done wonders with an army if he had not developed a passion for burglary and highway robbery.

The chapter on Clare provides us with another fascinating theme for romance, which is especially interesting in view of the fact that Mr. Anthony Hope has just been telling us how Sophy Grouch, the English kitchenmaid, rose to be Queen of Kravonia:

This is the occasion to mention the notorious Lola Montez—otherwise Elizabeth Rosanna Gilbert—who was everything by turns and nothing long—at one time ruling a kingdom—and she ruled Bavaria very well—at another time dancing in a third-rate hall for a livelihood. Except her beauty and a certain power of fascination, she had nothing to recommend her to the great personages whom she seems to have twisted round her finger. Her life was, everything considered, a miserable one.

Writers of Comedy.

We do not wish to leave the impression, however, that all the three thousand or so names that Mr. O'Donoghue mentions are the names of soldiers and adventurers. In nothing, for example, has Ireland been more remarkable than in her contribution to comic literature. Almost every great comic writer for the English stage—Farquhar, Steele, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Oscar Wilde, Mr. Bernard Shaw—has been an Irishman, and Congreve had at least the advantage of being brought up in Irish air. Swift, too, was Irish—more Irish than we sometimes remember—and Sterne, by a happy accident, was born among the microbes in Tipperary. It was an Irishman, moreover, who wrote one of the most famous comic lines in the English language:

A Kildare man, who was hardly a poet, but a couplet by whom has made his name famous, was Barrington (otherwise Waldron, his real name). He began his public career by pocket-picking in England, and after some particularly daring thefts was transported to Australia. There he became an exemplary personage, and obtained an excellent official position. In a prologue which he wrote in the Antipodes for a certain play occur these immortal lines:

True patriots we, for be it understood,

We left our country for our country's good.

It will be seen that Mr. O'Donoghue's book contains a great deal of entertaining and interesting matter. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that the geniuses should have been grouped merely according to the counties in which they were born. It would have been more instructive if they had been classified according to their professions; for justice has scarcely been done to Ireland as the birthplace of artists and men of science. By the way, the names of living people of ability seem to have been chosen rather at random. Professor Samuel Dill, for example, the historian of the decline of Roman civilisation, is not mentioned; nor is Dr. J. P. Henry, the Irish grammarian, or Mr. J. M. Synge, the playwright, whose "Well of the Saints" was recently considered good enough to be translated into German and produced in a Berlin theatre.

THE GAIETY THEATRE

VISIT OF THE MONCKTON HOFFE COMEDY CO.

An interesting engagement is announced for next week at the Gaiety, when the Monckton Hoffe Comedy Company will produce, by arrangement with Mr. George Alexander, two of Oscar Wilde's brilliant plays, "Lady Windermere's Fan" and "The Importance of Being Earnest." The Monckton Hoffe Company has been organised to present modern masterpieces of comedy in the provinces according to the high standard of acting that holds good on the Continent. Both the famous comedies to be played during this visit rank very high indeed in dramatic literature, and met with instantaneous success at the recent revival by Mr. George Alexander at the St. James's Theatre, and it is Mr. Hoffe's intention to present them in a manner fully worthy of their great reputation, and to this end he has given the greatest attention to the selection of his artistes. The Company is probably one of the best-organised combinations touring at the present time. "Lady Windermere's Fan" will be produced on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, and "The Importance of Being Earnest" on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday matinee. They will be produced each evening by a one-act play entitled "The Heritage."

WHILE our Censor refuses resolutely to permit the Strauss-Wilde opera, "Salomè," to be performed on the British stage, the work continues to enjoy a very considerable measure of popularity on the Continent. It has conquered Paris, where the conventions of Camille Saint-Saëns and Massenet are still the most potent of all musical forces, whether for good or evil. The German opera-houses have welcomed "Salomè" as a masterpiece, and even the Italians have insisted upon

its presentation in cities that lie right off the beaten track. For example, when the writer was in Italy during the spring, he heard of a spirited attempt made by the community of Ravenna, the little city in which

Dante is buried, near the Adriatic seaboard, to secure performances of "Salomè" in their four-weeks season; and although the project could not be carried through, owing to the expense involved, the attempt spoke volumes for the musical enterprise of Italy. In Turin, where that distinguished singer Bellincioni took the name-part, and in Milan, where it was entrusted to the gifted Salommea Krucelniczka, the opera has been received with extraordinary favour, although it is quite unlike anything to which the melody-loving Italians are accustomed.

It is needless, perhaps, to say anything about the book, because most educated people have read "Salomè," and may even be supposed to accept Wilde's drama as a singularly powerful presentation of a horrible story. It must be apparent to most students of music that the modern scale, now little more than three hundred years old as far as this country is

concerned, cannot cope realistically with scenes and emotions that are nearly two thousand years old. The man who tries to interpret a Bible story in the terms of melodies that modulate from tonic to dominant and back again after the manner of cheap ballads is doomed to failure. He may achieve a simple and pleasing failure, as M. Saint-Saëns has done with his "Samson and Delilah," a failure that comes near to being a success by reason of the inclusion of melodies that are singularly pleasing to the ear, though they have nothing at all to do with people or period. Richard Strauss makes no mistake in this direction. For a barbarous story enacted in barbarous times he has written barbarous music; he seems to have given to Oscar Wilde's play just the touch of strength and savagery required to endow it with permanent dramatic significance. It may be doubted whether the operatic stage holds any work that goes farther to create a startling and overwhelming atmosphere.

At a first hearing the general discordance is overpowering, but after a time the strength of the music persuades the listener that realism in music has said its latest if not its last word.

Before dealing with the final sale of the season it is necessary to mention a number of important works sold by different auctioneers between the 18th and the 25th of July. These comprise, *inter alia*, Oscar Wilde's *Vera, or the Nihilists*, the original privately printed first draft of the play, interleaved, and having numerous MS. erasures, alterations, **Jessen Women's University Library** and the author's handwriting,

1882, 8vo, £26 ;

Connoisseur sept. 1907

English Illustrated Magazine

Sept.
1907.

Oscar Wilde's comedy, "A Woman of no Importance," did not seem to fill the frame at His Majesty's Theatre. It was sumptuously staged, quite in Mr. Tree's grand vein, but the play is better suited to a smaller stage and a smaller auditorium. Much of the fragile humour of the dialogue and something of the intimate relation in which an audience stands to effective situation on the stage seemed to evaporate in that large atmosphere. And I think Mr. Tree rather emphasised the deliberate *nonchalance* of Lord Illingworth to the point of jeopardising its vitality altogether. He looked the part; he walked the part; he acted the part; but he spoke it as though utterly bored by it. At all events, he individualised it. He made its cold, calculating cynicism stand out in repulsive contrast to Miss Marion Terry's tender, emotional, womanly rendering of Mrs. Arbuthnot. How strong the characterisation is in "A Woman of No Importance"! They are not exceptional characters—not exceptionally base or exceptionally worthy, not too wise or too foolish for this commonplace world, but each is distinct. They are all human beings and conform to codes of recognised human conduct, each after its kind. And Wilde could write a pathetic scene with as unerring a touch as he could pen the light persiflage of a group of society dames. The scene between Mrs. Arbuthnot and her son is one that plays upon every chord of our sympathies. It was consummately acted, of course, but the author knew how to

lay the train for the action. His epigrams seem stale only because we have heard them before. It is a kind of wit that stimulates only on the first hearing; give time for analysis, and the effervescence is gone. But Wilde was not an epigrammatist only; we shall always wonder what he might have become had he been less of an egoist.

"The Door upon the Latch," dramatised by Mr. F. Kinsey Peile from R. L. Stevenson's "Le Sire de Maletroit," played as a curtain raiser to "A Woman of No Importance," was disappointing. We missed the fine delicate flavour of Stevenson's story. The qualities which fascinate in the tale are too purely intellectual for transmission to the stage; they require too much dramatic stiffening; and, moreover, the improbabilities of the story become annoyingly glaring in drama.

GOSSIP FROM THE GAY CITY.

LOIE FULLER AS SALOME.

"LA REVUE DE LA FEMME."

FATE is hard on us sometimes. I had not met Miss Loie Fuller since the Exhibition. I met her a couple of days ago on her return from London, and found her looking fully seven years younger. So that Fate is not always hard on us. But Miss Loie Fuller was not altogether happy. She had been to see the first performance of "The Little Japanese Girl" in London, and it had upset her a little. "It was beautifully stage-managed and produced," she said, "but until I saw it I had thought that I had been the author of the piece. I know a good deal about Japanese people and the prettily poetic way in which they talk, and I had tried to make my Princess talk as they really do. But somebody made her and the rest of them talk pidgin-English. I shall never drink tea again without remembering my poor little mutilated play. Well, well!" And Miss Loie Fuller began to talk about "Salome."

* * *

It had nothing whatever to do with Strauss or Oscar Wilde. It is a new "Salome"—a "Salome" with fresh music and without any words at all, which latter fact, I cannot help believing, makes things much pleasanter for Herod. "Salome" has been composed by a new musician who is to startle Paris. I murmured gently that new musicians always did this in one way or another, and Miss Fuller frowned, which made me change the subject. The book of her new "Salome" is by M. Robert d'Humières, who, Refereaders will remember, has done

"The Second Mrs. Tanqueray"

into French, and has written a very clever book on England. He is altogether a clever fellow, this aristocratic young Frenchman, and he is one of the few Anglophile Frenchmen I know whose English can be understood without a thorough knowledge of French. His "Salome" promises to be a fascinating work, and you shall hear more, Refereaders, when the time comes, about the wonderful light effects which Miss Loie Fuller is creating, and of Salome's serpent dance, which threatens to astonish.

* * *

"Salome" and other things are to be produced at the Théâtre des Arts, which that tireless American lady Miss Daisy Andrews has acquired and is turning into an

International Entente Cordiale Theatre.

It is to open on the 11th with a bill in which "one-acters" by well-known Frenchmen will alternate with Japanese masterpieces written and played by Mme. Hanako and her troupe. Those of you who are more than seven and remember Sada Yacco at the Loie Fuller Theatre in the 1900 Exhibition will have an idea of what to expect. I am sorry to say that I have been too lazy to learn Japanese yet, but I shall go and see Hanako and Co.—and in the meanwhile Banzai!

Dublin — ? Sept. 3, 1907

BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS.

THE GAIETY THEATRE.

The performance of "Lady Windermere's Fan," which was reproduced in the Gaiety Theatre last night by the Monckton Hoffe Comedy Company, was followed with deep interest by a very full house. The play has already been more than once presented on the Dublin stage, and though it has not been produced for some considerable time past, its outlines and the general idea of the plot are quite familiar to playgoers here. The staging was excellently arranged, and the performance elicited general admiration and satisfaction. Miss Nora Hoffe as Lady Windermere, acted very effectively, especially so in her interview with Lord Windermere (Mr. Monckton Hoffe) in the first act, and in that with her supposed rival in the second act, in which the latter implores her to return home without, at the same time, revealing her identity. Miss Lydia Busch, as Mrs. Erlynne, gave an interesting rendering of the part. The other leading roles were well filled. They include Lord Darlington (Mr. Lane Bayliff), Lord Augustus Lorton (Mr. Ralph W. Hutton), Lady Agatha Carlisle (Miss Maina Hearne).

To-night the company will present another well-known play by the same author, "The Importance of Being Earnest."

The play will be repeated each evening during the week by an interesting one-act play, "The Heritage."

THE GAIETY THEATRE

"LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN."

Last night a very crowded and appreciative audience filled the Gaiety Theatre in all its parts to witness the presentation by the Monckton Hoffe Comedy Company of "Lady Windermere's Fan," a society play which in its first run of popularity showed a dramatic genius and an intensity and vividness in character portrayed which marked out the author for distinction beyond any of his contemporaries who wrote for the modern stage. The theatre goes whose memories are not yet too old can recall the success which this work as well as "The Importance of Being in Earnest," by the same author, which will be played to-night, won on their first presentation to the public, and now when time has mellowed tragic and ever to be regretted memories, and the public mind in its charitable forgiveness thinks principally of the merits of the writer, and leaves his faults forgotten, these plays come back with their wealth of sparkling merit to remind us of a meteoric career which shot athwart the literary sky, leaving only the trail of its brilliance behind. The propriety of reviving this author's works at the present day need hardly be questioned. As studies of life they are superb in their human interest. They are vivid in their depiction of the shortcomings and foibles of society as it exists, of its ambitions, its temptations, and its misunderstandings, and in splendid contrast they display alongside each other the natural and the artificial elements which are forever meeting in fierce conflict, and alternately gaining the mastery, revealing one day the story of dramatic tragedy, and though less frequently because less sensationally the picture of social peace and tranquility as the happy ending to the stage story. "Lady Windermere's Fan" gives us a presentation of social life the actuality of which is apparent on the surface. One looks at it and feels that there is no getting away from its hard reality. With consummate art the author constructs his story, and the natural flow of events as they are guided and described by his pen reveals the marvellous study of the life which he mirrors in his play. The audience look on and listen and are obliged to feel that soft fancy forms no part of the author's mental composition as he develops his plot. The dialogue, witty and scintillating though it may be, is the reflex of modern thought amongst the men and women whom he brings together; and the characters which he puts on the stage do not vanish when the footlights are extinguished. The play contains a story which cannot be blotted from the mind when the following one comes along the next day. It is something haunting, which the memory carries away with it stubbornly and will not forget, and in this way the author by the aid of his art, which is that of the highest quality, and the sheer impress of his character will in the long run make his name permanent in the annals of English dramatic literature. This play to receive adequate justice would require to be interpreted by a company of the highest attainments. As it is it receives a good all-round presentment which is the next best thing to perfection. Miss Nona Hoffe as Lady Windermere succeeded well in a most exacting part, and the Lord Windermere of Mr. Monckton Hoffe, although showing many shortcomings, was on the whole fairly acceptable. Lord Darlington, as played by Mr. H. Lane-Bayliff, exhibited a good deal of naturalness, and the minor parts of Lord Augustus Lorton, Mr. Charles Dumby, Mr. Cecil Graham, and Mr. Hopper were intelligently filled by Mr. Ralph W. Hutton, Mr. Arthur Forbes Watts, Mr. Aubrey Fitzmaurice, Mr. A. W. Barker, and Mr. Reginald M. Field. Miss Lydia Busch as Mrs. Erlynne acted with a great deal of dramatic force, and Miss Maude Henderson as the Duchess of Berwick acquitted herself with credit. The other female parts were capably sustained by Miss Amy Lloyd-Desmond, Miss Ella Kitson, Miss Maina Hearne, Miss Winifred Vallant, and Miss Audrey Fitzgibbon. "The Heritage" as a curtain raiser was well received.

To-night the company will be seen in the "Importance of Being in Earnest."

Daily

Mail

19

Sept.

1907

A new operatic version of Oscar Wilde's "Salome," composed by M. Mariotte, a French musician, is to be produced during the winter at the Grand Theatre at Lyons. M. Mariotte first read "Salome" in 1895, when he was a naval officer and on his way to China. Later he left the service, and studied music under the most modern masters in Paris.

Jesse 2019 mcs-18 University 462 library

