

OCTOBER.

BY R. C. K. ENSOR.

The leaves have an odour of death  
As they hang in the sun;  
The autumn vapours ascend,  
Overclouding their gold;  
Not a stir, not a sigh, not a breath,  
As they drop one by one;  
And we bring our year to an end,  
Like a tale that is told.

We are strangers and sojourners here,  
O God, before Thee,  
As our fathers were; and the light  
Of our days is but doubt:  
O yet, in the respite of fear,  
Deal mercifully,  
That we may take note of the night  
Before we go out.

The New-York Tribune.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1908.

It has taken a long time to get it, but at last it looks as if we were to have a tolerably full translation of the essays of Sainte-Beuve. An English firm of publishers has undertaken the task, and the first volume of the "Causeries du Lundi" will shortly appear. If the work is really well done and some critic prepares just the right introduction for this initial volume, it would seem as if the publisher could count upon the necessary support. Critics everywhere ought to aid in the dissemination of Sainte-Beuve's ideas, for they owe him an unpayable debt. No one can study him without profiting by his method or without receiving a precious stimulus. It is, in fact, for his spirit, for his point of view, quite as much as for his substance, that the brilliant Frenchman is constantly to be read and reread and read again. He moved in literature as in an element, and while he had his likes and dislikes and even was capable of positive wrong-headedness, as in the case of Balzac, the great mass of his work is a monument to his passion for truth and his essential urbanity. No writer of criticism was ever at once so copious and so free from mere surplusage. Neither was there ever so bookish a man with quite such a faculty as he possessed for reconstructing historical personages in terms of flesh and blood. He was rare, too, in his power of combining common sense with charm. It is greatly to be regretted that the late Miss Wormeley was not encouraged to increase the number of her translations from Sainte-Beuve. She would have rejoiced to hear of the version now afoot.

Preparations are being made in France for the elaborate celebration of Barbey d'Aurevilly's centenary. This is reached to-morrow, but François Coppée was president of the committee formed to arrange the ceremonies, and on account of his death these have been postponed until May, 1909. The enthusiastic orations and articles which will then occupy the French public will interestingly illustrate the generosity with which it sooner or later does justice to its men of letters. The author of "L'Ensercelée" and "Le Chevalier des Touches" was the last man in the world to sue for the favor of readers at large. A fanatical aristocrat, a profound egotist, and, into the bargain, as zealous a dandy as Brummel or D'Orsay, he lived his long life apart from the literary and artistic movements which distinguished his epoch. Barbey d'Aurevilly, wearing clothes that gave him a certain singularity in the Parisian spectacle and assiduously cultivating the grand air in his carriage and demeanor, is to our modern eyes a fairly romantic figure, but he would have nothing to do with the romantic revolution as an organized affair. He fought for his own hand. His was an eccentric and a haughty soul. But he had imagination and wit. He was superbly independent, and he was an artist to the core. Few of his contemporaries estimated at their true value his brilliant writings and his wonderful talk, but a man of his character was bound in due course to be honored according to his deserts.

The subjects formulated for discussion at the international copyright conference at Berlin embrace several of great importance. Under Article 2 of the revised convention arranged to be submitted to the delegates, an author would enjoy rights in a foreign country independent of the existence of protection either in the country to which he belongs or in which his work is first published. Special attention is also given to the questions raised by the reproduction of music by mechanical means. Twelve years ago, when the Paris conference was held, mechanical musical instruments were known, but no one guessed that they would thrive as they do to-day. Whether or not royalties should be paid to the composers of the music used in them is now a problem of the most serious character. One proposal framed for consideration at Berlin has for its object the establishment of a universal term for the duration of copyright. The term varies widely in the different countries recognizing the Berne Convention. The idea presented at Berlin is that copyright shall endure for fifty years after the death of the author. It goes without saying that neither authors nor publishers will be completely satisfied by the outcome of this latest conference. Probably none of them has expected to be completely satisfied. These matters necessarily move slowly. But the mere fact of their being discussed in such circumstances as have marked the meeting at Berlin is by itself a thing gained.

THE STAGE.

Mr. Winter's Memories of Some of Its Brilliant Figures.

OTHER DAYS. Being Chronicles and Memories of the Stage. By William Winter. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 359. Moffat, Yard & Co.

"The fads have their little day; but, sooner or later, the world comes back to the right standard—to beauty, purity, simplicity, truth." Mr. Winter, steadfastly holding to the conviction thus expressed in his chapter on John McCullough in the present volume, himself does much to take the world back to the right standard. These pages of theatrical history and reminiscence have nothing didactic about them, but in more or less subtle fashion they must exert a salutary influence. They place the emphasis where it belongs—not on those aspects of stage life which yield piquant material to the easy gossip, but on those things which lie deeper, the traits, artistic and personal, of

study. Why does Mr. Winter consider Henry Irving to have been the greatest actor of his time? "Because," the critic replies, "he evinced a deeper knowledge of human nature, a broader comprehension and firmer grasp of the ideal, a wider scope of interpretative action, and an ampler facility of dramatic expression than any other actor has done whom I have seen." It is with the conception of the actor's art that he indicates in these words that Mr. Winter surveys, in his opening chapter, what he calls "A Royal Line," signifying in that phrase the succession of great actors who dominated the American stage from the dawn of the nineteenth century down to the masters of our own time. He shows, by the way, that the American public was from the start quick to appreciate good acting, but, on the other hand, he has no illusions as to the glamour which popular approval may sometimes throw over a conspicuous performer.

Thick and thin partisans of Edwin Forrest have demurred to Mr. Winter's estimate of their idol. In returning to the subject he easily demonstrates that he is not one of Forrest's de-

derstorm. Often he produced amazingly consolatory effects, affording ample gratification to the overstrained feeling of his audience, desirous—as in stormy passages of "King Lear" and "Othello," the forum scene of "Virginia," the statue scene of "Brutus," and the scaffold scene of "Damon and Pythias"—that something tempestuous and terrific should be said and done. There are times when it is a comfort to see somebody who can let himself go. Forrest could. His style, accordingly, had its positive, ample, undeniable merits; but neither he nor his apostles were ever satisfied with acknowledgment of those merits at their actual worth.

Judgments as vivid as the foregoing are scattered all through the book, but they are interesting personalia. Mr. Winter illustrates his argument about an actor with words from that actor's lips, or with an incident drawn from friendly intercourse with him. Speaking of Booth's clear intellect and the part that it played in the moulding of his impersonations, he quotes what the famous tragedian once said to him: "I am conscious of an interior personality standing back of my own, watching and guiding me." Apropos of Joseph Jefferson's consummate art, he repeats a saying of the comedian: "I never did anything on the stage that I did not know I was doing—never anything without the intention to do it." At the same time he speaks of the involuntary operation, in Jefferson, "of the actor's instinct of expression," citing an occasion on which they were looking over some costumes in his friend's garret just before the revival of "The Rivals." Here is the story:

His particular quest was for a suitable hat. My attention chanced to be attracted to some play-books that were at the end of the room, and for a little while I did not observe him; but presently, looking up, I saw him—completely absorbed in his scrutiny of the dresses—put on a characteristic hat, and instantly, as he did so, he assumed the face and manners of Acres. He had forgotten that any person was present. His gravity was prodigious. His assumption of Acres was complete. He never "looked the part" more effectively in the best public performance that he ever afterward gave of it.

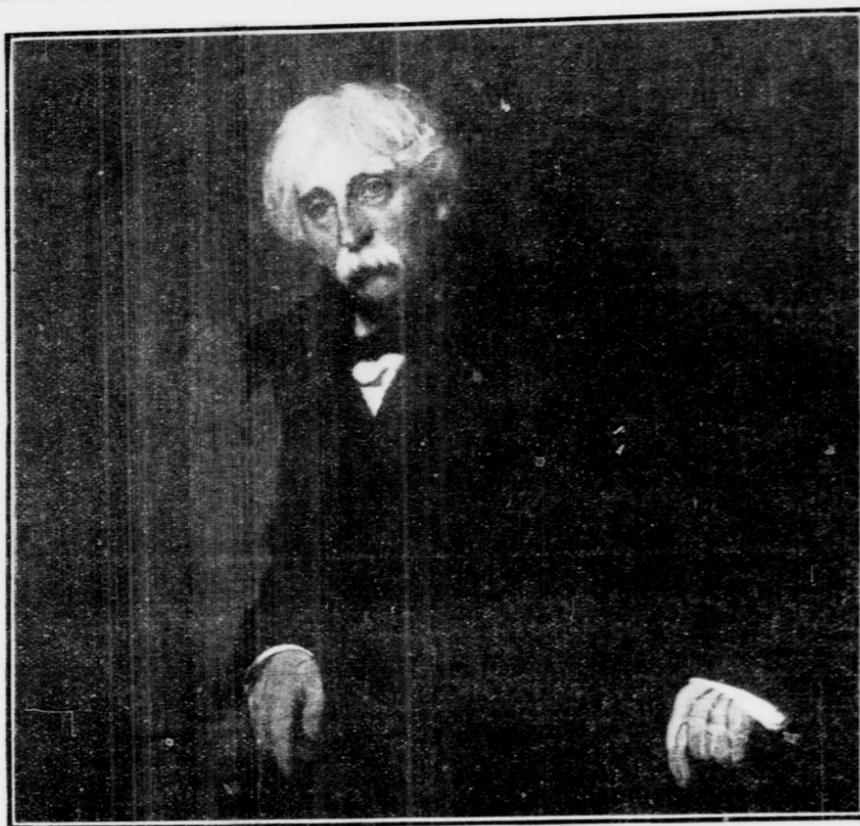
He gives us some capital examples of Jefferson's humor in private life. The friends were among the pallbearers at McCullough's funeral. "As our melancholy train was halted in a Philadelphia street," says Mr. Winter, "he glanced along the line and gravely remarked, 'I never knew before that there were so many walking gentlemen in my profession.'" Another quaint anecdote which he tells with reference to a melancholy occasion is this one on the burial of John Brougham:

Edwin Booth and I assisted to bear his pall. I remember that the two gravediggers, after they had lowered his coffin a little way into the grave, were constrained, with many muttered exclamations of "Aise her!" and "Raise her!" to lift it up again in order to enlarge the cavity. Booth and I, like Hamlet and Horatio, were standing under a neighboring tree, observing these proceedings, and nothing was ever more wofully comic or more humorously rueful than Hamlet's smile, as he looked at me with those deep, melancholy eyes and with that little, furtive grimace, murmuring, as he did so, "It is the last recall."

The study of Brougham is a biographical cameo, brief, vitalized and somehow fragrant as with the charm of the winning personality delineated. With him Mr. Winter had many a happy encounter. He refers to one dinner at Brougham's house at which John Gilbert and Lester Wallack completed the quartet. One can imagine that, as he says, a faithful record of the talk "would be a veritable 'purple patch' of pleasantry, wit, satire, reminiscence, artistic discussion, kindness and mirth." He recalls some of the comedian's sayings and anecdotes. One of the best is his remark on Boucicault: "If Dion had to play a second-old-man he would scalp his grandfather for the wig." In the chapter on the elder Sothorn he has an amusing reminiscence of a colloquy between that actor and Booth. To the latter Sothorn once said, "The worst performance ever seen was my Armand Duval." Booth remarked with gravity: "The worst? Did you ever see my Romeo?" Allusion is duly made, of course, to Sothorn's whimsicality, and various specimens of his fun making are given, but Mr. Winter sketches him with marked tenderness, exhibiting him in a much pleasanter light than that in which he is placed by most of the stories told about him. "Sothorn has, by some people," says Mr. Winter, "been deemed and called heartless. I did not find him so." Lawrence Barrett's character is also very affectionately analyzed, and it may be observed in passing that Mr. Winter here reprints the crushing article in which he exposed, a year or two ago, the pitiful attempt made by an otherwise judicious writer to present Barrett and Irving as at odds when the former went to play in England.

For its history this book will be prized by all students of the drama in America, but it appeals to an even wider circle of readers by virtue of the living, human character of Mr. Winter's portraits. He had a kindling sentiment for most if not all of the artists he has here celebrated, and they were wont to give him the utmost confidence. "I like William Winter," said Charlotte Cushman to McCullough when the three were once talking together, "because he puts me up—where I belong!" They turned to him not only for loving companionship, but for counsel. It was because Winter advised it that Irving, for his first American appearance, chose "The Bells." Similarly, Mary Anderson promised him to begin her first London engagement as "Parthenia"—and was glad, in the upshot, that she had adopted his suggestion. Between the lines one may see clearly enough why the best actors and actresses of his time have held William Winter in honor. They have recognized his genius for their art, his knowledge and authority, and his possession of that fineness of nature which caused Dion Boucicault to write him the following lines:

How, in these piping times,  
Have we not long'd for thee, thou Genial Soul!  
Keen in thy breath, sometimes, but with a heart  
Glowing and full of love for all things good!



WILLIAM WINTER.  
(From the portrait by Frank D. Millet.)

actors and actresses who have contributed substantial passages to the literature of the stage. "In every age," says Mr. Winter, "the acting that has captured the world and prevailed over it has been the acting inspired by genius and governed and guided by intellectual purpose, reinforced by personal charm." That is the kind of acting that has seemed to him worth while, throughout a career embracing the theatrical developments of half a century, and that is the kind of acting to which he pays tribute in this book. Our readers well know the devotion and the eloquence he has always brought to the execution of this first duty of the dramatic critic. He writes now with the same steady principle, but he adds to the resources of the critic those of the friend, painting not simply actors and actresses but men and women.

Here are gathered together impressions and anecdotes in which the author's old comrades are made to live again. It is a not unnatural assumption that intimacy with an artist is bound to complicate the task of the critic who would make a truthful analysis of his work. It depends altogether, of course, upon the critic's habit of mind. Mr. Winter has the rare faculty of writing about an actor he has known both with warm feeling and with a certain detachment. It is the truth that first and last concerns him, and while he lets you know his opinion of this or that individual he contrives, above all things, to make you realize the latter. Take, for example, the chapter in this volume on Dion Boucicault. It is a little masterpiece of just appraisal, of absolutely luminous interpretation. "There are but few men," that clever playwright and actor once wrote to Winter, "whose good opinion I desire to have—none more than I do yours." After a long friendship the two were estranged. Winter's portrait of Boucicault is candid to the point of severity, but it is marked by a completely dispassionate sincerity, and to the serious biographer it must be more welcome than a volume of unstrained eulogy. It is perfectly balanced. One feels instinctively that thus must the light and the shadow have been distributed in the sitter's character. Partly this persuasiveness is due to that exquisite precision of statement in which Mr. Winter excels. "He was himself as cold as steel," he says, of Boucicault, "but he knew the emotions by sight, and he mingled them as a chemist mingles chemicals; generally, with success." What a piercing gleam that throws into the very centre of the subject!

It is interesting to know the touchstone by which a great critic tests the objects of his

tractors, but simply regards him with unprejudiced eyes. Forrest, he says, "was an uncommonly massive and puissant animal, and all of his impersonations were more physical than intellectual, while no one of them possessed any spiritual element whatever." Delicately distinguishing between those material attributes which made Forrest effective and the higher traits which are indispensable to the great actor, he thus continues:

From the first and until the last his acting was saturated with "realism," and that was one reason of his extensive popularity. He could at all times



EDWIN BOOTH.  
(From a photograph.)

be seen, heard and understood. He struck with a sledgehammer. Not even nerves of gutta serena could remain unshaken by his blow. In the manifestation of terror he lolled out his tongue, contorted his visage, made his frame quiver, and used the trick sword with the rattling hit. In scenes of fury he panted, snorted and snarled like a wild beast. In death scenes his gasps and gurples were protracted and painfully literal. The fellow that he emitted when, as Richelieu, he threatened to launch the ecclesiastical curse, almost made the theatre walls tremble. The snarling yell of ferocity that burst from him when, as Jack Cade, he recognized and sprang upon Lord Say in the forest, fairly frightened his hearers. His utterance of Lear's delirious prayer to Nature was like a thun-