DELIBES'S "LAKME" REVIVED.

A SLOW PERFORMANCE AT THE METROPOLITAN.

Mme. Sembrich in a New Part and Picturesque Costumes—The Mounting of the Opera Not Picturesque—Minor Parts Poorly Sung and Ballet Awkward.

Delibes's "Lakme" was performed at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time in fourteen years. Doubtless this revival was not brought about by any deep affection for the opera on the part of the impresario. It seemed to be merely an incident in the continued demonstration of delight in things Gallic now going on at the Metropolitan. At any rate, the production was by no means unwelcome, for "Lakme" is very pretty and it gave the subscribers an opportunity to hear music of the gentle variety which appeals to so many of them.

And what a new sensation it is to behold Mme. Sembrich freed from the thraldom of *Mimi's* rags, from the silly ball gown and tuberculosis of *Violetta*, from the fluting madness of *Lucia* and set swimming amid the lush glories and sandal scents of the mythic East. If we must have India let us have it à la Delibes, not Kipling.

It was on Monday, March 1, 1886, when "Lakme" was made known to us at the Academy of Music by the American Opera Company, the defunct predecessor of Henry Savage. Who can recall the singers of that far off time? Pauline l'Allemande was the *Lakme*, William Candidus the *Gerald*, Alonzo Stoddard *Nikalantha*. The *Mallika* was Jessie Bartlett Davis; *Rose*, Helen Dudley Campbell; *Frederick*, William H. Lee; *Hadji*, William Fessenden, and *Mrs. Benton*, May Fielding. The conductor was Theodore Thomas.

It was not the first time that the opera had been given in America, for in the season of 1883-84 Emma Abbott devastated the West with a set of improvised orchestral parts and her own prayerful self and called down curses on the head of Delibes.

The work came to light again on February 22, 1892, at the Metropolitan Opera House. At that time the title rôle was intrusted to Marie van Zandt, who had "created" it. The *Gerald* was Mr. Montariol and Edouard de Reszke sang *Nikalantha*. Others engaged in the presentation were Mlle. Jean de Vigne, Ida Klein, Miss Bauermeister, Mr. Martapoura and Mr. Rinaldini. Mr. Vianesi was the conductor.

After that performance the opera faded away, and until last night it slumbered peacefully. In all probability whatever of success it now has will be due to the art of those concerned in the performance. "Lakme" rejoices in the possession of much superficial beauty. There is in this music a pronounced style which has all the elegance, daintiness and fluency of Delibes. There are half a dozen melodic thoughts of genuine charm and the orchestration is exquisite in its clarity, its color and its expressiveness. This score is worth a dozen such cumbersome inanities as "Fedora."

But it is so persistently sweet and pretty! It is more saccharine than "Lohengrin" and has not one-tenth the muscular power. This sort of music is like the frosting on a cake. It is at first most toothsome, but ere long it makes the teeth ache. And then that pitiless local color—that local color which never retires to the background but which keeps obtruding itself like one of Wagner's painted gauze drops between the stage and the audience—it does become so tiresome. One wishes at times that some one would whistle a music hall tune from dear old Broadway.

The drama? Well, it is good old operatic drama, wherein the heroine loves the man hated by her savage father. Hence when lovely daughter sings, the lover ranges himself up beside the fateful knife of father and is perforated as to his back. *Lakme* with the help of *Mallika* nurses him, but *Frederick* arrives to inform *Gerald* that his regiment claims his services. Of course, like *Vasco di Gama*, *Don José*, *F. B. Pinkerton* and all the other military and naval lovers, he has to go away from here. "Duty calls! I must obey." Applause from the gallery. Despair of the prima donna. "O terra, addio." "In questa tomba." In this case she has studied the wild flowers of her native land and, like Alice of Wonderland, she knows just what to eat. She eats an herb and dies operatically with much voice to slow and sobbing music.

It is all pretty, touching, sweet and charming. But there is nothing in the work to move one deeply. Nor did the audience last night seem to be touched. Aside from the art of Mme. Sembrich there was little in the performance to interest a lover of music, an admirer of spectacle or a connoisseur in linear curves. The prima donna dressed her part and made it up with a fine eye for barbaric splendor and a nice taste in facial pigments. We have had ebonized *Aidas* and rare beef *Selikas*, but last night's *Lakme*, like a certain damsel in a story by Kipling, was "yellow as bar gold in the mint."

Mme. Sembrich had an excellent conception of the rôle and her skill and experience as an artist were lent to the treatment of the music; but she had to carry most of the vocal burden on her own shoulders. Mr. Rousselière was only a fair *Gerald*, for much of the music of the part is in a style not congenial to this explosive young singer. As for Mr. Journet, he was a ponderous and unsympathetic *Nikalantha*, and his proclamatory publication of his ideas in the solo of the second act was more vigorous than satisfying.

The other characters were a sad and dispiriting lot. Mme. Jacoby as *Mallika* made a tolerable essay at the duet with *Lakme* in Act I., but her voice mixed with Mme. Sembrich's as oil with water. As for the rest, let their names be writ in water, as their tones were. The opera was mounted with little regard for the opportunities offered for pictorial beauty. Kipling says the golden East is not golden at all. He is right. It is yellow ochre, and barely that—raw umber would perhaps be nearer the color. Throw in a little Hooker's green No. 2 for foliage and a few flat washes of cobalt whipped with flake white for a sky, draw a cross eyed elephant sitting on a stump and some bell topped pinnacles, and there you have the golden East of last night's "Lakme."

Also there was a ballet. In the annals of the opera of 1906 let not that lambrequin trimmed ballet be forgotten. Let it be immortalized, that substantial but anxious ballet, striving to shake its toes for every note in the music and prancing on one foot spasmodically, unpoetically, uncomfortably. Fortunately the wise could shut their eyes, listen to Delibes's exquisite ballet music and conjure up a more entrancing ballet in their imaginations. The chorus sang very well indeed and in the sacred precincts of the first act looked like a choice collection of loathly fakirs and truth hating ayahs culled from "Plain Tales From the Hills" and "Mine Own People." The orchestra discharged its duties efficiently. Mr. Bovy sat in the conductor's chair and wagged a stick, but he did not seem to be able to infuse any life into the performance, which generally moved like a river of oil.

MRS. MASSEY ARRAIGNED

Before Goff, Who in 1888 Prosecuted Man She Is Accused of Shooting.

Mrs. Emilie Massey, who shot and killed Gustave Simon, a Broadway merchant, was arraigned before Recorder Goff yesterday on an indictment for murder in the first degree. Through her counsel, Charles Le Barbier, she pleaded not guilty and was remanded to the Tombs.

Recorder Goff, when he was an Assistant District Attorney, in 1888, prosecuted Simon for murderous assault. City Marshal Michael Goode attempted to serve a dispossess warrant on Simon, and the latter fired four shots at him. Simon was arrested and tried, but the jury disagreed.

Now Mrs. Massey is charged with killing Simon, and one of the last official acts in General Sessions of Recorder Goff was to commit Mrs. Massey to the Tombs.

"FAUST" AT THE MANHATTAN.

Mme. Donalda Again Shows Herself to Be a Real "Marguerite."

Mr. Hammerstein again exhibited a real *Marguerite* last evening at the Manhattan Opera House, where a very properly enthusiastic house applauded "Faust" from the rise of the curtain to its final fall. New York has seen many *Marguerites*, and some of them have been greater singers than Mme. Donalda, but this singer does not act *Marguerite*. She is *Marguerite*, virginal, wistful and winning. In her those operagoers who have been accustomed to see in Gounod's heroine merely a show case for the display of vocal wares will find a new sensation. Her voice caresses the music it sings, and it is not wonderful that this affection is reciprocated or that the listener is stirred as he never was and never could be by the mere trapeze performer of song.

At the last moment M. Dalmores found that his voice was indisposed. He cast his mantle from him and it landed on M. Altschevsky. Truth to tell, it didn't fit perfectly. But if the mantle was a misfit, the wig was worse. In fact, M. Altschevsky appeared to be suffering from a mild attack of hair on the voice. Not that he was a bad *Faust*. On the contrary, he was a more than respectable *Faust*, if such an adjective may be used of a man who sells himself to Beelzebub. All the same, it was hard to believe that *Marguerite* could be brought to overlook that wig, even by the aid of satanic interposition.

Mephistopheles, as previously at the Manhattan, was represented in the opulent person of M. Arimondi, whose splendidly sonorous voice was heard to the customary excellent advantage. M. Arimondi's *Mephistopheles* is a nice fat jolly Evil One, of whom, despite tradition, it is hard to think so very badly. He seems a great practical joker, to be sure, and his jest on *Faust* doesn't turn out very well. All the same, one would like to ask him to dinner some day when the cook was feeling particularly fit. He seemed, in fact, a devil of a good fellow.

Mlle. Giaconia obstinately remains of the opinion that music is a throat wash to be consistently gargled. It is true that it is hard to make the character of *Siebel* stand out in a very high light. Sometimes it is even excessively undesirable to try. As in previous performances M. Campanini conducted with superb spirit an orchestra that answered his every call, and the chorus sang out and acted with human vitality, especially in the kermess, where the chromatic legs of the chorus men were of great assistance.

NEWS OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Green Room Club Celebration To-night—Marie Dressler's New Skit.

The Green Room Club will celebrate tonight the completion of the reconstruction of its clubhouse at 139 West Forty-seventh street with a smoker, vaudeville show and beefsteak dinner. The entertainment will consist of a tragedy in one act, written by Herbert Hall Winslow, in which Alexander Carr, George Beban, Jack Gardner, Charles Dickson, Guy Woodward, Al Phillips, Templar Saxe, George D. McIntyre, Victor Morley, George Poncefote and others will appear, and vaudeville numbers.

Klaw & Erlanger's production of "Ben Hur," which has not been seen in New York for nearly four years, will be presented in this city at the Academy of Music for a brief engagement beginning Monday, February 25.

Arrangements were concluded yesterday by William A. Brady with George Broadhurst to write a comedy for Douglas Fairbanks, who has made a success in the light comedy part in "The Man of the Hour" at the Savoy.

The players that have been selected to surround Blanche Walsh when she appears in Clyde Fitch's latest play, "The Straight Road," at the Astor Theatre on January 7 are Dorothy Dorr, Louise Closser, Charles Dalton, Helen Lowell, Howard Estabrook, Jessie Ralph, George F. Demarest, William Travers, Ethlyn Clemens and William Wadsworth.

When Marie Dressler returns to vaudeville at the Colonial Theatre on Monday she will appear in a twenty minute comedy skit entitled "Oh, Mr. Belasco!" In it Miss Dressler burlesques principal characters in "Zaza," "Du Barry," "The Darling of the Gods," "The Girl of the Golden West" and "The Rose of the Rancho."

Ethel Levey, who is suing her husband, George M. Cohan, for divorce, has contracted for a tour of the Keith & Proctor circuit to begin at the Fifth Avenue Theatre on January 14.

CLASH OVER "PETER PAN" CHILD.

No Permit for Allowing Virginia Smith to Fly to the Never Never Land.

The Gerry society brought Thomas F. Shea, business manager of the Empire Theatre, to the Jefferson Market police court yesterday and complained that he was violating section 292 of the Penal Code by allowing Virginia Smith, 8 years old, a member of the Darling family in "Peter Pan," to swing above the stage on a wire just before she departs for the Never Never Land. Agent Pizarro of the Children's society said that a permit allowing her to appear had not been granted.

Attorney Nathaniel Cohen, for the Empire Theatre, said that an application for a permit had just been filed with Mayor McClellan, and requested an adjournment of the case until the application had been granted or denied. Cornelius Sullivan, attorney for the Gerry society, consented to the adjournment, but asked that the Magistrate order the theatre management to stop using any minors on mechanical devices until a permit had been granted.

Mr. Cohen protested that such an order would radically interefere with the performance of the play.

Magistrate Sweetser said that he had no power to restrain the performers. He adjourned the examination until January 3.

"THE MIMIC AND THE MAID."

First Production of Lowe and Sloane's Musical Comedy at Springfield, Mass.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Dec. 28.—The new musical comedy "The Mimic and the Maid" had its initial production this evening at the Nelson Theatre before a fair sized audience, and in its essential details met with success. The work is in two acts, and with the exception of one or two numbers is replete with jingling rhyme and music. The libretto and the humorous lines are particularly original.

Among the cast are Will C. Mandeville, George Ober, Harry B. Watson, Victor Rosaire, Maurice Darcy, Gilman Low, Dorothy Russell and Hattie Palmer.

Distinct hits were scored by the Misses Melville and Stetson and Doris Goodwin, the prima donna, whose rendition of a ballad of the higher grade, "Dear Love," reflected credit upon the composer's latter day efforts.

The work is staged with elaborate mechanical and scenic effects by Tom Collins, under the management of Wash Kilpatrick, for many years with Denman Thompson's "Old Homestead" company.

MUSIC FOR CONVICTS.

Eleven Hundred and Fifty Appreciative Listeners—Mrs. Booth Speaks.

OSSINING, N. Y., Dec. 28.—The Dunbar family, musical artists, entertained the 1,150 inmates of Sing Sing prison this afternoon, and in their whole career they never faced a more appreciative audience. Each year Warden Johnson provides an entertainment for the convicts, and this year he left the selection of the entertainers to Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth, the convicts' "Little Mother."

The concert was given in the Protestant chapel, where a stage had been erected. Mrs. Booth was accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. Edwin A. McAlpin, and Kenneth McAlpin, and the latter gave some songs and monologues. Mrs. Booth made a short address in introducing the musicians and hoped "her boys" would have a pleasant afternoon. Albert T. Patrick was present. It was the first entertainment he has been allowed to attend since he was received at the prison nearly five years ago. He joined heartily in the applause.

NEW BOOKS.

The Doctor's Revenge.

The first part of Mr. T. B. Clegg's story of "The Wilderness," (John Lane Company) is not encouraging. There is a pathetic chapter about two old soldiers, who forthwith drop out of the tale. There is another chapter in which a scampish man of business is bearded and upbraided somewhat too rhetorically by one of his victims. A third chapter establishes a simple domestic scene and involves a considerable play of humor that must in candor be described as also somewhat simple. Mr. Merton, the too sharp man of business, sat in his private office in his warehouse in Sydney. Young Dr. Rockleigh, newly home from China, sat sternly confronting him. Said young Dr. Rockleigh: "Ten years ago, Mr. Merton, my father sat where you sit. You were only working your way up then. You had done very well in the house for a lad my father picked out of the gutter. From first to last he befriended you—and yours. Your mother had her last days made happy by his generosity. Mine is lying dead to-night, and her death is at your door as surely as if you had killed her with your hands."

Mr. Merton assumed an air of unconcern. He stretched himself on the lounge and lighted a cigar. Young Dr. Rockleigh continued in part as follows: "My father was as good a man as God ever made. He made no better. Indeed he was too good for traffic with men of your kind. He gave you all his confidence. You gained such influence over him—heaven knows by what subtle, devilish means—that in the end he became your dependent, not you his. On your advice he went into this and that speculation. You would leave our table—breaking bread with us had no sort of obligation to you, Merton—and go with my father to his den to cozen him, to cajole him, cheat him. You had—you traitorous dog!—you had the brazen impudence to try and win my sister from us, a shammed affection to bring us closer in your coil, and then when the traps you led my father into snapped on him one after the other you found a temporary way out of the difficulty through my mother's affection. Next her settlement went, and all that remained was my father's encumbered interest in the house, encumbered by usurious interest and ruinous conditions to you. Then the day came when you finally ate us up, picked us clean to the bone."

One good point about this speech is that it clearly establishes the fact that Dr. Rockleigh and his family had been deeply wronged by Merton. If the young doctor cherished ideas of vengeance it is not likely that the reader will blame him. In the fourth chapter—the one following upon the simple domestic scene which we have mentioned but forborne from illustrating—the reader will find his interest suddenly stimulated. Nearly everybody has heard of the tropical American poison called curare. Capt. Mayne Reid made it wonderfully famous; it was Ossaroo, as we remember, who used to blow with fearful results through his blowpipe arrows that had been dipped in curare. So much as a scratch from one of these poisoned darts and that was the end of the stricken one. In the fourth chapter here, five years after the denunciation of Merton in his Sydney warehouse, we have Merton and Dr. Rockleigh and a supply of curare brought fortuitously together. Merton, travelling for his health, was knocked over by the sun in the Queensland wilderness. He fell into the hands of Dr. Rockleigh, who made use of him for a beautiful experiment. As Merton lay helpless the doctor injected under his skin three doses—one of curare, one of an alleged antidote for that poison and one of strychnine. The result was all that any reasonable vengeance could demand. Merton recovered his physical health, but his memory was gone and his mind otherwise was singularly affected. He no longer knew how to overreach his fellows or to coin money through shrewd speculation and trade. He was fitted particularly to be a wanderer, a tramp, and that he became.

The doctor had been very thorough. As a final touch he had performed a slight surgical operation. As the result of it "one side of Merton's face was out of all keeping with the other, the corner of the mouth sagging, the lid of the eye half closed. Rockleigh had severed the facial nerve to prevent recognition. The operation left only a minute incision in the flesh, but wrought a complete—a repulsive change." That done, the doctor rechristened his patient, who did not remember his own name. He called him Ishmael, gave him a £5 note and sent him forth into the world.

From the fourth chapter on the story is exceedingly interesting. Ishmael had a hard time. In the ninth chapter we read: "The unkempt beard could not wholly hide his distorted features; iron gray hair, dusty and tangled, reached almost to his shoulders; the rolled sleeves of his shirt showed arms burnt brown by the sun. His hands were horned and scarred, the nails broken and disfigured. The world had gone ill with Ishmael. In Brisbane, his little capital exhausted, he had lived the life of a dog—not the well fed dog in the back yard of the prosperous citizen, but the masterless dog who skulks along the lanes and alleys at midnight, nosing in the rubbish boxes for the wherewithal to live." He wandered into the wilderness. "He 'padded the hoof' along rough tracks worn by the timber getters' teams, with the bent back and the slouching gait of the swagsman, his sole belongings slung crosswise on his back; his greasy soft hat strung round with bits of cork on boot lace to keep away the flies that compassed him like a cloud by day, darting with devilish persistency at his bloodshot eyes." Deep in the bush he came upon a clearing and a house, and there was a struggling family that took him

But that was only after argument. He had been fed—had had "a pannikin of tea, a plate of stew, and a hunk of damper, thick and stodgy." He asked for a job. The young man of the place answered: "You're kiddin'. You don't want no job. Now then, you've had some tucker, move along." But Ishmael stayed. He became a great man on the place. The young man was killed by a falling tree. He was replaced by Ishmael. The transformed Merton labored hard. He came to have splendid health and to know the joy of life. He was good. He cared with all solicitude for the headless young family that had taken him in. We never dreamed when we read Capt. Mayne Reid's stories that curare could work such beneficent results.

Merton had a son who inherited the original nature of his father. He was a money getter, an ardent believer in his father's ardent theory that it is the top dog and not the under dog that occupies the desirable place. The story brings the transformed father and the untransformed son together. It presents many curious pictures and situations and contains much that is novel and impressive and readable.

Juveniles.

Excess of sentimentality rather spoils what would be otherwise a pretty, fanciful tale by Grace Squires, "Peaseblossom and Mustardseed" (Dana Estes and Company, Boston.) The reader willingly follows the children in their rather elaborate fancies and may even accept the theatrical attempt to turn these into reality, though calm judgment might expect brain fever as a natural result. To make the attainment of the child's desire, however, depend on the death of a self-sacrificing consumptive sister gives a hateful touch that makes one doubt for the future of a little girl whose imagination is developed at the cost of her heart.

There is no reason why authors should not take "Alice" for a model if they choose, but then they invite comparisons. "The Wishbone Boat," by Alice C. D. Riley (H. M. Caldwell Company) is fairly amusing in its way. It contains a great many rhymes that are clever, but occasionally seem intended for grown up people instead of children and once in a while suggest the variety halls. At times, too, the story seems meant for the children of an older growth.

Perhaps if the children and the botany had been kept apart "The Wild Flower Book for Young People," by Alice Lounsberry (Frederick A. Stokes Company), would have been better. The author, however, is first of all a botanist. A varied assortment of children go through many simple out of door adventures, running throughout the year. They are very observant children, with analytical minds and an amazing fund of information about nature.

The excitement of the incidents of pioneer life in Indiana and of the detection and hunting down of a band of outlaws in Mr. George Cary Eggleston's "Jack Shelby" (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company, Boston) is mitigated by liberal doses of information about farming and woodcraft, with an occasional glimpse of customs in the middle of the nineteenth century. Much of the information is imparted by an altruistic Irish schoolmaster, who sometimes uses brogue and sometimes does not.

There are authors whose names describe their books at once to their young readers and simplify the reviewer's task. Not only young women, but their mothers and some of their grandmothers will know what to expect in Miss Amanda M. Douglas's "Helen Grant in College" (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company.). That young person with her bevy of friends is familiar already through previous books of a series, and further adventures are promised in a later book. Mr. James Otis deviates from his straight historical path in "Among the Fur Traders" (The Penn Publishing Company, Philadelphia). He gets back into it every now and then, however, for the time is the beginning of the nineteenth century and there is plenty doing among the Indians and the game of the Far West. In "With John Paul Jones" (Penn Publishing Company) Mr. John T. McIntyre brings his youthful hero into contact with that adventurous commander in his career on land as well as on sea. Margaret Warde's "Betty Wales, Junior" (Penn Publishing Company), it will be inferred reasonably, has pleased her young acquaintances through two years of a college course and will keep on till she graduates. We regret that we cannot tell whether "The Young Musician," by Horatio Alger, Jr., (Penn Publishing Company), is a posthumous story or a reprint. Probably that does not matter to Alger readers who have not yet read this tale.

A New History of Architecture.

Dr. Russell Sturgis, whose pen seems to have been unusually busy of late even for him, adds to his recent architectural encyclopædia and to his directions for appreciating the several fine arts a new survey of the field in a three volume "History of Architecture" (Macmillans), of which the first volume, dealing with antiquity, is before us.

A curious impatience with ruins and the trouble of guessing what they mean is discernible in the brief preface. The author very properly points out the frightful waste of the world's wealth that would have been spared if men had had the sense to adapt their old buildings to changed conditions. A little patience, a little consideration, a little sense of what makes up permanent value as compared with trivial changes of fashion, and much of the building of former ages would have been found to fit the requirements of a new age." We fancy that with this must be understood that the "sense of permanent value" should have agreed with the opinions of modern art critics.

It is delightful to imagine some well preserved Etruscan temple still serving for religious purposes at Florence, though many of us would regret that it made Brunelleschi's dome and Giotto's tower unnecessary, or to picture the Roman temple that would have prevented the erection of the Cologne Cathedral. It is pleasanter to dream that a careful retention of beautiful public and domestic buildings might have saved us from much bad and imitative nineteenth century architecture. What would have become of architects and their profession and the development of the art we do not dare conjecture; the task of the art historian would certainly be simplified.

In the first volume treating of structures that are, almost all, in ruins Dr. Sturgis is obliged to supplement the observations of the builder and decorator with the researches of scholars in many branches, archæology, philology, history and the rest. In the many years that he has been writing about architecture he has become familiar with the important works and has shown himself to be a conservative critic. The first volume, of about 400 pages, with a great many pictures, comprises the history of the architecture of Egypt, of western Asia, of Greece and of Rome, and includes digressions on sculpture and on painting as decorative accessories. This leaves room for nothing but a concise exposition of the facts, bearing in mind the later discoveries, and the newer æsthetics.

The pictures are admirable and illustrative. Though some are borrowed from Dr. Sturgis's earlier "European Architecture," they are usually of unhackneyed objects, or from new points of view. The photographs are reproduced beautifully. Perhaps from a didactic point of view familiar monuments would sometimes have proved more helpful to the student, but the new apparatus provided for art study is very welcome. It will become familiar in its turn, and meanwhile will direct attention to monuments and to places that are generally ignored by the public. There are several excellent photogravures among the 350 illustrations. The book is beautifully printed and very handsome.

Ranch Life Pleasantly Told Of.

"Pardner of Blossom Range" is Francis Charles's second novel of Arizona life. As the author is a Western woman and familiar with the region of which she writes the local color may be accepted as authentic if extraordinary. For the rest the book is built up in the fashion common to novels of the class to which it belongs. There is the isolated ranch on which the beautiful young heroine, the sentimental and doting grandfather, the crusty old cook and the brave young army Captain play their little parts. Naturally the game is to pair the girl and the officer, which is ultimately accomplished in spite of the bunker contrived by the writer to prolong a pleasant performance. Pardner is a horse endowed with unusual intelligence and trained to retard or to accelerate the sequence of events in accordance with the author's fancy.

The book throws no new light on the problems of life, gives no new viewpoint, promotes no new philosophy, but it doesn't pretend to. It is just a story to be read and forgotten along with thousands of its kind which are written every year and somehow find publishers and temporary place in the vast field of fiction. (Little, Brown & Co.)

Indispensable Almanacs.

In its familiar red and green cover "Whitaker's Almanack" turns up for the thirty-ninth time to help its users through the year 1907. All the invaluable information it affords about things British is brought up to date, and this year it escapes the calamity that befel all almanacs last year, of being thrown out of gear by a change of Parliament and of Government after going to press. There are constant improvements made in the body of the almanac and in the important articles in the "supplement." This year particular attention is given to the organization of the army. The number of pages is kept the same, but the usual index refers to articles in previous issues.

Another strong prop of the reference library, the "Almanach de Gotha" (Justus Perthes; Lemcke and Buechner) in the issue for 1907 attains its 144th year. Though its lists of royal and princely personages retain their original importance, for the last half century of its existence the statistical and administrative information relating to all parts of the world has rather overshadowed the genealogical part. This year it takes up more than 700 of the 1,200 pages. The steel engravings for 1907 are all from one family, representing the new Kings and Queens of Denmark and Norway. The latest information comes pretty close to the beginning of December.

Of the more special books "The Protestant Episcopal Almanac and Parochial List" (Thomas Whittaker), more familiarly known as the "Churchman's Almanac," takes the lead for the denomination it serves, with its lists of bishops and clergy and many Church organizations of all kinds. We notice that Dr. Crapsey's deposition is not yet registered here.

Some Oscar Wilde Books.

A collection of little volumes by or about Oscar Wilde comes to us from John W. Luce and Company, Boston. They vary in form and size, but are all very attractive typographically. A slender book in large type, widely spaced, contains the lecture Wilde delivered in America on "The English Renaissance," which perhaps derives more notoriety from the incidents of the lecturing tour than from its intrinsic importance.

Very little characteristic of Wilde will be found in "The Canterville Ghost," an amusing short story, beginning with pretty boisterous fun and burlesque and turning after a while into queer sentimentality. It is clever nonsense, showing a side of his talent that will be unexpected to readers of his better known work.

A precious set of eulogies by devout idolaters is gathered in "Recollections of Oscar Wilde," translated by Percival Pollard. The authors seem to be very young men whose recollections can only date from Wilde's latest years. It is impossible for them to keep away from his disgrace and its consequences; and while they do not go so far as to glorify him for the actions for whose consequences he himself expressed a sort of half-hearted contrition, they are very severe on the British public for acquiescing in his deserved punishment. Mr. Pollard himself is flamboyant in his delight that Wilde is known in Germany and that he influences a neurasthenic school of young writers. Of the two Frenchmen who have real recollections of Wilde's later days, M. André Gide, who is unknown to the editor, has some literary reputation in France; the other, M. Ernest La Jeunesse, Mr. Pollard praises to the skies. The German, Herr Franz Blei, apparently never had anything to do with Wilde, and merely wrote a short notice of his more objectionable works in an obscure German review. The inclination to do justice to Wilde's indisputable merit in literature will not be helped by the efforts of overzealous admirers to justify his immorality and to force into notice the least important of his writings.

Other Books.

At the rate at which reprints of American historical sources are appearing every small library ought to be able to possess its set. To the series called "Original Narratives of Early American History" (Charles Scribner's Sons), edited by Dr. J. Franklin Jameson of the Carnegie Institution, the Rev. Dr. Henry S. Burrage contributes "Early English and French Voyages, Chiefly from Hakluyt. 1534-1608." The selection is extremely interesting; it could not well be otherwise, for it covers the romantic period of exploration of our Atlantic coast. The stories cannot be told better than in the quaint language in which they are preserved in Hakluyt. The book is handsome, with a very attractive page, and altogether desirable. We cannot help wishing, however, that editors and publishers could devise some scheme to avoid the issue in various forms of works for which the demand must be comparatively limited. We have here, for instance, Cartier's narratives, of which another edition was reviewed recently. We have the announcement of Champlain's voyages, of which at least two editions have been noticed of late, and in addition a new complete edition of Hakluyt is in course of publication. The same criticism applies to other portions of our history, for example the editions of the Lewis and Clarke expedition. There seems to be a waste of energy that might be remedied. However that may be, the reader will find Dr. Burrage's selection well worth having; he has taken care for one thing to include everything that touches on his own State of Maine.

We are glad to see a complete translation of "The Nibelungenlied" by John Storer Cobb (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston). For one thing it may serve to dispel the common error that Richard Wagner created the Nibelung legends, and may show what part of his plots are due to his invention. Moreover it presents the great German epic as nearly as possible in the form in which we have it—a belated form in a rhythm that approaches doggerel at times, and that cannot compare in matter or manner with the dignity of the older Norse versions. Mr. Cobb tried to translate literally and to preserve the metre of the original; in this he was remarkably successful, though often at the cost of retaining a German turn of expression, which does not detract from intelligibility, however, and too often of writing a line as prosaic in English as it was in German. The book, we are sorry to see, is posthumous, a fact that we regret the more on account of the excellence of the fragments of an introduction, which is fortunately printed as the author wrote it. The English reader will get a very good idea of what the Nibelungenlied really is from Mr. Cobb's translation.

Every Irishman who cares for his country and everybody who is interested in Ireland may profit greatly from Dr. Patrick Watson Joyce's "A Smaller Social History of Ancient Ireland" (Longmans, Green and Company). There is nothing controversial about the book, at least nothing the layman can controvert, for Dr. Joyce's is the Ireland before the English set foot on it, almost wholly. He who would dispute about the antiquities and the customs must turn to his larger book, where the proofs and the instances are given. In this little handbook, which is very prettily gotten up and beautifully illustrated, is the condensed but clear account of the old Irish antiquities, the government and the laws, the language and literature, the family relations, the sports, the fighting and every detail of life. It is all founded on sound facts, and helps to disentangle the real Celtic Ireland from the network of fable that has cast discredit on her history. The actual achievement shown here does not need the glamour of legend; it was a civilization that Irishmen should be proud of and should be able to talk about intelligently. Here are the compact results of modern Irish scholarship; those who wish to inquire more deeply may turn to the larger "Social History."

A dozen or so Shakespearian essays by Mr. Sidney Lee are collected in "Shakespeare and the Modern Stage" (Charles Scribner and Sons). They are magazine articles, written by a competent scholar, in a pleasant, popular style, about matters that may seem to some rather ephemeral and to reflect somewhat personal opinions. Mr. Lee objects properly enough to spectacular stage settings for Shakespeare; that we imagine is a question of degree and taste; he himself seems ready to accept in Germany what he might reprove in England. We fail to see how the question of pecuniary success can affect the value of an artistic performance.

The task undertaken by some American ladies of seeking employment in various branches of work for women in order to obtain sociological data has been taken up also in London by Olive Christian Malvery, an Anglo-Indian, or possibly a Hindu lady, we cannot make out from pictures or text which she is, who describes her experiences in "The Soul Market" (Hutchinson and Company, London). We cannot discover from her story whether she preceded or followed the American experiment. In her case the impelling motive was sociology pure and simple, although she also reported for a newspaper. She informs us that she possessed a voice and musical training of commercial value. The pictures disclose that she was too good looking to be acceptable for domestic service. Her sociological cravings led her to take up in succession a variety of the occupations followed by the women of the slums of London; in these she seems from the pictures to have been accompanied by a photographer. She likewise ventured into unpleasant and dangerous places, but with an escort at hand. She succeeded in gathering a large number of disagreeable and pitiful impressions which she recounts in this book very readably. It is possible that the point of view of the woman who works for her living and the woman of society may be somewhat different as regards the dismalness of life. Books of this sort impress us with the ease with which untrained female labor may obtain work more than with the adaptability of society women to any work that may turn up.

When a heaven born poet pours out a steady stream of poetry for nearly seventy years it may be pardonable for the public not to be familiar with all his output. The danger is that the hopelessness of mastering it all may keep readers wholly away. We therefore welcome the selection that Prof. Arthur Graves Canfield has made of the "Poems of Victor Hugo" (Henry Holt and Company), because it may help to make Americans familiar with a man who, with a large streak of humbug, had undoubted poetical genius, and also because the stock of modern French poetry at the command of college instructors is lamentably small. It may be heresy to suggest in opposition to Prof. Canfield that Victor Hugo's permanent fame is more likely to rest on "Les Misérables" or even his dramas than on his poetry. When he was young, however, and when he left out his politics he could write poetry that the world could care for. Prof. Canfield has taken pains to select from all periods of Victor Hugo's poetical career; he offers his readers a fair sample of all he wrote. It might have been a more pious task to pick out only his very best.

William Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," one of his strange rhapsodies on spiritual matters, is published in a pretty little volume by John W. Luce and Company, Boston. It is to be hoped that no Blake clubs will be formed in imitation of Browning clubs to explain the meaning of the poet's theology.

A selection of extracts from the writings of Franklin other than "Poor Richard's Almanac" has been made by Mr. John J. Walsh and published in an ornamental little volume, "The Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin," by Brentano's. The extracts are not clipped; they often extend to whole letters, thus preserving the context. There is always application for Franklin's philosophy and worldly shrewdness, and all efforts to bring them to the notice of the present generation must be welcome.

Books Received.

"Christian Theology in Outline." William Adams Brown, Ph. D., D. D. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

"Four Aspects of Civic Duty." William Howard Taft. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

"The Bridge Blue Book." Paul F. Mottelay. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

"The Secret of the Moor Cottage." H. Ripley Cromarsh. (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston.)

"Father Pink." Alfred Wilson Barrett. (Small, Maynard and Company.)

"A Sleeping Memory." E. Phillips Oppenheim. (Little, Brown and Company.)

"Enoch Strone." E. Phillips Oppenheim. (Little, Brown and Company.)

"Thoughts on Art and Life by Leonardo da Vinci." Maurice Baring. (The Merrymount Press, Boston.)

"The Investments of Life Insurance Companies." Lester W. Zartmann, Ph. D. (Henry Holt and Company.)

"Songs of East and West." Walter Malone. (John P. Morton and Company, Louisville, Ky.)

"Erstes Sprach- und Lesebuch." Lewis Addison Rhoades, Ph. D., and Lydia Schneider. (Henry Holt and Company.)

"Modern Poets and Christian Teaching. Lowell." William A. Quayle. (Eaton and Mains.)

"Passion Flowers." Elizabeth Lloyd Field. (Field Publishing Company; Eaton and Mains.)

"A Queen of Indiscretions." Graziano Paolo Clerici, translated by Frederic Chapman. (John Lane Company.)

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