

QUEEN MARY.

Tennyson's Play Being Prepared for the English Stage.

THE STRONG SCENES

Where Slashing Will Be Done—Criticism and Trial by Footlights.

LONDON, April 13, 1876.

Soon after Tennyson's "Queen Mary" was published here appeared in the Edinburgh Review a criticism of the work, which was one of the most curiously absurd productions I ever saw. The critic was, in the first place, savagely bitter. He was indignant that Tennyson should have attempted the dramatic form, and he seemed to feel a sense of deep personal injury that the poet should have thought of writing a play.

But the critic not only objected to it on principle; he condemned it in detail, and showed that it was utterly absurd and wrong from beginning to end. His grand objection was, as absurd as it may seem, that Tennyson had not written like Shakespeare. He showed first, for he seemed to know, how Shakespeare would have done it; then pointed out how Tennyson had done it; he showed where the method of this one differed from that of the other; he said, "Look upon this picture and then upon this," and thought he had damned Tennyson.

With regard to "QUEEN MARY" AS AN ACTING PLAY. It is of course difficult, as with any play, to say until it has been put on the stage whether it will succeed or not. The only test of a play as a play is its success or failure on the stage, and this test will soon be applied to "Queen Mary." Mrs. Bateson is preparing to bring it out in the same style of magnificence, as regards scenery, costume and decoration, with which she put "Hamlet," "Macbeth" and "Othello" on the stage of the Lyceum.

Although I believe Tennyson wrote this play for the theatre, it is, in its present condition, hardly adapted for acting, and will have to undergo several alterations before it is finally brought out. It betrays the inexperienced hand of a man who has never before written for the stage. There is a certain lack of dramatic coherence and sequence in it, a fault which would not have been made by an experienced playwright of even an inferior order.

TENNYSON'S LACK OF STAGE EXPERIENCE. The scenes are very loosely put together, and do not follow each other with dramatic sequence; that is, they do not produce each other. No one scene is made necessary by that which precedes or follows it, and many of them might be taken out entirely without interfering with the progress of the story, so little do they contribute to the central or dominant interest. There is no plot, properly speaking. The play consists of a series of historical pictures drawn from history and strung together, with scarcely any continued or dramatic interest to unite them. But this weakness, arising from want of stage experience, is one that can be easily remedied by an ordinarily skillful playwright.

There is the material in the play for a grand acting tragedy. It is a complete picture of a full life, from the forest, and three of them at least contain situations of the highest dramatic power, either one of which could insure the success of a play.

A HIGHLY DRAMATIC SCENE. One of these is the last scene of the second act. Mary is in the gatehouse of Westminster Palace with Gardner, Renard, Alice and others of her court, awaiting the result of the battle that is raging outside. The rebel Wyatt is attacking London and has advanced, driving a part of Mary's soldiers, as far as the palace gate, where they are making a last stand. The result is doubtful. Messengers come rushing in upon each other's heels bringing news of defeat and disaster. Gardner advises her to fly, but she refuses. Then Courtney, Earl of Devon, comes rushing in, breathless and battle-stained from Charing Cross, where he has been fighting the rebels, and he urges her to fly to Windsor. But she only treats him as a coward. Then the soldiers who are defending the palace gate are driven inside and the gates are closed against the enemy. She orders them to be thrown open again, the guard to rally out, and she herself rushes to the window to watch the fight in spite of the arrows that are flying thickly everywhere. This time her troops are victorious; they drive the insurgents before them, and now messengers come pouring in announcing that the tide of battle has turned and the rebels are flying on all hands. Finally the capture of Wyatt is announced. He who headed the rebellion which has been the pretext to prevent her marrying Philip. "To the tower with the traitors; then, trembling, quivering with the excitement and suspense of the previous few minutes, sinks exhausted on a seat and dies."

"MY FORTUNE AT MY FEET AND PHILIP KING." The scene is full of life, excitement, action, and will, if properly acted, be a grand dramatic scene. It is by no means a good one. It is for the most part devoted to quarrels between Renard and Gardner, that cannot have the slightest interest for the audience, and a description of the ceremonies attendant upon the abdication of England by the Pope's legate, Cardinal Wolsey, in which the reader can find nothing more than a list of names, the latter, inexpressibly heavy and wearisome, and without the slightest bearing upon the action. This scene, in which the reader can find nothing more than a list of names, the latter, inexpressibly heavy and wearisome, and without the slightest bearing upon the action.

THE CHARACTER OF COURTNEY. Courtney, foppish fool, not of Elizabeth, cool and sensible, but susceptible toattery, are well drawn. Philip is only a rapid sketch, some, as it were, with a few touches of the crayon, and his character is not very clearly defined. His character is not very clearly defined. His character is not very clearly defined.

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Her life is rendered miserable and wretched by Philip's coldness, indifference and licentious manners. We are told that she is waiting for a son to bind her fast to Philip's love, in that fervent passionate outburst when she feels the quickening of a new life within her bosom.

But her star never rises, her sun never comes. She is a child, and her life is a life of suffering. Her cold and harder as the ice of a never a prince born to him grows less. She thinks it is the hand of Heaven punishing her because she has not believed protected the faith and burnt out Protestantism. She grows more cruel and bloody. She burns Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, honestly to appease the wrath of heaven. We cannot help sympathizing with her hatred of Cranmer for it was he who divorced her mother and pronounced her illegitimate.

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MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC NOTES.

Mlle. Pappenheim appears on Wednesday at "Faust." The Vocal Society has a concert at Chickering Hall on Thursday. The Musical Protective Union will play this week at Mr. John Drew's Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia.

Mr. Theodore Thoma gives an extra symphony concert to-night at Steinway Hall. Max Pinner, the celebrated American pianist, left Bremen yesterday for America. Kelly & Leonard's Minarels open the Twenty-third Street Opera House on the 1st of May.

The E. L. Davenport Club give a dramatic performance at Terrace Garden on the 15th inst. The Kraljics' new theatre in Philadelphia, the Alhambra, is rapidly approaching completion. Mlle. Anna de Helocca makes her American debut to-night at the Academy of Music as Rosina in "Il Barbiere di Siviglia."

Mrs. Imogene Brown, Mr. Fritsch and Mr. Blum will sing the principal parts in "Der Freischutz" on Tuesday at the Academy of Music. A protogitator is giving "donation scenes" in Philadelphia who advertises to give to every purchaser of a fifty-cent ticket a building lot 20 by 100 feet. Mr. Adolph Neundorff has been proposed as the coming conductor of the Philharmonic Society, and a better selection could scarcely be made.

Mme. Julie de Ruyter's annual concert takes place at Steinway Hall on the 24th inst. The lady is one of the best of our local artists. Miss Gertrude Emanuel, a promising and accomplished young singer, gives a grand concert at Chickering Hall on the 21st inst., aided by a number of well known artists.

The ball to be given by the Women's Centennial Union of New York at the Academy of Music on Tuesday, the 28th of April, promises to be one of the most brilliant of this season. The Emperor of Brazil has been invited, and a presentation box has been provided for him and his suite. The proceeds of the ball will be devoted to the exhibition of examples of the handicraft of the women of this State at the Centennial Exposition.

The dramatic event of last week in Philadelphia was the appearance of Miss Beatrice de Trafford as Juliet, in Shakespeare's sentimental tragedy, Miss Trafford is the young American lady who took the Londoners by surprise in acceptably filling Miss Neilson's place in her great character when that lady was suddenly indisposed. Miss Trafford's debut in this country was made at the Walnut Street Theatre in "Romeo and Juliet." The young lady shows unmistakable signs of talent, and received a warm reception.

Theodore Thoma's last symphony concert at Steinway Hall, on the 23d inst., is announced, with the following programme: Concerto, in A major, No. 3, Beethoven; Variations (Thema mit Variationen), op. 99, Brahms; Spinning Chorus and Ballad, Wagner; Second act of "Phantom Ship," Miss Lina Felt, Miss E. L. Harrison and female chorus; Symphony in C, No. 9—Andante, Allegro ma non troppo; Andante con moto, Scherzo (Allegro vivace); Finale (Allegro vivace)—Scherzo.

A vile conspiracy has been entered into by the directors of the Musical Protective Union against summer garden concerts. Thinking that there was a good opportunity during the Centennial summer to exercise the tricks which failed so signally with the theatrical managers nine years ago, they have sought to double the rates of orchestral players this summer. The Musical Protective Union was once an organization worthy of respect; but in this instance, in the face of the fact that the union is composed of amateurs, its course is deserving of the utmost condemnation.

FINE ARTS. NOTES FROM THE GALLERIES. As the summer months approach and residents of the city prepare for departure to summer homes out of town the picture dealers import fresh pictures and direct more attention to other branches of their business which rise with the regular spring tidal wave. At Scheus' gallery Cabanel's "Penelope" still continues to be the chief attraction. Having given the proceeds of the exhibition to the Young Ladies' Christian Association for the past two weeks, he will continue the exhibition until May 1 for the benefit of the Women's Centennial Union.

At Studer's may be seen the best collection of American paintings, as he takes special interest in bringing before the public the works of our own artists, and has endeavored to reform the demoralized state of the market for American works of art which has this winter caused our artists to rely upon the unreliable patrons of the auction rooms for the patronage which should be given them in their studios and regular art galleries. The paintings which occupy the places of honor at present in this gallery are two Centennial pictures, Innes' large Italian landscape and Phillips' "1776 and 1876." Both will leave for Philadelphia this week.

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This is also a powerfully executed piece of work. A life study, by Mrs. Ranney, of the head of a man, not noticeable from striking color, but for the truth with which the objects are painted. The study contains nothing but a lighted candle, a pair of gloves, an ornamental vase, and a pair of shoes; but it shows how much knowledge may be put in simple studies as well as in the most ambitious subjects. One of Oswald's studies is the head of a man, with some qualities and is more showy. As the artist has chosen more brilliantly colored objects there is more form in the treatment, and the effect is only as good, the objects having the appearance of high finish without the labored appearance which too minute attention to detail is apt to give. A large flower piece, by Reinhold Fay, shows the light touch of his artist in masses of color. "Stealing a Kiss," by Gustave Fux, of Düsseldorf, is a small picture representing a dark rooming study, which is a study of a man perched on the limb of a tree to wait until the duck has finished the meal that has been placed in a dish ready for it. The Factory Merchant, by N. Serra; "The Lion," by A. Ciampi; a group of figures in a boat, by Dahlbom; two landscapes, by Carminecke; a small one by Reinhold Fay; a little group, by David Johnson, and two small scenes, one in France and the other on Long Island, by C. B. Conant, a young American artist, whose works show the influence of French masters. The subjects chosen are generally well-looking groups of tall, slender trees, with a little foliage that the anatomical structure is visible, thus being a peculiarity of the trees in France—and the artist shows this characteristic feature in wood interiors and lonely marshes, selecting generally for the atmosphere a peculiar and pleasing gray, which is not too dark, and more poetic, while it keeps within the limits of nature.

A SERIO-COMIC SEANCE.

UPROAR AMONG THE SPIRITS—ANNA EVA FAY'S CONFLICT WITH MATERIALISM. Last evening the comfortable hall of the Son Francisco ministers, in Broadway, held an assembly of a very redoubtable class, known to wit, the "celebrated" advertisements of the "Celebrated Indescribable Phenomena or Spiritual Medium." Every one present seemed to be in the best of humor. On the stage there was a cabinet, lined with red cloth, which had six short legs, each of which had a pivotal wheel under it. The cabinet was in sight of the audience, and it was not possible for any accessory or friend of Miss Fay, to come near it and accomplish any trick. Professor Fay, the manager of the seance, came forward at a little after eight o'clock and addressed the audience. He was attired in full evening dress, and stated that he expected silence from his hearers.

He added—"That order has been observed when Miss Fay had the honor to appear before the Prince and Princess of Wales." Immediately after these instructions of Miss Anna Eva Fay, who is described in the advertisements as the "Celebrated Indescribable Phenomena or Spiritual Medium." Every one present seemed to be in the best of humor. On the stage there was a cabinet, lined with red cloth, which had six short legs, each of which had a pivotal wheel under it. The cabinet was in sight of the audience, and it was not possible for any accessory or friend of Miss Fay, to come near it and accomplish any trick. Professor Fay, the manager of the seance, came forward at a little after eight o'clock and addressed the audience. He was attired in full evening dress, and stated that he expected silence from his hearers.

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