

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

THEATRICAL MANAGEMENT FOR THIRTY YEARS. By Sol Smith, retired actor. Philadelphia Agents: Harper & Brothers, Claxton, Remsen & Haffelinger.

There are no class of persons who are better "company" in private life than members of the theatrical profession. Their way of life throws them continually in company with queer specimens of human nature, and leads them into odd adventures which supply them with a limitless fund of anecdotes of the most laughable description. We know actors who are infinitely more entertaining of the stage than they are when before the public; and who, if story-telling was a paying art, would accumulate fortunes with the most gratifying rapidity, whereas they find it difficult sometimes to make a sufficiently favorable impression on their audiences to earn their daily bread and butter. Most of the autobiographical works written by actors and actresses are very amusing reading, and Sol Smith's "Theatrical Management in the West and South, for Thirty Years," is not the least entertaining book of the kind that we have seen. In this book is included the substance of two smaller works published in 1845 and 1855, and a number of anecdotes which originally appeared in "Barton's Encyclopedia of Wit and Humor," all of which had considerable popularity in their day. A considerable amount of new matter has been added, and the present work is a complete, although somewhat disconnected and rambling, autobiography. Mr. Smith does not make any pretensions to elegance of style, but he knows how to tell a good story, and has a keen appreciation of the humorous side of life and character, so that he is always entertaining, if not profound.

We do not remember whether the following has ever been published before or not, but we imagine that it will be new to the majority of our readers, so we give it as a "specimen brick."

In the course of my management, it may be well supposed that the receipts have on some occasions been very small. It happened that a performance had taken place without the presence of a dozen or two who paid for their admission. It will be seen by what I am now about to relate that in one instance a performance took place (at least in part) before about the smallest paying audience on record. It was a very rainy night. The play advertised was "Torture the Usurer," with Mr. E. Conner as the star, after which the celebrated Herr Clime was to go through with his wonderful feats of strength and agility, and I was to conclude with the farce of the "Rendezvous." Conner was to receive, and did receive, fifty dollars for his night's services; Herr Clime was to get one clear third of the receipts, and our nightly expenses were two hundred and fifty dollars. Contrary to my usual custom, I did not go to the theatre that evening, but on the evening, having no part to play in the first place, but at about 9 o'clock I went and watched my way through, and found the curtain just falling upon Torture. Herr Clime, dressed for his performance, met me as I entered.

"Oh! for God's sake," said he, imploringly, "don't compel me to appear before this miserable people; the night is so bad, there are not twenty dollars in the house. Come, let me off; dismiss the audience, and let them go home."

In this piteous appeal, which all the actors who had parts in the afterpiece, "What are the receipts?" I asked.

"Guess," said he.

"You have guessed just fourteen dollars above the mark," said the treasurer, throwing down two half dollars upon the shelf where the money was laid.

"Only one ticket sold," gasped I.

"Only one ticket sold," remarked he, coolly, again jingling the dollars upon the shelf, and then he gave me full assurance that what he said was entirely true.

"And a five-act play has been given to the one discerning and discriminating purchaser of that single ticket," I remarked.

"Exactly so," said the treasurer. "You know your rule, 'No postponement on account of weather.'"

"Stop a little," I said; "I'll go and see this gentleman—he may be bought off," and away I went into the front of the house, and found the gentleman, seated exactly in the centre of the parquette, listening very attentively to "an overture by the orchestra," which formed a part of the programme upon the bills of the evening.

"Quite a rainy night, sir," I said, addressing the attentive listener to the overture, seating myself at his side. He did not reply except by a polite inclination of the head.

"You will, I hope, excuse the request I am about to make of you," said I, as soon as the overture was finished (another nod from the gentleman), "but I believe, as I remarked, quite a rainy night, and you have ordered the stage 'have not been so well rewarded as the attractions offered might seem to deserve' (another nod); and we ask it as a favor that you will engage to back your money, and relieve our actors from further exertions to amuse you this evening."

Several emphatic nods and one or two shrugs of the shoulders were his responses; I received to this civil speech. After waiting a moment for an answer in words, I ventured to repeat my request that he would receive back his money at the same time as the gentleman's identical half dollars the treasurer had been jingling the whole evening. The gentleman started at the money, and then at me, as if he was at a loss to understand the meaning of my words and action. It suddenly occurred to me that the gentleman might have a little hard of hearing; so, placing my mouth close to his ear, I again requested his acceptance of the money, and demanded his permission to omit the remainder of the performance. This request for the third time, the gentleman at length opened his mouth, set his tongue in motion, and spoke as follows:

"Monseigneur, je ne comprends pas un mot de ce que vous dites; mais je suppose que vous parlez de l'excemption de ce soir. Eh bien, si vous le voulez, d'accord avec vous, et dans ce cas je suis d'accord avec vous. Mais, Monsieur, Monsieur Conner est un jeune acteur charmant, et Madame Farron est délicieuse!"

(Sigh.) Do not misunderstand a word you say; but I suppose you are remarking on the excellent performance, in which case I agree with you—it is superb. Mr. Conner is a fine young actor, and Mrs. Farron is great."

Mastering up the very limited knowledge I possessed of the French language, after imparting to him the information that I was one of the directors of the theatre, I managed to let him know what it was I wanted of him, when he answered me in a manner that I succeeded to my request with the greatest readiness, so far as remitting his claim to the rest of the party is concerned; but in my bad French I found it utterly impossible to prevail upon him to take his dollar. The polite Frenchman lighted a cigar at the door, hoisted his umbrella, and went forth, calling back to me, "Bon soir, Monsieur le Directeur; je n'ai pas compris le langage de votre piece; mais elle était bien jouée et splendide actrice. Bon soir, Monsieur le Directeur."

(Good evening, Mr. Director; I did not understand the language of your play, but it was well acted—very well acted, Madame Farron)

From K. H. Butler & Co. we have received "Ruth Lovell," by Mrs. Carrie L. May. Published by William H. Hill, Jr., & Co., Boston. This is one volume of the "Sweet Glogg" series of stories by the same author, why "sweet glogg" we cannot exactly understand, except that it has become the fashion to write such books in series, and that our name is as good as another so long as it has an agreeable sound. "Ruth Lovell" is a pleasantly told story, which may be perused with profit as well as entertainment by juvenile readers.

Eloan's Architectural Review for September shows a decided improvement on the previous numbers. A majority of the articles are by Messrs. Sloan and Lankens, the editors, and they treat of architecture, building, and kindred subjects which come within the scope of the publication, from an artistic as well as from a practical point of view. Several fine designs are given for stores, dwellings, churches, etc., with full descriptions and details. The Architectural Review supplies a long-felt want, and it is conducted with ability, we are confident that it will ere long become the recognized organ of the profession, and will be made the medium for the interchange of ideas and for the promulgation of valuable suggestions and information about matters of every description connected with architecture and building. Published by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelinger.

The Nursery for September is, as usual, full of pretty pictures and pleasant stories, which the youngest of the young readers will be able to understand and appreciate. This little magazine is nicely gotten up, and some of its illustrations are superior to those in periodicals of more pretensions.

Whitlock's Horticultural Recorder for October has a variety of articles of interest to fruit and flower-growers, and others engaged in horticultural pursuits.

FINANCIAL.

ONE OF THE BEST INVESTMENTS.

FIRST MORTGAGE BONDS OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CO.

850 Miles Completed.

A limited amount of the First Mortgage Bonds of the Union Pacific Railroad Company are offered to the public as one of the safest and most profitable investments.

1. They are a first mortgage upon the longest and most important railroad in the country.

2. By law they can be issued to the Company only as the road is completed, so that they always represent a real value.

3. The amount is limited by act of Congress to Fifty Million Dollars on the entire Pacific line, or an average of less than \$50,000 per mile.

4. Hon. E. D. Morgan, of the United States Senate and Hon. Charles Sumner, of the United States House of Representatives, are the trustees for the bondholders, so that all their interests are protected.

5. Five Government Directors, appointed by the President of the United States, are responsible to the country for the management of its affairs.

6. Three United States Commissioners must certify that the road is well built and equipped, and in all respects a first-class railway, before any bonds can be issued upon it.

7. The United States Government lends the Company its own bonds to the same amount that the Company issues, for which it takes a second mortgage as security.

8. As an additional aid, it makes an absolute donation of 12,000 acres of land to the mile, lying upon each side of the road.

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9. The bonds pay SIX PER CENT. IN GOLD, and the principal is also payable in gold.

10. The earnings from the local or way business were over FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS last year, which after paying operating expenses, was much more than sufficient to pay the interest. These earnings will be vastly increased on the completion of the entire line in 1869.

11. No political action can reduce the rate of interest. It must remain for thirty years, six per cent. per annum in gold, now equal to between eight and ten per cent. in currency. The principal is then payable in gold. If a bond, with such guarantees, were issued by the Government, its market price would not be less than from twenty to twenty-five per cent. premium. As these bonds are issued under Government authority and supervision, upon what is very largely a Government work, they must ultimately appreciate to Government price. No other corporate bonds are made so secure.

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