

HENRY IRVING intends to open his next season in London with a new and original poetic play by Herman Merivale, which has been in his possession for a considerable time, and is said to be a very fine dramatic work. For the purposes of the new play Mr. Irving has re-engaged William Terriss, who will take his old place in the Lyceum Company, which he only left to become the hero of Adelphi drama. The play is said to be founded on "The Bride of Lammermoor."

M. LAMOREAUX, the famous orchestral leader of Paris, can afford to keep his band together and lay out his *tournees* without thought of the material outcome of the venture. The eminent French conductor married a daughter of Dr. Pierre, inventor of a dentifrice that has long been popular in France, and that has brought millions of francs to its compounder. And it is understood that Dr. Pierre's bank account is at his son-in-law's disposal, whenever the interests of art require it to be dipped into.

AN interesting concert in Association Hall last Monday under the auspices of the Conservatory of Music revealed great talent among the members of the staff and much promise in the pupils. Mr. Harrison, Mrs. Jarvis, Mr. S. H. Clark (elocutionist), Miss Dallas, Miss Gordon and Mrs. Bradley contributed some pleasing selections, and the accompaniments were rendered by Signor D'Auria. Mr. Tripp surpassed all his previous efforts in a creditable performance, though taken at a slightly too rapid pace of Mendelssohn's G minor concerto, and received a double encore. The friends of the institution were present in large numbers; the object of the concert being the purchase of a reference library.

THIS little anecdote from the *World* of yesterday conveys some notion of the tribulations of the stage manager: Miss Jeffreys Lewis, who was cast for an important part in the production of "The Knights of Tyburn," at Niblo's, on April 7, presented herself for the first time at the Academy of Music for rehearsal yesterday. To the astonishment of Stage Manager Stuart, Miss Lewis announced that she had made out a part for herself, and didn't care to play that provided for her by the management. "But, my dear madam," said Mr. Stuart, "you must stick to our text. We can't let you do what you like in this matter." Miss Jeffreys Lewis, who has been a star of high rank, was very indignant. "I must play the part as I understand it," she said. "No? Oh, very well." With that she beckoned to her little child, who had been playing with Mr. Stuart in seraphic innocence of mamma's dramatic tribulations, shook hands with the company, smiled sweetly, and left.

THE N. Y. *World* says of a Canadian lady in a recent issue: Unlike other women composers, Helen Gregory stands almost alone in her profession. She is a writer of the ultra-classical, and enjoys the distinction of having been the first woman to have conferred upon her the dual degree of Musical Bachelor and Bachelor of Arts. Few imagine the necessary capabilities required for the attainment of such honours. In the Trinity University of Toronto, Canada, from which she graduated for the degree of Musical Bachelor, four successful examinations were necessary, each embracing a course in harmony, counterpart, canon, fugue, form, history of music and instrumentation. At the last examination the student is required to write a musical composition with full orchestral accompaniment, one or two choruses of at least four or six parts, a fugal chorus and solos. In order to keep the standard as high as possible the papers are sent to England and examined by three noted professors of the University of Cambridge. All this Miss Gregory went through successfully, claiming the credit of opening Trinity University to women, which had previously issued only certificates instead of degrees. She then, at the same college, by dint of perseverance, succeeded in persuading the Senate of the University to also grant her admission to a full collegiate course, and, but a few months ago, after a three years' course of study, she graduated with honours and the degrees named.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

CONVERSATIONS IN A STUDIO. By William Wetmore Story, D.O.L., Oxon. Two volumes. Boston and New York; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

The conversations in these neatly made volumes are on a great variety of topics. They are chiefly about art and literature, but the speakers—there are only two—dwell rather more on letters and authors than on art and artists. Many good stories are told, some of them quite new and some even venerable, but none that we should wish to exclude. We have the anecdote so often told, in one form or another, to illustrate Wordsworth's complacent self-conceit. The poet and Douglas Jerrold "were talking together one day about Shakespeare and his wonderful plays, when Wordsworth said, 'I have often thought that I, too, could have written plays like Shakespeare's, if I had had a mind to.' 'Ah,' said Jerrold, 'I see! it is only the mind then that is wanting.'" The caustic comment is, we think, usually attributed to Charles Lamb. Shakespeare is naturally the subject of much talk; and German criticism comes in for some vigorous condemnation. Even the great Goethe is spoken of in a tone that savours strongly of disrespect. "It provokes me," M. says, "to be told, as a man constantly told, that the Germans appreciate Shakespeare more than the English, and that they have taught us of late truly to estimate him. I am sick of hearing of Schlegel, and Goethe and the next, and what they say. We might just as well tell the Italians that we English

understand Dante better than they do. Some of the German criticism is as bad as Voltaire's. . . . But the very best of it is not worth much. Even Goethe's 'Analysis of Hamlet,' much as it has been praised, seems very poor to me—not to be mentioned for insight and sympathetic sense with, for instance, Lamb, Coleridge or Hazlitt. The single phrase of Hazlitt, 'We are all of us Hamlet,' is worth all that Goethe and Schlegel ever wrote. Not that I count for much the English criticism on Shakespeare, which is very traditional for the most part, and greatly overshadowed by stage influences. . . . But the Germans have the vice of anatomizing Shakespeare, and laying him out in parts and pieces, and admiring the worst as much as the best. They find admirable reasons to show that the notoriously ungeniune parts of his plays are as admirable as the others. When once they go in to praise, they praise everything. . . . In fact, take the German criticism on Shakespeare for all in all, it seems to me very commonplace. It is vehement and indiscriminate in its praise and blame, without any true critical sense. It is the same in their criticism of art."

The French are praised for their literary art, but are condemned for the plots and incidents they prefer to use. "The French generally write well—better than the English. They are neat, precise and clear in their style, and say what they mean with directness and simplicity, whereas in English we lack these qualities as a general rule. The French are more accustomed to talk, give vent to their thoughts and feelings more freely in conversation, are more impulsive and eager in their utterance, than the English, and when they write, they write more naturally."

The *motif* of many of their plays is seduction or a criminal *liaison*. They assume a condition of things which is repulsive to a just sense of honour, and impossible for pure and honest persons. . . . It is not the vice or wickedness of these French plays as much as the spirit in which they are conceived and developed that disgusts. It is the constant *inuendo* and allusion that offends. One cannot, however, deny that, given their theme, the best French authors develop it with great spirit, talent and vivacity. They are seldom tedious, heavy and boring; and, disapprove as you may, you cannot but admire the skill and literary faculty they display. . . . There are some charming plays in French, such as 'The Village,' of Octave Feuillet, which is full of pathos and tenderness of treatment and refinement of feeling; and what a pity it is that the French writers will waste their extraordinary talent on *demi-monde* subjects. There can be no doubt that they have a wonderful ease and lightness in dialogue, as well as great cleverness in the delineation of character, and skill in the development of their plot. But the subjects and incidents they choose, and the low tone of their morality and manners simply disgust one. Indeed, the stage has so fallen now that it would seem as if there must be soon a reaction towards virtue and nobleness. A pure, high-minded character now would have the effect of originality, and I cannot but think would have a fresh relish after all this low viciousness."

Let us give just one more extract about the French *à propos* of the art of conversation, for, as we are here told, "to talk well is an art, and it can be cultivated; and to listen well is equally an art." "There is nothing that charms like simplicity and unconsciousness. Freedom and naturalness are the very soul of life. The French understand this; artificial as they often are in their manners, they really know how to talk, and there is nothing more agreeable than the society of clever and educated Frenchmen. They are so light of hand, so frank, so quick, that the ball of conversation never falls. Sometimes they strive a little too much at cleverness, but they do not orate, which is the bane of social intercourse. They do not frame solemn sentences, but talk and let talk."

These almost random extracts will give the reader some idea of the quality of the conversations in these exceedingly interesting volumes, but none whatever of the almost infinite variety of topics touched upon or discussed with as much fulness as the plan of the work would permit. It is an admirable book to pick up at odd moments; for, open it where he will, the reader is sure to hit upon something entertaining, suggestive or instructive. An unusually full index facilitates reference to the subject matter of the "Conversations."

THE *Atlantic* for April opens with the first part of a paper on "Some Popular Objections to Civil Service Reform," by Oliver T. Morton. The serials, "The Tragic Muse," "Sidney" and "The Begum's Daughter" are continued; James Thayer contributes an interesting paper on "Trial by Jury or Things Supernatural;" Albert Shaw writes about "Belgium and the Belgians," and Oliver Wendell Holmes gives another instalment of pleasant talk "Over the Tea Cups." The verse of the number is by James Jeffery Roche and Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

THE leading article in the *Methodist Magazine* for April is a memorial tribute and portrait of the late Dr. Williams, by Rev. Dr. Carman and the Rev. Dr. Dewart. The continuation of the Editor's account of the Canadian Tourist Part in Europe is interesting and richly illustrated. "The Last Voyage" of Lady Brassey and Rev. Geo. Bond's record of travels in Palestine in his *Vignette Papers* are also generously embellished with illustrations. Mr. T. G. Mason's reminiscences of George Street and Richmond Street Churches have something more than a denominational interest.

THE Merchant of Venice is the subject of Mr. Andrew Lang's Shakesperian study in the April *Harper's* for which Mr. Abbey furnishes ten illustrations. Under the title of a "A Suit of Clothes," Mr. R. R. Bowker describes the processes in the manufacture of woollens; in "Three Indian Campaigns," General Merritt gives a graphic account of Indian warfare in the west; and in "American Literary Comedian" Henry Clay Lukens talks pleasantly about Nye, Burdette, Adams, and other American humourists, living and dead. All these articles are liberally illustrated. In addition to an instalment of Mr. Howells' new novel, three short stories of more than common merit are provided for lovers of fiction.

Canadiana is always welcomed and each number increases our appreciation of its usefulness. In the March number Miss Blanche L. Macdonell concludes her interesting review of "The literary movement in Canada up to 1841." The matter of Miss Macdonell's work indicates industrious and painstaking research, but her style betrays literary inexperience and would be improved by a little editorial revision. "The Trafalgar Tower" by the editor is a paper of much interest which, in some respects calls up recollections of Poe's prose stories. Mr. Robert C. Douglas contributes a paper on "The Lachine Canal French Régime;" Mr. Cruikshank continues his "Reminiscences of Col. Claus," and Mr. Lighthall relates an interesting anecdote of the Rebellion of 1837-8.

THE April *Magazine of American History* is notable for the timeliness of its topics and the clever style in which they are treated. The opening paper by the editor conducts the reader into a fresh and untrudged field, and no one who glances over the first page will be inclined to lay the periodical aside without making the complete tour of South America. It is rarely that so much of information and suggestion is condensed within so brief a space. "Laval, the First Bishop of Quebec," by John Dimitry; and "Diplomatic Services of George William Erving," by Hon. J. L. N. Curry, ex-Minister to Spain, are scholarly productions of the first importance and interest; such papers are always welcome. "Washington at the Columbus Exposition," by Rev. Dr. G. S. Plumley; "An Account of Pennsylvania, 1765," from Percy Cross Standing, of London; "Anecdote of Lord Chief Justice Holt," by D. Turner; and "Westward to the South Seas," by Milton T. Adkins, are varied, instructive, and delightfully readable articles, not a line of which could well be spared. This great historical monthly, the only one of its kind in the country, and the best in the world, grows more and more popular every year, exerting an educational and healthful influence in every branch of literature and study. The six departments of which no mention is here made for want of space are worth in themselves the entire subscription price, \$5 a year. Published at 743 Broadway.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

THE Bishop of Ripon will contribute a poem to the April number of the *Church Monthly*.

It will be a surprise to many to learn that the proprietors of the *Times* number nearly 100 persons.

A SECOND cousin of Wordsworth, Mrs. Dorothy Harrison, has just died at Ambleside in her eighty-ninth year.

AFTER the April issue, Mr. Edward Arnold resigns the editorship of *Murray's*, which he has held since its foundation.

BRET HARTE's new story, "A Waif of the Plains," and "The Mistress of Beech Knoll," by Mrs. Clara Louise Burnham, will be published soon from the Riverside Press.

BEGINNING with the May number, the *Andover Review* will have a new department devoted to the Literary Outlook, under the charge of Professor Arthur Sherburne Hardy.

THE late Sir William Gull, the famous court physician, has died and left a fortune of \$1,750,000. Thirty years ago he was an unknown hospital doctor, living from hand to mouth.

THE British War Office has decided that when it becomes necessary to handcuff a soldier in uniform he must not be marched through the streets, but a covered conveyance shall be provided.

"LOOKING BACKWARD" has reached its 333rd thousand. If the copies were laid end to end, they would make a continuous line over thirty miles long; or, if placed one upon the other, would make a column more than four miles high.

THE latest additions to "The Penny Library of Fiction" (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) are "A Drift for Life and Other Stories" and "The Log House by the Lake," a tale of Canada, by the late Mr. W. H. G. Kingston.

THE rush to the gold fields in the Transvaal region has been unprecedented in history. In three years £150,000,000 of English money have been invested there. Cities have sprung up where in 1886 only grass could be found and no habitation.

THE April *St. Nicholas* will contain the first of several important papers entitled "Six Years in the Wilds of Central Africa," by Mr. E. J. Glave, one of Stanley's pioneer officers. These articles contain vivid descriptions of the author's personal experiences, and will, in addition, tell much of the methods and achievements of the great explorer Stanley. The series will be illustrated by Kemble, Taber, and other artists, after sketches by the author.