

and join in strange, ghostly music. Mephistopheles joins the uncanny revels, then suddenly rising to the top of the rock, gives the word "Vanish!" and the scene is cleared as if by magic. However, he recalls his fiendish subjects, and once more the revels begin. Mephistopheles, nursing an imp, sits scanning the scene on the rock from which, as well as from all parts of himself, flash sparks of electric light. He again leaps amid the ghastly throng, and in a moment the whole place is in a blaze of coloured flames. The rocks seem to melt, the clouds shower down fire like rain, and thunder deadens the noise of the shrieking of the witches, fiends, and beings of nameless shapes. The curtain falls on this fiery scene, which may well be likened to one from Dante's Inferno.

The fifth and last act is a dungeon scene. Margaret, with chains on her wrists, is sitting on the straw. She is mad and dying. This touching scene recalls Miss Ellen Terry's equally beautiful impersonation of Ophelia. Faust comes to her but she does not know him, except in one lucid moment, in which she welcomes the approach of death and prays that God might save them both, "because of our great love and all my sorrow." She asks to be laid in a grave next her little babe's. There is a large cross in the dungeon, to which she clings, and falls at its feet, dead. Angels appear in the air and call her spirit away.

This production of Faust has drawn fresh attention to the beauties and lessons of the great poem, and opened up a new world of poetry to many to whom previously Goethe was but a name. With its spirit of philosophy, and feeling of humanity, it is indeed a classic; but whether Goethe ever intended it to be put on the stage is a question. Some critics think he meant the first part—what they call the tragedy, for acting—and the second part, for contemplative thought. We are told Mr. Irving had Wills' version in his possession for several years before producing it at the Lyceum, and though he travelled and studied in Goethe's country, he never saw Faust played in Germany, nor, in fact, in London either. He has represented and constructed the piece as closely as possible on the original lines. The *mise-en-scène* is indeed wonderful. Mr. Irving superintends every detail himself, and certainly shows great power of imagination. The foot-lights are supplied with artificial sunlight as well as cool shadows of browns and grays, and the atmosphere in each of the scenes can almost be felt; deliciously so in the lonely ones of Nuremberg, flooded with golden rays from the setting sun. These scenes of Nuremberg—slightly idealised—are faithful pictures of the interesting old medieval city with its spires, towns, and gabled roofs of red tile. Mr. Hawes-Craven and Mr. Jelpin are truly artistic scene painters. As Mr. Irving went to Nuremberg to study before the production of "Faust," so to learn the "hocus-pocus" of witchcraft he dived into the depths of wizard literature before introducing the "Witches' Kitchen." In his impersonation of Mephistopheles, Henry Irving, in figure, dress, and expression, is simply perfect. With her sympathetic acting, Ellen Terry cannot fail to be an ideal "Margaret," and "Faust" is excellently well played by Mr. Alexander. The incidental music has been specially composed by Hamilton Clarke and Meredith Ball (Musical Directors at the Lyceum Theatre), and selections have been made from the works of Beethoven, Berlioz, Schubert ("Erl King"), Liszt, and others.

FREDA.

### MUSIC.

THE New York *Evening Post* has some recent comments upon the genius and the achievements of modern composers, notably Mendelssohn, Rubinstein, and Schumann, that sound, we may suppose, the key-note of the present American attitude towards music. The article is well thought out, and would satisfy as well as interest were but one assertion removed—that "the generation for which Mendelssohn wrote has passed away, and with it the taste for his music, which to-day is heard only at long intervals, and is regarded by musical *connoisseurs* very much as Mr. Howells regards Dickens."

The closing remark is unfortunate. Mr. Howells, who is not a literary *connoisseur* at all, as implied in the article, but simply a painstaking, conscientious depicter of certain bald phases of American civilisation, unenlightened by the faintest gleam of imagination or suspicion of sentiment, does not, as we know, understand or admire Dickens. But he is an exception even among fellow exceptions who are devoting their energies to the praiseworthy task of trying very hard to discover and invent American types. What, in short, Mr. Howells may think of Dickens has nothing in common with what the true musical *connoisseur* may and must think of Mendelssohn. The truth about Mendelssohn is that, barring the "Songs Without Words" and other light and rather hackneyed piano works, the bulk of his compositions are as fresh to-day as they were thirty years ago. The *connoisseur* who knows the "Antigone" music, the "Edipus" music, the *ensemble* works for piano and other instruments, the quartets, quintets, fugues, symphonies, as well as the great "Lobgesang" and oratorios, knows perfectly well that all this is music made to last, not alone to please but to kindle, not alone for one generation or another but for all men and nations that praise the Lord or utter psalms of victory or peans of hope or confessions of weakness and suffering and despair, through the varying but ever sympathetic medium of musical utterance. The trouble is that, especially in America, there is a tendency to emulate the post-Mendelssohnian school, and exalt such composers as Rubinstein, Brahms, and Dvorák to a place they have no right to occupy. It is so easy to do a thing when one is shown how—a platitude that makes martyrs of geniuses and gods of common clay. The true *connoisseur* must know Mendelssohn at his best before he places him as the creator of a new, versatile, and sublime school, as, with Mozart and Wagner, forming the great trio of creative musical art; and then, and then only, he will place him correctly.

The similarity in quality and degree of genius between Mendelssohn and Tennyson has often been noticed, and our only excuse for referring to it here is that there is a curious fact in connection with it, namely, a certain lightness, a colloquial manner, a grace and airiness of treatment that frequently misleads a certain class of minds.

No critic of the very highest rank and order of culture but will assign to Tennyson a higher place than Browning as a thinker. All the magnificent passages in "Death in the Desert" and "The Ring and the Book" fall short of the calm wisdom of "In Memoriam," yet the critic is ever with us who inclines to suspicion of the genius who, having produced "In Memoriam," can still sketch a "Will Waterproof" or "The Northern Farmer." They doubt the versatility they should worship, and regard a light treatment as co-existent with a light aim. So it has often been with the music of Mendelssohn. It is so marvellously clever, so ingenious, so easily produced, so perfectly rounded and complete, that people do not half the time know how clever it is. The statement, besides, that it is seldom heard in these days is surely untrue.

SERANUS.

### LITERARY GOSSIP.

DISSATISFIED with the progress made by the publishers of her "History of Woman Suffrage," Miss Susan B. Anthony has purchased back her right in the work, and will become her own publisher. It will be remembered that two volumes of Miss Anthony's work are already published, and she expects to have the third volume ready before a month's time. This volume will contain the steel portraits of twenty-three women who have associated themselves with the question of woman suffrage, the last of whom is George Sand. Miss Anthony will hereafter publish her book from her home at Rochester, N. Y.

MRS. FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT has decided views upon the appearance of the portraits of authors and prominent persons in newspapers and magazines. To a correspondent who recently solicited a copy of a portrait of herself for publication in a magazine, the authoress wrote: "There is nothing more painful to contemplate than a picture of oneself in a book or newspaper. If one is a beauty one's reputation is instantly destroyed, and if one cannot afford to have any percentage taken off one's good looks, the consequences are that one's secret hopes are blasted, and one's most timid and modest confidence in oneself forever a ruin."

HUNDREDS of magazine readers, when the signature of Nora Perry was first seen attached to poetical contributions, imagined that the name was merely a *nom de plume*, and speculation was indulged in as to the real identity of the author. It was soon made evident, however, that the name was not a fictitious one. Miss Perry was then a resident of Providence, R. I., but the success which followed her literary efforts soon created in her a desire to be nearer her publishers, and she removed to Boston, where she at present lives. Miss Perry is an assiduous worker with her pen, and, although preferring the morning hours, like other authors, in which to write, the night hours often find her busy at some story or poem. She is a firm believer in wording passing thoughts, and constantly keeps a note book near by at all times in which stray suggestions and impressions are noted for future use. "I write greatly from inspiration and am a disciple of that school," Miss Perry says, and so her friends attest. Her friendships are very numerous, and include an intimacy with the poet Whittier which is of long standing. Outside the literary arena Miss Perry inclines to the acquaintanceship of actors, and Ellen Terry and Sarah Bernhardt are included in her circle of friends.

STATEN ISLAND is in many respects one of the most beautiful and convenient of New York's suburbs. It is close enough to the metropolis to be easy of access, and yet sufficiently distant to be away from the noise and bustle of the city. For the author whose business relations are centred in New York, and who desires a quiet nook where he can work undisturbed and unmolested, it is a perfect paradise. And this fact was doubtless appreciated by Mr. George William Curtis when years ago he took up his island home. It is in his Staten Island abode that Mr. Curtis performs nearly all his literary work. The Curtis home is situated at the corner of Bard and Henderson Avenues, in the pretty village of West New Brighton, and is a spacious, colonial mansion, suggestive of olden times, with its majestic trees surrounding the house. Extensive grounds are attached to Mr. Curtis' dwelling, and its out-buildings are numerous. Everything about the place is kept in neat repair, and evidences of care are seen on every hand. The author's love of flowers demonstrates itself both on the outside of the house and when the visitor has crossed its threshold. It requires only a brief stay within to understand Mr. Curtis' reluctance to leave it even for his short weekly business journey to New York, which he makes every Thursday, except in the case of stormy weather, when his correspondence is sent over to him by the Harpers. The interior of the mansion is strikingly suggestive of the inclinations of its occupant. Even the walls of the halls are crowded with portraits of eminent writers and Mr. Curtis' friends in art and literature. Taste and comfort are followed rather than extravagance. The richest and yet the most simple bric-a-brac adorn the rooms, and books are everywhere met with. The house is a familiar spot to Staten Islanders, and the smallest child can tell the stranger its exact location. No man is more respected and beloved among his neighbours than Mr. Curtis. His kindheartedness and amiability are known to all, and the child trips up to the author as he steps from the railroad car at the station feeling assured of a pleasant word, and oftentimes is rewarded by a meeting of the lips, for few men are more devoted to children. One might spend a month among the residents of West New Brighton, and yet every hour would bring forth some new story of Mr. Curtis' goodness and charity. They will tell you of the numerous churches he has helped to build by his lectures, how many church organs owe their present position to him, and how many of the poor of the village can trace back their present prosperity to the helping hand extended them by the author. And all these acts of kindness, you are told, are done in the quietest possible manner, the recipient being often unaware of his benefactor. Of Mrs. Curtis almost as many stories are told, and certainly few men have been blessed with a more loving and devoted wife. I saw her," says a correspondent, "but for a moment; it was long enough, however, to convince me that she is a woman of no ordinary qualities, and goodness and intelligence fairly beamed from her face. In dress, she appeared a model of simplicity and good taste. She is an invaluable aid to her husband, and a friend of the family is my authority for the statement that she reads over all of the author's manuscripts before they are sent to the publishers. It is in such an atmosphere of happy domesticity that George William Curtis lives, his leisure moments being ever occupied with the legion of friends that find their way to his charming island home.