

nity worthy of all praise. No, the other is evidently his conception of Hamlet.

"The play scene was very good. One curious bit of 'business' was that the play-king was distinctly dressed to resemble the ghost, thereby even more directly hitting at the king. Forbes Robertson left me distinctly at a loss why the king could be said by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to be moved 'rather with choler' than with any other emotion;—unless indeed the mere fact of Hamlet having put such a play on the stage be considered sufficient to enrage the king against him. Mounet-Sully left me in no such doubt. As the play within the play proceeded, he writhed across the stage from the feet of Ophelia where he had been lying—unnoticed, because all eyes are fixed on the play—and then suddenly in uncontrollable emotion, rises to his feet, right in front of the king, and hisses at him, with a touch of laughter in his voice, yet in most horrid earnest, 'He poisons him in the garden for his estate,' etc. It was most impressive, and certainly showed why the king was angry at his behaviour.

"We discussed several times the character of Polonius. You remember my theory that he was an old statesman, now grown old and senile, probably at his best more remarkable for cunning than for far-sighted intelligence, but still one who had seen 'Cities and men, and forms of government,'

and who, roused by the approaching departure of his son, could for a moment become his former self and give some splendid parting advice. Dumas, or the present stage manager of the Theatre Français, or both, cut the knot of this difficulty very summarily.

Polonius is simply or entirely a 'tedious old fool,' who gives the comic relief supplied later by the grave-diggers. Hamlet plays with him, but with a great deal of suppressed irritation, till he finally loses all patience, and rushes at him with the apparent intention of kicking him, Polonius fleeing precipitately. This comes almost near to low comedy, as does the scene where he reads to the king and queen Hamlet's letter to Ophelia,

'Doubt that the stars are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move,' etc. Before doing this, he carefully drew out and adjusted on his nose a large pair of eye-glasses, bound with black horn, and peered at the letter through these like a species of benevolent bird, his neck craned forward, the letter shaking in his hand."

Mr. Grant closes his interesting letter with a single word about himself:

"The University lectures do not begin till Nov. 1st here, but I am reading hard. In the evening I have gone a number of times to the theatre, finding it the best and most interesting and cheapest way of accustoming my ear to the language. Throughout the day I am reading French history."

—W. L. GRANT.

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NOTE:—We are indebted for the privilege of publishing this interesting article to Prof. Dyde, to whom the letter is addressed. Mr. Grant suggested that probably the description of "Hamlet" as played by the great French tragedian would be interesting to the members of the Dramatic Club, but as the subject is really of interest to a much wider constituency, we are pleased to be able to print it in the columns of the JOURNAL.