

Hamlin's Mill.

Brightly the sun one summer's day
Upon the charming scene was shining;
And warm the thrifty village lay,
Amid its silent fields reclining.
The river, like a silver thread,
Wound round the hazy, shimmering hill,
Till, plunging o'er the dam, it fled
In eddies down to Hamlin's Mill.

Along the pathway, through the grove,
Beneath the shady trees we hurried.
The birds were twittering above,
While in and out the squirrels scurried.
We took the narrow road that wound
Through clearings that were smoking still;
And soon our merry chat was drowned
Amidst the noise at Hamlin's Mill.

We stood within the sunlit room
And watched the busy bobbins turning;
Then gathered round a jangling loom,
The flying shuttle's secret learning.
Across the mossy flume we crept,
Whose leaky sides their burden spill,
And dabbled in the pond where slept
The giant power of Hamlin's Mill.

Montreal.

ARTHUR WEIR.

Our London Letter.

LONDON, April 25, 1891.

When anyone has anything of real importance to say on any topic, one doesn't, as in days gone by, write a book or long treatise on the subject, but one writes a magazine article of some six thousand words and gets it published in one of the more important monthly reviews. Of course the subject suffers from the undue compression; but what of that when one has the inestimable advantage of reaching the very large public which reads, and tries to comprehend the monthly reviews. The consequence is that the reading world is submerged with volumes of essays, taken from the magazines and reviews, on every possible subject under the sun. Mr. George Moore—the English literary apostle of Zola—has just given to the world a volume of this sort, under the title "Impressions and Opinions," (David Nutt) which has been very much discussed and talked about over here. Mr. Moore is unconventional, and he knows and likes it, and is always trying to play up to the character with the greatest success. The most trenchant and the most hard-hitting of all the articles is the one on "Mummer Worship," in which Mr. Moore protests against the adulation, flattery and attention which society showers on anyone who can call himself or herself an actor. He says that "an actor is one who repeats a portion of a story invented by another;" and he maintains that "acting is the lowest of the arts, if it is an art at all."

Then there is another article, almost as militant, on "Our Dramatists and their Literature," in which the author examines the claims of our dramatists and criticises them severely. Mr. Robert Buchanan, he says, is the best man of letters the stage can boast, while he dissects without mercy the claims of Mr. A. W. Pinero, Mr. Sydney Grundy, Mr. H. A. Jones and Mr. G. R. Sims. In reading this article, however, it should be remembered that popular rumour says that Mr. George Moore has written more than one play himself which has not been accepted.

Another important volume of essays is Mr. George Saintsbury's "Essays on the French Novelists" (Percival). The majority of these essays were written at the suggestion of Mr. John Morley for the "Fortnightly Review" (of which journal he was the editor) in 1878. In literature twelve years is a long time, and one hopes that in some future volume Mr. Saintsbury (for no one knows the French novel better than he) will give us his more extended views on the French novelists of the immediate present. The novelists whom he treats of here are Anthony Hamilton, Lesage, de Bernard, Dumas pere, Theophile Gautier, Sandeau, Feuille, Gustave Flaubert, Murger and Cherbuliez.

In addition to the usual first nights there have been two dramatic celebrations of importance this week. Mr. Thomas Thorne has just completed his coming of age as the lessee and manager of the Vaudeville Theatre, and in commemoration of the event he has been presented with a very handsome testimonial by his brother managers, who, at the conclusion of the performance of "Money," collected on the stage—Mr. Henry Irving reading a congratulatory address written by Mr. Clement Scott (the dramatic critic of the

Daily Telegraph). The second event was the home coming of Mr. John Toole, laden with trophies and curiosities from Australia and New Zealand. On Thursday, April 23, he re-opened at his little theatre on King William street, with H. S. Byron's "Upper Crust," an old favourite, which was warmly applauded both for the excellent acting and for old associations' sake. Everyone was glad to see the old comedian back again, and when he came on the stage the applause was deafening.

Apparently Mr. Wilson Barrett has not any new and original plays ready for production, for he still goes on with a wearisome round of revivals. Last week it was "Hamlet," (when Miss Winifred Emery made a charming Ophelia) and now it is "Belphegor," considerably revised and renamed, for the sake of the common crowd, "The Acrobat." Mr. Wilson Barrett as the hero acted (and ranted) with all his usual vigour, and Miss Winifred Emery gave a charming rendering of his persecuted wife, Madeline, while Mr. George Barrett was amusing in the part of Flip-Flap. But the first night of "The Acrobat" was notable in another and far more important manner. When the first act was over and when the applause had subsided, a number of play-goers in the gallery hung out a huge banner, on which was inscribed "All Fees should be Abolished." At the same time some hundreds of small handbills were thrown from the gallery and fell into the stalls, pit, and dress circle. These handbills were headed "Down with the Fee System," and wound up with an exhortation to all play-goers to refuse to pay for their programmes and for the cloak rooms, and to only patronize those theatres where these charges were not made. A truce was then declared until the end of the performance, when Mr. Wilson Barrett very sensibly came before the curtain and

promised that in future no fees whatever should be charged. This is a much needed reform, which, it is to be hoped, will be followed by every manager in London—and out.

At the Lyceum Theatre, Mr. Henry Irving has just revived Mr. G. W. Wills' charming play, "Olivia," (an adaption of Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield") with himself as the Vicar (one of his finest impersonations) and Miss Ellen Terry as Olivia. The cast also includes Miss Annie Irish and Mr. William Terriss. On the 12th of May Mr. Irving intends to revive "The Corsican Brothers," which has not been seen in London for some years. As there is no part for Miss Ellen Terry in this play, Charles Reade's one act comedy, "Nance Oldfield," will be revived, when Miss Terry will play Mrs. Oldfield for the first time.

GRANT RICHARDS.

Great men like Sir Christopher Wren have deigned to avail themselves of expedients. When the celebrated architect built the Town Hall at Windsor a fidgety member of the Corporation insisted that the roof required further support, and wished that more pillars should be added. Vainly did Sir Christopher assure him that the supposed danger was imaginary, the alarm became infectious, and the great architect was finally worried into adding the desired columns. Years rolled on; but, in later times, when architect and patrons had passed away, cleaning operations in the roof revealed the fact that the supposed additional supports did not touch the roof by a couple of inches, though this was imperceptible to the gazers below. By this ingenious expedient did Wren pacify his critics, while vindicating his own architectural skill to future generations. How often must the architect have smiled in secret as he passed under the roof with its "additional supports!"



A MONTREAL ALDERMAN'S HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE.