

WIDOWHOOD.

BREATHE softly, oh softly, ye winds through the willows!
Ye waft back the spring of the wild rose and fern,
And freshen the wood with your æry billows—
But never to me shall the spring-time return.

Breathe softly, oh softly! From your genial fountain
Blow zephyrs which lure back the lark to the lawn,
The ring-dove and thrush to their homes in the mountain—
But one's loving consort for ever is gone.

Breathe softly, oh softly! To me are ye sobbing;
To others ye whisper the music of May.
While my heaving bosom with sorrow is throbbing,
The heart of the blackbird beats time to her lay.

Breathe softly, oh softly! Why has he thus left me?
Ah! once through those maples ye sang to us twain,
But since of my loved one fell death has bereft me
Ye moan to my moaning and sigh for my pain.

Breathe softly, oh softly! I never shall meet him
Till in the kind grave I am laid at my rest;
Ah, then, only then, shall I meet him and greet him—
The moments I count with the throbs of my breast.

WILLIAM WANLESS ANDERSON.

AUTHOR, ARTIST, AND ACTOR.

"THE LIVES OF THE SHERIDANS," by Percy Fitzgerald, appears in strange opposition to the letters of Sheridan and Miss Linley, lately given to the public, followed by unjust and unproven hints as to their authenticity. Mr. Fitzgerald has done his best, or his worst, to spoil a good subject, and to cast a shadow on the gifted race he has depicted in his most disconnected, unfriendly, ill-arranged, two-volumed memoir, from which we turn, with a sense of pleasure and relief, to the warm, sympathetic magazine article of Miss Matilda Stoker, in which the characters of Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Miss Linley are allowed, with some few connecting links, to speak for themselves. Mr. Fitzgerald misrepresents and attacks the distinguished dramatist most unpardonably; if we are to believe him, his plays were poor, mere pieces of plagiarism; his speeches, fustian; his wit, forced and dull; his manners and morals, those of a profligate and a publican. Yet Lord Byron's opinion of Sheridan was that "whatever he has done, or chosen to do, has been always the best of its kind." He wrote the best comedy ("The School for Scandal"), the best opera ("The Duenna"), the best farce ("The Critic"), and the best address ("Monologue on Garrick"), and to crown all, delivered the best oration ("The Begum Speech") ever conceived or heard in England. The fashionable vice of drunkenness no doubt ruined Sheridan eventually, but that is almost the least of those attributed to him. So far from being a plagiarist, "The Rivals," his first and most successful play, was founded largely on his own experience and adventures in wooing and wedding his wife. It is curious, too, that few of Sheridan's good sayings are even reported by his biographer. Some specimens of his ready wit, however, are given us, such as that in connection with his son Tom, whom he threatened to cut off with a shilling. "You haven't got it about you, have you, sir?" Tom did not always get the best of these passages-at-arms, as when he said, "If I get into Parliament, I will pledge myself to no party, but write upon my forehead in legible characters, 'To be let.'" "And underneath that, Tom," added his father, "write, 'Unfurnished,'" or, when Tom remarked he wanted to go down a coal mine, for the sake of saying he had been down, and Sheridan remarked, "Why not say it without going?" The career of Tom Sheridan's daughters, the Duchess of Somerset, the Queen of Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament, and the celebrated Mrs. Norton, form some of the most interesting reading in the book.

THE early art-career of Randolph Caldecott, given us by Mr. Henry Blackburn, is rather a fraud in its way. The story, such as it is, breaks off in the middle, and half the illustrations are repetitions from the artist's previously published works, and from the well-known pages of *Punch*. Apart from these, the letterpress is of little importance; it would, indeed, scarcely detract from the knowledge of the man if we had never seen it at all. Our sympathies were long ago elicited for Randolph Caldecott, who, a young clerk, brought up in a Manchester bank, was diligent enough at his desk to cover every scrap of paper and blotting-pad with humorous sketches, and eventually to carve out for himself a remarkable career as an admirable illustrator of books, taking up the idea of the writer whose work he was to embellish, with an honesty and faithfulness all the more surprising from the extreme quickness of his own eye to note any passing group and humorous figure, and the fertility of the world around in furnishing irresistible studies. His early death in a foreign land, at St. Augustine, Florida, whither he was sent by the proprietors of the *Graphic* to recruit his failing health, and to make studies for the paper of American manners and customs, was most tragic and unexpected, and his removal left a blank in his sphere of artistic work, which is only partially filled by Mr. Hugh Thompson.

MR. ROBERTS, the energetic creator of a Toronto Gallery of Art, 79 King Street West, deserves great credit for the enterprise he displays in his peri-

odical visits to England and the Continent, made for the purpose of gathering together such pictures as come within the reach of his purse, for the benefit of our citizens. The collection, which is the result of a recent visit to London and Paris, was on exhibition last week, and contained several excellent paintings, and some very inferior ones. Among the best, in our opinion, were the works of Alizone, a modern French painter, four in number. "D'Automne," the gem of these, has, we hope, passed into the hands of some true picture lover. An excellent landscape, by V. Lariot, was conspicuous on the west wall, and there were three admirable examples of figure painting, by J. Poy, another Frenchman; also two capital still life studies, by Leopold Durangel, an exhibitor in the Paris Salon. G. Calves, whose name is unknown to us, is represented by "Storm in Summer Time," two horses under a tree, exceptionally well drawn and painted. From the brush of M. S. Cival, Paris, there are no less than forty-three pictures, all small in size, and showing clearly the influence of Constable in the development of French landscape painting. The English artists are few in number, and of them J. W. Eyres is the most important; of all his pieces, which are much too realistic, "The Hammer Ponds, Surrey," is far the best. The largest picture in the collection is one by F. Laura, of Paris, entitled "Expectation," which, though somewhat faulty in composition and treatment, is remarkable for the admirable texture given to the maiden's plush costume, as well as for the careful rendering of her expression of anxious waiting. It is to be hoped that Mr. Roberts' laudable effort will meet with due appreciation at the hands of Toronto society, so that he may be encouraged to repeat it on a more extensive scale with the works of artists more prominent in the French and English schools.

THE Royal Academy exhibition at Burlington House this year is likely to produce a general feeling of disappointment. Though the pictures on the whole are above the average of merit—they numbered in all 1,946, a score more than last season—some of the most accomplished figure painters belonging to the institution, including Watts, Poynter, Calderon, and Burne-Jones, are not represented, and the contributions of a few other well known artists fall below their accustomed level. Among the most important works are those of Sir John Millais, six of which are to be found in the first room; of these the best is called the "Bird's Nest," and represents a life-size study of a graceful lady, holding a child in her arms. The treatment in parts is loose, but the colour is of fine quality, and the head of the child, who is looking with eager interest at the object which gives its name to the paintings is full of vitality, and is splendidly painted. On one side of this picture hangs a strikingly characteristic portrait of Sir Horace Jones (the city architect), by Mr. Onless, one of the best he has produced; on the other a life-like half-length of Sir George Trevelyan, by Mr. Frank Holl, in his most restrained and best style. Mr. Briton Riviere exhibits an "Old World Wanderer," an early Greek explorer, surrounded by sea birds. The wonder of the man is well expressed, and the birds are painted with rare skill and mastery.

From the brush of Mr. J. W. Waterhouse is an admirable picture, one of the best in the exhibition, of Mariamne, the wife of King Herod, going to execution, as described by Josephus. The President, Sir Frederick Leighton's great picture, "The Jealousy of Simalthea," the sorceress, is remarkable, not less for the intensity of expression in the beautiful, cruel face than for the draughtsmanship of the figure and the masterly treatment of the draperies.

One of the best examples of refined female portraiture in the Academy is a three-quarter length of Mrs. Luke Fildes, by her husband, the most complete work he has achieved. Mr. H. S. Marks has a large and very amusing picture, called "Dominicans in Feathers," which represents nine blackfooted penguins, in various attitudes, on a ledge of rock overlooking the sea. Every bird, while true to ornithological fact, is humorously suggestive of human character and expression.

AGAIN the Metropolitan Museum of Art scores and records its acquisitive triumphs. Mr. George I. Seney (the beneficent), in addition to the twelve paintings he lately presented, has given eight more, "Nydia," "And She was a Witch," also "An Ideal Head," by George Fuller, a deceased Boston painter of great promise; Carl Marr's "Gossip"; "The Old Man's Garden," by Adrian Louis Dumont, of Paris, from the Salon of 1884; "Evening," by George Innes; "Spring," by Bolton Jones; "Moonrise at Venice," by Samuel Coleman. It is understood that these will all appear in the coming exhibition of the Museum, as will also Mr. W. Schaus's valuable donation of the "Vintage," by L'Hermite, from the Salon of 1884. Miss Wolff's pictures will probably not be shown until there is a fireproof gallery to receive them, according to the conditions of her bequest.

MR. TRISTRAM's drama of the "Red Lamp," with which Mr. Beerbohm Tree opened the Comedy Theatre in the double capacity of manager and leading actor at the end of April, is a clever play, but unfortunately not of the kind which is needed to ensure success upon the stage. It is polished in quality, but too full of exciting situations, and too devoid of sympathy and common humanity. Blood-thirsty Nihilist plots, sustained by people who have no very apparent motive or object, are the chief ingredients of the piece, and Lady Monekton even, in spite of her unquestionable power, fails to enter into the spirit of the "Red Lamp." Mr. Beerbohm Tree's Russian police official is a very original and effective study of character, but sketches of character in a play are only valuable as factors in working out the author's designs.

"THE WITCH," a new five-act drama which was brought out at the Princess's, translated from the German by Mr. Masham Rae for his wife's benefit and first appearance, made a good impression, and possesses some very strong dramatic situations. The plot is skillfully constructed, and