

That which Verona by that name is known,  
There shall no figure at such rate be set  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.  
Capulet.—As rich shall Romeo by his lady  
lie,  
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

No one who had enjoyed the privilege of witnessing Miss Neilson's Juliet in her prime, would feel much inclination to criticise the faded and fatigued actress, wisely retiring from the stage before the public has become conscious of her waning powers. In her better days, the silver-sweet discourse of the lovers in the moon lit garden, which, at the best, must be sullied by exposure on the stage, would not have been vulgarized by such stage tricks as concluded the scene in its latest representation. Nor in that still lovelier scene, where the newly-wedded husband and wife separate with the breaking day, would she have missed the point that Juliet's cessation of entreaties for Romeo's stay is caused by his resignation to even death at her bidding.

Romeo Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death,  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so,  
Come death and welcome, Juliet wills it so,  
How is't my soul? let's talk, it is not day.  
Juliet—It is, it is; hie hence, be gone, away!

One wonders why it should be necessary to omit one word of this perfect scene, still less to commit the profanation of adding to Shakspeare. Is there in English history, a lovelier description of the dawn than here? Shakspeare must have had fresh in his remembrance his youthful days in Warwickshire, when no doubt he had often seen with keen delight, the hunters going forth in the grey misty morning, singing a 'hunt up,' *a réveil* to the day. On the stage this scene inevitably loses its ethereal beauty, and its splendour 'fades into the light of common day.' No actor, I believe, could possibly be found equal to these earlier scenes, but later on the part of Romeo presents no insuperable difficulties, and in them Mr. Compton attained a high degree of excellence. His self-restrained passion—the restraint of desperation—when Juliet's death is announced, and afterwards at the tomb, was admirable, and his enunciation of the words "Mercutio's kinsman!" when Romeo discovers that he has ignorantly slain the County Paris, emphasizes the culmination of his perverse fate. It is almost impossible for an actor to fail in the rôle of Mercutio—it acts itself. But much of his wit has its edge blunted by the misrepresentation of Tybalt's character, which seems the rule on the stage. It is written down plainly enough that Tybalt was possessed of all the gentlemanly accomplishments and out-

ward graces of his age. Shakspeare seems to have had in his mind's eye, a favourite subject of his satire, the travelled dandy, 'who sold his land to see other men's,' and whose manners are as affected and foreign as his garments. "Why is it not a strange thing, grand sire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *pardonnez-moys*?" In the surly clown who usually stands for him on the stage, there is little of Shakspeare's Tybalt to be discussed. Indeed it is generally true that the distinctive individuality and interest, which Shakspeare's prodigal genius conferred on the least significant persons of his dramas, is sacrificed in the theatre.

NOTE.—There is a difficulty in making out the time of the play which a Shakspeare Club may perhaps be able to solve. The play begins about 9 a.m. on Sunday (I. 1, 152). On Sunday evening the feast is held at old Capulet's (I. 2, 820). The balcony interview takes place towards Monday morning (II. 2, 176 and 168-9). At 9 o'clock on Monday morning, Juliet sends to Romeo (II. 5. 1.). Soon after 12 o'clock, the nurse returns, and Juliet hies to the friar's cell where she is married (II. 5, 9-76). About an hour after their marriage, Tybalt is slain (II. 1, 109), and within two hours more, the fearful news is brought to Juliet (III. 2. 99). On Monday night Capulet determines that "on Thursday next," Juliet shall be married to the County Paris (III. 4, 18). On Tuesday morning, at break of day, the lovers part, and the same morning Juliet visits the friar, and receives the potion to be drunk on Wednesday night, and which is to keep her entranced *two and forty hours* (IV. 1, 90 and 104). On her return from the cell, her father changes his mind and decides that the marriage shall be celebrated next day, Wednesday (IV. 2, 36). In consequence of this, Juliet drinks the potion late on Tuesday night. On Wednesday morning she is buried, and on Thursday, apparently, though this is not free from doubt, Romeo receives the news (V. 1, 20-34). On Thursday night late, Romeo is at the tomb, and shortly after the friar comes 'at the prefixed hour of her waking' (V. 3, 253). As the potion's force was to last only two and forty hours, Juliet should have awakened about five or six o'clock on Thursday evening, at the latest, according to this calculation, whereas it was nearly Friday morning (V. 3, 173, *et seq.*). The friar's medical reputation is clearly at stake!

## PAST AND PRESENT.

## I.

"*Laudator temporis acti se puero.*"

How is the old place faring? Who are our successors, and are they living up to Trinity's traditions? These and like questions, "*Rouge et Noir*," past men expect you to answer. Is the Institute as prosy and as popular as ever? Are SS. Simon and Jude still the most uproariously venerated of prelates? And is the solemn masquerade yearly holden—the judicatory of erring matriculants?

How well Trinity, aged before her time, must be remembered by old graduates! Her picturesque and smoke begrimed turrets—variously paint-freshened by some iconoclastic hand—her gables half hidden with unkempt creeper—her yellow-washed corridors, the home of the winds, haunted by the inevitable charwoman (peace to her aching joints!) leading no freshman can tell whither. What a tortuous dance for him! along their dusty length, here passing a lecture room—how often the scene of Euclid's discomfiture, or of the worsting of heathen sages!—past chapel and hall and tributary passages, each yielding its quota of sombre-togaed seniors; up winding stairways; through the much slighted "Wilderness"—noisy home of the undergraduate fledgling; on, till, with instinctive reverence, the very corridor abruptly stops at the library—the scene of many an anecdote—the home of the worm and its food. Twice a week and twice only, I remember, were we bidden to inhale the learning of its atmosphere—to whet our literary appetites. Seated along those green-baized tables we might then speculate on the contents of its shelves—the peaceful dormitories of erudition—the crumbling tombs of the dead languages. Warm looking old volumes, the dusty lubrications of the ancient Fathers, perhaps,—decked out in sheepskin, centuries ago, for our delectation—in their well-worn "leathern jackets"—the battered uniform of the Crusaders against Schism—below, irregular rows of variegated bindings, each with its individual pretensions, too self-reliant, too personally self-assertive for the company above; copper-clasped veterans upholstered in yellow hide—novelists in a demi-toilet of calf—the orthodox and the heterodox lettered together (a strange confusion unworthy of the dispensation), to the right, more modern creations, apparently, dressed in their linen frocks—speculation's children—probationers on their good