

figure below the ordinary price of one of the articles. Then came a piano, an organ and a few other things which might be classed as among the luxuries of a household. Up to this stage of the proceedings no very resentful feelings animated me, but, later on, I will confess that I viewed the matter in a very different light. Lot No. 72, I think it was, was announced—a baby's cot. "What!" I muttered, "would they seize an infant's cot in satisfaction of rent?" "Yes," replied a sad looking man at my elbow, "they'd take the shirt off your back if they could. Two days ago, my child, a poor, sickly, little thing, was soothingly rocked to quiet in that cot. To-day, the child is lying on a wad of straw in a room stripped of every article of furniture. If anything happens to that child——" and here my friend uttered a terrible oath and gave expression to feelings which only men driven to desperation are capable of. "Going—going—gone," said the auctioneer, and at six bits the cot passed over to a stranger! Next came a bedstead, which my poor friend informed me had been his. For \$1.25 it became the property of another, and at \$2 the mattress was sold. A series of other like articles—none of which would indicate pretentious housekeeping—were rattled off at slaughter prices, amid eager bidding on one side and sighs on the part of the poor folk whose homes had been thus depleted. A lady's work box—an old looking affair—was among the petty articles put up. "That," said the old man at my elbow, "was one of my wife's wedding presents." I suggested that he should buy it in, but he declared that having been out of work for several months, he had no money. The treasured article was knocked down to me for 35c, and of course I handed it over to the poor fellow. He explained that he owed but a few months' rent, some fifty dollars; that he expected immediate employment, and fully intended to have cleared off the debt. I naturally asked why he did not state the case to his landlord, and he assured me that he had done so, explaining that the landlord professed to blame the agent in the matter, while the agent averred that that he had had positive instructions from his principal. The bailiff, of course, was acting under instructions from some one else, as was also the auctioneer; but between the lot the responsibility of a cruel act—a dirty job—which makes distress more distressful and misery more miserable, is divided. Such pressure as this, in times such as these, is, to say the least of it, reprehensible, particularly as the landlords upon whose instructions the sale for distress of rent took place, are men who are well fixed in this world's goods. There is a day of judgment coming, and if such men be

found on the right hand among the sheep,—well, there is hope for the vilest of sinners. To the credit of our local landlords be it said that, as a class, they are men of a kindly heart; but there are landlords—and landlords. I would not be surprised, when the present temporary depression passes over, to find certain properties in this city shunned as would be houses of plague. It is certainly not fair that a landlord can pounce down and take all for rent, while the butcher, the baker, the grocer and others are obliged to go unpaid. The liberal patronage accorded those sales for distress of rent at such a crisis as this, and the eagerness with which people will buy up for next to nothing, the effects of humble households, is not a pleasant reflection.

The only thing that Alexander Dumas, fils, has to regret is that he has never seen Mr. Kyrle Bellew interpret his creation of Lucien de Riverolles in "In Society." The part is a strong one in itself, but presented by Mr. Bellew it far surpasses any mental conception formed by a perusal of the play. In this role, Mr. Bellew has found a part which fits his magnetic genius as the glove fits the hand. The charm of his acting is that it is so natural; it is never forced, and every gesture comes of itself just at the right time to intensify a line or to add expression. Last Wednesday night, he warmed up the audience until it fairly glowed, and to warm up a Victoria audience is an achievement of which any actor may be justly proud. He has left behind him a living memory of his charming acting and his refreshing vivacity.

Mr. Bellew bears a remarkable resemblance to Henry Irving. This likeness goes further than his general appearance—it is also in his voice and stride. There is no probability that he will ever achieve the artistic greatness of his fellow-countryman, for there can be only one Irving in one century; but he is easily in the lead of anybody on this continent now interpreting the parts which he undertakes.

Of Mrs. Potter, it can truly be remarked that she is not a great actress. Inexperience is stamped on her every word and gesture. She is a disappointment from beginning to end. Of course it may be said that Victorians did not see her at her best—she was suffering from a severe cold—but it is doubtful if even under the most favored conditions she would be able to make an impression of being anything more than a very ordinary actress. She is the victim of mannerisms that will never be overcome, and she is not natural in anything. In so far as she was concerned, the audience were cold and unenthusiastic, and only on one or two occasions did they evince any particular appreciation. In Mrs. Potter's case, the old saying "There is no royal road to

learning" is fully emphasized. Her position as a leader of society in New York has assisted her very little, so that becoming a capable actress is conceivably a very difficult task. Her imitation of greatness is not even a clever counterfeit. Mrs. Potter has been particularly unfortunate in the selection of her plays. A play like *Camille* requires all the artificial aids to the imagination and senses to make it acceptable, and the character of *Camille* requires the intense strength and magnetism of a part of the actress to relieve it of its gruesome features and raise the tone above the role. It is a character which Dumas must have drawn in a state of mental depression. Its wickedness is true, rises to heroic heights, and is thrilling when forcibly portrayed. I scarcely believe that the audience who witnessed Mrs. Potter's presentation of *Camille* will accuse her of having reached their expectations in this respect. If, however, this ambitious lady is not a great actress herself, she can at least be credited with possessing a keen appreciation of the necessity of surrounding herself with a capable company. Miss Leigh is a finished actress; the articulation of Mason Melville is irreproachable; Frank Rolleston is a conscientious young actor, and Miss Perdita Hudspeth is a very clever young lady. Taking the company as a whole, it must be said that Victorians do not often have an opportunity of witnessing its equal; and it is fortunate that the patronage was not used as to encourage Manager Jamieson to engage other high-class organizations. Notwithstanding the discouragement the manager has received—which has come from most unexpected sources—he has been indefatigable in his efforts to place Victoria on the same footing as the other cities in the matter of first-class attractions. How far these efforts have been appreciated, I leave it to the numerous filled houses at The Victoria to answer.

Notoriety is a stepping stone to success on the stage of to-day. A young woman walked into a man's office in New York city a few days since and belabored the man over the head with an umbrella and subsequently offered an excuse for her conduct which is said to have been entirely satisfactory to all parties concerned, remarks an exchange. The man was pretty, graceful and ambitious. She had studied elocution, stage deportment and dancing, but she could not get on the stage. She had observed the women who got their names in the papers by means of fights, domineering, diamond stealing escapades and other violent episodes of contemporary life, were invariably approached by theatrical managers, with offers of engagement. Realizing this the young woman decided to get her name in