

THE ALPS IN WINTER.

DEAD silence ; and a loneliness so vast,
So awful in its self-sufficient calm,
The very shadows of the starward spires,
Scarce creeping, flake by flake, along the snow,
Seemed fearful of their presence ; stealing past
Like sinners that have entered unawares
The Holiest of Holies ; for it seemed
Death's inmost temple, whose high psalmody
Is silence, and whose worship breathlessness.

Death's solemn temple, whose huge buttresses
Were planted, and its deep foundations laid,
In molten crystal, when this world was yet
One furnace ; whose gigantic aisles were hewn
By earthquake ; whose stern columns were upreared
By fire, and carved by the stormy hand
Of everlasting winter ; whose wide floor
Was paved with ice and strewn with winnowed snow,
Grain upon grain, for ages ; and its dome
Girdled with fretted pinnacles of pearl,
Built without bound, and gemmed with countless worlds.

ALFRED HAYES.

AUTHOR, ARTIST, AND ACTOR.

To those who are desirous of studying Mr. Browning's "Parleys with certain People of Importance in their Day, etc." it may be interesting to know who the shadows addressed are, and what the topics connected with their names.

Bernard de Mandeville was an Anglicised Dutchman, who wrote a considerable quantity of questionable philosophy in the reign of Queen Anne. His chief work, "The Fable of the Bees," or "Private Vices Public Benefits," which second title gives a clue to the scope of the book, attracted a good deal of attention in an age which had no lack of thinkers.

The reader whose mind is not open to philosophy will find, probably, the parley with Christopher Smart and that with Daniel Bartoli, the most interesting in the book. Smart, as perhaps the erudite know, was a single-song poet, guilty of much feeble rhyme and one fine poem, which may not be worthy, as Mr. Browning asserts, to station the writer between Milton and Keats, but which, at least, was wonderfully different from the rest. It is a very fitting problem for a poet-philosopher to solve, as well as a very curious enquiry in itself. Poor Kit Smart was no elevated individual ; he was irregular, foolish, perhaps vicious, and he ended by being mad. Of Daniel Bartoli, we humbly confess we know nothing except what Mr. Browning tells us—that he was a Jesuit and compiler of saintly legend ; the poet parleys over a story which is no legend but a chronicle, and which he represents to the old monk as nobler and purer than any of his legends. Bubb Doddington may further be conversed with, through Mr. Browning, "On Public Virtue," which is the least attractive parley of all. More agreeable is the musing called forth by Gerard de Lairese, a Dutch painter who lost his sight, and then wrote a book upon the ideal of art, finding the beauty of the old Greeks behind many homely scenes of nature, widening out of the common every-day world which Mr. Browning smiles affectionately at. Another very characteristic talk is with Francis Furini, a painter priest "who walked Tuscan earth" about two hundred years ago, and who, having in his love of beauty painted from the nude, repented much on his death-bed, and left instructions that all these pictures were to be burned.

THE graceful and sympathetic attempt of the Dean of St. Paul, in a recent number of *Macmillan*, to elucidate "Sordello," recalls an epigrammatic criticism on this early work of Browning, recorded by Canon Farrar in his lecture on the poet, given in Toronto two years ago. The learned divine quoted from a personal friend who had confided to him that the only two lines of the whole of "Sordello" he understood were the first line, "Who will shall hear Sordello's tale unfold," and the last : "Who would has heard Sordello's tale unfold ;" and that neither of these were true.

MISS CATHERINE LORILLARD WOLFE has bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, her entire collection of oil paintings and water colour drawings, the bequest being made on condition that a suitable, well lighted, and fire-proof building be set apart for them. She also left \$200,000 to be held in trust for the purpose of keeping the collection in repair, and for the purchase of original modern oil paintings of acknowledged merit, which are to be added to it from time to time.

It is a matter of regret that the late A. T. Stewart was not inspired with like public mindedness, for on the death of his widow and dissolution of his household in March, his works of art were disposed of by auction sale. The length of time over which Mr. Stewart's purchases extended was forcibly indicated by the varying character of his pictures and statuary. Most of these earlier investments, both in colour and marble, have now a curiously simple-minded and archaic character : the difference between some of the Dusseldorf and Munich school and the statues and paintings of Fortuny, Meissonier, and Boldini is now the difference between two schools of art, and seems to indicate two entirely distinct mental attitudes. The acknowledged masterpieces of the Stewart collection are most of them well known by various reproductions in black and white ; but one of the largest and most worthy, the noble "Environs of Fontainebleau," by

Auguste Bonheur is almost unknown in its smaller state, and is superior as a piece of painting and a work of art to the famous "Horse Fair" of his distinguished sister. The Gérômes and Fortunys of the collection have a wide reputation. The "Chariot Race," of the former is far better than it is represented, and his famous "Police Verso" is full of dramatic instinct. Of the blaze of sunlight that floods Fortuny's "Plage de Portici," and of the admirable skill, as artist and painter, displayed in his "Serpent Charmer," it is impossible to speak too highly. The former picture was purchased by Mr. Stewart at the sale of Fortuny's effects in 1875, the price at which it was secured being the highest paid, 49,800 francs.

THE March celebration at the Union League Club, New York, was most interesting. It was arranged by the recently elected Art Committee, which decided to make a good showing of native work if possible, and so restricted the painters of the Old World to some ten or a dozen canvasses out of the seventy-four exhibited.

The American pictures represented most of the well known names of the art catalogues, and set forth very fairly the admirable, if somewhat limited, range of the artists. That sustained flight of imagination, that subtle and exact science of observation and draughtsmanship, which exalt the works of Gérôme or Meissonier or Detaille, were all wanting. Of the pictures of foreign painters some were lent, others offered for sale. Among the costly works of art contributed by Mr. Martin was "La Charette," a Corot, for which he is said to have paid \$12,000 ; also Detaille's "Return from a Grand Manœuvre," and a "Charge of Dragoons at Gravelotte," by De Neuville, one of the most conventional and unsatisfactory of his compositions. "The Duel," by Pottenkoffen, a low-toned forest scene, with riderless horses in the middle distance, in some respects is certainly the most masterly work in pastel ever exhibited in America. Mr. W. C. Van Horne bought at this exhibition "Old Road to the River," by Bolton Jones, a most idyllic scene, for which he only paid \$1,200. Some of the gems of Mr. Richard B. Halstead's sale of paintings passed into the hands of Canadians—"A Woodland Brook," by Bliss Baker, was bought for Mr. R. B. Angus at \$2,800 ; also a Cazin, and Kowalski's "Whipper-in." Mr. D. McIntyre, another Montreal collector, purchased a celebrated picture, by Erskine Nicoll.

ONE of the best criticisms on Mrs. S. James Brown Potter's first appearance at the Haymarket regrets that her advisers should have allowed her to make her *début* in such a character as Anne Sylvester, in such a piece as Wilkie Collins' "Man and Wife," which is in fact nothing but a nineteenth century play of modern manners ; while Mrs. S. Potter, to suit her style, must have romance or poetry. She is emotional, magnetic, ideal, and is fettered by the restraints of fashionable gown and furniture. She forced all her effects, and exaggerated every scene ; she was over-emphatic in word, in movement, in bearing, until suddenly in the last act she changed the whole manner of her playing, when with quiet came effect, with repose came interest. No one could believe that an actress who had played three acts so badly could play one so well ; but so it was. Mrs. Brown Potter has a brain to think, if not the skill to execute ; she has power ; she has intelligence ; she has imagination. If she studies and perseveres, she will one day turn her back on drawing room dramas, give an impulse to the classic and poetic drama, and soar to the heights of Shakespeare and Victor Hugo. Mrs. Potter was faithfully coached by Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft (not by Mrs. Kendal) ; but her temperament is not for the Bancroft school at all. Given so much promising material, old John Ryder, the Juliet maker, would have turned her out a very reputable Shakespearian actress ; but in these degenerate days, alas ! where is a lady to go whose ambition soars higher than genteel domestic drama ?

SELDOM has Shaftesbury Hall been filled by a larger audience than gathered there on Thursday evening, April 14th, to do honour to Will Carleton, the popular poet of the people and the fireside, who visited Toronto at the invitation of the Press Club ; it should have been to him a gratifying evidence of the appreciation his poems have met with in Canada. The assembly was, it must be admitted, not a fashionable one, and was largely composed of the dissenting element of the city ; but all who were not present have good reason to regret that they missed the opportunity afforded them of becoming acquainted with a man who is the author and exponent of what may be called American Poetic Realism. Mr. Carleton is not an elocutionist, but he has a resonant voice, an impressive countenance, and considerable dramatic power, as well as a most sympathetic personality. His lecture was in itself a novelty, being treated not in prose but in verse. The subject, "Home Life and Influence," appeals to every heart, and the different phases it presents enabled Mr. Carleton to introduce some of his popular pieces, as well as some entirely new poems, in illustration of the Home and the Hearth. The originality of language which is one of his strongest attributes, together with that keen sense of humour and pathos he has made so exclusively his own, were admirably elicited and skilfully blended in his varied recitations. The large assembly present were completely absorbed for the two hours during which he carried them with him from grave to gay, without either book or note to assist him, revealing not only his poetic inspiration but the power of a very remarkable memory, which never once failed him during the evening.

THE success of the Kermess is now an established fact, and all the ladies who devoted boundless time and endless trouble to the accomplishment of so brilliant an entertainment must feel that the result exceeded even their most sanguine expectation. The readers of THE WEEK, we feel sure, endorse the prophetic spirit of our issue of the 7th April, which foretold "an intellectual and spectacular treat prepared for the Toronto public, guaranteeing the 50 cents admission a cheap investment." The dances alone