

of society life he is not at home. Mr. Sambrook only occasionally pleases, as he has to contend against seemingly ineradicable defects of voice and intonation, which render him an unattractive actor. His manner partakes of a rather unctuous character, and his utterance is often unmanly and whining. Mr. Curtis's manner is occasionally droll, and his acting is sometimes whipped up to sprightliness; but he is lumbering in his speech, and he has but little idea of the congruities of representation. Mr. Stokes is ponderous and ungainly on the stage, and has, in an aggravated degree, the defects of voice which we have noticed in his fellow-actors. Mr. Spackman, the successor of Mr. De Groat, creditably and satisfactorily replaces the best actor in the company, though he lacks the finish and delicacy which characterized Mr. De Groat's playing. Of the ladies it may be said, without laying oneself open to the charge of partisanship, that they largely compensate, by their appearance and acting, for the defects and deficiencies of the actors. Miss Carr is always up to her work, and has the faculty of realizing her part exceedingly well, and plays it with a degree of finish and satisfaction agreeable to the spectator. Mrs. Vernon is a decided acquisition to the strength of the company, and her acting is a vast improvement upon the heavy and tasteless playing of Miss May Preston. Miss Davenport is a painstaking actress, and appears to a decided advantage upon the stage both with regard to her acting, her dressing, and her looks. But she fails in the art of pleasing, and represses in the spectator the feeling of satisfaction which the faithful rendition of her parts secures to her, by a frigid and unsympathetic manner. Mrs. Marlowe possesses the happy faculty of adapting herself well to anything on the boards; and there is no part, entailing however much of effort, and drawing however much upon good nature, that she will not assume that may lend a hearty aid to the piece, and impart to its representation the needed harmony and completeness. Of Mrs. Morrison herself we scarcely deem it necessary to speak, as her acting is always in accord with those perceptions of the dramatic art, and the design and ideal of the playwright, that gratify the critic and delight the audience. There is invariably in her playing that happy union of art and nature that charms the spectator, inspires the play, and is independent of all adventitious aids. Her acting is characterised by vigour and rapidity, ease and precision, and is always in excellent taste and ever happy in its effect. But writing at this length, we have left ourselves without

space to speak of the plays presented at the Opera House, and of the parts severally taken in them by the members of the company. Had our space permitted notice of these, we should, probably, have had something more favourable to say of the actors of the troupe, the rendition of whose parts, in some instances, merited commendation. It will be understood, however, that the reference made to them has been that necessary in dealing with their general characteristics, and not with their more special qualifications, or with their capacity for achieving greater success. Nothing so enfeebles the dramatic effect produced by the player's art as a lack of intelligence, and a failure to realize the delicate subtleties of conception and the niceties of emotional expression, on the part of the actor. In these important respects there is need that the male portion of the company, at any rate, should give more attention to their representations, while all might find profit in increased histrionic study and the acquisition of more general culture. Limited as we have hinted our space to be, we are constrained also to omit reference to those actors whose temporary engagement during the past month have given us pleasure—notably to Mr. McWade, in the *role* of Rip Van Winkle, whose calm and unobtrusive acting, and pleasing interpretation of the part, we should have liked to have done justice to.

Let us, however, before closing, revert to the subject of our opening remarks—the apparent insensibility of our theatre audiences to the exhibitions of the dramatist's art in all but the broader lines of comedy or of farce. If we are serious in desiring the elevation of the drama, and of utilizing the stage as a medium for the inculcation of lofty moral truth, as well as a means of wholesome and legitimate recreation, it must receive more recognition from those whose influence in society is effective for good. As a means for good or evil the theatre is an all-powerful factor; and the class who usually hold aloof from it, from conscientious motives, have a duty to perform towards it far other than the negative one of ignoring or condemning its influence. The stimulus that a keener appreciation of the actor's profession, and a greater sympathy with him in his work, is capable of giving to managerial enterprise cannot but be admitted; and where this is extended to those engaged in theatrical management, directed in their work by cultivated tastes and influenced by high ideals, the result must be helpful to the progress of æsthetic culture and beneficial in its educational and social aspects to the community.