

Instead of which he was greeted with a volley of abuse and condemnation, for as the General explained, "If his time was come it was not the soldier's duty to interfere." We believe that this action, meritorious as it might seem to more worldly natures, neither received thanks nor any other ulterior benefits from the hands of the man whose life he had undoubtedly saved. On another occasion, somewhat similar to the last, Gordon, whilst walking on shore, almost unattended with the exception of one or two of his European subordinates, was pursued, when some two or three hundred yards from the bank of the river, by hostile Arabs. They were well aware who the white stranger was, and were desirous to revenge themselves upon their governors by getting rid of so distinguished a person as the Governor-General. But though they followed him down to the water's edge, they hesitated to attack the small party before them. When they reached the water's edge, and further retreat for the time was not possible, owing to the boat being in mid stream, it seemed more than probable to the majority of the party that the end had come. But Gordon did not seem to take any notice of the hostile Arabs surrounding him, although their threatening attitudes and gestures betrayed, without any doubt, to the remainder of his party what their sinister intentions were. At that critical moment a hippopotamus rose at the edge of the river amongst the reeds, and Gordon, with the greatest calmness and indifference to his perilous surroundings, promptly turned on his heel and shot the hippopotamus dead. Whether it was the apparent indifference to their presence or the obvious contempt for the impending danger we do not know, but the Arabs allowed Gordon and his party to return to their dahabayah without molesting them in any way. Another curious trait in Gordon's character was his fondness for dromedaries or riding camels. He possessed, when at Khartoum, a very large stable of these useful beasts, and he did not care what he had to pay for them; but have them he would. He would enter a village and ask what man possessed the fastest dromedary. On receiving the information, he would send for the owner and offer to buy his beast and take it away with him on his next journey, generally paying a much larger sum than was asked by the avaricious owner. Many other anecdotes of this remarkable man and his still more remarkable life in the Soudan have been related to us by the same eye-witness, but space does not permit us to reproduce more in our present article.—*Horse Guards Gazette*.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

On Monday evening Miss Kate Castleton commenced a week's engagement at the Grand Opera House, and the grace and charm with which she had formerly invested her "For goodness' sake, don't say I told you" served to draw fair houses, the individuals of which went, were amused, and came away again, wondering what had pleased them. For, after all, the play, *A Paper Doll*, is about as sensible a piece of patchwork, dramatically considered, as one could well conceive. It simply serves as a bag in which to carry about a lot of variety specialties and a little character acting. These amuse, of course, but they do no good, and I fancy that unless Kate Castleton develops further capabilities, her business as a *soubrette* will soon pall on the public, especially as she is losing the charm of slenderness for which she was once noted. A ray of brightness in the *olla podrida* of the play is the wit of "Horace Buckley," though it is of the minstrel order. Still, it is very funny in its paradoxical cleverness.

An example well worthy of being followed has been set by Mr. S. H. Janes, who, with most praiseworthy liberality, has offered a scholarship for one year in the Toronto Conservatory of Music, in the highest grade of the piano department. There are doubtless many in Toronto who have latent musical talent, but whose circumstances forbid the comparatively heavy expense of pursuing a course of systematic and well-outlined study, and if a series of scholarships, like that given by Mr. Janes, were founded by liberal music-lovers, with the object of aiding such talent, many a pupil of more than ordinary excellence might be found to do credit to such an institution as the Conservatory.

EDWIN BOOTH has made a magnificent present to the Players' Club in the shape of a splendid club house at No. 16 Gramercy Park, New York, at a cost of over \$200,000. The decorations of the club are handsome and solid, and in the dining-room is this quotation: "Mouth it, as many players do," opposite to it being "Sit by my side and let the world slide, for we shall never be younger." There is also a library containing 1200 volumes presented by Mr. Booth, 2000 presented by Lawrence Barrett, and a large number of rare and priceless works, the gifts of others.

A. C. WHEELER, known to the world by his *nom de plume* of Nym Crinkle, one of the most conservative of American critics, now goes into raptures over Mrs. Potter's "Cleopatra," that lady's latest creation. He says: "In the mere matter of regal magnificence she certainly outstripped all her recent rivals in costumery. . . . She gave new significance and new beauty to the work and incidents and business which have hitherto been oftenest overlooked or slighted for the conspicuously tumultuous episodes. . . . She makes Cleopatra a teasing, winning, capricious, petulant, quick-tempered, and somewhat unscrupulous woman, and not a heavy tragedienne, as the stage tradition presents. . . . She gave us an entirely new Cleopatra, which was in colour, in appearance, in womanly craft and delicacy and capriciousness her own, without using any the less Shakespeare's." And yet one

can read between the lines of Mr. Wheeler's notice, for one cannot call it criticism, an evident and laboured effort to present only the laudable in Mrs. Potter's performance, even going to the extent of belittling Mary Anderson in comparison. Why he does this he himself best knows.

THAT this opinion is not shared by everybody is shown by the following from *Music and Drama*: "Mrs. Potter, undaunted by the criticisms which have already been passed upon her futile efforts to be considered an actress, has dared to appear in a rôle in which even the greatest and most talented actresses have hesitated to play. Her 'Cleopatra' is a farce. Her first entrance on the stage from the barge at the landing place of the palace showed how utterly beyond her ability is the part which she has essayed, and which has evoked the ridicule of both the public and the press. . . . In her scenes with 'Antony' her acting is so frivolous and vulgar that it savors more of a cheap variety performance than anything else, and is utterly unworthy of the faintest praise." From all that I can see and from my impressions of her acting when in Toronto, I fancy the latter critic has the best of the matter. . . .

So we are likely to have the genial P. S. Gilmore, again in the spring with his splendid band, and his anvils and artillery. He is nothing if not an organizer, and this year he promises greater things than ever, because it is the bi-decade, or some such thing, since his big Jubilee of 1869. Besides securing the assistance of local choruses in the cities he visits, he has engaged Signorina De Vere and Mrs. Blanche Stone Burton, sopranos; Miss Helen Dudley Campbell, contralto; Italo Campanini, tenor; Giuseppe Del Puente, baritone; and Myron W. Whitney, basso. This ought to prove strong attraction, and it is to be hoped that the Philharmonic Society will see its way to taking this entertainment up again this year.

ALAS! poor Ilma di Murska! At one time fêted, caressed and adored, her improvidence left her penniless of late years, and on Friday last she died at Munich in extreme poverty, an ending whose tragic character was accentuated by the immediately subsequent suicide of her heart-broken daughter. This brilliant singer was born in 1843. She had a pure and bright soprano voice, nearly three octaves in compass, and of remarkable flexibility, and her ability as a bravura singer was of the highest order. The last time she sang in Toronto was in 1879, at the old rustic pavilion in the Horticultural Gardens, with Brignoli, Susini and Ronconi, when they performed *Don Pasquale*. Her *Carnival de Venise* and *Astrafiammetta* aria were wonders. Her last days in America were much brightened by the generous kindness of Chas. E. Pratt and his family, who enabled her to reach her home.

MESSRS. MASON AND RISCH have bought the interests of the New York Church Organ Company, and will manufacture vocalions in both Worcester, Mass., and Toronto.

B NATURAL.

NOTES.

A NEW opera, *Das Steinerne Herz*, by Ignaz Brüll, has scored a brilliant success at Prague.

VERDI'S *Othello* reached its thirty-first representation at the Vienna Opera last December.

MR. GERICKE has at last, after many rumours to that effect, definitely decided to resign the conductorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

PATTI sang to 8,000 people at the Albert Hall, London, Eng., and received £700, the largest sum ever paid to any singer in England for one evening's work.

MRS. J. G. BLAINE, JR., having been deserted by her husband, now threatens to add another to the list of society actresses. She is a handsome woman, and it is said that she is a vocal phenomenon, being able to sing a true tenor.

EMMA NEVADA is in great favour now. She has been engaged for forty representations in South America at \$3,000 each. She is to inaugurate the new Opera House at Rio Janeiro, which is to be named "Teatro Nevada," in her honour.

MME. ALBANI left Liverpool on the *Servia* on the 12th inst. for her American and Canadian concert tour. She takes with her Orlando Harley, Miss Damian, Barrington Foote, Signor Beviniani, and W. L. Barrett, a very finished and socially popular player of the flute.

BY order of the Emperor of Germany a number of trumpets have been imported from Italy for the use of the band of the first battalion of the regiment of "Fusilier Garde." These trumpets are similar to those used in the famous *fanfare* of the Italian Bersaglieri, which pleased the Emperor so much that he procured music and trumpets, and ordered them to be immediately adopted in the German Army.

A LONDON despatch, in speaking of Carl Rosa's Opera Company singing Planquette's *Paul Jones*, says: If the opera is a success it will be due to an American girl, Agnes Huntington, who created the part of *Paul Jones*. The part was written originally for a baritone, but her deep, velvety contralto voice, admirably trained, met all the requirements. She is an unusually good actress as well, and made an excellent impression, the house being enthusiastic and the critics inclined to give her warm praises. The opera is good, without being remarkable, but below *Les Cloches de Corneville* both in story and melodies.

TORONTO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

THE second annual general meeting of the Toronto Conservatory of Music was held on Monday, the 16th inst., Hon. G. W. Allan, President, occupying the chair. The report presented to the shareholders was a very gratifying one. It showed that the financial position of the Company was satisfactory, the directors having been able not only to declare a dividend, but to materially reduce the preliminary expenses, cover all depreciation on the furniture account, and carry forward a balance to the credit of profit and loss. The report of Mr. Edward Fisher, the Musical Director, showed that the increased attendance of pupils made the leasing of additional rooms necessary. The report referred to the free advantages offered by the Conservatory to its students, to the fortnightly recitals, occasional lectures and quarterly concerts, which are to be continued this season, and to the scholarships—five in number—presented by the faculty. Twenty-five per cent. of the pupils are drawn from cities and towns outside Toronto, representing many distant sections of the Dominion, as well as various parts of the States. In closing their report, the directors suggested that early consideration should be given to the matter of securing for the Conservatory a building of its own, suitable for its purposes and sufficient for the accommodation of the constantly increasing number of pupils. After congratulatory speeches by the President, Mr. W. B. McMurich, Mr. Janes, Mr. Pellatt, and others, the following gentlemen were elected directors for the current year:—Hon. G. W. Allan, Hon. Chancellor Boyd, Mr. Justice MacLennan, Geo. A. Cox, A. M. Cosby, Edward Fisher, Elmes Henderson, W. B. McMurich, Robert Jaffray, D. A. O'Sullivan, LL.D., S. H. Janes, and Dr. Ryerson. The officers of the Conservatory are:—Hon. G. W. Allan, President; Hon. Chancellor Boyd and Geo. A. Cox, Vice-Presidents; A. M. Cosby, Hon. Treasurer; Edward Fisher, Musical Director; and E. L. Roberts, Secretary.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

THREE VASSAR GIRLS IN FRANCE: A Story of the Siege of Paris. By Elizabeth W. Champney. Illustrated by "Champ" and others. Boston: Estes & Lauriat; Toronto: Williamson & Co.

This handsome volume, and *Chatterbox* from the same publishers, came too late for notice among the holiday books of the season; but the "Vassar Girl" series and *Chatterbox* are both such old and well-known favourites that they require no special commendation. The next of Mrs. Champney's stories will, we understand, take the Vassar girls to Russia, and another interesting story may be looked for at the end of the year.

BRITISH LETTERS ILLUSTRATIVE OF CHARACTER AND SOCIAL LIFE. Edited by Edward T. Mason. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson and Company. Three vols. 12mo. \$4.50.

Letters—especially letters not written with a view to publication—have a peculiar charm; and many writers have gained a more enduring fame by their unstudied correspondence with familiar friends than by their more laboured and ambitious works. The editor of this collection has done a signal service to lovers of this department of literature by the skill, taste and completeness with which he has done his work. His aim was "to present phases of life and character as described and exemplified by British letter-writers." His plan was a good one, and he has carried it out with commendable success. The letters are grouped under thirteen headings, such as "Autobiographic Sketches," "Glimpses of Men and Women," "The Family," "Friendship," "Manners, Customs and Behaviour," "National Traits," "Comedy and Farce," "Whim and Fancy," etc. Chronological sequence, except in some instances, has been disregarded, and an arrangement adopted which seemed to the editor most logical and illustrative. Letters known to have been written for publication, or which were published by their writers, have been excluded; and, as the book aims to be a pleasant one, "didactic and hortatory utterances, and, more especially, accounts of affliction, have generally been avoided."

All the well-known British writers are represented in these volumes, and many are but slightly known. Of recent writers Thomas Carlyle, Mrs. Carlyle and Benjamin Disraeli are frequently quoted; two of Tennyson's letters and several of Dean Stanley's appear, but none of Thackeray's to Mrs. Brookfield have been included, because of their recent publication in several editions.

ESSAYS ON PRACTICAL POLITICS. By Theodore Roosevelt. Questions of the Day. No. XLIX. New York: G. P. Putnam's; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

The essays in this volume, "Phases of State Legislation" and "Machine Politics in New York City," appeared originally in the *Century*. Mr. Roosevelt has been a member of the State Legislature of New York, and is, of course, familiar with the character of its members and their methods of legislation. The representatives from the country are generally very good men, those from the great cities the most ignorant and corrupt. "The majority of the Assemblymen from the great cities are 'very poor specimens' indeed, while, on the contrary, the Congressmen who go from them are generally pretty good men. This fact is only one of the many which go to