

The Passing Show.

BY WILFRID WISGAST.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

Some one has sent me the copy of a novel called "In the Arms of Love," and asked my opinion of the production; it purports to be written by Abi S. Jackman. I wasted an hour in reading the book through and have no hesitation in saying what my opinion is.

This book, then, though bearing the name of a publisher in this city, is really a New York production, and is one of a series of cheap and nasty novels with which some Chicago and New York publishers have for a long time been flooding the whole of this continent. These novels have in them the worst elements of the worst kind of French novels, only entirely lacking the smartness and ability often a marked characteristic of the French *feuilleton*.

"In the Arms of Love" is the story of a young girl who passes most of her time in walking up and down her chamber with nothing at all in the way of drapery about her, and in this interesting condition she is fond of admiring herself in a large glass, and shrieking out for "Paul," a married man of whom she is enamoured. From the first page to the last the tale is a tale of undisguised sensuality and filth, without one redeeming particle of talent; from the first page to the last it is so much repulsive, nauseating, maudlin muck; it appears to be written by a half-tipsy courtesan and is only fit reading for a brothel.

It is said on the street and in the clubs that the retirement of Mr. Clarke is only a bluff. In repeating what I hear in this connection I express no opinion. The story is that the Mayor's friends, unable to meet the charge of "hoggishness" in trying to secure for him a fifth year of office have advised him to announce his retirement. However, this is announced to be only an electioneering dodge, and it is claimed that Mr. Clarke is a dark horse to be entered for the mayoralty stakes at the last moment.

I am told that it is the intention to try and work the pea in this way. Mr. Clarke's announced retirement will, of course, bring into the field candidates who would not otherwise have appeared. At the last moment, when two or three candidates have spent too much money and gone altogether too far to recede, a numerously-signed requisition will be presented to "Ned" begging him to withdraw his withdrawal; and Ned—our gentle, meek, and modest "Ned"—will find himself unable to withstand the flattering and earnest solicitations of such a large and influential section of his fellow-citizens and friends.

In the opinion of many men who "know the ropes" this is the game we are about to see attempted to be played. All is fair in love, in war, and—in electioneering. But Mayor Clarke may as well be distinctly told he will alienate many

old friends if he tries to come over us with a trick like this. At present it looks as if Beaty, Fleming, Osler, and McMillan all mean running. If so the friends of the present Mayor claim that in these circumstances they can, by the tactics here indicated, be sure to place their man.

The suicide of poor Henry Hanbury is only another case of the sad ending of a wasted life. Himself his own worst enemy, he found when his money was gone that his former friends knew him no more. I fear no amount of moralizing will ever alter the recurrence of this kind of folly. It is the old story of ruined health and squandered fortune, then poverty, dishonor, and a suicide's grave. But there are many men in this city who liked Henry Hanbury, and for whom, with all his faults, they will long have a tender memory.

The Hanburys are among the wealthiest people in London. They are bankers, brewers, and wholesale chemists. That a member of such a family should be out here, and have to eke out a scanty pittance from home by becoming bill collector for a livery stable keeper, is one of those strange stories in real life that men who move about the world become acquainted with so often. Just now I do not envy the feelings of liveryman Brown; Hanbury had misappropriated a few of the staboan's dollars; it was a paltry amount. Brown might have had the magnanimity to not prosecute him.

What I said last week about the elopement of Miss Teetzel with a fellow claiming to be a minister and calling himself Walter Nelson, has brought me a letter of remonstrance from a lady, who says that I have libelled her sex; she also informs me that she "often walks out with married men and sees no harm in it; and that only a corrupt mind would do so." Just as you will, my dear Miss or Madame—I bet my bottom dollar you are a Miss—I have no wish to interfere with your recreations, innocent or otherwise. Walk about, if you be so inclined, with the Devil himself, if you can find him. But what I said I adhere to and repeat: any single young woman who walks out habitually with a man whom she knows is married is tempting him and seeking temptation herself; she knows perfectly well what will probably come of it, and anyhow, whatever happens, she is equally responsible with the man, and deserves no sympathy. I am sorry that my correspondent is offended of course, but I have a habit of speaking my mind, and fully intend to continue to do so.

I desire to enter my most emphatic protest against the proposal to release the convict Graham, the cowardly miscreant who four or five years ago threw vitrol on the face of Louis Severt, the well-known and much respected tobacconist in the basement of the *Mail* office. Young Severt lost his sight for life, and for such an act of atrocity as this I would willingly hang Graham or any other man with my own hand. Let us know the names of the nauby-pamby "humanitarian" humbugs who are trying to effect this gross parody

on justice. I quite agree that this man ought not to pollute Kingston Gaol; it is much too good a place for a scoundrel of his degree. But we have no other place in which to put him that is more uncomfortable, so by all means let him stay there for life. The only thing I regret is that Graham does not receive a couple of dozen with the "cat" once every month.

Miss Gladys Evelyn, the London actress, is after Mr. Hurlbert with a warrant for his apprehension on a charge of perjury in the late celebrated trial. While there was much difference of opinion in London society and in the English press as to how much of the lady's story to give credence to, there was practically but one opinion as to Wilfred Murray being as mythical a personage as the late lamented Mrs. Harris. The fair Gladys said that William wrote the letters to her, letters described as too filthy to be read out in court. There was certainly some rather tall perjury on one side or the other, and it appears improbable that the truth ever will be established. Anyhow, Mr. William Henry Hurlbert has no doubt by this time quite realised that it is exceedingly risky work for a middle-aged gentleman of means to make intimate acquaintances of pretty girls picked up in a London omnibus.

I am only one of many thousands in the Canadian Dominion who are pleased to hear that the recent illness of Mr. Edmund Yates was not so serious as the first advices by cable led us to fear. As a novelist of repute, editor of the *London World*, and an all round jolly good fellow, Mr. Yates is one of the best known and most popular "newspaper men" of the day, and his numerous friends on this continent are delighted to hear that he is, according to our latest information, pulling himself together in good style.

Grip the other day presented the following curious composition:—

COCHONVERT—"Avez vous vu *Passepartout*, journal comique?"
GOMMEUX—"Non. Est il Rouge ou Bleu?"
COCHONVERT—"Ni lim ni l'autre."
GOMMEUX—"Quel couleur doux."
COCHONVERT—"Sorel."

The interesting bird had better confine its attention to the English language, in which it is not too proficient. Taking the above as a specimen of what it can do in another tongue, one naturally exclaims:—"Oh, Mon Dieu, c'est vraiment ni l'un ni l'autre. Et Monsieur le rédacteur-en-chef, le mot 'doux,' dit-moi, s'il vous plait, qu'est ce que c'est que cela?"

A correspondent sends me the following particulars about the "advice gratis" firm of Yankee quacks to which I drew attention last week. Two young men a few days ago called on these gentry and received the "advice gratis" but parted with \$8.50 each (a total of \$17) for the medicine they were persuaded to buy. Who was the philosopher who said a fool was born into the world every minute? And they evidently all live.

I do not know whether the *Globe* has dropped the train or the railway company has dropped the *Globe*. Anyhow the "special train" which the *Globe* has been for a long time telling us was such a startling success is given up—doubtless because it was a success. It cost nominally one thousand dollars a month, but in the elegant language of one of the proprietors, "We divvied that up with some ads."