

of the measles, but my little ones have them, and I myself have had a slight attack." But, equal to the occasion, he replied: "Madam, I should be only too delighted to take anything from such a charming source."

"Everything belongs either to the king of France or to Madame Champmesle," wrote La Fontaine to that queen of the French stage; but flattered as she may have felt at receiving such a tribute to her charms, we may be sure the actress thought much more of the involuntary eulogy wrung from Mademoiselle d'Éuillets, who as the curtain fell on the new *Hermoine*, exclaimed; "There's an end of d'Éuillets!" Nor could Talma but be satisfied he was right in attiring Proculus in a genuine toga, as the first step towards reforming stage costume, when Conlet, aghast at the innovation, cried out: "Look at Talma! Was anything so ridiculous ever seen! He looks like an ancient statue!"

Talking over Garrick's retirement with Mrs. Montague, Dr. Beattie told her he was so excited the first time he witnessed that actor's performance of *Macbeth*, that he nearly fell over into the pit from the front of the two-shilling gallery, and wished he could have another opportunity of risking his neck and nerves in the same cause, since to fall by the hands of Shakespeare and Garrick would ennoble his memory to all generations; supplementing this compliment to his dramatic idols with expressing his belief that if all actors resembled Garrick, it would be impossible for a person of any sensibility to outlive the representation of *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, or *Macbeth*. But all compliments paid to players pale before Ben Jonson's eulogistic lines upon Salathiel Pary, the boy-actor:

Years he numbered scarce thirteen
When fates turned cruel;
Yet three filled zodiacs had he been
The stage's jewel;
And did act—what now we moan—
Old men so duly;
As sooth, the *Parce* thought him one,
He played so truly.

The Ettrick Shepherd took a neat way of telling a lady she was no ordinary specimen of the sex. "Ye're a nice lassie, Miss Drysdale," said her "Nearly all girls are like a bundle of pens cut by the same machine; but ye're not of the bundle."

Not contented with giving verbal dem-

onstration of his admiration was the Shah of Persia, who, when an English lady of high degree pronounced his diamonds to be "so lovely," slapped her ladyship's fair shoulders, saying: "Not so lovely as we have here!" The Shah, however, might with advantage take a lesson in the art of complimenting from the Sultan of Zanzibar, who likened Queen Victoria to the mountain of loadstone which drew the nails out of the sides of passing ships, for even so did the hearts of Englishmen seem to be drawn on by a magnet to Her Majesty. Or he might learn something from that Siamese ambassador who wrote: "One cannot fail to be struck with the aspect of the august Queen of England, or fail to observe that she must be of pure descent from a race of goodly and warlike kings and rulers of the earth, in that her eyes, complexion, and above all her bearing, are those of a beautiful and majestic white elephant."

At his first meeting with Mrs. Somerville La Place told her the world held only three women who understood him—namely Caroline Herschel, herself, and a Mrs. Greig, of whom he had never been able to learn anything. "I was Mrs. Greig," was the quiet response. "So then there are only two of you!" exclaimed the philosopher. It was a naive compliment but not one to stir the recipient's pulses; for after all, the most pronounced blue-stocking would probably prefer exciting male admiration by physical rather than mental charms. Does not Mrs. Thrale say emphatically: "That a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person, is well known, and none of us will contradict the assertion." Had Lalande known as much, he would not, on finding himself placed between Madame Recamier and Madam de Stael, have discharged the double-barrelled compliment: "How happy am I to be thus placed between Beauty and Wit," drawing upon himself De Stael's retort: "Yes, and without possessing either!"

Fishers for compliments are apt to make strange catches. A curate complaining to Dr. South that he had only been paid five pounds for preaching at Oxford, the Doctor rubbed the sore by declaring he would not have preached such a sermon for fifty pounds. Julius Beer playing to Rossini a funeral-march he had composed in honour of his uncle Meyerbeer, was delighted by