

out first, the man with a personal grievance, or the man burdened with somebody else's (e.g. an editor's) fault. We are inclined to follow a university practice and bracket them equal, wondering, as the boy about the musquitoes as they worried him while bringing home the cows, what is their use in the social economy.

WHAT harm in the theatre? asks many a youth as he steps into the mazes of city life. There are good plays. Yes, and there are bad ones. Unfortunately the bad ones prevail in actual life over the good. For our own part we judge the theatre *as it is*, not as it might be, and that, we humbly suggest, is the only true way. Men might be angels; experience tells us they are not, and until they are angels we must accept them as they are. It is not wise to dream ourselves into a fool's paradise while our house is falling over our head. And it is worse than folly to treat the theatre, not as it is, but as it might be. The Paris *Figuro* is not troubled with being righteous overmuch. We clip from our contemporary, *The Morning Star*, its estimate of the morality of the French stage.

"The character of an actress is really a matter that does not concern us; it has never interested the public. If now and then a woman passes virtuously through the ordeal of the stage, a thing of very rare occurrence, the public does not praise her in the least on account of the austerity of her private life; if, on the contrary, as is the case with the majority, the life of an actress is filled with intrigues, the same public does not condemn her for such trifles. It is understood that that separate world which is called the theatre can not be judged by the strict morality which rules the rest of society.

"A young girl who chooses the dramatic career either is no more virtuous, or she will not remain so long. Whether she will or no, her profession will fatally force her, sooner or later, into sin. To this rule there is scarcely any exception. I will suppose a girl of eighteen, pure as a star, coming out on the stage. Thanks to the character of contemporary literature, she is from the very first evening involved in intrigues. An actor clasps her in his arms, and calls her the most charming of her sex; she hears nothing but words of love, and the more passionate they are the more the public applaud. Either the *debutante* understands, and then already she is no longer an innocent girl: or she does not understand, and then she is a bad actress. Two hundred men in the orchestra level their opera-glasses at her. Love-letters pour in at the porter's lodge. She lives in a world of passion and excitement. Everything around her conspires towards her ruin.

"It is because we know the snares of theatrical life that we have set up a separate code of morality

for actresses; it is an understood thing that their responsibility does not equal that of other women, and that what is called a fatal fall in ordinary life, is nothing more than a trifling accident in the life behind the scenes. Her profession as an actress saves the woman from current morality; the public feels that a young woman cannot be mixed up every evening in intrigues, nor play a part in what is called the study of manners, without losing by degrees the strict notion of modesty.

"For all these reasons the virtue of an actress is of very little use to her in her profession. I will go further and say: To be a really clever performer, and very few are such, the various passions of a woman's nature cannot be represented by one who has not felt them. If I do not express an absolute fact, it is at least remarkable that the lives of all the great actresses have been full of intrigues; and it may even be said that the greater they were the freer the life they led. The history of the theatre, from its origin to our own times, tends to prove this.

"Everything connected with the theatre is beyond current morality. For example, it is certain that a tradesman would be less esteemed if, to improve his business, he exhibited half a dozen young girls in his window, luxuriously dressed, and adorned with all their diamonds, in order to attract the passers by. The manager of a theatre loses none of his respectability through adding such an attraction to his undertaking.

"The author who furnishes the pretence for these exhibitions, and who knows perfectly well that the immoderate luxury of that half dozen women has nothing to do with the question of art, properly so-called, remains no less an honourable man in all the force of the term. And why, pray? Because everything that concerns the stage escapes analysis. The public does not take the same view of the stage as of social life; it wants to laugh, or to cry, often both at once; and it does not trouble itself about the consequences."

OUR valued contemporary the *Nonconformist and Independent* has published a statistical supplement containing items of interest with regard to the nonconforming churches. The ten principal denominations, viz., Baptists, Congregationalists, the various members of the Methodist family (six), the Friends, and the English Presbyterians have an aggregate of 8,996 ministers in England and Wales; 12,900 places of worship, without allowing for defective returns; and a total of a million and a half of church members, which are estimated to represent 4,500,000 persons, out of a total population of 25,968,286 in England and Wales. The three principal Churches are credited with the following yearly sums contributed to missions and their various societies, viz.:—Baptist, £163,763; Congregationalists, £229,024; Wesleyans, £289,902. These, with sums set down to the United Free, Primitive and Calvinistic