

amateur and other societies now that it has been given to the public.

We regret that, owing to pressure of other matter, our dramatic criticism for the month must be very brief. Mr. Pitou, at the Grand Opera House, very successfully continues to cater for the entertainment of Toronto theatre-goers, though the bill for the month has not been a signally brilliant one. In our limited space we shall only be able to speak critically of one of the attractions which Mr. Pitou's enterprise brought before us, viz., Mr. Bandmann's engagement—and content ourselves with the mere enumeration of three of the other attractions of the month, which more particularly call for mention. The latter referred to are the engagements of the Criterion Comedy Company of New York, Mr. Denman Thompson, and Mrs. Siddons. The Criterion Company gave unqualified pleasure by their representations of three of the light society pieces from their *repertoire*—‘Our Daughters,’ ‘Freaks,’ and ‘A Triple Courtship;’ in all of which the characteristics of this capital troupe were delightfully displayed to the great entertainment of the houses played to. The following week, Mr. Denman Thompson drew large audiences nightly to witness his character-piece, ‘Joshua Whitcomb,’ a unique personation of the plain, honest, good-hearted American yeoman of half-a-century ago. The unaffected naturalness and the bluff, homely, but wholesome character delineated by Mr. Thompson, was a refreshing exhibition on the stage too much given up in these days to *roué* gallantry and gilded dross, though the piece might have been pruned with good effect of some of the realism introduced against which the play as a whole is designed as a protest. Mrs. Siddons's engagement, which followed, was too brief to satisfy those who delight in the simulated histrionics and the fragmentary declamations of the elocutionist's platform, for even so distinguished a professional reader as Mrs. Siddons fails to maintain the enthusiasm of her admirers, unless her programme is just such as they wish to have it. For ourselves, while respecting the great gifts of Mrs. Siddons, we could wish to see her personate, with the accessories of the stage, the characters she so well portrays, and which only want the dramatic *ensemble*

of the plays themselves to render her work thoroughly enjoyable. As a Shakespearean delineator of rare excellence, it is the more to be regretted that Mrs. Siddons should confine her entertainments to mere elocutionary recitation, though it must be confessed that in the sleep-walking scene from ‘Macbeth,’ in the defiance of Lady Constance, from ‘King John,’ and in the forest scene between Orlando and Rosalind, from ‘As You Like It,’ she gives us much to compensate for the absence of the actual representations of the plays themselves.

But the most noteworthy event at the Grand Opera House during the past month, was the appearance of the Anglo-German tragedian, Mr. Bandmann, with his company. Mr. Bandmann, though a remarkably fine actor, cannot be pronounced a great one. In certain qualities of the highest histrionic genius, among which may be mentioned that personal magnetism which places an actor *en rapport* with his audience, he is notably deficient. The spectator rarely forgets that what he is witnessing is acting, not reality. Among minor defects are an occasional want of dignity in bearing, and a certain unpleasant hardness of voice at times. A graver fault is that he rarely looks at the person he is addressing. Of the three characters in which we saw him,—*Hamlet*, *Narcisse*, and *Othello*,—the first-named was the most satisfactory. A finer performance of that most difficult and trying part has perhaps never been seen in Toronto. In the level passages,—the interviews with Horatio and Marcellus and Bernardo, and with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,—the actor was natural and admirable; and the whole of the third act was given with extraordinary power and effect. Mr. Bandmann's *Othello*, though immensely powerful at times, was not so satisfactory as his *Hamlet*; a remark equally applicable to his *Narcisse*. The support of the principal actor was moderately good. Miss Bennison's *Desdemona* was admirable, but her *Ophelia* was rather wooden, at least in the earlier scenes. Miss Aicken's excellent elocutionary powers lent weight and dignity to the parts of the *Queen* and *Emilia*; Mr. Gofton was remarkably good as the *Ghost* and as *Brabantio*; Mr. Lyndal was a better *Horatio* than any we can remember; and Mr. Beck made a passable *Iago*.