

THERE have been over a dozen operatic settings of the story of "Hamlet." Only that by Ambroise Thomas is sung at the present day. Mercadante composed a "Hamlet" to the libretto of Felice Romani (a most graceful and spirited poet), and Faccio, in 1865, produced at Genoa a "Hamlet" to a libretto by Boito.

EDWIN BOOTH is a very rich man. He lives simply, but is lavish in other directions, his gifts to the Players' Club having been princely. His wealth is largely invested in real estate, and he owns property all over the country. His tours with Mr. Barrett have been very profitable, and he is now a sure card as long as he chooses to act.

GIBSON'S famous "Tinted Venus," which was the subject of so much discussion twenty or thirty years ago, or rather was the occasion of so much discussion as to the propriety of painting statues, was sold in London the other day for 1,750 guineas, and will have a place in the extraordinary art gallery of the Messrs. Pears, the soap men.

THE aged Baroness Burdett Coutts seems to be much interested in theatrical people, and it is stated by English papers that she is to be the "backer" of three dramatic organizations next year, among them an opera company headed by the young American contralto, Agnes Huntington. Perhaps the Baroness is aspiring to be a latter-day Mrs. Piozzi.

SARAH BERNHARDT'S "Jeanne d'Arc" did not drive London mad with delight. In the first place they did not like Barbier's play. They think he sets up the Maid of Orleans as an apostle of hypnotism on a wholesale scale. They don't think the fair Sarah looked well in such attire. She was too insignificant, and failed to suggest in any way the least inspiration.

A BENEVOLENT Englishwoman, who died recently, left a bequest of £5,000 for the purpose of buying real wine for stage scenes requiring that beverage. This will be a boon to histrions who have had to put up with cold tea and ginger ale heretofore; and it will enable managers to engage actors for very low wages when plays with banquet scenes are presented.

MARQUIS QUEUX DE SAINT-HILAIRE, recently presented to the Paris Conservatory a valuable Stradivarius violin, one of the best preserved instruments of its kind, of the year 1699. In addition, he also gave the Conservatory a valuable viola, two Villanue and several other valuable bows. In order to make it a complete collection of the great Italian masters the conservatory now needs only a good specimen of Amati violins.

WE clip the two following items from a Chicago paper. One is refreshing for its ignorance, and the other for its—well, let us say, *naïveté*:—"Madame Albani is summering in the Highlands. She is, by the way, a Scotch woman by birth. Queen Victoria has lately had the honour of being presented to Miss Hattie Harvey, of Chicago, who is the guest of Madame Patti-Nicolini." When was Patti reinstated on the Lord Chamberlain's reception list?

WRITING to the *Daily News*, the Paris correspondent of that journal described on Wednesday week the marriage of the Comte d'Aguesvives and Miss Yvonne de Dampierre, and related how M. Gounod, as a relative of the bride "obliged" with some organ solos, among which was given a "meditation on a prelude to one of Bach's oratorios." What a pity that the imaginative lady did not specify the work! It would have been very interesting to lovers of the great master.

MR. GEORGE BELFORD'S dramatic and humorous recital at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, in aid of the fund for the restoration of the Toronto University Library, was an entire success. The audience was a good one, including Sir John Thompson, Dominion Minister of Justice, and Lady Thompson, and Miss Carling; Sir William White-way, Premier of Newfoundland; Mr. O'Halloran, Secretary to the Royal Colonial Institute, and Mrs. O'Halloran; Mr. J. G. Colmer, Secretary to the Offices of the High Commissioner, etc. The programme was carried through with Mr. Belford's usual artistic skill, and met with hearty appreciation.

SOME manuscripts sold by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, a week or two ago, seem to have realized very fair prices. The largest sums were secured for five letters of Schiller, which fetched over forty guineas. An interesting item was described in the catalogue as "an autograph MS. duet for piano, four hands," dated "Leipzig, March 26, 1841," and signed on the title page "Paul Mendelssohn Bartholdy." This date hardly agrees with that of the piano duet in A, composed by Felix Mendelssohn especially for a concert given by Mrs. Schumann, played by that lady and the composer, and numbered op. 92 in the posthumous publications. At the sale, however, it fetched £10. Six scraps by Beethoven fetched rather less than £1 each; a quartet, "Dona Nobis," by Haydn, sold for little over £3 3s.; but eight letters of Mendelssohn fetched £17, the manuscript of three songs by Schubert, £3 3s., and Schumann's march, op. 76, No. 2, £4, while various scraps of Wagner's manuscript also secured fair prices.

DEMILL'S RESIDENTIAL ACADEMY.—We are glad to note the opening of a school for little girls of six to fourteen years of age, in the late Judge Duggan's residence, where all the comforts surrounding a home are to be given. There is no doubt that a school where the young girls of Protestant parents can be placed for a reasonable price and receive good attention is much needed. The fees are low, and the enterprise should command success.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

ALDEN'S MANIFOLD CYCLOPEDIA, Vol. XXI. Jordan—Legacy. New York: Garretson and Company.

Between the titles Jordan and Legacy which begin and end volume XXI. of this important little cyclopedia is compressed an immense mass of information on various subjects, such as Jurisprudence, Jury, Jute, and biographical sketches of such well-known people as Kellogg, Kemble, Kossuth, Kennan, Lee, Lafayette, to say nothing of such ancient characters as Josephus. The same unequal apportionment of space that we noticed in volume XX. obtains in volume XXI., and, with this exception, in view of the price of the work, one can have little to say about the cyclopedia but in praise.

THE UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE, Windsor, N.S., 1790-1890. By Henry Youle Hind, M.A. New York: Church Review Company; Halifax: T. C. Allen and Company.

With more than a century of history demanding record, it was time that King's College, the offspring of courage in adversity, should find some worthy son to chronicle her achievements and progress. Accordingly, a scientist of no mean attainments laid aside his experiments for the pen of the historian and in a comparatively short time has produced the well written and interesting volume now before us. The book is not a mere register of past events, a dry and uninteresting catalogue; it is far more, it comprises in its pages interesting historical events, such as the American Revolution, the Loyalist Refugees and many others. And beside the interest attaching to the oldest English University in Canada, and its close affiliation to the Mother Land in that he of Canterbury is its head and controller supreme under Providence, the traditions and stories which cluster round its site, sacred to Haliburton, hallowed by the memories of Grand Pre, by the land of Evangeline, hymned of Longfellow, lend additional attraction to the history of King's.

ROMANCE OF SIR RICHARD, and other poems. By Arthur Weir. Montreal: W. Drysdale and Company; Toronto: Hart and Company.

A new book of poems by a Canadian writer is always welcome and encouraging, from the evidence it gives to us of a perseverance that to some extent defies the coolness and apathy shown by the Canadian reading public towards the productions of native authors. The poet has apparently supplemented some poems which have already been given to the public through the columns of THE WEEK and other journals, with a few hitherto unpublished, or at least new to us. Mr. Weir's verse does not confine herself to contemplation alone; she busies herself with life, and the "Snowshoe Song" is an incitement to a healthy and invigorating pastime. Here are a couple of stanzas:

Hilloo, hilloo, hilloo, hilloo,
Like winding sheet about the dead,
O'er hill and dale the snow is spread,
And silences our hurried tread;
The pines bend low, and to and fro
The maples toss their boughs o'erhead.

Hilloo, hilloo, hilloo, hilloo,
We laugh to scorn the angry blast,
The mountain top is gained and past,
Descent begun, 'tis ever fast,
A short quick run and toil is done,
We reach the welcome inn at last.

The sonnets, of which there are thirty or more, are unequal, the construction in some being obscure, though "At the Recital" and "Dante to Beatrice" contain some fine writing. The volume is well printed, save for an error or two in the proof-reading, and is neatly bound. We wish Mr. Weir a large audience and do not doubt that his poems will obtain it.

NORTHERN STUDIES. By Edmund Gosse. "Camelot Series." London: Walter Scott; Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company.

We are harking back, so to speak, in the intense interest that has of late sprung up amongst the English reading public in the history, poetry, and general literature of the north, to the northern pit from whence we were digged. Whether we owe it to a similarity between the present gradual evolution of Norse and Danish sentiment under the pressure of modern conditions and the change that has come over our own literature, which is in a still somewhat uncertain attitude, or to those innate likenesses which we can trace in late northern writers to poets of our own time, we do not pretend to say. Perhaps it is to a mixture of both. Our own great living writers, especially one, a poet, have found in the Norse field of saga and marchen an inspiring and attractive theme, and one which has caused, in the case of Mr. Morris, the poetical spirit of the North "to bloom out into song," to use his own phrase. Mr. Gosse's essays are not new to us, having been printed some ten years ago in book form, and the series contains the paper which may be said to have introduced Ibsen, the chief, perhaps, of modern Northern dramatists, to his English brethren. There is much keen insight and appreciation displayed in a popular and enthusiastic style, and no one can rise from reading them without feeling somewhat of a disciple's zeal for the exploration of the "immense past" from which the poets whom Mr. Gosse has chronicled are descended. In reading the account of the Danish National Theatre, one is compelled to stop and ask if much of the prejudice existing

in certain quarters against the stage might not be removed were it possible for us to have a national theatre, where education might be an end and over whose portals might be inscribed the same legend: "Not merely for enjoyment."

LIFE OF LORD BYRON. By Hon. Roden Noel. London: Walter Scott; Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company.

Had Byron lived in another age would his work and life have differed materially from that which they were? If it be true, as some one has said, that he was the mouthpiece of his age, which was one of unbelief and unrest and hardly purged of seventeenth century profligacy, in an era of severer morals and of ennobling faiths, the sweetness and genius which, turned to gall, embittered his verse and corroded his life, might have enshrined him far above any poet of our own time in affection and fame. True genius, however, is always self-consuming; it is a tyrant in its way. Mr. Noel has written a very concise and, though appreciative, never extravagant memoir of the poet. We might expect, as a matter of course, that Carlyle and Goethe would differ in their estimates of Byron's work. The Chelsea sage declared that no genuine good thought was ever revealed to mankind by Byron. And yet surely, with all due deference to this sledge hammer deliverance, even in "Don Juan" there are passages of satire which are as scathing and just as any written by Carlyle's fiery pen, and others again which are broad and elevating. A just satire is the equivalent of a good thought. Goethe, on the other hand, thought Byron was the greatest genius of the century, "the representative of the modern poetic era," and yet, strangely enough, says farther on that when "he begins to reflect he is a child." Byron in fact consumed himself; his aspirations were Titanic, and his proper rôle was that of a Greek god, beloved of women, invincible in battle, supreme in arts. Like Burns,

He bared our nature with incisive rhyme,
Perversely dwelling on its lower brink,

while in lofty thought, sonorous rhythm of expression, and withal a sublime contempt for lingual restraint, he is often unapproachable. Had Byron been of a less sensitive temperament he might have helped to mould the world's destinies; as it was an abnormal personal vanity nullified his greater qualities. The history of his life is too well known to touch upon it here, but we must refer to the hitherto unpublished stanzas selected by Mr. Noel from a poem which is ascribed to the poet, and which is in the possession of Mr. McCalmont Hill. It is called "The Monk of Athos," and is, according to Mr. Noel, of but ordinary merit.

Beside the confines of the Aegean main,
Where northward Macedonia bounds the flood,
And views opposed the Asiatic plain,
Where once the pride of lofty Ilium stood,
Like the great father of the giant brood,
With lowering port majestic Athos stands,
Crowned with the verdure of eternal wood,
As yet unspoiled by sacrilegious hands,
And throws his mighty shade o'er seas and distant lands

And deep embosomed in his shady groves
Full many a convent rears its glittering spire,
'Mid scenes where heavenly contemplation loves
To kindle in the soul her hallowed fire,
Where air and sea with rocks and woods conspire
To breathe a sweet religious calm around,
Wearing the thoughts from every low desire,
And the wild waves that break with murr'ring sound
Along the rocky shore proclaim it holy ground.

Sequestered shades where Piety has given
A quiet refuge from each earthly care,
Whence the rapt spirit may ascend to Heaven!
Oh ye, condemned the ills of life to bear!
As with advancing age your woes increase,
What bliss amidst these solitudes to share
The happy foretaste of eternal Peace,
Till Heav'n in mercy bids your pains and sorrows cease.

BISMARCK INTIME. By a fellow student. Translated by Henry Hayward. London: Dean and Son, 1890.

Anecdotes and facts about great men, and especially men who have swayed the fortunes of empires, are always interesting, and if the author of these recollections of Bismarck has mixed up a great deal of what is old with what we read for the first time, his almost unavoidable error will detract but little from the wide interest the book will in the main inspire. The volume does not bear out its title, for but few of the incidents and anecdotes are of such nature but that they might have been gathered second-hand. The translation by Mr. Hayward is vigorous and readable, and as to the point of time, even Bismarck's much talked of interview with the French journalist M. Des Houx is given. Bismarck's unpopularity before the war of '66 and his own appreciation of it, as also of the fact that he was about to realize the truth of the saying that "nothing succeeds like success," are well described and confirm one's impression of the cool, calculating boldness of this modern German giant, in whom the physical capacity of the Viking and the mental astuteness of the modern diplomat met and mingled and foamed to success. Bismarck was fond of jokes even in his middle and earlier life, but he sometimes met his match. It is related that a German soldier had performed some deed of bravery which entitled him to the Iron Cross of the First Class, and the Emperor commissioned Bismarck to present it. Bismarck determined to test the man, and, when the soldier appeared before him, thus addressed him: "My friend, I have been commissioned to hand you the Iron Cross of the First Class, but if it should prove that you are of poor family, you can have an hundred thalers instead;