Of and About the Makers of Books.

Notices of Recent Interesting Volumes and Chats Concerning Literary Men and Women.

"OUR COMMON SPEECH."

That the mutability of human affairs should find a parallelism in the instability of the meanings attaching to the words employed in our daily tongue seems reasonable enough when one pauses to think of it. But the average man rarely does pause for thinking purposes unless specially arrested. A book which will perform this desirable function for all real students of the English language has recently appeared from the press of Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, under the title "Our Common Speech." Its author, Gilbert M. Tucker, of Albany, has not aimed at a display of erudition, but has sought simply to call attention, in a series of readily understandable papers, to some facts with reference to our language which are frequently overlooked. Without further preface we shall hastily review the chapter in his opportune book which treats of "Degraded Words," and shows how, in degrading them, we boldly exhibit fundamental traits in our nature.

I

As a first instance, Mr. Tucker cites the adjective "pitiful," which at present we almost invariably employ in an evil sense. When we say "a pitiful subterfuge" we mean, of course, a contemptible attempt at fraud. Yet the dictionaries with one accord give the good meanings precedence—either "melancholy, moving compassion, deserving to be pitied" or else "full of pity, tender." In our author's opinion it needs no conjecture to discover the reason and method of this gradual drifting in meaning from good to bad. "Whoever," he says, "has heard a 'pitiful' story of his woes from a wandering solicitor of charity, and, moved with compassion, has looked into the case only to find an impudent attempt at deceit, has the explanation before him in characters which he may run that readeth. The 'pitiful' story becomes provocative of scorn and indignation; and the ignominy of the transaction attaches itself to the word that described its first appearance, dragging down with it the innocent adjective, and fitting it for companionship with actions and conditions diametrically opposite to those with which it originally found place."

Four other words noted as similarly undergoing degradation are "apparent," "ostensible," "plausible" and "specious." The original meaning of "apparent" is "seeming;" but things which seem to be right so often prove to be otherwise that we have come to view any "apparent" thing with a certain measure of implied suspicion. This partial fouling of the adjective's meaning is of recent origin. As late as 1764 Bailey defined the word without giving any hint of a dubious or suspicious import. "Ostensible" originally meant "capable of being shown;" now we regard it as conveying the idea of sham or pretence. "Plausible" meant "the possession of qualities deserving of applause;" now it means something in need of confirmation or proof. "Specious" meant "having a good shape, beautiful, handsome, fine;" now it conveys the suggestion of insincerity.

Another word, "hypocrite," meant originally an actor, whether good or bad; apparently "acting," off the stage, is more often for evil purposes than for good—at all events, "hypocrite" is now a full-fledged word of contempt. The word "counterfeit" did not at first imply any wish to defraud; to "equivocate" meant to call two things by the same name, not necessarily in order to deceive; and "tinsel" in the beginning was really woven of the precious metals. "What a commentary it is upon the proverbial deceitfulness of appearances in this uncertain world," observes the author, "that these terms, which really indicate that a thing seems to be all right, have come to convey so sharply the implication that it is all wrong!"

Even more vivid is the degradation in the case of the word "pretend," which, as late as 1775, and for centuries previous, had meant simply to "claim," whether rightly or not. Today its first and almost exclusive meaning is "to claim falsely," evidently proving, as Mr. Tucker remarks, "that it has been the common experience that people are apt to claim more than their due." Similarly with "legend," that first meant "a book in the church containing the lessons that were to be read in divine service." Some of these "lessons" must at one time have grown so fanciful as to cause the word to convey a warning against too much credulity.

II.

Another group of words, by the changes that have occurred in their meanings, typify the human characteristic of despising those below one in wordly station. The word "villain," for instance, originally meant the serf or bondsman attached to the "villa," or farm. The transition from this primary meaning to one that credits the serf or hireling with churlish, selfish, dishonest characteristics is simply indicative of the general contempt entertained by the fortunate upper half for the unfortunate fellows who are beneath. The word "boor" meant, at first, simply "plowman" or, as we would say "farmer." Because some farmers are incivil, the word "boor" was loaded down with the sins of these few exceptions and driven as a scapegrace out into the wilderness of our English speech. Among other words that have been degraded through the operation of similar laws the author cites "churl," who was primarily no worse than a free tenant at will; "kern," who was simply a foot-soldier; "pagan," who was only a villager; "heathen," a dweller on the heath or open country; "incivility," which meant conduct not common to the city, as that of awkward or embarrassed countrymen; "savage," which referred merely to the state of being free from the trammels of conventional society; "outlandish," which meant simply foreign, or outside of the land; "uncouth," which meant no worse a thing than unfamiliar; "vagabond," who was simply a wanderer; "harlot," which meant a stranger; "barbarian," which in the Greek meant a man of different nationality from the speaker; "idiot," which meant only a private person, as differentiated from office-holders; "caitiff," which meant a slave, whether good, bad or medium; and "base," "mean" and lewd," which originally carried no suggestion of moral inferiority, but were used simply to distinguish the mass of people from the gentry or clergy.

Of late the word "beast" has come to have a scornful significance, whereas primarily it meant any living being different from men. The term "knave," like the German "knabe," meant simply a boy, whether good or bad. "Blackguard" meant a scullion; "menial" was one of the household or mesnee; "minion" was a favorite; "brat" was a child, whether lovely or ugly; "imp" was a young person. Bacon, it will be remembered, in his "Pathway Unto Prayer," calls Prince Edward "that most angelic imp." "It may, of course, be," says Mr. Tucker, "that a part of the new turpitude which has gradually attached itself to all these words is attributable to the actual discovery of unexpected vices in the classes to whom they primarily referred; but it seems more probable that the terms have become odious chiefly because of their constant application to those unfortunates whom their betters have thought it proper to regard with some measure of systematic contempt. In either case, the changes in the meaning that the whole group have undergone, constitute certainly a very striking instance of the power of degradation which man's bad habits are constantly exerting upon the structure of the language that he uses."

III.

On the other hand, the tendency of inferiors to speak disrespectfully of those above them in authority or circumstance presents evidences of its workmanship upon our vocabulary. Those conceited in their pretended learning are called "pedants"; and the great schoolman, Duns Scotus, has given us the word "dunce", as a reminder of the vanity and worthlessness of his unpractical knowledge. The word "tyrant" at first meant simply an absolute ruler and was applied as well to wise and liberal rulers as to despots. "Wizard" meant a wise man until wise men so frequently turned out to be charlatans that the designation acquired a suspicious significance.

Turning now to words relating to the passions and appetites, we find "paramour," once devoid of evil import, now suggestive of a cardinal sin; "love," once reserved for sacred feelings, applied indiscriminately to things we like to eat, drink or wear, and "carouse," which meant the drinking of a health, turned into a symbol of riotous excess. "Indolence" originally signified merely a condition of freedom from pain or excitement; now it means laziness, truly a censurable habit. To be "careless," three hundred years ago, was to be free from anxiety, not culpably negligent, as now. The word "indifference" once meant impartiality.

Nowadays to "inflame," "denounce," "instigate," "conspire," abet" or "provoke" means to do that which has an evil or sinister look, but originally these verbs were just as applicable to endeavors in the most praiseworthy directions. Once, an "accomplice" meant merely a companion or colleague; to "wrangle" meant to argue decorously; and to "retaliate" or "resent" meant as frequently to give back a good deed in kind as to take "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

To "censure" was once merely to express an opinion; to "traduce," simply to blame, and not to slander. Many persons now seem to think that to "criticize" involves the duty of picking at flaws and remaining silent as to merits. To "prevent" is really to get ahead of, or to precede. "But alas!" exclaims our author, "those who reach first a desirable goal are so wont to take advantage of their position, not to help others get there too, but to block the way if possible that the verb which ought only to describe the arrival of the first-comers in advance of the rest, is now understood as implying also their doing their best they can to monopolize the good fortune and 'prevent' others from sharing it." In similar fashion, "rivals," which meant partners or co-laborers, now means a conflict of interest.

IV.

The foregoing are only a few random citations from a chapter of rare interest to all students of the English language. Other chapters in Mr. Tucker's book are equally interesting and instructive. We bid adieu to this volume for the present, only upon condition that we may return to its consideration at some future time when space and leisure shall enable us to do it better justice.

L. S. R.

THE MAGAZINES.

For Oct. 1 the Chap-Book appears in a new cover, of Beardsleyesque design, representing a low-browed woman of ungainly proportions sitting upon a bench and gazing in reverie upward at an angle of forty-five degrees. The perpetrator of this cover drawing is Frank Hazenplug. More to the point is John Bennett's graceful poem, "In a Rose Garden," which we quote:

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We will not care at all.
It will not matter then a whit,
The honey or the gall.
The summer days that we have known
Will all forgotten be, and flown;
The garden will be overgrown
Where now the roses fall.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We will not mind the pain,
The throbbing, crimson tide of life
Will not have left a stain.
The song we sing together, dear,
Will mean no more than means a tear
Amid a summer rain.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
The grief will all be o'er;
The sea of care will surge in vain
Upon a careless shore.
These glasses we turn down today
Here at the parting of the way:
We will be wineless then as they,
And will not mind it more.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We'll neither know nor care
What came of all life's bitterness
Or followed love's despair.
Then fill the glasses up again
And kiss me through the rose-leaf rain;
We'll build one castle now in Spain
And dream one more dream there.

Before we dismiss this issue of Chap-Book a word should be said in praise of Dawson Watson's drawing in three colors of a girl with wind-tossed tresses standing upon the cliff-like shore with face turned seaward. In every particular except the girl's face this conception is admirably done; but the face needs a veil.

Easily the paramount achievement in Chips for October—that clever little Gotham publication which, after Nov. 1, will be issued weekly—is E. C. Burling's portrait of Bret Harte, which appears in white against a black background representing an ace of hearts obscuring a cabin in the gulch; while in the foreground are daisies, clover blossoms and honey bees. The portrait is finely typical of its subject and deserves to be preserved. A portrait in black-and-white of Hall Caine by James Brevort Cox is beautiful in conception and delicate in finish but faulty in its adjustment of light and shade. The literary contents of this issue of Chips comprises several readable sketches and verses, of which Louis How's imitation of one of Mary E. Wilkins' New England stories impresses us as the cleverest.

A McLaren story, a gossipy study of Maeterlinck, the new Belgian apostle of the occult in art, and a forecast of Zola's forthcoming novel, "Rome," are some of the special features of the October Bookman, to which, of course, are added its usual popular departments that keep one in touch with the world of current literature. The McLaren story alone is worth the price of admission. How Watson does sweep the strings that control the tear-ducts!

Of the 10-cent magazines, we suspect that the Cosmopolitan has, this month, a shade the best of the competition. Its Kipling jungle story, concluding that wonderful series of impossible Mowgli tales in which the gifted Rudyard demonstrates his entire supremacy over facts; Hopkinson Smith's quaint story, "Jonathan," with Kemble's quainter pictures; Frank Clark's timely paper on modern Cuba, and Elizabeth Cardozo's unique conceit which she calls "The Pursuit of Happiness" form a list of "features" that carries weight.

McClure's, however, is a close second; and only for the fact that its Hope and Weyman stories had been anticipated in the newspapers would easily have ranked first. Its portraits of General Miles, the Creelman article narrating the interesting history of the London Times; "Edmund Kirke's" recollections of the New York Tribune's experience during the draft riots, and Theodore Roosevelt's vigorous article on Sunday closing are salient items in an attractive table of contents, which further contains a strong Drumtochty story by McLaren.

Munsey's, for October, supplies a varied pictorial spread and maintains its departments admirably. There is no doubt that Munsey's is reaching the great mass of readers whose tastes trend rather in the direction of the Sunday newspaper than in that of the conventional, old-style magazine.

LITERARY GOSSIP.

Ordinarily a popular author of fiction sells the serial rights of his work to a magazine and then publishes it in book form afterward; but Frank R. Stockton has flatly declined to follow this custom with his new novel, "The Adventures of Captain Horn." He says: "I have been asked so often why this story was not first published in serial form, that I will here say that not only would the story have been very long for magazine use; but but that I did not consider its nature adapted to monthly publication. I believed that, if people were interested in this story, they would want to go on and read it, and not stop in the middle of an adventure and wait a month to see what could happen next. For this reason, therefore, I deemed it wise to publish the story at once in book form.

Mr. Stockton's remarks suggest to the Philadelphia Bulletin the query whether the serial style of publication is the best, after all, and it remarks: "From an author's point of view, it is scarcely open to discussion; he is not only assured of an immediate market for his work, but, if he retains the copyright, may reap additional profit by publishing it in book form afterward; but how about the artistic effect, on which Mr. Stockton appears to lay stress? Is it heightened or lowered by leaving the heroine clinging to a precipice for a whole month, until the next instalment brings the hero to her rescue? We think the effect of this treatment is to turn the dramatic into the melodramatic and make that sensational which should be emotional. Only the sensational passages linger in the reader's mind, and by the next instalment of the story is received the details on which the beauty of the whole may depend are forgotten and only the unlovely outline remains. It may be questioned, too, whether the serial story has not lost its commercial value to a great extent. Of course, there are exceptions. Stories like Du Maurier's 'Trilby'—and we think Mr. Stockton's 'Captain Horn,' would come in the same category—take such strong possession of the reader's mind that they are retained from month to month and effort is made, if necessary, to secure their successive instalments; but there are only one or two such stories in a year, and as for the others, there is a pretty general tendency among readers to let them go and await their appearance in complete form; being content, meanwhile, to read some of the innumerable volumes that are continually issuing from the press. There are many indications that the day of the continued story is waning rapidly."

Some one with leisure to follow a delicate quarry should devote himself to the genealogy of slang or to illustrations of what is nothing else than slang in the classics. For instance, "We shall smile" is in Julius Caesar, "I have been here before" is in Rossetti's "Sudden Light" and "We give ourselves away" is in Mr. Aldrich's sonnet on sleep.

There is in the October Bookman an agreeable epigram of journalistic application. "The Sun and the Evening Post," it says, "are probably the most individual journals that are anywhere published. People read them even when they disapprove of their utterances, and read them all the more carefully when they disapprove. It is curious that while their general standpoints are diametrically opposed to one another, the general effect which they make upon the mind of the reader is pretty much the same—a fact which gives point to an epigram ascribed to a well-known jurist, and which we here set down with apologies to the respective editors, who can themselves hardly fail to be amused by it. The aforesaid jurist having heard one of his friends denouncing the general demoralization of New York, broke in with, 'Well, what can you expect of a city with two such leading newspapers—the Sun in the morning making vice attractive, and the Post in the evening making virtue odious!' "

Speaking of epigrams, two by Mme. Barrotin, recently published, are clever:

"The invention of the piano derives its chief importance from the fact that it it has so immensely enhanced the value of silence."

"In traveling, an Englishman wants to see everything, a Frenchman to attempt everything, and a German to swallow everything."

A. B. Frost has been engaged for a long time upon a series of one hundred and twelve illustrations for the original Uncle Remus, by Joel Chandler Harris, which has been revised by the author, and is to appear shortly in new dress as one of the leading illustrated standard books of the year. It is said that the pictures, which include a gallery of negro types as well as quaint and delightful studies of Brer Rabbit and his friends, represent the most striking and original work which has been done in this field. This fascinating book is to be published shortly by D. Appleton & Co.

"In Defiance of the King" is the title of an American historical romance by a new writer, who is said to show great promise—Chauncey C. Hotchkiss. In this romance there is unfolded a stirring tale of patriotic adventure ranging from Lexington, the burning of Norwalk, the British occupation of Long Island, and thrilling experiences on Long Island Sound, to Benedict Arnold's descent on New London, and the massacre at Fort Griswold. It is a book to appeal to Americans as a vivid picture of Revolutionary scenes, while the love story which is interwoven will be found a singularly charming idyl. "In Defiance of the King" is to be published immediately by D. Appleton & Co.

AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS:

Henry Tyrrell, editor of Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, has written a play in which Edgar Allen Poe is the hero.

Fresh pond, a beautiful sheet of water in a park about a mile from the home of the late James Russell Lowell, is to be rechristened Lowell pond.

Mme. Taine, with the assistance of her daughter, is putting the finishing touches to the memoirs and correspondence of her husband, the brilliant historian of English literature.

An American who saw Ibsen at a court ball in Norway, recently, says that the author's small figure fairly blazed with stars, crosses, collars, pendants and other decorations of all kinds from all sources.

The most curious book ever written is Pere Berruger's "Improvements on the Bible." He rewrote the Scriptures in the style of a fashionable novel, stating in his preface that Moses and the other writers are too barren in their description.

At the recent sale of the first portion of the library of George A. Sala seven volumes of Burke's works and nine of Pope's went for a shilling. The total realized for the 8,000 volumes was only $4,258. Many of the volumes were handsomely bound.

Herbert Spencer, who was one of the three men, outside of Germany, who were recently appointed by Emperor William knights of the Ordre pour le Merite, has declined the honor on the ground that his opinions, repeatedly expressed in his writings, debar him from accepting it.

Mary Cowden Clarke, the author of the "Concordance to Shakespeare," will in June next be 86 years old. Douglass Jerrold once complimented her in this way: "On your first arrival in paradise, madam, you must expect a kiss from Shakespeare, even though your husband should happen to be there."

F. Frankfort Moore, the novelist, has been trying his hand at a play. "Kitty Clive" is its title and it is a dramatization of a magazine story published not long ago by the author in the Pall Mall Gazette. Mr. Moore is a quick writer. His new book, "The Sale of a Soul," was written in eight days. This young man was born in Ireland and he is an accomplished journalist and something of a traveler.

W. B. Yeats, the young Irish poet, is mentioned as reminding one of Stevenson. He wears a scarlet sash and a sombrero in the Dublin streets and has "a tall, willowy frame with the tint in his cheeks of the wild olive." And if you stop in the street this mixture of olive and the willow, with a question as to the weather, behold he will "dreamily spin you a fable out of the Celtic twilight or reel off a sad-toned sonnet."

MR. AND MRS. RISING.

From the Times-Herald.

"We've beaten the Englishman, Em'ly," Mr. Rising announced triumphantly.

"What Englishman, John?" asked Mrs. Rising, a trifle absent-mindedly.

"The one we've been racing with."

"Where were we racing with him, John?"

"Along the seaboard," Mr. Rising responded, with a jauntily nautical air.

"That seems to be a funny place to run races," said Mrs. Rising, thoughtfully. "Isn't it very narrow?"

"The Englishman though we didn't give him enough room, but that was because we had him fast in a tight place, I guess," Mr. Rising answered with a patriotic chuckle.

"Then I should think they'd get a wider place," continued Mrs. Rising.

"Sometimes they do, Em'ly, make a triangular course, and run on one leg at a time," explained Mr. Rising, like a very son of Neptune.

"Do they run much that way?"

"About as much as any way, Em'ly."

"I should thing it would be awful hard to run on one leg any length of time, John; how long do they do it?" and Mrs. Rising looked at Mr. Rising for further information.

"As long as the leg holds out, Em'ly, then they come back on another one, you see. The Englishman said the excursion boats crowded him, but I don't see how they could crowd him without crowding us too."

Mrs. Rising felt that there were many things she didn't see, but she had no intention of giving up the ship, so she took another tack, and came up in her hazy course, with the question:

"Where were the boats, John?"

"Which boats, Em'ly?"

"The ones that crowded the Englishman."

"Oh! sailing about everywhere."

"Was the water deep enough for that, John?"

"Well, I should say so, down New York bay and out in the Atlantic ocean," replied the inland mariner.

"Did the Englishman run as far as that?" queried the indefatigable Mrs. Rising.

"He ran that twice, Em'ly, but he wouldn't run the third time, only made a start."

"But I though the Englishman was running along the seaboard," hazarded Mrs. Rising, from the general confusion of her ideas.

"So he was, Em'ly, but now he's running for home, so to speak," and Mr. Rising assumed a position of ease by occupying two chairs at once.

Mrs. Rising regarded her liege lord with an air of troubled thought, but before she was able to ask another question an odor of burning distracted her mind, and she left the room hastily to ascertain the cause.

Mr. Rising regarded his tan shoes with approval, while he whistled,

"A life on the ocean wave."

"The bookmakers are having a hard time this season. Been turned down everywhere. Even Indiana won't have 'em," remarked Mr. Rising, as he laid aside his paper.

"What's the matter with them, John?" asked Mrs. Rising, who was sewing a button on Mr. Rising's last season's light-weight overcoat.

"Oh, they're a good enough lot of fellows, I think, but the law's against 'em, and so they've got to go," asserted Mr. Rising, easily.

"Go where?" inquired Mrs. Rising, biting her thread off with her pretty teeth.

"Anywhere, anywhere, out in the world," Mr. Rising replied, with a feeling that he was really poetical.

"Where were they before, John?"

"All over," responded Mr. Rising, with broad generality, "the woods were full of 'em, but Hawthorne was the best known—perhaps."

"Seems to me when I was in the high school I heard something about him. Didn't he make a book about mosses?" queried Mrs. Rising, reflectively.

"Hawthorne's a place, goosey," genially corrected Mr. Rising, "and there's no moss grown there, but maybe it does now, the odds are in its favor."

"I though he was a man who made books," said Mrs. Rising, groping in the recesses of her memory.

"No, he's a place where books were made, Mrs. Rising, but his day is over and he's a back number. If there are any books made this fall they will be made at Roby," alleged Mr. Rising, confidentially.

"Why, John, are all books made at one place?" queried Mrs. Rising, surprised by this definite statement.

"Just now, Em'ly, public opinion is against the whole business—at least so the newspapers say—and so the bookmakers are taking mighty few chances," and Mr. Rising stood up, preparatory to leaving his domicile.

"Well, John, the newspapers will hold out, won't they, even if the books aren't being made? I don't know what you'd do without your daily," and Mrs. Rising looked apprehensively at Mr. Rising.

"I never made any book, Em'ly, and as to tips, I may place a little now and then, but not on what the papers say. I'm too old a bird for that," and Mr. Rising cocked his hat on one side as he strode down the street.

"I'm just sure Hawthorne's a man," said Mrs. Rising, as she watched him out of sight, "and I'll ask Bill Jones' wife about it the first chance I get. Men are always awfully sure they know it all."

SOME TIMELY RHYMES.

A Sweet Little Chinese Tale.

Pish-Tush was a Chinaman who
(It is whispered, at least, as a fact)
Once wedded a maid named Pooh-Pooh,
And forever repented the act.
Close related to them
Were Tut-Tut and Ahem,
And Fi-Fi was a relative, too.

Whenever Pish-Tush said "Pooh-Pooh!"
She would think he was angry and weep;
When she murmured "Pish-Tush!" then anew
She wept, for his anger was deep;
And they grew, after years,
So accustomed to tears
That they christened the baby "Boo-Hoo!"
—Nannie F. Maclean in Harper's Bazar.

Heard During the Late Hot Wave.

Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight,
And let me be cold again, just for tonight.
Turn backward, O time, just about half a year,
And give me a chill or a frostbitten ear.
—Philadelphia Record.

One Reason for Thankfulness.

There's the mannish new woman and the smart new woman,
And the new woman awfully rude,
But let us thank heaven that up to date no man
Has discovered a new woman dude.
—Indianapolis Journal.

The Price You Pay.

When you set yourself up by your brains, luck or pluck,
Just above the dead level of men,
You have merely begun on the fight of your life,
For the envious aim at you then.
—Chicago Times-Herald.

New Women.

Their two souls hold a single thought,
As one their two hearts beat;
Each yearns for what may there be bought—
Each wonders which will treat.
—New York Truth.

It Is Going Up, Too.

'Tis not the winter's cold I dread;
Ah, nay; not so in any wise;
But winter's coal is what my head
Is bothered with as autumn flies.

A Scientific Warning.

"Mother, may I go out to spoon?"
"Oh, yes, my darling daughter;
But don't forget to take along
Your carbolized rose water."

Alas.

No blessing but may be a curse,
No thornless rose there be,
No trousers worthy of the name
That bags not at the knee.

News of the Green Room and Foyer.

Some of the More Important Doings of These, Our Actors.

For much the same reason that the baseball directors invariably prefer as the manager of their nine one who is also a player, Lyman B. Grover pleads for a player-manager in theatrical affairs. In his opinion the ordinary manager is "the worst possible judge of plays. And why should he not be thus distinguished? His function is that of financier and arranger extraordinary of business details. Neither by training nor education is he capable of determining the art and dramatic aspects of a literary product. He would be quite as much at home with a case of appendicitis or a problem in constitutional law. On the principle that the jack of all trades is master of none, the manager who knows all about routes, printing, railroad contracts, advertising, salaries, rent, percentages, and such matters in general, is quite well enough informed for one man. No pent-up Utica contracts his powers. His work is laid out for him in such ample measure, particularly if he has a dozen companies to look after, that it is quite impossible to add the burden of play examiner, drill master for the actors and artistic producer of plays in general. These are a distinct and important—the most important—branch of a difficult profession, and no man who does not possess the soul of an actor and the taste of an artist can hope to succeed in handling the necessary details with skill and discretion. The actor-manager is the legitimate solution of the whole matter. Leaving bill posting and mere financial details to the business manager, he can apply an artistic instinct to the selection and production of plays with reasonable expectation of success. Henry Irving, Willard, Beerbohm Tree, Wyndham, Toole, Barrett and the Kendals belong to the English contingent of actor-managers who have fully demonstrated this theory. Richard Mansfield, Otis Skinner, the Tabers and other producers are adding American testimony to the same conclusion."

The same excellent writer, in his weekly budget in the Chicago Times-Herald, thus pointedly discusses the recent failure of the imported sex-problem play, "John-a-Dreams": "Respectable human beings—and most of those who attend the theater may be called respectable—are not necessarily absorbed in the vagaries of opium fiends and Magdalens of all sorts and conditions, from the defiant and unrepentent Mrs. Tanqueray to the sorrowful Kate of "John-a-Dreams," who never feels quite easy in her own mind unless she is confessing to some one the sins of her past. Those who are afraid that some one will purify the drama when they are not looking, and thus deprive them of ravishing studies in garbage box philosophy, need not waste any tears over the narrowness of decency. If they wish to take refuge in the dramatic slums and cry aloud that the exhibitions of vice and vicious people is for the healing of the nations, no one will object. There is no law forbidding distempered people to find beautiful perspectives in muck heaps, but it is altogether too much to insist that sensible and wholesome persons shall sympathize with them in their visions. Plays of the 'John-a-Dreams' class are chiefly objectionable on account of their utter worthlessness. They do not hold the mirror up to nature either in point of character or incident, but are strained, artificial and often ridiculous, developing false theories of life and offering the shadow of social philosophy in place of its substance. The building of a play around morbid and hectic characters, solely for the purpose of exhibiting those characters, is vicious and unwholesome work, particularly so when the play is essentially weak, incoherent and shiftless."

De Wolf Hopper tells an amusing story of Alfred Klein, the diminutive comedian of his company. When both were members of the McCaull Opera company, 'Falka' was produced, and at the end of the second act a wild and delirious dance was indulged in by Hopper and Klein. This effort achieved such enormous success that the curtain was rung up four times after the act, with, of course, a different dance each time. Hopper was by no means prepared for this success, and in the excitement of the moment, inventing haphazard, as he had to, he flung the little roly-poly, Klein, through space in a way that threatened the absolute collapse of said Klein. Hopper went to his dressing-room after this, and in his calmer moments realized that if he hadn't killed Klein, he had come very near it. At this instant he heard his miniature partner coming up the stairs in a very labored fashion, and he immediately settled down and prepared himself for a profound kick. Klein eventually appeared at the door of the dressing-room, with Niagaras of perspiration flowing from him, and paralyzed Mr. Hopper with the remark: "Gee whizz, Hopper, I had no idea there was so much in my part before."

This is how the New York Herald comments on the premiere performance, the other evening, of "The Gay Parisians," a Frohman production of pretentious character: "Whether it is seven or eight thousand times that farces have been built around the idea of a jealous wife who seeks to revenge her husband's neglect by imitating his reprehensible conduct, there are no statistics at hand to show, but every persistent theater-goer has seen at least a hundred of them, some rough and noisy, others gravely intent on teaching something or other which ail the world would admit as a self-evident proposition. That another has been added to the list does no particular harm. The present specimen, like so many of its predecessors, begins with the quarrel between a young husband and wife, and then the inevitable best friend suggests retaliation in kind to the injured wife. The suggestion is, of course, accepted and away go she and the friend to that familiar restaurant, where the characters in the play chase each other through doors and up and down stairways until each of them has acquired the name of somebody else and a general cataclysm is impending. This all happened in the regular way and such observers as had not seen such happenings on too many other stages, were amused more than a little. They even laughed when Mr. Ferguson, who played the tempter's role, was made ill by the smoking of a long cigar. Fortunately he disappeared through one of the many doors just before his nausea became uncontrollable. A raid by the police brought events to a climax soon after his recovery and return, and then all the mistakes as to identity were either confirmed or cleared away to everybody's satisfaction."

Upon the arrival of Comstock's monster minstrels in this city today the entire company will alight from their special train to the beat of drums. They will be costumed in neat white caps and capes, and will march in a body to the Frothingham theater. Here they will disband. At 11.45 they will assemble at the theater and don their uniforms for the main parade. The great parade will be led by two mounted buglers dressed in marroon and gold, followed by two white women in striking bloomer costumes, also mounted on horses. The parade will be over 1,000 feet in length and the music will be furnished by three brass bands, fife and drum corps. No one should miss seeing this great noon-day street spectacle.

The recent New York success, "Lost—2 Hours," a three-act society comedy, with Robert Hilliard in the leading part, will be the attraction at the Academy of Music next Tuesday evening, Oct. 8. The scenes of this new comedy are laid in New York city. Mr. Hilliard's role is that of an old-time clubman, whose adventures, it is asserted, create no little genuine amusement. The characters in the piece are said to have been drawn with much firmness and originality, with no little ingenuity displayed in the construction of the piece. The stage settings, it is promised, will be unusually handsome. Mr. Hilliard will be supported by Grant Stewart, Cecil Butler, Harry Rogers, C. Stuart Johnson, Howard Adams, Madeline Bouton, Maud White, Sydney Cowell, Daisy Dixon and Ethel Vallerie.

Those persons who miss the performance of the "Merchant of Venice" Wednesday night are apt to feel mighty sorry. They ought to be, too. They never had such a chance to witness such a delightful performance of a Shakespearean play. It will be acted by three stars and a well nigh perfect company of players. Its all-around excellence is what makes the show both popular and pleasing. The stars are Charles B. Hanford, Elihu R. Spencer and Nora O'Brien. To their fingertips they are artistic. The secondary as well as the minor characters will be acted in the same intelligent, graceful, forceful fashion, and the scenery, which illustrates the play, is superb; so are the gowns and costumes. The scenery pictures Venice in the olden time.

The "Corsican Brothers," a play in which many of the first actors of the country have played the leading role, presented by a company headed by Harrison J. Wolfe, an actor of sterling worth and reputation, will be the attraction at Davis' on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday next. Very flattering notices have been given of the ability of Mr. Wolfe, and we have assurance that a fine performance may be expected.

CHATTER ABOUT THE STARS:

Lole Fuller will begin her American tour in November.

Alberta Gallatin is Thomas Keene's new leading woman. She used to play with Mansfield.

"On the Mississippi" will open its second season Oct. 7 in Philadelphia.

Charles H. Hoyt has secured Ada Dore for the role of the burlesque queen in "A Black Sheep."

Frederic de Belleville will be Miss Lillian Walrath's leading man in the new play, "Honor."

Marion Crawford's story "A Cigarette Maker's Romance," is being dramatized by Charles Hannan.

John Drew has a new play entitled "The Haven of Content," by Malcolm Watson, brother of the designer of Valkyrie III.

A new 10-minute burlesque on "Trilby" added to the second act of "The Hustler" has made a great hit wherever that piece has appeared.

A. H. Canby, Francis Wilson's manager, is authority for the statement that within the seven years Mr. Wilson has been a comic opera star he has spent $140,000 on productions.

Edward Vroom has received from Francis Coppee the sketches of the scenery and costumes used at the Odeon theater, Paris, in "For the Crown," which Vroom is to produce.

James O'Neill has been playing "Virginius" with a walking stick. A critic attacked this innovation, and then found out it was in consequence of a recent injury to the star's knee pan.

"The Bostonians," with Jessie Bartlett Davis, Eugene Cowles, Barnabee and MacDonald in the cast and also a number of new members, have begun their season. They are rehearsing a new opera, which has the quaint title "A War Time Wedding."

Charles B. Hanford, Elihu R. Spencer, and Nora O'Brien have engaged a quartette as a feature of their performance of "The Merchant of Venice" and have named it the Loretta quartette in honor of the Loretta convent, of which Miss O'Brien is a loyal alumna.

According to a gentleman well versed in matters theatrical in Germany, and who has just returned from Berlin, "Trilby" stands no chance of being performed in Berlin or any other German city. "The managers there all read it," he said, "and don't want it." This is curious, as showing the difference in taste between American and German audiences.

Hoyt & McKee announce for this season "A Contented Woman," in which Caroline Miskel Hoyt will be the chief figure; "A Black Sheep," presenting Otis Harlan; "A Trip to Chinatown," in which Harry Connor continues; "A Runaway Colt," in which Captain Anson, of the Chicago base ball club, will be an interesting personage, and "A Milk White Flag."

John T. Malone has written a paper for the October number of The Forum entitled "The Actor, the Manager, and the Public." Mr. Malone in this article explains the reasons which have led to the present condition of the stage in the United States, blames the manager for many of the evils which have befallen the actor and suggests the revival of the stock company as a remedy.

Whistler, the artist, once sat at the theater next to a lady who was going in and out of her seat constantly, not only as soon as each act was finished, but also while the play was going on. The space between the rows of seats was very narrow and the artist was subjected to much annoyance as she passed him. "Madam," he said at length in his sweet tones, "I trust I do not incommode you by keeping my seat?"