

Of and About the Makers of Books.

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

MISCELLANEOUS.

FROM WALL STREET TO NEWGATE VIA THE PRINCIPLES WAY. By Austin B. Bidwell. 50 pages, 40 full page illustrations. Rarely does a journalist have a book to review so striking as this one. It is the story of a wrecked life, wrecked when its bark had scarcely more than entered the stream, wrecked with every circumstance of terror and disaster which seemed to declare that the wreck was total and hopeless, and yet in spite of every obstacle, the wreck has been raised and is once more bravely facing the billows.

Few men ever started in life with brighter prospects than Austin Bidwell, and yet before he was 25 years old he was flung into a prison cell that his life might rot away under a sentence of perpetual imprisonment for a fraud on the bank of England. Terrible was the penalty exacted from him for his sin. Few men forgive injuries. With pitiless fury did those who injured him seek to avenge their wrongs. At last it was over. He came back with whitened hair, but strong and full of high resolve, determined to show young men the pitfalls opened before them, and to prove to them as no professed teacher ever could the truth which the young are apt to mock but which the older among us know to be true, that in the world of wrongs doing success is faster than the good written in a style and with a nerve which keeps the reader in breathless interest throughout. The following extracts will give an idea of the author's style and sentiments.

Today there is not a criminal but who, at the start, looked forward to the time when he would no longer be against society, but would be one of its members in peace with all men. But when one comes to think of it, what a fool's game is that of a man who has committed a crime. He has but two arms, very short and weak they are, and of flesh, too. He has but two eyes, and they are not so good as those of the nearest crowd, while society has a million arms of steel that can reach around the world, and a million eyes which are never closed, that can pierce the thickest gloom of mortal concealment. The poor unhappy criminal by fortunate dexterity may escape for a little, but at last society will find him out on him, and with giant force hurl him into a dungeon.

What were my good resolutions and what had become of them? Why, they, under the effect of the wine and the magnetic influence of the doctor, had gone flying down the bay, and under a favoring gale were fast speeding seaward beyond the ken of mortal eyes, to be found by me again until years after, when, with the tolls about me, I found myself in Newgate. Then the fugitive all came back, this time to stay. Page 55. Let no man who may be tempted to commit a crime think that he will stop until he reaches the bottom. For this history is a handwriting on the wall, full of warning to all and every who may be tempted to take one step in any other path than the path of honor—Page 57.

May readers of the book find in professional ranks speak of it in the strongest terms. It certainly is a wonderful work, one which, while the old will read with the greatest interest, ought to be everywhere placed in the hands of the young.

LITERARY GOSSIP.

Americans are now "staring up" as we say, the personality of Mr. Hall Caine. The general opinion, bolder down, seems to be, says a writer in the Philadelphia Post, that he is a sensitive, warm-hearted, whimsical, charming sort of fellow, full of courtesy and good nature, and that he might do for a starved fanatic. He was largely entertained in Philadelphia and came back at once to the Philadelphia paper men who met him, having been introduced as the foremost reporter of the day. But the Philadelphia Post, an exclusive Art club thought him queer. Mr. Megargee, of the Times, toils why. After swapping the story with three newspaper men he was warned that he must go to an Art club reception, given in his honor. He unrolled himself, and a sigh, from the depths of his chair and remarked:

How must you up and shake hands with a lot of women I never saw before, and will never see again.

The author of "The Manxman" visited the cell of H. J. Holmes. When he came away he said: "The interior affected me very much. After we had talked a little the tears came to his eyes and his voice choked. That was too much for me. I broke down and had to leave. Understand me, I am not in any way pleading for him, nor would I give my vote for the hand of justice. But God, I walked away I said to myself, 'Thank God, I am a judge. I could never do it.'"

Certain unjust criticisms have been made upon a recently published work of Hall Caine. It is said that he is guilty of plagiarizing from himself, as it were, the "plot" of his story, appearing again, scarcely disguised, in the latter part of the book. The author, however, writes long ago. Of it "The Dreamer" is an elaboration. Mr. Caine's story was that it was to be reprinted, and he would have prevented it if he could.

Reminiscences of Eugene Field yet abound. In the Times-Herald Nellie S. Yonowine tells us that when she was visiting Mr. and Mrs. Field at their home in Buena Park, and on our way back to the city she was asked to call at a wholesale toy store to get some little things for the babies, as he never went without something for them. Among the things he ordered were a dozen medium sized bisbis dolls. I said: "What are you going to do with those dolls?" He answered: "Oh, I like to have them, so whenever any little girls come out to see me I can give them one. Everyone knows he was always thoughtful of the little ones. He enjoyed toys as much as any child and had a very large and unique collection of dolls. I shall never forget when he reached Louisville two years ago on his way back from New Orleans. When I met him at the station he appeared with many bags, boxes and bundles, all containing queer things which had been given him or he had acquired while in the sunny clime he loved so well. In one box was an alligator, which he received as much care as a child. The queerest of all was what looked like a healthy baby about two years old, wrapped up tightly in a big shawl, making a large bundle. From one end hung two dolls developed. They were life-like legs and feet, neatly incased in little brown slippers and the conventional socks. This proved to be a large rag doll such as they make in New Orleans. It certainly was most realistic, and created any amount of excitement about the station, for people thought, as they say in the south, that it was "sure enough baby." Mr. Field was perfectly oblivious to the consternation he was creating and went serenely on in his own peculiar way.

At one time he made a several weeks' stay in an old Kentucky farm. He loved it there; the simplicity and sweet hospitality of the people of the surrounding country charmed him. He had only been there a few days when all the live stock on the place, from chickens up, would follow him everywhere. He kept a constant supply of shelled corn in his pocket. He was told one day before he left the farm that there was a nice turkey fowl of our national bird. He said: "I don't know if it is a turkey or not, but I'll take it; I could eat that turkey and watch it strut around it. It is needless to say the turkey was killed. The next day he wanted the bird and carried it home. The little boy asked him where he was going. "Never mind," he said, "you will know when I perform." During the course of few weeks he returned, bringing with him a big turkey gobbler and two hens, which he named Augustus, Adeline and Hattie.

"Then you know nothing about music," the young lady retorted. "Oh, yes," he began, discussing familiarly with the art he began to discuss counterpoint and to prove that Leoncavallo's music was worthless. As for its originality, he said it was stolen from Bisset, that one from Beethoven. In short, he would not allow a single good point in the opera and his neighbor listened sullenly, and when he was in prison. At last, when the performance closed she asked: "And is this your real opinion?"

"Certainly," he said, and with a slight bend of the head the lady turned away. The next morning at breakfast the composer was glancing over the columns of the daily paper when his eye rested on his own name. "Leoncavallo's opinion of his 'Pagliacci' and he read words to the effect that he had said to his fair neighbor the evening before. He had been seated next to the musical critic of the paper and she had revenged herself upon him.

A Reminiscence of Eugene Field. They tell a story of Field in Kansas City which shows the quickness of his invention and the earnest kindness of his heart. It was told to me by one of his old friends, just after the paper was "up." On the other side of the street his attention was called to a row of heavily loaded printers and despite their maudlin exhortations was dragging them to the battle. Field's kind heart bled for the poor printers. They were on his paper, too.

An idea seized him. His room was near at hand, and he hurriedly climbed the stairs to the third story, which was uninhabited, and standing near the open window he shrieked: "Murder! murder! help! help!" and all in a sudden he was in the street. The policeman in charge of the very unhappy printers stopped irresolute. Very evidently a woman was being murdered. Should he go to her rescue, or should he have on to his drunken prisoners. It took only a moment to decide. He cast the two followers of Benjamin Franklin from him and flew swiftly to the rescue. For the sake of the printer who was in bed and apparently sound asleep.

It cost Charles Frohman thousands of dollars to produce "The Masqueraders" in a season. The play, which was a great success achieved there, where it ran for eight months, cost him \$5,000 more. The latter expense was not reckoned on in the first estimates for the production, which can be explained as follows: The play was signed a contract with Bronson Howard to produce in the Empire last January a new American comedy which Mr. Howard was writing. He had signed that he would be in possession of such an extraordinary triumph as Henry Arthur Jones' drama turned out to be. After "The Masqueraders" had been running for several weeks in New York, the editor of Harper's Weekly, at the end of the third act both went into Mr. Frohman's office and told him that they had a great and great success. Mr. Howard added: "I see at once that in justice to yourself, Mr. Frohman, you cannot produce my play at this house during the present season." Then Mr. Howard agreed to accept \$5,000 in satisfaction of his contract. "The Masqueraders" will be presented at the Academy this evening and a large and fashionable house may be looked for.

Stetson's company, under the management of W. W. Brown, will present "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at the Academy Monday evening. In the third act the landing of the boat, "R. E. Lee," and the happy darkness working on the level and the chief eye-earful presentation into the river and her rescue by Tom is a life picture. Between the acts Stetson's uniformed band, which is mostly composed of the members of the southern pastimes. Previous to a performance the company gives a street parade.

"The Girl I Left Behind Me," which is to be produced at the Academy on Tuesday evening may be described as an American drama in the style of "The Girl I Left Behind Me" is considered the best combined work of its authors, David Belasco and Franklin Fyles.

On Wednesday evening of next week Robert Mantell, who is, by all odds, the best romantic actor on the American stage, will be seen at the Academy in "The Husband," a strong society drama by Espy Williams, the author of "The Queen's Garter." Mr. Mantell, who is a great favorite in this city, having been here before in "The Corsican Brothers" and "Monbars," and his coming here will be hailed with delight by lovers of flash acting.

The "Two Old Cronies," presented by John B. Willis and a competent supporting cast, will be given on the next three days of next week at Davis' theater. This play was always a glittered one, and was presented here some years ago, at full standard prices, several times. It is of the nature of a series of burlesques on such reigning hits as "Tribby," "Sans Gen," "Rob Roy," "The Magic Mine," "The Little Trooper," "Robin Hood" and the like.

Here is what Leslie Whitacre had to say of Frank Daniels' Gotham debut: A new comedian has struck Broadway. He is short, fat, pudgy, but wonderfully droll, and he has accomplished the Herculean task of making a Broadway audience laugh for 160 consecutive minutes. Perhaps they never was a more severe commentary on the provincialism of these Broadway theatregoers than the fact that after the first act of "The Wizard of the Nile," at the Casino, not one but many members of the first-night audience exclaimed: "Who is Frank Daniels, anyway? I never heard of him before, but he is great!" And this, if you please, was after a comedian who has been before the public for more years than he would have to count. At the Fourteenth Street and the other combination theaters Daniels has been a great favorite for several years. Who that has seen his "Little Puck" will forget his impersonation of the hero of Ansley's topey-topsy tale. But to me, who have seen him perform in the theater is one thing, and to appear at a Broadway playhouse is quite another, so many a good actor knows

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