

The artist has succeeded wonderfully with his candle-light effect, in which he showed himself an adept at the "New" last summer; he has also managed to convey the prettiness and youth of his heroine, in spite of the startled expression that she wears.

The other most noteworthy picture is by the President, Sir James Linton, and is the most interesting I have seen from his hand. It is called "Portia" (No. 281). This is a picture which will be pretty sure to call forth discussion; no two persons will agree as to whether Portia is pretty or no. It is painted in deliberate and conscious imitation of the Raffaele School of portrait painting. The lighting of the face, the treatment of the lips, the hair, and the modelling of the nose—all most admirably give the desired impression. The model must, I should think, be an Italian. There is a subtle gleam of fun dancing in the long eyes, and the face decidedly conveys the idea that Portia was a very clever woman, which no doubt she was.

I have left myself no room for more this week, but shall hope to mention several other pictures next time; there is much good landscape that calls for remark.

G. M. R.

The Drama.

SIR AUGUSTUS HARRIS has scored another great success in his latest Nineteenth Century Drama, "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!" at Drury Lane Theatre. The South African Mining boom is the main feature of the plot, and furnishes the authors with an admirable opportunity of depicting the whirl and excitement of colonial life at feverish periods. The stock-jobber and his devices are admirably portrayed in the course of the play, and a wily city man and unscrupulous Hebrew, though very successful at the outset, come to well-deserved grief in the end and lose their all. As in all modern melodramas, virtue is triumphant and villainy at a discount. The play is magnificently mounted throughout and the ladies' costumes, straight from the famous Worth establishment, are a new feature likely to be imitated in other plays of a like character. "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!" of which a *matinée* performance is now given twice a week, bids fair to fill "Old Drury" until the opening of the pantomime season in December.

Two Books of the Week.

"WHEN VALMOND CAME TO PONTIAC"
AND "DIALOGUES OF THE DAY."*

WHEN Shakespeare's Romeo exclaimed in his love-delirium, "What's in a name?" he was suffering from love-fever, or else he would never have asked such a question, for there is a great deal in a name, and a melodious title to a book is very attractive, and strikes the eye of a reader at once, if he is searching the columns of book advertisements in order to make out a list of names for his circulating library. Ever since I first saw the title, "When Valmond came to Pontiac" on the advertisement sheet of the *Spectator* newspaper I

* "When Valmond came to Pontiac," by Gilbert Parker. 6s. (Methuen & Co.)
"Dialogues of the Day," edited by Oswald Crawford. 5s. (Chapman & Hall.)

have been hungering with curiosity to know what *did* happen when Valmond came to Pontiac; and thus before I had read a line of the book its beguiling title had aroused pleasant expectation in my mind.

Mr. Gilbert Parker is an author whose writings are much admired in America, and magazine readers will remember him by his weird half-allegorical tales, of which the one published in—I think—the *New Review*, called "There was once a Little City" is a very good specimen.

The story of Valmond is the history of a lost Napoleon, a putative descendant of the great Emperor, who comes to stay in a little French village, and before a month is out contrives to make himself believed in and adored by all its inhabitants, and the charm of the book consists in the art with which Mr. Gilbert Parker manages to make us understand that beneath all the charlatanism of Valmond he was yet a thoroughly likeable character. One by one he conquers all his opponents, and in the end even Madame Chalice, the *patronne* of the village, loves him.

I think it would be a pity to spoil the readers' interest by revealing how Valmond acquired all the knowledge and possessions which enabled him to play the part of a descendant of Napoleon Bonaparte, but I hope that I have said enough to make them wish to read the story for themselves.

Mr. Oswald Crawford, in his preface to "Dialogues of the Day," says that "No practised writer will really think that to tell a short story in dialogue, and to make it interesting and dramatic without any help from narrative, analysis of character or description, is an easy thing. It is an extremely hard thing to do. But the particular hardship upon the author of this kind of work is that he meets with a good deal more than his just share of criticism."

The dialogues that are contained in this volume have all of them appeared previously in the pages of *Black and White*, when it was under the editorship of Mr. Oswald Crawford, and when he opened his columns as a cantering ground for young Pegasus.

The contributions by Mr. Anthony Hope and Mrs. Hugh Bell bear the hall mark of their having served an apprenticeship to the craft of writing conversations. It is a little difficult to understand why some of the others were thought worthy of re-publication. Of the whole collection I very much prefer Mrs. Hugh Bell's, which is genuinely comic. The volume is attractively bound in green canvas, and I am sorry to see was printed in Holland.

A. M. G.

Bookland.

WHAT TO READ.

"Letters of Edward Fitzgerald to Fanny Kemble (1871-1883)." Edited by William Aldis Wright, D.C.L., with portraits of Mrs. Kemble and Edward Fitzgerald.

"Icebound on Kolguev, a chapter in the Exploration of Arctic Europe," by Aubyn Trevor-Battye, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., with illustrations by J. T. Nettleship and Charles Whymper.

"Sir Richard Church in Italy and Greece: Chapters in an Adventurous Life," by E. M. Church, with photogravure portrait. (Edinburgh, Blackwood.)

"The Unclassed," a novel, by George Gissing.

"On the Threshold," a novel, by Isabella O. Ford, Author of "Miss Blake of Monkshalton."

"The Chronicles of Count Antonio," by Anthony Hope, Author of "The Prisoner of Zenda."

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