

"Claudius Clear" (Dr. Roberson Nicoll) discusses last week the question, "What Makes a Novel Successful?" in the *Bookman*. His conclusions may be summarised thus:—

"Any excellent story-teller will succeed. The power of telling a story may exist where there is no culture, no taste, no genius, no wit, and no humour. Whoever can construct a good plot, and can tell his story simply and directly, is independent of all the critics. He will always be able to command a great public.

What certifies a novel as having the power to win its way into the general heart is, beyond everything, passion, or, as it may be better expressed, depth of feeling. Charlotte Brontë's enduring fame surely rises from this. To this I attribute the attraction of Mr. Kipling.

Anything like originality, provided it is not too difficult, is a strong recommendation for a new writer.

I should for one be delighted to read really humorous books, light-hearted, irresponsible, pure humour. Anybody who can do anything in the style of the 'Pickwick Papers' is a benefactor to his kind. He may be sneered at by the critics, but he need not trouble himself about that.

I mention next heart as a great possession.

A great, perhaps the greatest, element in writing that appeals to the people is a religious faith. They like to have life drawn for them by one who believes that there is a God behind it and heaven above it.

To that the writer who merely possesses fine literary tastes and style has no chance! This is one of 'life's little ironies.'

We must offer our sincere thanks to our progressive Dutch contemporary, *Maandblad voor Ziekenverpleging*, for the very appreciative article in this month's issue, descriptive of the Nursing Exhibition lately held at St. Martin's Town Hall.

WHAT TO READ.

"Two Campaigns: Madagascar and Ashantee, 1895-6." Nearly 50 Illustrations and Maps, by Bennet Burleigh, War Correspondent to the *Daily Telegraph*. (Fisher Unwin).

"Work in Great Cities." Six Lectures on Pastoral Theology, delivered in the Divinity School, Cambridge, by the Rev. A. F. Winnington Ingram, M.A., Head of the Oxford House, and Rector of Bethnal Green. With Introduction by the Rev. Herbert E. Ryle, D.D., Hulsean Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

"Devil Worship in France; or, The Question of Lucifer: a Record of Things Seen and Heard in the Secret Societies, according to the Evidence of Initiates," by Arthur Edward Waite.

"Introduction to Sociology," by Arthur Fairbanks.

"Eighty Years Ago; or, The Recollections of an Old Army Doctor, his Adventures on the Fields of Quatre Bras and Waterloo and during the occupation of Paris, 1815," by the late Dr. Gibney, of Cheltenham. Edited by his son, Major Gibney.

"Here and There Memories," by H—R—N—. (London: Fisher Unwin).

"The Fool and his Heart," by Norreys Connel. (London: Leonard Smithers).

"A Cornish Maid," by L. Higgin.

"The Flower-seller and Other Poems," by Lady Lindsay. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co.)

"Christ in Hades," by Stephen Phillips. (Elkin Mathews).

Dramatic Notes.

"THE NOVELTY."

Le Roi est mort! Vive le Roi! is the famous motto which ought to be associated with the reproduction of "Trilby" at "The Novelty" Theatre on Monday night. We have said reproduction, but that word applies rather to the name than to the piece, since Miss V. St. Lawrence, the accomplished actress who now guides the destinies of "The Novelty," has not infringed on the rights belonging to Mr. Beerbohm Tree, but has made use of an American version of Mr. Du Maurier's delightfully-written book. To do full justice on the stage to the author's now famous story is, of course, from a literary point of view, an impossibility, since so much of its interest and piquancy depend upon the beauty of the language in which it is couched. We can safely say, however, that the actualities of the tale are not sacrificed in the version employed at "The Novelty" more than the imperative exigencies of the stage demand. As Trilby herself Miss V. St. Lawrence brought a wealth of histrionic experience to bear, which the youthful lady who so recently undertook the part at "The Haymarket" could not be expected to display. Miss St. Lawrence's performance was, throughout, of a highly-finished description, and was thoroughly appreciated by an attentive audience. To none of it, indeed, can we take any fair exception, unless it may be to the prolongation of the speech to little Billie's mother, Mrs. Bagot—played by Miss Elsie Trevor—immediately preceding Trilby's death scene, which concludes the drama.

In the well-known trio of friends, Mr. C. Lillford-Delph as Taffy, Mr. George Belmore as the Laird, and Mr. Donald Stuart as little Billie, all acquitted themselves admirably—albeit that little Billie scarcely looked young enough—and Mr. George Belmore must be congratulated upon his arrangement of the production. The skirt dance in Act II, might, perhaps, have been a little curtailed, but in this respect much allowance must be made for the taste, or rather want of taste, of a large section of the play-goers of the period! As Svengali, Mr. Trant Fischer played a good second to Mr. Beerbohm Tree, which is saying not a little, since in no part that Mr. Tree has ever played have his singular histrionic qualities been so conspicuously exhibited as in the one of which we are speaking. The entire cast deserve approbation, and it is to be hoped that Miss St. Lawrence's managerial venture may speedily earn the success which it merits. The prices of admission are certainly not "caviare to the million," and might fairly be somewhat raised in view of the class of entertainment offered.

E. G. H.

Coming Events.

July 24th.—Dental Hospital of London—Conversation, Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, 8.

July 25th.—The Duke and Duchess of York open new Infirmary at Halifax.

July 28th.—Reception of Nurses at the Bovril Co.'s Offices, 63, Bath Street, City Road, from 3 to 6. Lord Playfair and some of the Directors will receive the guests. Tea and coffee. Processes of the manufacture of Bovril will be shown.

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