

not quite decent to mention it; her opposite neighbour's lace curtains are of much more real importance; and so the gentle, wavering spirit breaks under the sudden realization of the burden of his brother's sorrows. There is no one to hold out a helping hand—wife, doctor, priest, all alike fail him; in his helpless ignorance, he grasps truth by the blade, and it cuts him to the bone.

This story is, perhaps, the best in the book, and next to it, I would place "Daisy" the last one.

The vulgar-souled villagers, who cast off a miserable girl in her shame, and then cringe to her when she has whitewashed herself, after a career on the stage, by marrying a vicious baronet, are unfortunately only too true to life; and the whole story is most admirably related, and not in the least overdone.

"The Choice of Amyntas" opens well, but I must own that I thought the end rather foolish. It is disappointing to find an author of Mr. Maugham's discrimination, degrading the name of Love into a matter of caresses and nudity. Amyntas apparently had to choose between War, Art, and Passion; surely there are other alternatives before every man, and if, as seems to be suggested at the end, we are to consider the airy little trifle as allegorical, it must be judged as either incomplete, or as showing a very low opinion of male humanity.

I like "De Amicitia" very much; the French and the Dutch atmosphere are wonderfully given; and the last chapter is too delightful.

"One night after dinner I told this story to my Aunt.

"But why on earth didn't they get married?" she asked, when I had finished.

"Good Heavens," I cried, 'it never occurred to me.'

"Well, I think they ought," she said.

"O, I have no doubt they did. I expect they got on their bikes and rode off to the consulate at Amsterdam, there and then. I'm sure it would have been his first thought."

"Of course, some girls are very queer," said my aunt."

G. M. R.

### "The Drama as a Field for Women."

THURSDAY, JUNE 29th, 1899.

Ere rhetoricians subtler and more skilled  
Shall speak of Woman's prowess in the field  
Of Art Dramatic (for our theme is this),  
Step back with me across the centuries.  
See the Globe Playhouse in Queen Bess's age,  
The flag is hoisted—rushes strew the stage,  
Tobacco-drinking gallants perch on stools,  
The sky-roofed pit is packed with wise and fools,  
With knavish and with honest. As to-day  
The verdict of the groundlings makes the play,  
And this on which such eager hopes are set  
Is Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*!  
See, Chorus enters, and the Play begins,  
The board announces First and Second Scenes,  
With expectation the throng'd house is stirr'd,  
For Juliet makes her entrance in the Third.  
Nurse calls her lady-bird. A wait . . . a hum . . .  
Of consternation—Juliet does not come!  
Behind the scenes Alleyn or Burbage raves,  
The stage must wait, forsooth! whilst Juliet shaves.  
Boys *will* grow men; and that bold, bristling chin  
Which marks the hero, mars the heroine!

Did the gray eye that burned with mystic glow  
Beneath the imperial dome of SHAKESPEARE'S brow,  
Behold with prescient vision days in store  
When the pert page should squeak and strut no more?  
When WOMAN—once the mark for ribald rage—  
Pelted with pippins from the public stage—  
Deafened with yells from Puritanic throats  
Should prove her claim to her own petticoats?  
Clutch her bright crown from brows effeminate,  
Demand her sceptre and assert her state;  
Thenceforth to have, and hold, and yield to no man  
Her immemorial right to play the Woman!

O! since the first faint meteoric light  
Of woman's genius shot athwart the night,  
What stars have risen in the dramatic skies;  
What radiant planets have enthralled men's eyes,  
What fiery comets dazzled ere they sped!  
But though we mourn the glories that have fled,  
Our heavens hold their shining galaxies,  
And there were never greater days than these!

Nor greater names, deny it an' you will  
What! does not Ellen Terry rule us still  
By that resistless charm that grows with years,  
And Margaret Kendal, queen of smiles and tears!  
Do we not own the witchery divine  
Of Ada Rehan's peerless Katharine?  
And are we proof against the magic spell  
That Bernhardt, ay! and Dusé, wield so well?  
For Art's great Daughters own no clime or clan,  
They are the World's—born cosmopolitan!  
Wherever Destiny may bid them roam  
New kinsfolk rise up, crying 'Welcome home!'

Speed on, Old Time! the gilded laurel shed  
From fallen temples, decks some younger head!  
The purple mantle drops from shoulders worn  
To grace the state of genius later born  
Thus shall it be until the Earth-Play ends  
And the dark curtain on the Scene descends.  
But, till that closing of life's final Page,  
With plectrum on the heart-strings of the Age  
The PLAYER WOMAN, once despised, shall stand  
A power for Good, a glory to the land,  
And when the World its MAKER shall confront  
And men and women for their gifts account  
Shall She not cry—

'My talent, LORD, behold  
Increases'd not seven, but a millionfold,  
Let it atone for errors that were mine—  
Thy earthly creature, held Thy gift divine!  
And pass on, honoured, having played her part,  
A radiant spirit, crowned with deathless Art!

CLO. GRAVES.

### WHAT TO READ.

- "The Story of the Revolution." By Henry Cabot Lodge. Two vols.
- "The Custom of the Country." Tales of New Japan. By Mrs. Hugh Fraser.
- "Sketches and Studies in South Africa." By W. J. Knox Little, M.A.
- "The Strange Story of Hester Wynne." By G. Colmore.
- "The History of a Double." By Charles F. Grindrod.
- "The Binks Family. The Story of a Social Evolution." By John Strange Winter.

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