

Miscellany.

THE DRAMA IN THE WEST.

WHEN Bishop Berkeley wrote "Westward the Star of Empire takes its way," he might have added that the dramatic star which rose in splendor in Shakspeare's time has pursued the same course until it now stands out glorious in the clear sky of the western empire. That class of drama succeeds best upon the stage of the United States, which has for its prominent feature the exhibition of an American type of character. It may be our southern friend Col. Mulberry Sellers, or his eastern relative Judge Broadwell Slope or the stalwart Buffalo Bill of the western frontier.

Some caricature of American life, or American character meets the most hearty approval of the mass of theatre-goers in our country. The western people are fond of amusement and the growth of the drama has been much less slow among them than among the denizens of the East. As an illustration of this, the following anecdote related by George Hendle Hill, known to the public as "Yankee Hill," is very apt, at least it shows that New Yorkers are not all accustomed to the usages of the play goers of the present day. This actor once showed in a town in western New York where no theatrical performance had ever been given. The audience assembled with the women on one side of the hall, the men on the other, just as they used to sit in church and all through the play, all observed the most solemn silence, there was no applause, no laughter, not even a smile; Hill did all in his power to break the ice but it was no use, and the curtain fell amid an oppressive silence; worn out and mortified at his want of success, Hill in passing through a public room of his hotel was stopped by a tall countryman who remarked that he had been at the play that evening. "Were you," said Hill, "you must have been greatly entertained." "Well I was, I tell you what it is now, my mouth is all sore a-straining to keep my face straight, and and if it hadn't been for the women I'd a laughed right out in in the meeting."

Play writers have not been produced very largely by the Western States but some of the production of western authors have been dramatized and played with good effect. "Ah Sin," the joint production, of Bret Harte and Mark Twain drew large and appreciative audiences although critics assert that its only meritorious feature is the trial before Judge Lynch in the last act.

Those who have heard of Jo. Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle" or Ada Gray in her fiery portrayal of "The Creole" or seen Miss Claxton in the "Two Orphans" as

she simulates suffering in a way to move the stout hearted; those who have been thrilled by deep guttural utterances of Lawrence Barrett in his "Cassius" or entranced by the rhythmic utterance, poetic delivery and diction of The Barnhardt, such we may say will not need to be assumed that dramatic talent and historical art are not wanting in the Drama in the West.

D. H. W. JR.

QUOTATIONS FROM PAUL AND VIRGINIE

VIRTUE.—Virtue is an effort which we make for the good of others and with the intention of pleasing God.

BENEFACITOR.—He, who from the soil which he cultivates, draws forth one additional sheaf of corn, serves mankind more than he who presents them with a book.

WOMAN.—There is in the gay graces of woman a charm that dispels the dark phantoms of reflection. Upon her face sits soft attraction and tender confidence. What joy is not heightened in which she shares? What brow is not untent by her smiles? What anger can resist her tears?

LOVE.—It must be admitted that to the fond dreams of this restless and ardent passion, mankind are indebted for a great number of arts and sciences, while its disappointments have given birth to philosophy, which teaches us to bear the evils of life with resignation. Thus, nature having made love the general link which binds all beings, has rendered it the first spring of society, the first incitement to knowledge as well as pleasure.

SOLITUDE.—After having enjoyed and lost the rare felicity of living with a congenial mind, the state of life which appears the least wretched is that of solitude. It is remarkable that all those nations which have been rendered unhappy by their political opinions, their manners, or their forms of government, have produced numerous classes of citizens altogether devoted to solitude and celibacy.

LITERATURE.—Literature, my dear son, is the gift of heaven, a ray of that wisdom which governs the universe, and which man, inspired by celestial intelligence, has drawn down to earth. Like the sun, it enlightens, it warms with a divine flame, and seems in some sort, like the element of fire, to bend all nature to our use. By the aid of literature we bring around us all things, all places, men and times. By its aid we calm the passions, suppress vice, and excite virtue. Literature is the daughter of heaven, who has descended upon earth to charm and to soften all human evils.

These dramas were performed with such an air of reality that you might have fancied yourself transported to the plains of Syria or of Palestine. We were not unfurnished with either decorations, lights or an orchestra suitable to the representation. The scene was generally played in an opening of the forest, where such parts of the wood as were penetrable formed around us numerous arcades of foliage, beneath which we were sheltered from the heat during the whole day; but when the sun descended toward the horizon, its rays, broken upon the trunks of the trees diverged among the shadows of the forest in strong lines of light, which produced the most sublime effect. Sometimes the whole of its broad disk appeared at the end of an avenue, spreading one dazzling mass of brightness. The foliage of the trees, illuminated from beneath by its saffron beams, glowed with the lustre of the topaz and the emerald. Their brown and mossy trunks appeared transformed into columns of antique bronze; and the birds, which had retired in silence to their leafy shades to pass the night, surprised to see the radiance of a second morning, hailed the star of day with innumerable carols.

POETRY RUN MAD.

I stood upon the ocean's briny shore,
And with a fragile reed I wrote upon the sand.
"Agnes, I love thee!"
The mad waves rolled by and
Blotted out the fair impression.
Fragile reed! Cruel wave! Treacherous sea!
I'll trust thee no more;
But with a giant hand I'll pluck
From Norway's frozen shore
Her tallest pine, and dip the top
Into the crater of Vesuvius;
And upon the high and burnished heaven I'll write
"Agnes, I love thee!"
And I'd like to see any
Dog-goned wave wash that out.—Anon.

Subject of debate in an Arkansas agricultural society: "Was Samson as strong as a bunch of red onions."

"Empty is the Cradle, Baby's Gone," is the latest serio-idiotic song. It will probably be followed by "Empty is the Bottle Papa's Full."—News.

"There are two boating associations here," wrote a Japanese student home, "called Yale and Harvard. When it rains, the members read books."—Ex.

(Prof.) How long does it take to hatch eggs. (Pupil in physiology.) 104° Fahr. (Prof.) What does that mean? (Pupil) I don't know, but I suppose it means fair days.—Ex.

Man, says Victor Hugo, was the conundrum of the eighteenth century; woman is the conundrum of the nineteenth century. An American editor adds: "We can't guess her, but we'll never give her up—no never."—Central Collegian.