

thrice attending the theater. However we are inclined to believe that this preparation equals that of many who set themselves up as connoisseurs in criticism. Presumption seems to take deep root in writers as well as other men.

But it is permitted to everyone to say whether he likes a thing or not. If our taste is poor, that is our own misfortune, for which we ought to command sympathy instead of censure. Holding to this theory we give our opinion without further apology.

We were disappointed in Keene's rendering of *Hamlet*. Perhaps a play that has called forth the study and criticisms of the greatest thinkers of the nineteenth century is not an easy one for an actor to satisfy his audience with. After hearing all that Goethe, Schiller, Coleridge and Lowell have to say on the character of *Hamlet*, we are liable to expect a great deal from one who endeavors to interpret him as he lived and moved at Elsinore. Mr. Keene's was not the *Hamlet* we had expected to see. Perhaps his individuality is such that he cannot become Hamletized. His general appearance, facial expression, was not what we had conceived to be *Hamlet's*. The continual rolling of the eyes lent a sinister cast to his countenance that would be more characteristic of *Richard III* than the meditative, speculative, profoundly intellectual *Hamlet*. Perhaps as Shakespeare conceived him, he would not affect the grand manner as much as Keene. He would be more unconscious.

Sometimes Keene seemed to rant more than would be natural. Perhaps, also, he manifested too much emotion by sighs and groans. In the scene with *Ophelia* we fancy the real *Hamlet* would preserve more indifference, for there is no evidence that he cares for her at all.

Where *Hamlet* is ironical, or expends his wit, Keene plays well, but in his subtle moods, not so successfully.

The character of *Horatio* seemed to us a wretched piece of acting. We expected something different. The calm, well balanced, finely-tempered *Horatio* of Shakespeare ought not to be slandered by such insipidity as the representation would reflect.

Perhaps the day of stage-playing is passing away. We have become too intellectual in our tastes to care for it so strongly. More pleasure is derived from reading a drama like *Hamlet* than seeing it acted.

An exchange takes us to task for not having a literary department. That is the very thing we have been trying to avoid, and if we have been successful it is truly gratifying. We want some place as a refuge from the all-devouring spirit of learning that hangs so continually over us in our college life. We prefer even commonplace locals to heavy, pedantic literary articles that are as remote from a student's actual life and experience,—what he really sees and feels,—as the ends of the universe. We venture to speak of matters that have some connection with occurrences in our college life, rather than to get up laborious articles on the Reformation and Renaissance. To be called commonplace, is not so grave a charge. Many things fall in this category that are quite essential. Honesty is quite common, yet we are always glad to meet with it when genuine. We would even prefer that some of our exchanges should contain matters of more common interest. It is not so serious a crime as they imagine. Gray, the poet, is called commonplace, yet we all like to read him much more than some who are called profounder. There are many places on the earth where you can dig very deep and only bring up sand. The mental world is similarly constructed. We don't know that sand at a depth of two hun-

dred feet is any better than that on the surface. It is no more valuable. To our exchanges, we say then, don't do so much fruitless digging.

The most natural enquiry after reading the "*Bostonians*" would be if Henry James Jr. was reared and educated on the moon, supposing that planet to be as cold, black, unfriendly to life as generally reputed. The style and execution may be unobjectionable, but there is no more human interest in it than in deriving the Trigonometrical formula for the sine and co-sine. It requires the same cold, calculating, methodical spirit. James seems to delight in putting humanity under a microscope, following closely all the paths and by-ways its spirit leads, as far as a critical observer can determine. He has the true scientific spirit. The only trouble is that this invades his characters and he gives us scientific abstractions rather than human beings. They are ingenious and complex enough to be real men and women, but they lack the merit of being alive, at least not enough, so that they make any definite impression on us. One would find it very disagreeable to meet his characters in real life. A cold, clammy feeling would steal over him at any near approach of them. They may be objects of curiosity as psychological phenomena, but as people to associate with, they are decidedly uncomfortable.

For ourselves we cannot get over the impression that James is devoid of human sympathy and feeling; that he brings no higher motive to the study of man, than a vulgar curiosity to see how it acts, as if it were no more sacred than a toy puzzle box. There is something in the tone of his later writings that is repugnant. They produce a dreary feeling as if one were traversing the Siberian wastes of the mental world. James' novels will become classics if we accept a recent critics theory of classics that "they are to be admired, not read." We can admire his literary style; for simplicity and purity, it takes rank with our best prose. But the world he introduces us to as a novelist is decidedly uninteresting.

"Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade, in short, in all management of human affairs."

As an evidence of the increasing respectability of the HESPERIAN we are pleased to note that it is rapidly taking precedence of the University library in the esteem of exchanges. The *Scientific American* has now ceased to arrive at the library table and may be found on ours.

Gen. Beauregard gives a history of the Shiloh Campaign in the January number of the *North American Review*. He claims that Gen. Algernon Sydney Johnson acted only as a corps commander at Shiloh. Gen. Beauregard emphatically asserts (contrary to the common belief) that he was sole commander on both days, and without naming them, controverts the reports of Grant and Sherman as to the nation's forces being taken by surprise.

The *Lawrentian* calmly enumerates the following uses to which a mortar-board may be put:

They are good to catch gophers in.

They will serve for a table at a picnic.

They make capital snow shovels.

They are admirably adapted for cake baskets.

They would make both a useful and ornamental work basket for a lady's sewing table.

By the use of a little white chalk they may be transformed into beautiful checker boards.

In fact they are an invaluable article of household furniture; no house can well afford to be without one.