

it will come to fifty dollars," Mr. Fisk answered slowly.

His wife started and looked at him curiously. It was several minutes before she spoke; then she laid her hand on her husband's arm and said:

"Dick, did Cousin Hiram tell you about Annie?"

Mr. Fisk pushed his cap back, looked away from his wife, and nodded.

For some time they walked on in silence, then Mrs. Fisk said:

"I don't hardly see how I can have the sewing circle again without having that front room fixed up. Martha's been telling Lillie Harter all the things we're going to have, and last Sunday Mrs. Harter said to me that next time they met at my house she guessed they'd see something pretty fine.

Then followed a silence as they started to cross the street, and waited for a team to pass that was a quarter of a block away when they started. When they were safe on the other side, Mrs. Fisk asked:

"Would it take about all we'd planned to spend?"

Her husband looked at her kindly and said: "Yes, Mary, about all."

They walked slowly on down the street and passed the furniture store without knowing it, when Mrs. Fisk spoke again.

"They could sew in the dining room, and I can spread the supper in the kitchen. It's plenty big."

Her husband turned towards her and there were tears in his eyes.

"Why, pa," she exclaimed, "surely you ain't feeling so bad over that book case?"

"No, Mary, my wife," he answered, "but you have waited so long."

That evening the moon rose early, and at first shone with a pale, undecided light, almost as though it were making up its mind whether there was anything worth looking at in the world below. The stacks of corn in the fields looked like rows upon rows of sentinels, and the naked branches of the trees cast weird shadows upon the country road.

After a little it rose higher and shed a clear golden light upon a man and woman as they sat on the broad seat of a lumber wagon.

The horses were going at a brisk trot when the woman said, "Pa, can't you tie that chair and keep it from rocking? It sounds kind of lonesome."

OBSERVATIONS.

(Continued from First Page.)

carry on the narrative it is necessary to use prose. And when the thought is prosaic it is prose, even if the lines scan rhythmically and every alternate line gingle in perfect consonance. There are these prose passages in all the great narrative poems. Even Homer nods, and some of the prose paragraphs in *Evangeline* require all the fame and power of Longfellow to induce us to patiently continue the reading. Yet for some reason, unknown to the plodding, unambitious newspaper writer, poets great and small regard a narrative poem as the only worthy and memorable achievement. This is sad, in a way, because the aforesaid newspaper writers, who are obliged to fill so many galleys a week must read and criticise the narrative poems of the lesser poets and, honest, it is not a congenial task. Newspaper workers are not imaginative soaring fowls. They peck at small things on the earth that look as though they contained gluten or the necessary fats demanded by the system and look anxiously but not epically at the swooping flights of the hawk or eagle.

In criticising Mrs. Ritchie's book

"When Love is King" I do so, knowing that I can not fly, that I never looked down on a crag half hidden by a cloud between my flight and it, that my wings never beat the blue empyrean into a froth, and that my eyes never swept at one glance the round world and saw that it was round and the star set ether. Only poets see these great and solemn tableaux, and only poets should criticise another poet's vision. On the other hand a small western newspaper can not afford to employ a poetry critic and the same hack who discourses on the futility and bad judgment of sending Mr. Thompson to the Senate, of the nature of sealing wax, pigs and ships must also read and criticise a book bound in white, lettered in gold and entitled "When Love is King," reluctant and unfit though she may be for the task.

The Courier's pages have contained many eulogies of Mrs. Ritchie's work and the present edition of her poems contain short poems of great beauty as:

MY SHIPS.

I sent a vessel far, far out to sea,
Its cargo was of hopes as fair and bright
As butterflies in summer, and as light
As silvery notes of merry childish glee.
I bade it bring fruition back to me,
And watched it till it wavered out of sight
Against the far-off border, in its flight
Unto the country of its destiny.

The day wears on and it has not returned,
But ships I know not of have drifted in,
Laden with treasures that I would have

[spurned

When youth was with me and unrest, its twin,
Yet dearer, dearer, by a thousandfold
Than that dream vessel which I loved of old.

"When Love is King" is the story of a man and a maiden who fall in love with the same convictions and devotion as though all the rest of the world were not a trifle weary of that sort of thing. The man's mother thinks she finds out that the girl's mother went crazy, and the lover leaves his sweetheart because of the inexorable laws of heredity. He goes out west, where ever that is, it may be anywhere west of Massachusetts, his location depends altogether on the position of the narrator. West means to Chicago people, this side of the Mississippi and from Boston Chicago is as far west as San Francisco. The young man makes a fortune in the wilds, it may be of Omaha and meets a hermit exile from "the east" meaning Iowa, who reveals himself finally, as the father of the girl whom Raymond has so heroically deserted. The father explains to Raymond that he has been married twice and that the crazy woman was not Madeline's mother and then the faithful lovers are reunited.

It is a pretty tale and the moral is all right but it would be more readable if it were not for the long prose passages which connect the short poems of "When Love is King." For instance:

"The year was fifty six, and Iowa
The scene of this most unassuming tale;"

Avon sounds poetic enough now, but Shakspeare dared not lay a scene there. He chose a distant isle or Arcady when he needed a lonesome shore or a wood shipwrecked sailors, a peasant a shepherd lad and lass, or a hermit or two. "Four will not go into three, and Iowa will not go into poetry. Iowa is as beautiful as Arcady where no broad mighty river rolled. Brook, lake, river, wood, hill, dales, all the words and places of poetry are in Iowa, but the state is not poetical property and can not be translated into rhythm. This is one of the hardships of narrative poetry

which nobody can conquer. It is better to be discreet like Shakspeare and not try.

A House.

Mrs. Jack Gardiner of Boston is building an Italian palace on Boston's Back Bay fens. She has announced, that when she is through living in it the public can have it for a free museum of art. It is not far away from the art museum, and will be a notable addition to the artistic treasures of Boston. Mrs. Gardiner has all sorts of loot, pictures, antique jewelry, statues, and statuettes, coins, china, brass, copper, ivory, gold and silver, carved woods; all the beautiful materials which the patient hands of men have carved into flowers, animals and imperishable human shapes of beauty. Therefore. The Transcript says Mrs. Gardner's house will be Boston's Cluny museum.

She Had Her Way Once.

Mrs. D. M. Holmes of Norwich New York asked that none of the horses who drew the friends that followed her corpse, be checked up. Her wish was granted and the horses threw their heads up and down and on both sides, at will. Mrs. Holmes was a member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. She regarded the check rein as an instrument of torture and a few days before she died called her family to her bedside and asked that no check reins be used at her funeral. The horses in the funeral procession held their heads down, as though in sorrow for a lost friend.

Safes.

It is many years since a safe in a city bank has been rifled. Burglar proof safes are really burglar proof. Clever burglars do not operate in New York City but in the small towns near their dens in New York. Ingenuity and invention applied to safes have kept pace with burglars who seem to possess very acute minds. If policemen were made of tempered steel, bolts and annealed steel doors several inches thick controlled by clock-work, there might be some hope of matching wits with wits. But as it is the Chief Deverys are selected for ductility and bribability and criminals whistle on their way to a hold up, gambling houses are advertised by the biggest and brightest electric lights and saloons run till morning in New York City where Tammany owns the mayor, the chief of police and all the policemen.

Governor Roosevelt's Way.

District Attorney Gardiner of New York assumes the injured air to perfection, but the evidence of the gambling establishments which remained closed on the morning after Governor Roosevelt removed him from office, drowned out his assertions of innocence and of an over ruling desire to enforce the laws in spite of an anti-law and order Tammany influence. When questioned about their closed doors the gamblers told the reporters that they did not propose to open up their places while there was any uncertainty about its being safe. Mr. Phibin, a gold democrat, whom Governor Roosevelt appointed in Gardiner's place, is an opponent of Tammany, and an honest man with a jaw and a backbone very like the Governor's. New York is about to enter on another periodical era of good government. The people are thoroughly aroused by the revelation, in the first place, of Mr. Franklin Mathews' article on Wide Open New York, publish-

ed in Harper's Weekly two years ago and by a second one on The Cost of Tammany in Flesh and Blood, published last October, illustrated by pictures of the Tammany vultures whom the citizens elected, judges and strict attorney and mayor. The indignation has been still further deepened by Bishop Potter's arraignment of the policemen and sergeants who are paid tribute by the criminals. Decent democrats opposed to Croker and decent republicans opposed to Platt may unite in the nomination of honest men of both parties and elect a city administration that thieves will run from. Of course the indignation will not last long and the machine politicians will return to power. But the respite is grateful to the robbed metropolis of America.

Mrs. Fiske.

Mrs. Fiske who plays Becky Sharp next week at the Oliver, is one of the most interesting actresses in this country. She is neither beautiful nor does she possess the peculiar feminine charm that has helped Julia Marlowe and Maud Adams so much. She is a slight, fragile woman, with an incomprehensible power of conveying some of the emotion that rends her, to the audience which listens to her in spite of a rapid and unintelligible elocution, which in so gifted a woman as Mrs. Fiske is incomprehensible.

Becky Sharp is a cold-blooded mix, born to hardships which she resented and defied. As Mrs. Fiske presents the character you feel or are made aware of Becky's temperamental coldness and of her intellectual mastery of every situation. She is interesting and reminds one, not of any one woman but of the characteristics of first one and then another. Not until the supper scene with Lord Steyne and after the entrance of Rawdon Crawley is it suddenly revealed how great and truly original an actress Mrs. Fiske is. She is incoherent, and her voice cracks and breaks with the sudden consciousness that forever more she is an outcast. The overwhelming nature of the accident is clearer to her than to most women because her wits are so sharp and she has a stronger imagination than most women. In that stroke of lightning the structure she has been building all her life falls down, is utterly wrecked and from that moment she is a wanderer. The play might end there, if it were not for Amelia Sedley, whose affair with Major Dobbin must be happily concluded and for the moral of showing Becky in a wretched garret as the punishment of wickedness and still practising her tricks. The fourth act emphasizes Becky's bravery and real indifference to humiliation and poverty and shows that she has a small affection for the silly Amelia, who offers her a home, which Becky gives up by showing her the letter from George Osborne. If it were not for this touch of tenderness Becky would be an inhuman sprite, like one of Dicken's characters and Shakspeare knew better than to leave her so, though Becky performs her benevolence with scorn for her own weakness.

Mrs. Fiske's support is excellent. The play is exquisitely staged, and the costuming is correct and elaborate. Lord Steyne's role is satisfactorily subtle and Rawdon Crawley and Miss Crawley delight a constant reader of *Vanity Fair*, which is saying a great deal. There are so few really great actresses, that Mrs. Fiske occupies an unusually isolated position.

Jaggies—What real advantage is there in being in society?

Waggles—You don't have to pay cash