

for the most part, only proofs of the prejudice and, in some cases, of the dense ignorance of the so called critics.

As to structure, we may, with full confidence, permit the play to speak for itself to all observant readers. To us, the whole and its several parts all seem clear cut and distinct. Each scene advances the plot; and the scene ends when its work is done. A character never appears when he is not needed; and, moreover, he never appears unaccountably, just because he is needed. The beginning of the play is by no means equal to what comes later; and yet the preliminary information to the audience is given most naturally. No one stands gawkingly with his face to the audience. No one is compelled to soliloquize in order that the audience may know the facts, including his own views. A page suffices to bring us to the action of the play.

The "heroic suffering to sublime reward" doctrine was exploded ages ago. The reward may come hereafter—Miss Rives does not deny this—but here the noblest mortals often suffer most and never cease to suffer. Shakespeare knew this: Everybody knows it. Idealists are compelled to ignore the unpleasant truth, but a realist is compelled to state it. Miss Rives would probably resent being called a realist; but to our mind she is one of very few Americans that deserve the title. The others, no one yet suspects of realism.

Even "sin to punishment" is dubious. But Shakespeare believed in it; and Miss Rives evidently shares his opinion, at least in part. Herod sins, and he dies ten thousand deaths. What punishment could be better suited to his crime than the horrible, burning torture of his own mind? The less fervent nature of Macbeth can not know half such agony. Lady Macbeth goes far beyond, of course; but some day Miss Rives may depict a woman Herod. We dread to see the picture. We may say, in passing, that Miss Rives' women are even more unswervingly true to life than are her male characters; and we predict that her greatest tragedy will be that of a woman driven to madness, by remorse.

The gleams of mirth, of sunshine, swift and genial, —are they lacking? True, we find not one word of levity, not one boistrous jest, in the whole play. But after all, are they not out of place in tragedy? Do they not grate upon, rather than soothe, "the mind that is to sup on anticipated horrors." Men larger than Miss Rives' assailants have thought so; and we are not prepared to say either yes or no. But certain it is that the mind needs soothing; and in "Herod and Mariamne" this is done by delicate touches that are far superior to any rude raillery. We shall give but one instance. We have just seen a disgusting picture of Salome's fiendishness. Soon we shall see a picture yet more disgusting, and it will be terrible as well, for Herod will be there. We are now rested, entertained, and even made cheerful by a piece of boy-play that sometime someone may say is without a rival, in all literature. We think that even the sour, dyspeptic critics must have smiled a pleasant, cheerful smile when they read this. We should like to quote a few lines, but we have space for but one quotation, and we wish that one to remove the last of the objections that have been mentioned.

As to characterization: The whole play is full of striking examples. If we wish contrast, let us look at Alexandra and Hyrcanuse, at Herod and Joseph, at Salome and Mariamne. But to show the author's marvelous power, we must turn to the play itself. Herod and Mariamne have just been engaged in the most satisfactory interview that they are permitted to enjoy. Cypros, the stony hearted and designing mother-in-law of Mariamne, interrupts. See how few lines make us acquainted with the three. We are content to leave the reader after he has read this brief quotation:

Enter CYPROS.

Cyp. Good my son,
Thy horses wait for thee.
Her. Do thou likewise.
Seest thou not that I am occupied?
Cyp. A wife should urge her husband to his duty,
Not keep him from it.
Her. Out! Such musty maxims
Affront the air. I leave me. I'll send for thee
When I desire thee.
Cyp. Madam, wilt thou bear this
And say no word?
Her. Think'st thou that I'll hear that
And say no word? Depart o' the instant!
Mar. Nay,
I'll wait below. Thy mother hath some message:—
Some special word for thee. I will be there,
Fear not, to give thee my last love and blessing.
Now let me leave thee, as I love thee.,
Her. Go, then.
Mar. Why dost thou say't so harshly?
Her. If thou lovedst me
Thou wouldst not be so ready to be gone.
Mar. Doubt'st me again? Remember what thou saidst
A moment past, and to thy word be true.
Her. Well, go. I will believe thee. [Exit MAR.]

LITERARY.

During a sojourn in the "cold, cold world," as alumni are pleased to designate everything beyond the walls of their alma mater, I noticed a decided turn of public attention towards one or two books. For instance just now everybody is discussing Amelie Rives and Kennan's "Siberia" articles in the *Century*. It seems to me there should be at least as marked a popular tendency in university circles on the current literature. We might start by forming a faction who would be properly shocked at "The Quick or the Dead," with its corresponding factions, who insist that the evil in the articles is entirely in the corrupted minds of some of its readers. Perhaps some other author, however, would form more delectable material. No one pretending to be a student should leave Kennan's articles unread.

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I suppose students generally take the summer vacation to catch up on their light current literature. I know that is the case with me; and when it comes to sitting down to give any impressions of the works read, the lazy, dreamy way in which the reading was done, during the warm summer months, seems to have impregnated the whole matter so thoroughly that a clear cut idea is almost out of the question. I don't hope to do more in this department than feebly reproduce any stray ideas I may get from my own reading, as directed by one or two of our friends in the faculty, and I shall feel amply repaid if I succeed in directing a students' attention to a work or an article which has given me a pleasurable or a profitable hour's reading. I believe I understand how our work presses upon all of us, but I must confess that I have no sympathy with a student, who will not find time to do some reading outside of his course.

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I started to say something about summer reading, but find that I can recall nothing more vividly than a vague, mixed sensation of pleasure from reading in Hawthorne, Holmes, Balzac and George Eliot. Perhaps I remember best the pleasure which I experienced walking home with a new novel, by Balzac, under my arm. I think I realized for the first time the eagerness with which the admirers of Scott, or Thackeray, or Dickens—some of them *did* think they were enjoying themselves when they read Dickens—must