

other six lines, "Fanny, l'heureux mortel qui près de toi respire" (page 384), and similar arbitrarily selected fragments posing here as one connected poem. Not a clue is given to the originals; and we have never seen before such a unique liberty taken with an author's works.

As Chénier's rhymes are so very perfect, we naturally feel surprised to find them rendered into English words that have not even a bowing acquaintance as regards rhyme, both as to sound and colour. Here are a few of them: "devoreth, death;" "courage, image;" "deign, again;" "thro', too"!

The original play of André Chénier, which seems to afford the excuse for the meagre translations, is utterly weak and valueless, and must be considered with the bits of verse as belonging to the list of amateur productions.

Chénier suffered less at the guillotine!

Esther Singleton.

BOOKS ABOUT THE STAGE.*

There is a certain sameness in all the volumes of actors' autobiographies with which the shelves of the dramatic collector's library are lined; and so it is small wonder that there should be a little similarity between the two latest—one of them the long story of the stage career of a comedian who had been a member of the Comédie-Française for thirty years, and the other the brief account of the few seasons spent in the theatres of the United States and Great Britain by an actress who chose to forsake the boards while in the flush of her beauty and her youth, and while her

* A Few Memories. By Mary Anderson (Madame de Navarro). New York: Harper & Bros. Journal d'un Comédien. Par Frédéric Febvre. Paris: Ollendorff; New York: Dyrsen & Pfeiffer.

The Theatrical "World" of 1895. By William Archer. London: Walter Scott; New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Dramatic Essays: John Forster and George Henry Lewes. With notes and an introduction by William Archer and Robert W. Lowe. London: Walter Scott; New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Les Théâtres Parisiens. Par J. J. Weiss. Paris: Calmann Lévy; New York: Dyrsen & Pfeiffer.

Demi-Cabots: Le Café-Concert, Le Cirque, Les Forains. Paris: Charpentier & Fasquelle; New York: Dyrsen & Pfeiffer.

gifts were still ripening and her art still maturing. It would be misleading to suggest that either M. Febvre's narrative or Mme. de Navarro's is equal in the importance of its subject or in the skill of its telling to the incomparable *Apolo* for the Life of Colley Cibber, that most vivid and picturesque of all histrionic autobiographies. Yet they have, each of them, an interest of their own; and in each of them the student of the stage can find his profit.

Lamb thought it some compensation for growing old that he had been born in time to see the *School for Scandal* in all the glory of its first cast. I refuse to admit that I am growing old myself, but as it happens I can recall distinctly the acting of M. Febvre in the *Famille Benoiton* at the Vaudeville in 1866 before he was called by the Comédie Française; and in the past thirty years I have had the pleasure of seeing him in the best of the characters he has sustained as one of that splendid company. As it happened, he alone of all the important performers of the Théâtre Français was not a graduate of the Conservatory, and it cost him an immensity of labor to acquire in middle life the clearness and the breadth of delivery which the French poetic drama demands, and which is to be obtained most easily in youth and at the Conservatory. For years M. Febvre at the Théâtre Français was like an army officer appointed from civil life among West Pointers, and in nothing is his memoir more instructive than his frank acknowledgment of his own deficiencies of delivery and his statement of the ceaseless toil he imposed on himself in the vain effort to make up for his early disadvantages. For the rest, his book is pleasant enough reading to those who have followed the theatres of Paris in the second half of this century. It has two prefaces, one to each volume—one by M. Claretie, now the administrator of the Comédie Française, and the other by the late Alexandre Dumas, *fil*s. It has not a few misprints, not only in the English proper names, which occur now and then, but also in the French text. And it enables us more than once to catch at least a glimpse of that snobbishness of which M. Febvre has often been accused—a snobbishness which leads him to lug in the name of the Prince of Wales as often as he can, and which even tempts him

into stating (ii. 249) that he showed Maximilian of Mexico over the Théâtre Français, although he was not a member of the Comédie Française until two years after Maximilian had left Europe finally.

There is no need for me to dwell on the pleasant pages of Mme. de Navarro's fragmentary autobiography, especially as the volume has already been considered at length in *THE BOOKMAN*. The autobiography of Mary Anderson is a book to go on the shelf of the collector by the side of the autobiographies of Fanny Kemble and of Anna Cora Mowatt; and I do not think that Mme. de Navarro's *Few Memories* will be found inferior in interest or in entertainment to the *Records of a Girlhood* of Mrs. Butler, or to the *Life of an Actress* of Mrs. Ritchie. The three books have many things in common, and, taken together, they suggest a comparison of the British stage in 1830 with the American stage in 1850 and again in 1880—a comparison for which, tempting as it seems, I have no space now. All three books reveal fascinating personalities, and all three have the charm which comes from the self-revelation of autobiography; as Longfellow declared, "autobiography is what biography ought to be."

One of the things to be discovered by the diligent study of the books on the shelves of the dramatic collector's library is that a really great theatrical manager is a far rarer creature than a really great actor; and that in like manner there are far more dramatic authors of high rank than there are dramatic critics of equal importance. Indeed, the list of the foremost dramatists of the chief literatures of the world is very long; and the list of the really important critics of the acted drama is very short. There were four great Greek dramatists whose works have come down to us, and only one great dramatic critic. In all the eighteenth century Germany had but one real critic of the contemporary stage—Lessing; and in all the nineteenth century France has had but one possessed of an experience and equipment and an insight worthy of comparison with Lessing's—M. Francisque Sarcey. In the second half of the nineteenth century there have been in Great Britain two dramatic critics having an intense love for the stage, taking delight in all its manifestations,

understanding the conditions of the theatric art, accepting cosmopolitan standards due to a wide acquaintance with other literatures, ancient and modern, and being possessed also of a full share of the critical faculty. These two are the late George Henry Lewes and the living William Archer; and of the two I think Mr. Archer has the wider experience, the richer equipment, and the keener insight.

Mr. Archer is the accredited critic of the London *World*; and for now three years he has annually revised his weekly articles and sent them forth as a year-book of the acted drama in London. That there has been a renaissance of the drama is obvious to all who follow the stage of our time. Thirty years ago the drama was literature only in France; now the drama is often literature in Scandinavia and in Germany, and to a less extent in Great Britain and in the United States. Of course the influence of Ibsen counts for much. Had not Ibsen written, probably Sudermann, and Echegaray, and Pinero would not have arrived at their present stage of development. It was Mr. Archer who gave us the English translation of Ibsen, and it was Mr. Archer who welcomed every attempt to get a little more real life into the formulas of the contemporary theatre. See in the present volume the cordiality with which he praised Mr. Thomas's *Alabama* as it was acted in London last fall. See the clearness with which he indicated the real advance Mr. Pinero made in *The Benefit of the Doubt*. See the articles on Signora Duse's acting, on the Maeterlinck plays, on *Magda*, on *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*.

A selection of the hitherto uncollected criticisms of John Forster (Macready's friend and Dickens's biographer) accompanies a selection of Lewes's dramatic essays, which has now been made by Mr. Archer and his friend Mr. Lowe (to whom we owe an admirable edition of Cibber's *Apology*). The Forster papers are not first-rate, but the criticisms by Lewes are well worthy of the author of the invaluable volume *On Actors and the Art of Acting*, which is, perhaps, the best book on the histrionic art in our language. In his introduction Mr. Archer points out how modern Lewes was in his point of view, and how he has anticipated many of the turns of

modern taste. For example, he saw the literary flimsiness of Scribe, but he recognised the dramaturgic skill of that master of stagecraft. Especially refreshing is Lewes's frankness in discussing the deficiencies of the Elizabethan dramatists, and he takes delight in showing—what is not yet fully admitted—that the most of Shakespeare's contemporaries were very poor playmakers, however brilliant they might be as poets or as rhetoricians.

The late J. J. Weiss was one of the most brilliant of the French journalists of his generation; and for three years he acted as the dramatic critic of the *Débats*. Since his death three volumes have been collected from the weekly articles written for the *Débats* in 1883-85; this volume on *Les Théâtres Parisiens* is the third. They are all easy reading, for Weiss was a brilliant writer, and they are all interesting, but they owe their interest rather to Weiss himself than to the actual criticism of the acted drama contained in them. Weiss was not a born dramatic critic, nor had he trained himself for the task, nor did he take it seriously enough ever to acquire real authority. He was freakish often, and paradoxical.

How many are there of those who can read the French of Corneille, Molière, and Racine, who know what a *demi-cabot* may be? How many of these, indeed, really understand the full meaning of the full word *cabotin*? The volume into which M. H. G. Ibels seems to have emptied his sketch-book quite in the latest Parisian manner contains three or four hasty and empty essays by three or four young newspaper men on what may be called the side-shows of the great French theatre—on the circus, on the variety-shows, etc. The text lacks form as well as style; and even more does it lack taste. And the sketches are not clever enough to atone for the defects of the letterpress.

Brander Matthews.

ORTHODOXY PROGRESSING.*

The breadth and sagacity of this, the first book which Professor Harris has

* Moral Evolution. By George Harris, Professor in Andover Theological Seminary. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$2.00.

published, will give the author a foremost place among the leaders of American thought, and will still further establish the reputation of Andover as a centre of progress. To produce a book which is at once profound and perspicuous, scholarly yet fresh and fascinating, is not within the power of many. This Professor Harris has done. There is something persuasive and captivating in the spirit of the book. It is not ironic, certainly it is not polemic. It moves upon a plane which is distinctly free from any purpose but the attainment and declaration of truth.

It is a courageous book. Professor Harris has dared to deal with one of the largest and most pressing issues of modern thought—the relation of evolution to ethics and religion. While there will be differences of judgment as to the measure of his success, that he has succeeded will be generally conceded. The method and contents of the book may be summarised as follows: Evolution considered with relation to individual ethics, social ethics, religion, Christianity. The order of treatment is not formal and precise, yet it is logical and progressive. Evolution, as a scientific theory, Professor Harris accepts without hesitation; not on the ground of personal investigation, but upon that of the practical unanimity of scientists. As to the relation which it sustains to ethics, he shows, in a brilliant introductory chapter, that it is one not of antagonism, nor of independence, nor of identity, but of harmony. This harmony he proceeds to unfold.

First, with respect to the individual, Professor Harris holds that he cannot be considered as separate from society. "It is due to a pre-existing society that the individual is and that he is what he is." Still the individual is not for society, but society for the individual. "It is the function of society to develop persons." "The standards of society must be the standards of personal value." The individual must be governed by an ideal. That ideal is the Good. The obligation to pursue it is given by the law of Right in Conscience. The ideal consists, according to Professor Harris, in "self-realisation," which is made up of two elements, worth and happiness. Worth and happiness cannot be separated. In the development of personality or self-realisation Professor Harris main-