

school history, as it seems to us, which has yet been presented to the public.

Literature. By Herman Grimm. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co. 1886.

THE men of letters in Germany are regarded as rather learned than cultivated, and are oftener spoken of as scholars. There have been some shining exceptions—some who recall the delightful humanism of Humboldt, and give us a new view, that has always something of surprise in it, of the capabilities of the intellectual life in the country of the professors. Herman Grimm is one of these men of culture, and the collection of his essays which is here translated is a sort of contribution which Germany seldom makes to foreign literature. The volume opens, pleasantly to American readers, with two articles, written at a score of years' distance from each other, upon Emerson, in which the author's own experience in being captivated, and his attempts to persuade some of his friends to acknowledge the charm, are told with an attractive mingling of criticism and humor; and the tribute to Emerson's genius, being the confession of a singularly sincere and simple mind, has a directness, spontaneity, and clearness which is to be commended to the notice of Emerson's American eulogists. The remaining essays are upon Voltaire and Frederick the Great, in connection with whom Grimm exposes the shallow facility of Macaulay's essay, and Dürer, Bettina von Arnim, and Dante's relation to the patriots of Italian unity. There are also some loosely-joined papers upon the brothers Grimm, the author's father and uncle, which make the most agreeable portion of the volume.

There is no need to speak of each separately. Grimm is a discursive writer, and has the ease of movement that characterizes a mind familiar with ideas and principles. His culture seems to be that of art and history, and reflections upon these in a general and comparative way strew his pages. The book is singularly free from prejudice; and even in dealing with the characteristics of the intellectual activity and interests of his countrymen he points out limitations and defects with what to our eyes seems wisdom, much as Renan occasionally enlightens the French in regard to themselves. So much serenity and suavity in literary style, so many penetrating and illuminating sentences dropped by the way, such intellectual clearness and refined utterance, are rare in any country; and though the topics of this volume are as a whole of slight interest to us, and limited value, one has the feeling, on laying aside the volume, that he has met, with a man of exceptionally fine perceptions, human sympathies, and catholic interests, whose excellence of nature the essays but faintly report. The book itself, however, will prove remote from most readers.

The Postulates of English Political Economy. By the late Walter Bagehot. Putnam. 1885.

THE opening essay of this little book, which gives it its title, may be cordially recommended to all readers who do not see to their own entire satisfaction what Political Economy means and what it teaches. If, as is probably the case, such readers have been confused by the conflict of schools, and by the popular attacks upon the current system which we have imported from England, they will find in Mr. Bagehot a teacher who will clarify their ideas, and place the subject before them in such a light as to compel conviction. The most valuable feature of the lesson is that it does not leave the opposing side of the argument in misty confusion, but begins by showing the learner its strongest points. Indeed, we cannot but think that Mr. Bagehot exaggerates the difficulties in the way of the Political

Economy of Smith and Mill being accepted outside of England. The comparison should rather be made between two methods of viewing the subject, both of which are found in all civilized countries, than between England and the Continent. A large majority of the recognized economists of Germany, France, and America are in substantial accord with our author, while it can hardly be claimed that the masses even in England are unanimous for the English system.

The objective point at which Mr. Bagehot aims is contained in the proposition that our system of economics "is not a questionable thing of unlimited extent, but a most certain and useful thing of limited extent." It is not a system of universal theorems, like those of geometry, but a set of theorems applicable solely to modern commercial peoples. However imperfect it may be, it affords the only method of foretelling the effects of new conditions upon the interests of the world. This is emphasized by comparing its method with other methods which men have attempted to apply to the case—the "All-case method," for example. This might have been put yet more strongly by showing that the limitations and imperfections which opposing writers so much dwell upon are common to all the sciences, are in fact necessary features of all generalized knowledge, physical as well as moral.

The two essays on the transferability of labor and capital, which form two-thirds of the book, were originally published in the *Fortnightly Review*; and it is intimated by Mr. Alfred Marshall, who supplies the preface, that they were intended as part of a book having for its object to free English political economy from the discredit into which it had fallen through being often misapplied. Although the restricted field which they cover prevents their having the value of a systematic work, they are well worth careful study as examples of the true economic method indicated in the opening essay.

The great value and the great charm of the whole book lie in the fact that it is the work of a man of business who supposes himself talking to men of sense, and who points out to both opposing parties the common ground on which their view and methods can be reconciled.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Adams, O. F. December: A Collection of Poems. Boston: Athrop & Co. 1886. New York: Westermann.

Almanach de Gotha. 1886. New York: Westermann.

Gillow, J. Biographical Dictionary of the English Catholics. Vol. II. Catholic Publication Society.

Grimm, H. Literature: Essays on Emerson, Voltaire, Macaulay, etc. Translated by Sarah H. Adams. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co.

Griswold, J. M. General Index to the *Nation*, Vols 31-40. October, 1880-October, 1885. Bangor, Me.: Q. P. Index. \$1.25.

Havergal, Frances R. Christmas Sunshine. Boston: H. H. Carter & Karrick. 75 cents.

Hale, Lucretia P., and White, Margaret E. Three Hundred Decorative and Fancy Articles for Presents, Fairs, etc. Boston: S. W. Tilton & Co.

Harourt, Joseph. J. H. The Bachelor Vicar of New-ford: A Novel. Harper & Bros. 25 cents.

Hardaway, W. A. Vaccination and small-pox. St. Louis: J. H. Chambers & Co.

Hilgard, A. Urkunden zur Geschichte der Stadt Speyer. Strassburg: Trübner.

Howells, W. D. Poems. Boston: Ticknor & Co.

Holtzendorf, Professor P. Handbuch des Völkerrechts. Part I. Berlin: Carl Habel.

Jaques, Lieut. W. H. Ericsson's Destroyer and Submarine Gun. G. P. Putnam's Sons: 50 cents.

Journal kept by Richard Doyle in the Year 1840. Introduction by J. H. Pollen. Scribner & Welford.

Jowett, B. The Politics of Aristotle, translated into English, with introduction, notes, etc. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press. New York: Macmillan.

Kenyon, Ellen E. A Lucky Wait. Fowler & Wells. \$1.

Kirchbach, W. Ein Lebensbuch. Leipzig: Otto Henrichs; New York: Westermann.

Lowell, P. Choson, The Land of the Morning Calm: A Sketch of Korea. Boston: Ticknor & Co. \$5.

Magazine of American History. Vol. xiv, July-December, 1885.

Meyer's Konversations-Lexikon. Vol. 2, parts 8-16; vol. 3, parts 1-2. New York: Westermann.

McLennan, W. Songs of Old Canada. Translated. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

Murray, D. C. First Person Singular: A Novel. Harper & Bros. 25 cents.

Mora, A. The Shakespearian Myth. 2d ed. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co. \$2.

Paddock, J. R. Tabular Book-keeping. Cincinnati: K. Clarke & Co. \$3.

Pater, W. Marius, the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas. 2d ed. Macmillan & Co. \$2.25.

Parker, Theodore. Views of Religion. With an Introduction by James Freeman Clarke. Boston: American Unitarian Association. \$1.

Rossetti, Christina G. Time Files: A Reading Diary. Boston: Roberts Bros. \$1.

Schuchert, G. W. Colonial New York: Philip Schuyler and his Family. 2 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Sheldon, Mary D. Studies in General History. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co.

Solon, L. M. The Art of the Old English Potter. D. Appleton & Co. \$2.25.

Stewart, David. The Law of Husband and Wife as Established in England and the United States. San Francisco: Sumner, Whitney & Co.

Stewart, David. The Law of Marriage and Divorce as Established in England and the United States. San Francisco: Sumner, Whitney & Co.

Sturgis, J. John Malminton: A Novel. D. Appleton & Co. 50 cents.

Strack, H. T. Hebrew Grammar, with Exercise, Literature, and Vocabulary. B. Westermann & Co.

Talmage, T. D. W. Sermons. 2d series. Funk & Wagnalls. \$2.

Tennyson, Lord. Tiresias, and Other Poems. Macmillan & Co. \$1.50.

Thackeray, Miss. Mrs. Dymond: A Novel. Harper & Brothers. 25 cents.

Tolstoj, Count Leo. My Religion. Translated from the French. T. Y. Crowell & Co. \$1.25.

Veulliot, L. Etudes sur Victor Hugo. Boston: Schoenhof.

Verdi, T. S. The Infant Philosopher: Stray Leaves from a Baby's Journal. Ford, Howard & Hulbert. 30 cents.

Wentworth, G. A. Exposé sommaire des Théories Transformistes de Lamarck, Darwin et Haeckel. Paris: Ch. Delagrave.

Wheeler, B. I. Der Griechische Nominal-accent. Strassburg: K. J. Trübner.

Wentworth and Reed. First Steps in Number: A Primary Arithmetic. Boston: Ginn & Co. 35 cents.

Wentworth, G. A. Grammar School Arithmetic. Boston: Ginn & Co. 85 cents.

Wiltse, Sara E. Stories for Kindergartens and Primary Schools. Boston: Ginn & Co.

Young, Rev. A. Carols for a Merry Christmas and a Joyous Easter. Catholic Publication Society.

Fine Arts.

"TAMING OF THE SHREW."

IF any one had predicted, five or even three years ago, that on the 4th of January, 1886, two German operas, one by Wagner and the other by a disciple of Wagner, would be produced in this city; that the tickets for both the new operas would be sold for the first two performances before the date of the first; and that this first representation would attract an audience of at least 6,000 spectators, at the two houses, he would have been voted a mad visionary whom one could not safely allow to roam at large. Yet this seeming miracle has been accomplished.

We have now in this city two excellent opera companies, whose aim is not to make money by showing off the vocal tricks of a prima donna and a tenor, but to familiarize the public with the greatest works of the greatest composers, interpreted in the most conscientious manner, and with no more regard for financial results than is consistent with the natural desire to clear expenses. The devotees of fashion and the lovers of music have, as it were, formed an informal association for the mutual realization of their respective aims and desires; and in a republic where state support of the opera is out of the question, such combinations doubtless represent the most satisfactory state of affairs that could be realized.

The company which has taken up its abode at the Academy of Music lays special stress on the national side of the enterprise. The name first chosen for it was "Opera Sung by Americans," or "Opera in English"; but, for the sake of euphony and to emphasize the patriotic element, this was changed to "American Opera." The repertory is to be international, with a leaning toward German opera. If there is no American name in this list, it is due simply to the fact that the country has so far produced no dramatic composer who has felt sufficiently inspired to write a grand opera regardless of the prospects of immediate performance. Wagner was snubbed on all sides early in his career, but the confidence in his genius led him on, whenever an opera was rejected, to seek consolation in composing another, confident that his day would come. The existence of a special "American Opera" company may prove a potent stimulus in rousing dormant musico-dramatic powers; but until a really meritorious work is forthcoming we shall have to be contented with such things as come to us from the effete monarchies of the Old World. And,

after all, there is nothing in this borrowing inconsistent with the name of "American opera." For is not the essence of American nationality internationality? This country is peopled by emigrants from all parts of Europe, and if we ever have a "national" opera, it is to be hoped it will be international—uniting Italian sensuousness and French piquancy and clearness of form with German harmonic depth, variety, and dramatic vigor and realism.

Like the opera, most of the members of the orchestra were originally imported, though the majority have become American citizens. The conductor, also, was born in Germany, but Mr. Thomas came to this country at so early an age, and his name has become so identified with the progress of music in America, that it would have been as impossible to find a man more appropriate from the national point of view as it would be from the point of view of competency and experience. The remaining factors of the complicated operatic organism are almost purely American. The scenery, which receives special attention, is all painted by well-known native artists; the majority of the ballet are Americans, and the same is true of the chorus. And in regard to the leading vocalists the rule has been more strictly adhered to, that they must be natives of this country.

It is this last clause in the constitution of the American Opera Company that will have to bear the brunt of criticism. Perhaps it would have been wiser to follow simply the successful example of Carl Rosa, and give opera in English without reference to the nationality of the singers. But in some respects this experiment would have been less interesting, and at any rate we shall now no longer be open to the reproach that we leave the recognition of American vocal talent entirely to foreigners. Some of the vocalists in the American Opera Company have had wide experience as opera singers, while others have been suddenly promoted from operetta to grand opera. Until they have become accustomed to their new sphere it is therefore but just to make allowance for inevitable shortcomings. No such allowance, however, need be made in the case of Mme. L'Allemand, who takes the part of *Katharine* in the "Taming of the Shrew," not only because she is an experienced opera singer, but because her *Katharine* is a most clever and fascinating impersonation. Her dark style of beauty, together with the taste shown in her make-up, enable her to look her part to perfection. The mingled surprise and indignation are in the early scenes depicted in her face as realistically as her sweet, piteous humility when she has been tamed. She embodies Professor Dowden's conception of the character: "*Katharine*, with all her indulged wilfulness and violence of temper, has no evil in her; in her home-enclosure she seems a formidable creature, but when caught away by the tempest of *Petruchio's* masculine force, the comparative weakness of her sex shows itself; she who has strength of her own, and has ascertained its limits, can recognize superior strength, and, once subdued, she is the least rebellious of subjects." Mme. L'Allemand's voice is somewhat guttural in its lowest notes, but in its upper register it is delightfully clear, rich, sweet, and flexible. Mr. Lee's *Petruchio* cannot be said to be characterized by a "tempest of masculine force." The humorous possibilities of the part, too, are much greater than they seem in his hands; yet he takes pains with it and sings it satisfactorily. Miss Bensch's *Bianca* is not a striking impersonation, but has its points of merit. Mr. Hamilton's *Baptista* is in one respect, and an important one, superior to any other rôle, viz., in distinct enunciation. Mr. Fessenden (*Lucentio*) and Mr. Stoddard (*Hortensio*) are well known to the

New York public, and scarcely anything needs to be said of them beyond remarking that their parts were well fitted to their capacities.

One of the most interesting features of the performance was the fact that Mr. Theodore Thomas made his first appearance in many years as an operatic conductor. From the circumstance that he has no superior as a concert conductor it does not follow that he is specially qualified to be a good operatic conductor. There are specialists in conducting, as in everything else. But there is a class of conductors who are equally able as concert and as opera directors, including Bülow, Jahn, and Hans Richter; and Mr. Thomas gave indubitable evidence on Monday evening that he belongs to this class. His method of conducting is as quiet as at a Philharmonic concert; for his rule is to do all the difficult work at the rehearsals, so that no frantic gesticulations are needed when the public performance is given. Under his command his admirable orchestra—which is of course the best that has ever been heard in opera in this country—brought out all the beauties and subtle details of the score with marvellous distinctness. The chorus, also, contains, perhaps, better vocal material than has ever been brought together here, and everywhere gave evidence of the most careful and intelligent training. The ballet made its appearance in a special divertissement arranged by M. Bibeyran to the delightful rompish music of Rubinstein's *Bal Masqué*.

By choosing Goetz's "Taming of the Shrew" for the initial performance, Mr. Thomas added, to the many debts of gratitude our audiences owe him, the opportunity to become acquainted with one of the most successful operas of modern times; but at the same time he imposed on his singers a task of extraordinary difficulty, for there is hardly a single work in the operatic repertory that makes at the same time so many demands on the singer's vocal attention and his duties as an actor. In some respects it is even more difficult than Wagner's "Meistersinger," which inspired it; for in Wagner's opera the words are so neatly fitted to the song, and the melodic current is so broad, that the singer is irresistibly carried along with it; whereas in Goetz's opera the words and music do not so necessarily amalgamate, nor is the musico-dramatic current so irresistible. This is indeed the weak point in the "Taming of the Shrew," that both as a whole and in most of its details the music does not reflect the spirit of the text. It is often too serious, not to say sombre, for so sprightly and humorous a dramatic substratum. But if Goetz lacks Wagner's sense of dramatic fitness and his stirring climaxes, he succeeds better in imitating his declamatory precision and vigor and his symphonic orchestral accompaniment. In the orchestra lies the chief strength of Goetz. Many of the numbers have great individual merit, and throughout the opera there is a subtle attention to details and an esprit worthy of a French composer. It is stated that Goetz at first wrote the score without drums and trombones, but added the trombones when the opera was produced in Vienna. Subsequently he seems to have also added the drums, for they were in use in Mr. Thomas's orchestra. Musical readers need hardly be told in conclusion that Hermann Goetz was, like Bizet, one of those gifted and promising opera composers who seem to be fated to die young. His opera was first produced in 1874 at Mannheim, when the composer was thirty-six years of age. Two years later he died, leaving an unfinished opera score, "*Francesca von Rimini*," which was afterward completed by a Herr Frank.

"THE MEISTERSINGER."

THE first production in America of what will some day be Wagner's most popular opera is

an event of historic significance. The performance itself, too, was of a very high order of merit, and therefore most enjoyable. In view of the fact that the German Opera Company, during their recent absence in Philadelphia, gave a performance every evening, it was to be feared that sufficient time would not remain to rehearse Wagner's comic opera properly. It is a work of extraordinary difficulty, as may be inferred from the fact that when it was first produced in Munich under Dr. Hans von Bülow, in 1868, eight months were devoted to its preparation, during which sixty-six rehearsals were held.

No wonder that a few days ago the last rehearsal of "Die Meistersinger" at the Metropolitan, which lasted eight hours, revealed a number of weak points. But it also revealed another thing—Herr Seidl's extraordinary genius as operatic conductor. Every weak point was "spotted" on this occasion—for he knows the whole score by heart—so that when it came to the public performance, the smoothness and animation of the ensemble was little short of a miracle, it being hardly necessary to make any allowance for the difficulty of the task, the limited number of rehearsals, and the unpropitious state of the atmosphere. Herr Seidl was deservedly and repeatedly called before the curtain, with the principals, after each act; for the enthusiasm of the audience was such as is only witnessed at a Wagnerian *première*; and a Wagnerian audience is sufficiently intelligent to recognize the supreme importance of having a conductor of Herr Seidl's energy and ability. Although we have heard "Die Meistersinger" more than a dozen times abroad, and although in Vienna and Munich, where the opera has been on the repertory for a number of years, some of the details are placed in a clearer light, yet for general animation we have never heard a performance superior, if equal, to Monday evening's; and this is in the first place due to Herr Seidl's thorough appreciation of Wagner's intentions. He put so much variety and "go" into his *tempi* that the performance never dragged for a moment; and although the necessary cuts were not so extensive as those made in some German cities, the opera lasted only four hours and twenty minutes, including waits.

Of the vocalists it must be said in general that they were equal to their tasks. Frau Kraus's *Eva* is one of her most satisfactory impersonations, and Herr Stritt's *Walter* is the best thing he has done here yet. Herr Staudigl sang *Pogner's* address nobly, and Herr Fischer was an impressive *Sachs*, though suffering from hoarseness, which prevented him from fully justifying the reputation he has secured in this rôle abroad. Brandt made as much as possible of the rôle of *Magdalena*, and the naive and sportive *David* was well acted and sung by Herr Krämer, the husband of Frau Krämer-Widl, who made his début on this occasion. The comic part of *Beckmesser* was in the hands of Herr Kemnitz, who, without over-acting, brought out the grotesque humor of his part in a realistic manner. Much praise must be awarded the chorus of apprentices and the general chorus for their contributions to the success of the performance. Even the immensely difficult comic choruses of cobblers, tailors, and bakers in the last act were well done. It should be stated that in this scene the chorus was strengthened by the voluntary coöperation of a number of the active members of several of our leading German societies whose enthusiasm for Wagner, and their desire to have him correctly appreciated by American audiences, led them to submit, without any other recompense, to the arduous labor of rehearsing.

To sum up: the indications are that "Die Meistersinger" will soon become a favorite of the New York public, and never again be allowed to be absent from the repertory.