

and Prama. Paraphrased and slightly adapted, Hamlet's observation, 'The play's the Hamlet's observation, 'The play's the thing to catch the conscience of the king,' seems to fit the King of Siam to a nicety. His first evening in London he spent at a theatre, an experience several times repeated, and when in Edimburgh he was so much interested in the working details as to go behind the scenes and see them for himself. This fondness for theatrical performances, and curiosity as to details, however, is not surprising, in view of the large part this form of entertainment plays in the life of all far Eastern peopies, and of the great difference existing between Eastern and Western theatrical methods. In Siam the lakon (play) is as universal as the pwe in existing between Eastern and Western theatrical methods. In Siam the lakon (play) is as universal as the pwe in Burna. It is brought into requisition at births, marriages, deaths and cremations; a top-knot cutting ceremony without one or more lakons was never heard of; they are presented at every fair and festival; in fact, no occasion, either domestic or national, is complete without them. The Siamses lakon, the Burness pwe, and the Malayan jeckhay have many points of resemblance, and in Bangkok one may see all three, as well as the Chinese play; but Siamese and Burness stage representations are infinitely more artistic than Malayan and Chinese; indeed, to Europeans it seems almost sacrilegious to speak of Chinese performances as artistic. Of Siamese theatres proper there are two in Bangkok, but some princes and nobles also keep up troupes for the amusement of their families and friends, and for hiring out at festivals and fairs. At the regular theatres the performers, with kok, but some princes and nobles also keep up troupes for the amusement of their families and friends, and for hiring out at festivals and fairs. At the regular theatres the performers, with the exception of three or four male clowns, are all females. Performances are only given about twelve or four-teen evenings per month, while the nights are moonlit. At other times the troupes are either giving representations at family parties or rehearsing new pieces. In a Sismese theatre the performance takes place, so to speak, in the pit. The stage is almost square, galleries occupy two opposite sides of the square, while the third side is used for dressing rooms and stage entrances. A play often lasts three or four nights, from about eight o'clock till two or three in the morning, and is seldom performed twice consecutively. Music plays an important roll in every play, while a powerful chorus of girls behind the scenessing loudly in unison, punctuating their theme by striking together short sticks of hard wood. The Siamese have a very fine sense of harmony, and though their system differs so much from ours both as to intervals and time, their hands are always tuneful, and one often hears most taking melodies. Of scenery there is none, beyond a fixture representing the front of a palatial residence, above which runs a gallery, where fairies and Celestial characters make their appearance. Along the roof, over the central portion of the stage, however, are generally mechanical appliances used for the flight of angels and demons of the air. Properties are openly carried upon the stage by supers. The costumes of the players are often brilliant with jewellery and genis; indeed, the gorgeous dresses of our English pentomines fall far short of the brilliance here seen. A large amount of 'business' is invariably introduced, chiefly consisting of dancing, games, and buffoonery. Eastern dancing, as seen in the Siamese and other ballets, is, however totally different from our ideas of the poetry of motion. It consists entirely of attitude, and the combination of gracefulness and drollery has a charm of its own. Performed upon that feet, there is nothing of the light funtastic toe' about it, yet the marvellous genufication of limb and body and the grace of movement often give the spectator the idea of extreme airness, agility and rhythm. Siamess are extremely clever at mimicry and hurlesque, and they greet with shricks of laughter caricatures of public men or well known characters. On the other hand, a fire brigade marching three or

four times round the stage in search of a fire, or a procession of twenty men headed by one carrying the bows of a toy ship, another the mainmast, and the last with the rudder tied behind him, are regarded without a smile, even though the bows often chase the rudder.

Professor Abbott, of New Jersey, is one of the few naturalists who speak in a kindly way of toad voices. He thinks the batrachians have never yet received the consideration that is their due from the poets, and he asks:—'Is

due from the poets, and he asks:—'Is it because their music is not popular with the masses?'

"Now, professor,' said the young man with musical aspirations, 'I want you to tell me exactly what you think of my voice.' No, sir,' was the emphatic reply. 'I see through you. You were sent here by my enemies to get me arrested for profanity.'

Palermo was once noted for the popular songs of the peasants in the vicinity, and there were annual competitions participated in by singers from all parts of Sicily. An effort has just been made to revive the ancient glory of the 'canzonetta poplare siciliana,' but only thirteen singers presented themselves, and the affair has proported and the affair presented themselves, and the was pronounced an utter failure

At St. Petersburg they are about to erect a new theatre almost entirely of iron. When completed it will contain 2500 persons.

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Tamagno, the rich, penurious tenor, has been fleeced out of 2,000,000 frances by a clever Italian deputy. He induced the tenor to buy an old and decrepit hotelin Rome for the luxuriant sum of 2,000,000 frances, under the false pretence that it would be bought back at a great advance by the Government, which was in need of this building for one of its departments. Now the tenor is sueing the wily deputy.

Last week the Anckland Choral So.

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Last week the Auckland Choral Society gave its sixth orchestral concert of the season. The Choral Hall was crowded on the occasion, and a programme of a very attractive character was performed with exceptional success. Mons de Wilfinoff acted as leader and solo violinist, while Mr A. Eady was among the instrumentalists, and the able baton of Professor Carl Schmitt directed the orchestra. The orchestral litens rehearsed included the first second and last movements of Beethoven's first symphony. The orchestral items rehearsed included the first second and last movements of Peethoven's first symphony, which were splendidly rendered, Adams' the Brasseur de Preston,' and the evergreen overture to 'Maritana.' A quartette—the Minuetto Audantino and Finale Allegro, from Rheinberger's Pinno Quatuor (op. 38) was played by Miss Yates (piano), Mr Kcesing (violin), Cox (viola), and Mr Beale (Cello) and was warmly and deserved papplauded. The violin solos by M. de Willimoff—Zarzicky's Mazurka and an arrangement of 'Maganiello'—were, however, the numbers which were most loudly appreciated. The musician gave the audience a very fine rendering of both pieces. As a finale to the concert, a waltz entitled 'Thyllis,' and composed by Mr J. B. Macfarlane, a local amateur, was played, Mr Macfarlane conducting. The composition is tuneful and rich in many parts. Interspersed with the instrumental items were several solos. Miss Lizzie Black sang 'The Promise of Life' (Cowan) and 'The Lost Chord' (Sulivan), while Mr George Reid contributed Bevan's 'The Flight of Ages' and Balfe's 'Come Into the Garden, Maud.' Mr Reid's voice is too well known to need commendation. The lady, on the other hand, is a newcomer, but she has a fine contraltovoice that we shall be very glad to hear again. hear again.

their again.

The principle of the incandescent gas light is now available for oil amps. The principle of the petroleum hurner is exactly the same as that of the incandescent burner. The burner used is similar to the ordinary duplex, except that it has a circular instead of a double horizontal wick. The mantle and chimney are fitted on a gallery, which can be lifted by a screw, exposing the wick, which is lighted in the ordinary way. The lifter is then lowered, and the flames, from being an illuminant, become a perfect atmospheric flame, causing the mantle to become brilliantly incundescent. The burner gives a fifty candle-power light, with, it is said, a saving of two-thirds in the consumption of oil.

In matters of male tailoring (says

In matters of mule tailoring (says Table Talk') London now undoubtedly gives the law to all the civilised

world. Did you ever hear of an Eng-lishman who desired to pass for a

world. Did you ever hear of an Englishman who desired to pass for a well-dressed man going over to Paris to get himself fitted out? If there is to look like a foreigner in his dress; while, on the other hand, it now appears to be the ambition of all the 'jeunesse doreo' and the 'beau monde' in every capital of Europe to dress like an Englishman. A year or two ago I remember seeing this Anglomania well hit off in a French pictorial paper. An exquisite sauntering along the Boulevards was encountered by one of his friends, who asked in annazement why he had his trousers turned up, as it wasn't raining. 'No,' said the exquisite, 'it isn't raining here, but possibly it is in London.'

According to the 'Review Encyclopedigue,' the idea that the habit of sinoking dates only from the discovery of America must be abandoned as a vulgar error. Clay pipes which had been used as far back as the Gallo-Roman period in France were found in 1844 while excavating a cemetery belonging to that epoch. Their antiquity was doubted until similar remains were discovered beneath the foundations of the palace of Charles the Bold. Subsequently, upwards of a hundred prehistoric forges, of a date anterior to the Roman occupation of Switzerland, were brought to light in the Burmese Jura, and smoking pipes of iron were found in these. In the prehistoric tombs of Holland many similar objects were disclossed, and a bronze pipe excavated from the ruins of ancient Rome has been preserved in the celebrated Campana collection now in the Louvre. A Spanish poem, which is known to have been composed in 1276, spenking of one of the captains of the Christian army, Pedro Espigol by name, describes him as snoking lavender in order 10 dissipate the humour of the brain.' And a corbel carved in the eleventh century in the church of Huberville, in France, represents t remains, and popular superstition assumes that they were left there by the fairies, bence they are generally known as elfin pipes.

known as elfin pipes.

Lord Wolseley, according to a quaint chronicler, is extremely superstitious; indeed, he has owned' that while in Ireland he had worn out several hat brims 'through saluting single magpies' (single magpies are supposed to foreshadow sorrow), and that he would not 'on any account' walk under a ladder. He also believes in ghosts, and can tell 'some exceedingly stronge stories of regimental spectres.'

The once famous Fat Mer's Account.

The once famous Fat Men's Association of America, that attracted to its annual meeting large numbers of men who weighed five hundred pounds, has dwindled to a few light-weights of four hundred pounds or so.

four hundred pounds or so. We have one suggestion to make to the Government of India (says the Simla 'News'), and that is, that should these complications increase, and still more troops be required on the frontier they should ask, say the Maharuja of Patiala, as an experiment, if he would undertake the task of crushing one of these tribes, Mohmands, Afridis, Orukzais, or any other. Give him a free hand, and let him make his own arrangements, and we renture to free hand, and let him make his own arrangements, and we venture to think that he would speedily give them such a lesson as would live in their memories and keep them quiet for the next twenty years. The British Government is far too gentle in its treatment of these border ruffians, who do not understand it, and it make the memorial terms of the contract of the co ruffians, who do not understand it, and it only encourages them to rise again at an early date. A little roughness would appeal very forcibly to them. Probably the methods employed would not commend themselves to Exeter Hall, and as we must take account of the cowardly fear of both the Indian and Imperial Governments of this obsolete old bogy, why the Government of India might refuse to allow press correspondents to be present.

sent.

Some surprise has been created in St. Petershirg by the sudden way in which the publishers of the 'Rus' censed to issue thir paper. Hajdebaroff, the publisher, was thought to be in financial difficulties, 'This is, however, a mistake. Hajdebaroff lately employed an assistant named Drabsnuretzky, who signed as responsible editor. This man was nothing but a police spy, who had obtained the position to inform the police of what is

going on in journalistic and literary circles. He was paid for this £300 a year. When Hajdeburoff discovered the true character of his editor he dismissed him, and stopped publica-

It is a proverbial fact that life and property are well protected in the British Colonies, and that most distant of British possessions, the far North-west of Canada, is no exception to the rule. Of the shooting and tighting, the murders which followed every new discovery or gold in the United States, nothing has been heard in the Klondike district, simply because a detachment of the mounted police was on the spot from the beginning. When the Canadian half-breeds rebelled under Louis Riel, the mounted police was raised to an effective strength of 1000 men, and it has never been reduced. It is truly an elite corps. Wherever these able horsemen show themselves smugglers and Indians vanish. They travel with the most astonishing celerity from one part, of the Dominion to another. They are not specially well paid, but young men of the best English and Canadian families are anxious to join this force, whose duties are very varied and exciting. They are orgunised like the Irish Constabulary, and are such picked men that they would know how to command respect even without carbine, sword and revolver.

For some days past (says a London paper) a motor cab has been parading It is a proverbial fact that life and

know how to command respect even without carbine, sword and revolver.

For some days past (says a London paper) a notor cab has been parading the streets of the city, in defiance of an Act of Parliament, being practically a theatrical advertisement, On the roof of the cab is a large travelling basket, such as those used by ladies in the arried touring companies, bearing an immense label giving the name of a play now running at a West End theatre. Inside is seated a coloured gentleman, attired in all the magnificence of an Oriental potentate. After its braving the police for some days—the authorities evidently heing unable to make up their minds as to the legislity of the proceeding—the progress of the cab was suddenly arrested in Fleet-street the other day by a police constable. 'Stop,' demanded the officer, 'Give me your number, name and address,' 'What for?' returned the driver, with a blandly innocent smile. 'Because you are an advertisement and not using the cab for legitimate purposes.' 'I'm engaged by the gen'leman inside,' expostulated the driver, 'and I'm a-driving of him to see the sights of London, including of the Griffin at Temple Bar.' 'Go on, curtly returned the constable, 'you'll hear more of this.'

Miss Marie Lloyd's first engagement

Miss Marie Lloyd's first engagement Miss Marie Lloyd's first engagement was at the Star. Bermondsey, where she received the salary of fifteen shil-lings per week. Nowadays one hund-red pounds weekly is not considered too much for her. She was originally

a teacher.

Sir Alexander C. Mackenzie's compositions for Mr J. M. Barrie's play, founded on 'The Little Minister,' are an overture, three entractes, and some incidental music. At the start of the overture there is a snatch of the bagpipes, and an effect is made with clarionets. There is a slight suggestion of the air of 'Duncan Grey.' Each of the entractes is a dance. The Little Minister is the only character to whom Sir Alexander has given any beit-motif. This pathetic melody is heard in the overture.

'A School of Beauty' has been

heard in the overture.

'A School of Beauty' has been started in New York in which lessons are given with respect to the expression of the face. According to the endown had been all down in this remarkable academy, laughter is a vulgar distortion of the features and has a democalising effect. It destroys the shape of the mouth, thickens the most and causes lines round the eyes. Tears are not to be indulged in under any provocation. To 'smile vaguely' is the object at which all students ambitions of walking steadily in the ways of heauty should aim; while tears should never be anything less poetical than dewdrops in the eyes. This seminary is so decidedly suggestive of new ideas in the way of booking a part that it may appropriately be mentioned in 'Stageland.'

Stageiana.

The first instance on record of a death upon the stage occurs in 1735, when an actor mined William Bond, who had misucessfully attempted to get his friend Aaron Hill's translation of Voltaire's Zaire' neted a. Covent Garden or Drury Lame, gave a private performance in a concert-mon. He played the part of Lusignan, afterwards canceted by Garrick and Barry.