THE AMATEUR DRAMA.

SOME OF THE TRIALS AND DIFFI-CULTIES OF THE LEADER.

The Ladies and Gentlemen He has to Deal With-Their Demands and Wishes-The First Act of the Play-A Sketch True to

The church choir has long been one of the cherished themes of the poet, as well as the prose writer. The very inharmonious time that they usually have among themselves, their little jealousies, and squabbling done up into neat type, or smooth rhyme, have served to amuse generations. In fact we have almost grown tired of laughing at them and we pine for something new.

Therefore; it has struck me lately that immortality-literary immortality, of course -might await the man who directed attention to the rival claims of the Amateur Dramatic club. Some [months ago Progress arose in its majesty and made a few brief remarks on the subject of amateur theatricals, and keeping those sentiments in view, I will proceed to say a few words myself.

I once belonged to an amateur dramatic club! but I have repented of the evil in sackcloth and ashes, and should brain and will power be spared to me I will never do it again, for I have seen the error of my ways and turned from them.

The club is usually composed of the best families in the town, who are naturally inclined to give themselves airs, and look down on professionals as "low." There is often a great deal of genuine talent amongst them, but it is, unfortunately, so often covered up with fussiness that it can't get a chance of coming to the surface. There is sure to be one first class actor in the club, and he is elected to the proud post of manager; and from that hour till the club finally disbands, without any one member being on speaking terms with another-he wishes he had died in his infancy. On him rests the awful responsibility of alloting the different parts, and making up the parts generally. And a ship among breakers is not to be compared to him for a moment, it would be too feeble a metaphor. The only real comedian in the group is convinced that he was born to take the world by storm in tragedy, and he is mortally offended at being given a comic part, hints that the unhappy manager has reserved the tragic part for himself, out of jealousy, and intimates that if they can get anyone else to fill his place he will be only too glad to retire, as his time is valuable.

The manager gives him his choice of the whole cast, and turns to redress the wrongs of the mature young lady, who has been in the club since it first started, and considers herself entitled, in view of that fact, to "run" the entire company. She has just discovered that her part is that of a talkative elderly lady, a character which she could do more than justice to, and which suits her to perfection. But nothing less than the title role will satisfy her soaring ambition. Aut Ceasar aut nullus, she will be the heroine, or she will Resign, with a capital R. She feels that she could interpret the character as the author intended it should be interpreted, and she does not wish to see the play spoiled. Her feelings are impersonal; she wishes to see the entertainment a success, that is all.

the elderly lady. So, at the next rehearsal, the heroine's part is given to the pretty little novice who has just joined the club, and has still her spurs to win as an actress. And the next morning the manager receives a belligerent looking square envelope, containing the mature young are no longer appreciated, she takes this opportunity of retiring, as she feels certain filling her place."

in the whole town who can take her place, and she is fully aware of the fact, and can afford to be very positive to the unfortunate helmsman of this refractory craft, who calls on the irate damsel at once, and humbles himself to the dust. He promises all things, and the pretty rosebud is "made up" to look as middle-aged as possible, with very indifferent success, and plays the part as successfully as a very small kitten would perform the role of a grave and ancient mouser; while the M. Y. L. is rouged and powdered into a faint semblance of sweet sixteen. And dove-eyed Peace once more spreads her downy wings over the dramatic family.

At last the night arrives! Posters have been out for a fortnight. Each member of the club has prowled about for an equal length of time, armed with a bundle of Travels in the Atlas and Southern Moroces, tickets, and ready to pounce upon the unwary, in unexpected places, and wrench from him his unwilling shekels, in exchange for small pieces of pasteboard.

They have borrowed from their friends till those unhappy people who are favored with their friendship have scarcely an article of attire left, and a great many after buying tickets are compelled to remain home on the night of the performance because their best bonnets have been borrowed, sacrificed to a higher cause.

It really is a matter of surprise! the extraordinary coolness with which a member of a dramatic association, will ask you to lend her your freshest evening dress to drag -Advt. over an uncarpeted stage and tear upon the nails and hooks behind the scenes. street.

She really has the air of conferring a favor instead of asking one, giving you an opportunity of serving your country, as it

But this is a retrogression. I had reached the all important evening. All the friends of the actors feel that they must go, there is no escape, for they are sure to be catechised as to how it went off. So they screw their courage up to the sticking point and prepare to die for their country, bouyed up by the hope that somebody will break down and furnish a little variety.

After a dreary wait of half an hour, the curtain rises, discovering the heroine seated alone on the stage. Her opening speech is a soliloquy, the cue for which is to be the striking of a clock. After it has struck the requisite number of times, she has to say, "eight o'clock, and still he is not here!" But the person in charge of the clock forgets to make it strike, and the heroine sits for two full minutes in a silence so profound that the audience come to the conclusion that the play is to be a pantomime, when she suddenly snaps out the opening sentence with an indignant energy that is absolutely startling, and bodes ill for "him" when he does arrive, after which all

In the second act, the curtain rises on the heroine's friend, engaged in doing the week's washing, and the audience are delighted, until it does look so very real, until the fairy washerwoman takes up a bright-bordered towel to wring it, and discloses the fact that it is neatly ironed and quite dry, the water in the wash, but having been forgotten.

In the third act, the heroine has to faint, in the outstretched arms of her lover, who -when the critical moment arrives-is looking another way, and so she falls-not into his arms, for he did not reach her in time—but on the floor, with a perfectly audible yelp of dismay.

And at last, when the curtain is rung close to the footlights, and the curtain descends behind them, so they have to scramble to their feet in undignified haste are inches high. and dodge under it to get out of sight. Mr. Botsford Peters, of Moneton, spent Sunday in And their friends put on their cloaks with a sigh of relief, and say to each other Well, it went off much better than I expected; but I hope they will not be giving another entertainment very soon." And

GEOFFREY CUTHBERT STRANGE.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

The Magazines. "The Highest Structure in the World," in other words the Eiffel Tower, is the snbject of the first article in the Atlantic Monthly for June. It is devoted to an account of the methods of construction of the tower, and comparison with other buildings of great height. This article is written by Mr. Wm. A. Eddy. "Bonny Hugh of Ironbrook," a story of life among the miners, is contributed by Edith Bower. Charles Eliot Norton gives an account of the gravestone of "Banished Norfolk," at Venice. This curiously interesting article is embellished with a picture of the carved stone itself. Mr. George Moritz Wahl gives an account of "The German Gymnasium in its Working Order," showing But, for once, the manager is firm. No the course of studies and discipline pursued one else can be found to take the part of in these schools. "The Thousand and One Nights," is an account by C. H. Toy of Mr. A. J. Chapman, Mr. F. S. Anderson, Miss the literary genealogy and various versions | Tait, Mr. A. N. Charters, Mr. A. B. Tait, Miss of the Arabian Nights. Mr. Horace E. Scudder has a thoughtful article on "The State, the Church, and the School;" while Prof. Royce continues his "Reflections after a Wandering Lite in Australasia." "Brevet lady's resignation. "Since her services | Martyrs" is an account of some of the queer characters who passed through the doors of a sanitary commission "Soldiers' Home" in they will not have the slightest difficulty in Ohio, The Rev. William Burnet Wright makes Birmingham the subject of an article Consternation reigns. There is no one entitled "A City of Refuge," and tells of the many great movements which have originated in that comparatively modern English town. Mr. Bynner's serial "The Begum's Daughter," full of local color of early Knickerbocker life, and Mr. James' "Tragic Muse" are both represented by ample installments. Besides poetry by Edith Thomas, and a stirring Scotch ballad called "The War-Cry of Clan Grant," the number closes with reviews of the lives of Hector Berlioz and Bishop Ken, and the usual departments. The number as a whole is of more than ordinary value. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston.

Notes and Announcements.

Mr. Joseph Thomson, the author of Through Masai Land, and as an African traveller second only to Stanley, has just written a book on his recent explorations which will be published immediately in New York by Longmans, Green & Co. It will contain six maps and more than sixty illus-

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SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

DORCHESTER.

[Progress is for sale in Dorchester at George M. Fairweather's store.]

May, 29 .- The suspense is over at last, and the appointment to the position of deputy penitentiary warden has been made. Mr. Ross, who has hitherto been the steward of the institution, has received the appointment, his former office being abolished at the same time. There is no doubt but that Mr. Ross is very well liked for the position, and his promotion gives general satisfaction.

His many old friends were glad to see Mr. Fulton Cole here last Thursday. Mr, Cole was a resident of Dorchester for many years, and he is by no means

Mr. Percy Forster made a visit of a few days to Amherst last week, returning on Saturday.

Mrs. Captain Amos Atkinson, of Sackville, together with her friend Mrs. Parsons, made a flying visit to Dorchester on Thursday last. Mrs. Atkinson, who until recently lived in Dorchester as Miss Botsford, was eagerly greeted by her numerous old friends, who think she might drive over from Sackville oftener than she does.

Mr. Gesner Kerr spent Friday in Amherst. Lady Smith is making preparations for a lengthy visit to the Annapolis valley this summer, and intends to start very soon.

Dr. J. F. Teed, after a few months in Dorchester, is again iu Moncton where he will take charge of Dr. Chandler's large practice, during the absence of the latter in Europe this summer.

The familiar face of Mr. P. W. Morrison was seen in Dorcnester on the Queen's birthday. Mr. Morrison was for some years teller of the Merchants' bank here. He spent from Friday to Saturday here with Mrs. Morrison, whose arrival I noticed a week or two ago, returning to his duties in Summerside on Monday- Mrs. Morrison is still here.

Another old Dorchesterite turned up on Saturday in the person of Mr. W. Y. Chapman, commonly called "Noon." Mr. Chapman left Dorchester for Philadelphia about two years ago, since which time he has been sojourning in New York and other American cities. He only spent one day in Dorchester, when he proceeded to Moneton.

As I predicted, most of the male population of Dorchester went fishing on the 24th, but I have not yet any tales of phenomenal catches which do not evaporate on close inspection. Indeed I know of one party who got nothing but a bad ducking and a correspondingly bad cold for their day's toils. Our champion yarner, too, has a heartrending tale of perils in deep waters and a narrow squeak for life, down on the final tableau, they are all too a tale which finds ready credence when it is remembered that his fishing resort was at the turbulent waters of Anderson's brook, where the torrents brawl and roar over many a pebble, and the waves

> Mrs. Charles U. Chandler, of Moneton, has been spending a few days in Dorchester, the guest of Mrs. Chandler, at Rocklyn, and of Miss Gilbert, at Willow Farm. She returned to Moncton on Mon-

> Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Douglas, of Amherst, spent Sunday in Dorchester, together with Mr. Joe Donglas, at the residence of Mrs. Douglas' father, Mr. Jos. Hickman.

Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Oulton presented their youngest child for baptism at Trinity church on Sunday,

naming him George King. Mr. George M. Fairweather spent Saturday in Sussex with his father, Mr. Douglas Fairweather. Mr. Edwin A. Record, of Moncton, spent Saturday and Sunday iu Dorchester, the guest of his brother-in-law, Mr. H. R. Emmerson, M. P. P. Mr. D. I. Welsh, barrister, was in Dorchester of

Miss Steeves, who is in charge of one of the departments of the Dorchester superior school' spent Saturday and Sunday in Moncton, with Mr. and Mrs

Mr. D. L. Hanington is in Moncton today on logal

The Messrs. Greenhill, of Boston, gave an excellent panoramic lantern exhibition in Robb's hall, Mr. Rawdon Brown and his discovery of | Monday evening, which was very largely attended. Mr. R. A. Borden, barrister, of Moncton, was registered here on Monday.

Miss Hanington left on Monday for a visit to Miss Hanington, in Shediac.

Mr. R. W. Hewson was here last evening. A large number of people from Dorchester have been attending the closing exercises at Mount Allison, during the last few days. Among the number were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Forster, the Misses Forster, Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Palmer, Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Wilbur, Miss Wilbur, the Misses Chapman, Steeves, Miss Grierson, Mr. R. W. Hanington, M. George J. Oulton and Mr. B. B. Teed. They pronounced the art display in the college gallery very fine, and the calisthenic exercises at the ladies' academy extremely interesting, as indeed were all the closing exercises of the institutions. The programme at Lingley Hall was well rendered, and the music particularly enjoyable.

Mr. A. Bennett, barrister, of Sackville, is in town Mr. F. W. McDougall, of the Merchants' Bank,

Sackville, was in Dorchester on Thursday. Mr. M. G. Teed spent Monday in Moncton. Mr. E. J. Smith, of Shediac, spent a day in Dor-

An excursion to Moncton on the Arbutus is one of the pleasures promised us for June. It ought to be largely attended. Pansy.

SUSSEX.

[Progress is for sale in Sussex by R. D. Boal and S. H. White & Co.]

May 29 .- The Amateur Dramatic club are going to give a performance on Thursday next. From what I have seen of the past efforts of the performers there can be no doubt of its being a success. Mrs. Robert Morrison is in Sackville, visiting Mrs. Charles Pickard.

Miss Elsie Fielders, of St. John, spent a few days in town last week, the guest of Mrs. Charles Hazen. It was a sincere regret to her many friends in Sussex that her visit was so brief.

I am glad to hear that Mr. James Hallet, who ha

been seriously ill. is recovering. Dr. G. H. Raymond spent Sunday in Springfield, with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. Raymond. Mrs. Blakney, of Petitcodiac, was in town last week, the guest of Mr. and Mrs. W. Stockton.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Fairweather, of St. John, are boarding at the Knoll. Mr. G. M. Fairweather, of Dorchester, was town last week, visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Fairweather.

Our little village put on quite a holiday appearance on the 24tn. The stores were all closed and an unusual number of visitors were in town. The base ball match between the La Tours, of Portland and the Sussex club was the great event of the day, and erowds of people were on the grounds watching the game, which was interesting and at times quite exciting. There was also a number of fishing parties to the various beautiful lakes and streams in the vicinity. But the most enjoyable event of the day was Mrs. J. M. Kinnear's delightful little tennis party. In the afternoon the visitors enjoyed themselves playing tennis and strolling around the beautiful grounds. Then in the evening, after a pleasant and refreshing 5 o'clock tea, which was served on the grounds, they repaired to the house and finished up with a delightful little dance.

(Continued on Eighth Page.)

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