

OUR THEATRICAL PLAYGROUND.

THE ENGLISH EXOTIC.

MRS. LANGTRY and Mrs. Potter have possession at present of the two theaters occupied immediately before their coming by Booth and Barrett, and Mary Anderson. The Langtry and the Potter are types of a class of dramatic exotics which have, of late years, come into prominence. They represent nothing in art; their schooling, teaching, and social life have tended to unfit rather than prepare them for work on the stage. If Mrs. Langtry had not obtained prominence in one way or other and as a beauty in England before she turned her attention to play-acting, no American manager would have troubled himself to introduce her to the American public as an actress. Without the notoriety she achieved abroad she never would have been accepted in this enlightened country by the theater-going public. Like a thoroughly sensible and practical woman she saw a chance to make a fortune here and took advantage of the opportunity. She is now playing to large houses at the Fifth Avenue Theater. When Booth and Barrett appeared there the attendance was not nearly so great. This fact alone speaks volumes for the artistic intelligence of American theater-goers. Make hay, Mrs. Langtry, while the sun shines!

THE AMERICAN EXOTIC.

MRS. POTTER is another type of the hot-house actress. Her great drawback is that she is an American, and Americans, though protectionists in the main, strange to say, dearly love the foreign article in the way of imported talent. It took Mrs. Potter some time to make up her mind whether or not she should adopt the stage as a profession. It was all right to be an amateur actress, but to be a professional actress was another thing. However, she finally made the plunge, and now she is a full-fledged actress of the Langtry type, without the slightest chance of making anything like the fortune the Lily has already piled up. Strangely enough Mrs. Potter succeeded Miss Anderson at Palmer's Theater, just as Mrs. Langtry succeeded Mr. Booth at the Fifth Avenue. There is no other great city in the world where a similar state of things could exist. Edwin Booth, one of the greatest actors of his time, succeeded by Mrs. Langtry, a professional beauty, and Mary Anderson, who has won her position on the stage by earnest toil, hard work and persistent study, followed by Mrs. Potter, an amateur fledgeling of two seasons professional growth. *Miserere, Domine!*

A DRAMATIC GEM.

ONE of the best and most interesting plays New Yorkers have had an opportunity of enjoying for a long time is "Little Lord Fauntleroy," as at present played at the Broadway Theater. It is a dramatic gem of the purest water, and will long continue to interest play-goers who have a taste for the refined in art in preference to the meretricious. Mrs. Burnett's charming story has lost nothing of its beauty by its adaptation for the theater. As a novel it is interesting; as a stage story where its personages appear and take form before the footlights it is a delight.

IRISH ROMANCE.

EDWARD HARRIGAN, when he produced "The Lorgaire," at the Park Theater, made an entirely new departure in his dramatic work. Laying aside for the time being the task of drawing pictures of New

York life at the present day, he entered into the field of romance, and on Irish soil gathered together the material with which he has woven his story together. Apart from the dramas of Boucicault it is one of the best Irish plays written in years. Unlike the machine-made Irish play of the revolving stars, which are generally made up of a song, a jig, a priest and a handful of English soldiers, Mr. Harrigan has endeavored to picture an Irish story in dramatic form on the stage, as Carleton, Lever, Maxwell and Griffin sought to relate their tales as story-tellers in their books. If "The Lorgaire" did not catch the fancy of theater-goers as quickly as "a local" might have done, that is nothing to be wondered at. The new drama offered at the Park will enhance Mr. Harrigan's reputation both as a writer and a player.

ENGLISH REALITY.

PINERO has written many good things for the stage, and though they may not live much beyond the present day, they are as enjoyable as anything we have in contemporaneous dramatic literature. "Sweet Lavender," the latest of Mr. Piner's works, is now in the full tide of success at the pretty Lyceum Theater. It well deserves the victory it has won. Mr. Le Moyne, who plays the part of a good-hearted old barrister, with a fondness at times for his cups, is the best thing that accomplished actor has ever attempted. It is not, however, Mr. Le Moyne's acting or the acting of any particular member of the Lyceum Theatre Company which wins approval. It is the decidedly English atmosphere of the work—the setting, scenes, properties, business and everything connected with the play—that shows with what care "Sweet Lavender" was prepared; and with such preparation it is not a matter of surprise that the public crowd the little theater to take a look at this picture from nature.

REAL GAUITY.

As intimated in a previous number of *OUTING*, the London Gaiety Company, with Nellie Farren as the bright particular star of the organization, has made a deep impression on American theater-goers. The feeling entertained by some people that Miss Farren and her ways, and the ways of the company by whom she was surrounded, were too thoroughly English to meet with recognition here, proved erroneous. The theater-goers of this city are not limited by such narrow boundaries. It was not Miss Farren's nationality or the nationality of her company that was to undergo a test, but Nellie Farren and the London Gaiety Burlesque Company as artists. With a burlesque not adapted for an American audience—for "Monte Cristo, Jr." is anything but bright in dialogue—they won the favors of New Yorkers. Even with the disadvantage of a poor book, they succeeded in convincing the public they could act, and dance and sing themselves into appreciation as burlesquers. Moreover the Gaiety Company did not rely wholly on the ability of Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie for all the supply of burlesque entertainment as is too often the case with such organizations. After a short trial, New Yorkers rather fancied the new comers, and toward the end began to regard them as favorites. The success of the return visit of the London Gaiety Company to the United States is pre-assured, notwithstanding the movement of Louis Aldrich, Harley Merry, and others.

RICHARD NEVILLE.