

Trajan were interred beneath the column which bears his name. Lanciani says that this is very improbable, as the column is not sepulchral in character, and, according to the inscription, was erected to commemorate a feat of engineering skill.

James C. Egbert, Jr.

### III.

#### MR. PEMBERTON'S "ELLEN TERRY AND HER SISTERS."\*

The biography of a contemporary is, after all, the safest. The first object of such a work are the facts. Who should know them better than he or she most intimately related to them? It is the only safe way to bring conviction to present and probably future skeptics. The iconoclasts have been so busy with history—sacred, profane, political and biographical—that our libraries seem now to contain, for the most part, that which we can't any longer accept with certainty. If from the beginning contemporary biography had prevailed, we would have been saved the effort and the pain of unbelieving so much we have been taught to cherish. The seminary boards would be spared the embarrassment of having young ecclesiastical candidates question that uncommon ancestor in whom we are all brothers, because the reverend seniors would have some eye-witness's word, if only Eve's. We should have some one's affidavit for the mythological whoppers about the Greek Olympians, and the now incorrigible Baconians would be put to rout, with a biographical brief of Master Shakespeare's life, of which the bard would himself have read the proofs. And does not a single notable fact sustain the contention, for with all his other limitations Boswell made himself a model to posterity by his life of Dr. Johnson. Wise enough men framed the rule of admission to the Salle Carré. Ten post-mortem years are not too many to give impartial perspective or to give logical selection an opportunity to group its canvases; but they are ten years during which the facts about the masters are languishing, and the moss of forgetfulness and the green scum of neglect are obscuring the well of

truth. Especially desirable is contemporary biography of our players. There is no Louvre for their masterpieces; they painted in sound and motion, and erase each other in creation. The poet, the philosopher, the composer, the sculptor and the painter create for futurity. The player is essentially the creature of one generation, his own. When by his own genius and attainment he raises himself to eminence, it is pleasant and profitable to enjoy a personal intimacy with him, at least through the pages of some reliable and sympathetic chronicle. Of all the men or women of the stage who linger in active eminence, enjoying in maturity a maturity of sweetness and power, none occupies a place quite so secure in the appreciation of all who have seen her as Ellen Terry. How many hundreds of thousands her graceful comedy and impressive tragedy have made votaries at her shrine! History and tradition will gather her into the train of the elect with Betterton, Cibber, Abingdon, Garrick, Siddons, Kean, Cushman and Booth; but to no succeeding generations with whom Ellen Terry is a tradition will biographical intimacy be so welcome as to those who have seen the great actress and treasure the memory of her accomplishments. These considerations are suggested by a *Life of Ellen Terry and Her Sisters*, by T. Edgar Pemberton. As a dramatic chronicler of scrupulous exactitude, a critic of safe judgment, and a writer of engaging style, Mr. Pemberton has already made himself a secure place among present English writers on the stage. He has prepared a careful and engaging narrative of the career of the four celebrated daughters of that line of Terrys which included Daniel Terry, who "Terry-fied" Scott by his nimbleness in dramatising the ink-wet Waverleys, and "Ben" Terry of the Worcester circuit. If the writer is somewhat saccharine over his fair subject, not sometimes, but nearly always, it is an amiable fault and far pleasanter to the reader than the opposite failing. The book is an admirable addition to its class, invaluable as a document of detail, and will be treasured by all who love the stage and have seen Ellen Terry. From the earliest day of Henry Irving's tenancy of the Lyceum Miss Terry has been associated with him, so that Mr. Pemberton's book is at once

\* *Ellen Terry and Her Sisters*. By T. Edgar Pemberton. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. \$1.50.

a life of Ellen Terry and her sisters and a history of the Irving regimen of London's most important playhouse during almost a quarter of a century.

*Paul Wilstach.*

#### IV.

##### MR. HILL'S "THE MINORITY."\*

The title of Mr. Hill's book scarcely prepares us for its subject. It is not political, but a powerful and well-balanced story of the factory, the stock market, and industrial combination. Lest this give the impression of weightiness, it should be said that there is not a dull page in the book, while the pictures of the horse-show, the fashionable dinner table, and the house party are excellently done and full of light. In the matter of conversation—one of the most difficult accomplishments of the writer whose aim is the consistent and uninterrupted development of plot—the story is a success. Mr. Hill's people talk—and at times wittily—because they have something to say that advances the action, discloses their personalities, and entertains. The development of character is done so adroitly that the reader flatters himself with a larger share of intuition than is his due. Without rising to great heights, the book comes near being what a book of its kind should be.

Mr. Hill writes with knowledge and enthusiasm, and while he does not offer an opinion upon the vexed question of the relation of labour and its employers, and the ultimate effect upon the interests of these of union on both sides, he puts into a series of suggestive and dramatic situations facts which promote thinking on one's own account. He has been wise enough to allow events to bring about their logical end without interposing the pleasing but impossible romantic elements which some writers of fiction feel justified in introducing in an effort to play at Fate.

For "the minority" of the title we should read Kennard, the hero of the novel. Kennard is a factory owner and manager, with old-fashioned ideas about the direct responsibility of employers to their employees. He is something of a

\*The Minority. By Frederick Trevor Hill. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company.

philanthropist, though an exceedingly practical one, and his factory is a model in its conduct, equipment and products. There is a long "waiting list" against his roll, and until he encounters Mr. Harland, the father of the girl with whom he falls irrevocably in love, prosperity attends his busy life. Harland is a promoter, the head and front of the United Milling Companies, a shrewd, strong man, but without much conscience. With two scheming brokers he projects a combination of all the factories in Kennard's line. Kennard refuses to join this combination, but is forced into it through the instrumentality of a conspiracy started among his own men by the opposition. He discovers this plot and identifies the handwriting on one of the plotters' papers as that of Leslie Harland. The inference strips him of the one ideal which the situation had left him, and here his manhood is put to its severest test. From the middle of the book his resolution and the steadfastness of his love are thrown into strong relief. The story progresses rapidly and with cumulative interest. The power of the stock market, the press, the unscrupulous factory inspector, the agitator, and his personal enemies is brought to bear on Kennard. The action teems with excitement and uncertainties, in which the reader does not lose sight of Leslie Harland, and in the end—well, Mr. Hill's love story is cleverly done.

*Francis Churchill Williams.*

#### V.

##### MR. VIELÉ'S "MYRA OF THE PINES."\*

Disguised as a hopeless specimen of veranda literature in its saucily hideous cover of pea green, with pines in close resemblance to those that come with nursery arks, Mr. Viélé's story about the crossroads company that lived "eight miles from Thebes" affords the reader first surprise, then a constantly increasing pleasure. A summer book it is, with its light, refreshing quality and charm springing from the naturalness and liveliness of the people and situations described, so good a product that the

\*Myra of the Pines. By Herman Knickerbocker Viélé. New York: McClure, Phillips and Company.