

To say that the opening performance, that of Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," was in all respects worthy of its luxurious surroundings, would be an exaggeration. It did, however, furnish many evidences of liberal and intelligent management, which are rich in promise of future achievement. The tragedy itself, it is pretty safe to say, has never had a more effective, a more artistic, or a more appropriate scenic setting. Such liberties as were taken with the text—and the excisions were on a wholesale scale—are as a rule justified by the general result. Although many fine passages disappeared, nothing vital was lost—except the scenes in Pompey's barge, which have been ruthlessly erased in spite of their value in comic relief and dramatic interest—and a fairly continuous and intelligible story was presented. By putting all the Roman scenes in Cæsar's house and all the Egyptian scenes in Cleopatra's palace much saving of time was effected and the artists were enabled to construct two massive and imposing sets. The interior of Cleopatra's palace, with its huge pillars and its outlook across the Nile to the opposite shore, was particularly beautiful. The Roman scene was a very handsome piece of stage masonry, and Cleopatra's monument, with its majestic Sphinxes, provided another striking picture. But the excellence of the stage management was manifested chiefly in the purposeful and intelligent actions of the supernumeraries, the handling of soldiers, slaves, messengers, etc., which reflected much credit upon that experienced producer, Louis Calvert. All the minor "business" of the play, which is too often left to take care of itself, was conducted without awkwardness and without hitch.

But few of the speaking actors were really equal to the tasks assigned to them. Both in speech and action they betrayed their unfamiliarity with the needs of poetic drama. The blank verse was a perpetual stumbling-block to them. E. H. Sothorn, the Antony of the occasion, made an unheroic and unimaginative impersonation still less attractive by the humdrum monotony of his utterance. Of the fierceness of the contending passions in the part he seemed to have no adequate conception. Once or twice, he let himself go with good effect—as in the attack upon Thyreus and in the quarrel with Cleopatra—but his performance, as a rule, was tame and uninspired. Miss Julia Marlowe's Cleopatra was beautiful to the eye and eloquent in rage. Some of her outbursts were exceedingly fine. But she lacked the essential cunning of the Serpent of old Nile. Her fickleness was too transparent, though her fascination was undeniable. William McVay played Enobarbus in blunt, soldierly fashion, but there is far more humor, in the character than he got out of it. Of the wonderful descrip-

tion of the famous barge he made nothing. Roland Buckstone did little with Lepidus, but Mr. Anson would have been an excellent Octavius if his elocution had been better. The best speaking was done by some of the minor players in the cast. Perhaps the most obvious moral of the entire representation was that no amount of expenditure can be of much avail to the poetic drama until our modern actors have recovered the almost lost art of acting and reciting it.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's new play, "The House of Temperley," is a melodrama of the prize-ring, founded in part upon his novel, "Rodney Stone." He holds that England owes much to the spirit of endurance which was the chief feature of the old prize-ring, and wishes to enforce that truth.

Glasgow now has its repertory theatre, and its experiment differs, according to a correspondent of the London *Times*, from those made in other places. It is financed "by a limited-liability association," made up almost exclusively of Glasgow citizens: university men, professional men, merchants, and manufacturers. The prospectus of the Royalty Theatre, where the plays are performed, sets forth as one of the objects in view "to encourage the initiation and development of a purely Scottish drama by providing a stage and an acting company which will be peculiarly adapted for the production of plays, national in character, written by Scottish men and women of letters." There is as yet no evidence of enthusiasm in Glasgow for a Scottish theatre: "Scotch writers are too sentimental for the Scotch; they have to go to London." Among the plays already produced, or in preparation, are "The Voysey Inheritance," Mr. Masefield's "Nan," "The Seagull" by the Russian Tchekhof, "Arms and the Man," etc. The company is said to be a good one, and is run on the regular stock company principle of each member taking the part best suited to him.

The first production in Paris of "La Rampe," a new play by Baron Henri de Rothschild, was signalized by the return to the stage of Mlle. Marthe Brandès. It is, as the title implies, a story of the footlights. A wealthy woman, becoming weary of an uncongenial husband, deserts him for a fashionable comedian. Going on the stage under her lover's guidance, she soon eclipses him, thereby estranging his love and exciting his furious jealousy. Before long he abandons her in favor of a vulgar little chorus girl. He still remains her instructor, however, and, while rehearsing under his direction the part of a deserted woman in a new play, she attempts to regain him by a final appeal. When he repulses her she finishes the scene with an actual, instead of a counterfeit, suicide. The piece is said to be a vivid exposition of stage life.

M. Antoine's resources as producer, not C. H. Hirsch's literary talents, are displayed to advantage in the new play at the Odéon, "Les Emigrés." Act i shows us the Canal and a Venetian *cabaret*; Act ii, the lower deck of an ocean liner speeding guilty lovers to America and a future unmarred by a drunken husband; the final setting is the stoke-hole, with that same husband, who has pursued the runaways

on the same steamer, cremated for the audience's edification. All this is very cleverly managed and luridly depicted, but is not, after all, just what the *tout Paris* of the *rive gauche* expects to find at the second Théâtre Français. There is little of psychology, little of significant dialogue, to wash down this rather strong concoction. More than one assistant, admiring, the while, the melodrama's effectiveness, pinches himself to make out if he be not, after all, in the stalls of the Grand-Guignol.

Lionel Brough, the British comedian, died at London November 8, in his seventy-fourth year. Among his best-known impersonations were Tony Lumpkin, which he played 777 times, and Bob Acres. He had successes also in Shakespearean comedy, notably as Touchstone. He visited America in 1885, with Violet Cameron, and at various times toured all parts of the United Kingdom, America, and South Africa.

Music.

The opening night of the season at the Manhattan brought an opera—Massenet's "Hérodiade"—which, though Brussels heard it as long ago as 1881, had never before been sung in this country. It was worth producing, as it contains some of the composer's loveliest airs, and is operatically effective. From the "Salome" of Wilde and Strauss, it differs utterly, the heroine being a pure maiden, who, when the Prophet she loves is executed by order of her mother, commits suicide. Two of the airs, "Il est doux, il est bon," and "Vision fugitive," have long been favorites in concert halls and homes. There is a great deal of splendor in the shape of processions, Oriental dances and backgrounds, and Mr. Hammerstein and his aids have staged the opera in a manner recalling the Paris Opéra in the days of Meyerbeer. Dalmore as Jean, and Renaud as Herod, contributed new dramatic portraits to their already famous galleries.

In the matter of novelties, our operatic managers are much more enterprising than they used to be. The Metropolitan announces no fewer than twelve works new to New York, and Hammerstein promises nine. Twenty-one new operas in one season will break all records; in fact, all records would be broken with half of the promised novelties produced. Among these are Bruneau's "L'Attaque du Moulin," Leroux's "Le Chemineau," Wolf-Ferrari's "Le Donne Curieuse," Franchetti's "Germania," Paër's "Le Maître de Chapelle," Blech's "Versiegelt," and "Gypsy Love" by Lehar, the composer of "The Merry Widow." More important than these are three others, Tchaikovsky's "Pique Dame," Goldmark's "Cricket on the Hearth," and Humperdinck's "Children of the King." The list is completed by Laparra's "La Habañera" and Converse's "Pipe of Desire." Meantime, Mr. Hammerstein's list includes two operatic novelties by Strauss: "Elektra" and "Feuersnoth"; four by Massenet: "Hérodiade," "Griseldis," "Cendrillon," and "Sapho"; Leoncavallo's "Zaza," Hubay's "The Violin-Maker of Cremona," and "Natoma," an opera which Victor Herbert has in preparation.

One of the surprises and sensations of the season will doubtless be the production of Wagner's "Lohengrin," on Saturday afternoon next week, at the Metropolitan, not only because there will be a fine cast, with new scenery and costumes, but because the whole work has been, as the Germans say, *frisch einstudiert* with the same care that Conried bestowed on the first production of "Parsifal." New facilities for thorough rehearsal have been provided, the top floor of the Metropolitan having been set aside for that purpose. It is now possible to rehearse a German opera at the same time an Italian one is being sung before an audience, or vice versa, for there are two orchestras, making together over a hundred and fifty players. At some of the Wagner performances all of these will be heard together.

The number of undeservedly neglected comic operas and operettas is, perhaps, greater than that of the grand operas that were prematurely buried. This season we are to witness a general revival of them at both the opera houses. The Metropolitan has underscored "Fra Diavolo," "Czar and Carpenter," "Les Dragons de Villars," "Il Maestro di Cappella," "Il Signor Bruschino," "La Belle Galathée," "La Fille de Madame Angot." Mr. Hammerstein also will produce the last-named, besides "La Belle Hélène," "La Grande-Duchesse," "The Bat," "Le Jour et la Nuit," "Dame Blanche," "Orphée aux Enfers," "La Mascotte," "Les Dragons de Villars."

Boston's million-and-a-quarter dollar opera house, erected in Huntington Avenue, near the New England Conservatory and Symphony Hall, by Eben D. Jordan, was opened on Monday evening with the rendition of Ponchielli's "La Gioconda." Mesdames Nordica and Homer and Señor Constantino were among the members of the new company heard at this première. There had been little opportunity to rehearse the opera, for the house was completed only just in time for the performance; which went off, however, more smoothly than this circumstance suggests. Acoustically, the new house is a great success.

Monteverdi's "Orfeo," the first performance of which was given in 1607, is to be revived this season at the Brussels Opera.

Paris is to hear "Salome" after all at the Grand Opéra. Richard Strauss had quarrelled with the managers some time ago, and, owing also to the difficulties which the theatre then was in, had withdrawn his work. But the opera is now in smooth waters again, and the composer has finally agreed to the performance. The cast is not yet arranged, except that Mary Garden will certainly sing the part of Salome, and that M. Delmas will probably be Iochanaan.

Art.

THE GENTLE ART OF BUYING FORGERIES.

We are in no position to say whether the wax bust recently bought by Director Bode of Berlin as a Leonardo was actually modelled by a Victorian sculptor named Lucas. But we do know that even if the story be true, it is a case

not for mockery but for an admiring sympathy. It takes pluck to pay down public money for a beautiful nondescript object, to take the chances of deception and subsequent ridicule. It is because Director Bode takes such chances and makes his mistakes valiantly that he is the best buyer in Europe and his museum the richest, at the smallest cost, of all recent foundations.

Indeed, is there any better test of the efficiency of a museum director than a record of buying sufficient forgeries? Enough, mind you; not too many, for such lapses are expensive. But enough at least to prove that he has the courage not merely of his knowledge, but of his instincts; that he responds keenly to a beautiful object, and will incur the hazards of its possession. In other words, the museum and the collector who never buy forgeries will rarely buy masterpieces, and when they do will inevitably pay the highest price. The vagaries and blunders of such adventurers of the beautiful are so much evidence that their souls are alive. Dr. Bode has never failed to give such demonstration.

On a memorable occasion he discovered in his storeroom a Leonardesque altarpiece—mark the recurrence to this master—a thing of small beauty, and straightway promoted it to the galleries. The occasion was seized by the rival critic, Giovanni Morelli, who harped upon this indiscreet enthusiasm until a "Bode Leonardo" became almost as notorious among scholars as that staple article of commerce, "an Omaha Van Dyck," is among picture-dealers. But, as we have said, this comminatory way with erring experts fails to take into account the temperamental nature of their judgments. Science and dispassionate observation may be three-quarters of the battle, but the other quarter is a primitive and quite instinctive craving for beauty akin to that of the artist. This passion is naturally fallible, but it is also indispensable. Accordingly, it is better not to gloat over the blunder of a great expert, but to inquire how such a lapse comes about. To retrace the steps of error may be a lesson not only in human nature but also in charity.

In most cases, your expert need not fear the forgery. It is the work of an artist of a sort—otherwise it is wholly negligible—who has his own characteristics. One comes, in short, to know the forgers just as one does the masters themselves. There is, however, one moment when a falsification is really formidable, that is when it is unique in its class and seen for the first time. The strength of the expert is that he can visualize the memory of thousands of fine and real objects, confronting therewith any unfamiliar work of art that may come along. But what if the newcomer have no analogue in his experience? Then, evidently, the very basis

of expertism is missing, and judgment must be passed by a kind of inspiration which naturally is subject to error.

This seems to have been the case with Dr. Bode in his recent mishap. Some fifty years ago, we are told, an erratic sculptor of talent, Richard Cockle Lucas, at the instigation of a dealer, did a wax bust, borrowing the forms of a Leonardesque painting. The bust disappeared, only to emerge some time ago as a bargain at a provincial sale. In London, it found admirers and rose to a price of £150, to pass eventually into Dr. Bode's hands in the thousands. Now what was he to do under the circumstances? Point of comparison there was none. The single wax bust of fine quality—that of Lille—is not by Leonardo and even its period is unsettled. Old painted wax is so rare that the effect of age upon it is not thoroughly understood. Dr. Bode has seen no other work of the versatile and forgotten Lucas. All the criteria of sure judgment were absent. What was he to do? Let a rival director pick up a possible Leonardo at a derisory price—or take the chances? He chose the perilous course and though his opinion was apparently wrong, we hold—observing Taine's fine and true distinction—that his judgment was right. A man is judged not by his weaker moments, but by his career as a whole, and if he had bought half a dozen Lucases, the Kaiser Friedrich museum would still be deeply in his debt for the money he has saved through thousands of shrewd and timely purchases. Now that Lucas has been disinterred, the matter is simple. It is easy enough for the rest of us to be wise at Dr. Bode's expense. As for Lucas, he may even establish an independent reputation like the Italian archaizer Bastianini, or the Russian Rukhomaski of Tiara fame. The wise amateur will not scoff overmuch, but rather thank his lucky stars that he was not the predestined discoverer of the wax works of the late Mr. Lucas.

These mishaps are the chance of the game, and the buyer of works of art who admits no defeats is either a sad dissembler or an incompetent. The real difficulty in museum management is not the occasional slips of directors and curators, but the timidity that demands certitude all the time. Connoisseurship being itself an art and not an exact science, certitude cannot always be had, and the opportunity missed by caution is grasped by audacity. The museums that need reform are not those that occasionally indulge in forgeries, but those that so cramp their purchasing power by the ignorance and timorousness of committees that paralysis ensues. Such museums buy no forgeries, to be sure, nor, except upon the most exorbitant terms, anything of any account.

The new building of the Boston Museum