

of the great man or woman; and lose heart in themselves and respect for their public. The long runs of the same pieces remove the opportunities, which more frequent changes of the bill supply, for hard work, study, and discipline or display of the actor's powers. The "stars' peculiarities, defects of pronunciation, or oddities of manner, become points for imitation; for actors are naturally the most imitators of human beings. The public gets blasé to everything like the level performance of plays by a well-trained "stock" company—not forced up by newspaper-puffs, huge posters, the broadcast sowing of orders, and all the other arts by which a "star's" rays are kept blazing, if there be any appearance of their getting dim, or, even without this, from the mere influence of the Transatlantic usages, among which some of the most brilliant of these stage-planets began to shine.

These "starry influences" we believe sincerely to be among the most mischievous now at work in the London theatres. One consequence has been the fostering of the individual sense of importance among actors till it has become almost impossible to form and keep together a really efficient working company for any length of time. And, without a well-composed company, worked together for a long period, under the most energetic and intelligent management and stage-management, it is impossible to get that wholeness of effect which we can only describe by the French word "ensemble," and for perfect examples of which we must still go to Paris.

Another mischief-working influence is that of actor-managers and manageresses, when their theatrical position or accidental circumstances enable them to take the lead in the pieces produced at the theatres they manage. Farewell, when this is the case, to all chance, not only for any rival of the great man or woman, but for any one in whom the dimmest possibilities of future rivalry can be detected by the lynx-eye of theatrical jealousy. There is no artifice too tortuous, no piece of spite too petty, no form of persecution too cruel to be resorted to by these theatrical Amurats against any possible successor to the throne, however remote the possibility of succession. There is no sacrifice of self-interest that will not cheerfully be made to the insatiable demon of self-love, whose very throne seems to be the heart of a player. The success of a piece and the hopes of a season will be kicked down, without a regret, as an offering to this Moloch. And of course all the interests of art, as well as all the principles of good management, kick the bucket. It is unfortunate that, just as it is hardly possible for any but a dramatic author to be a really consummate dramatic critic, so it is hardly possible for any but an actor to be heart and soul a manager. And yet it is not more hard to find a dramatic writer who will honestly do the work of a dramatic critic than it is to find an actor who will make an able and intelligent manager. As a rule, the actor, to be capable of filling this place, must be himself, in some sense, a subordinate performer. And it seems asking almost too much of human nature—as one sees it in the theatre at least—to require that he should continue content, now he is manager, with the parts he would have been glad to fill while a salaried actor.

There are other evil influences, many of them contingent on those monster ones which we have principally dwelt upon in this paper; and on which, did space permit, much might be said. One is the great slovenliness of rehearsals in our theatre. Another is the practice of calls between the acts, or at the close of a piece, which is barely tolerable in the case of the most exceptional merit, but which has been pushed, by organized trickery—akin to that of the Parisian *claque*—to the extreme limits of abuse. To any one who is familiar with the *couilles*, the indirect machinations of this practice, in encouraging jealousy, cabals, and ill-will among actors, are well known; but another evil effect of the tendency it has to encourage that craving for applause which even the most conscientious actors find it hard to keep within bounds.

We have by no means exhausted the enumeration of points which would form so many texts for a fearless and strict theatrical critic. Such a one is sadly wanted; the stage never needed a tonic more. There are many indications of returning health, amid all its symptoms of weakness and functional derangement; but it is precisely at that point on the way to convalescence at which bitters may be exhibited with the most magical effect. A course of really good theatrical criticism—say in the *Times*—would at this moment, as the doctors say, work "like a charm" alike on the managers, the authors, and the actors of our theatres; and, what is more, we believe that the best managers, actors, and authors would be sincerely glad to see it.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

GRANT'S AFRICA.

*A Walk across Africa; or, Domestic Scenes from my Nile Journal.* By James Augustus Grant, Captain H.M. Bengal Army, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society. (Blackwood and Sons.)

CAPTAIN GRANT tells us that he has written this volume at the suggestion of personal friends who had seen his journals, and also at the express wish of his leader, the late Captain Speke. He now offers them to the public with considerable reluctance and anxiety, feeling that a full narrative of the journey has already been laid before the world. We can, however, assure Captain Grant that his diffidence is quite uncalled for. This volume is a supplementary record of great value and of considerable intrinsic merit. It is by no means a repetition of what Captain Speke has already told us, but a narrative of the same scenes by an independent observer. It checks and defines what we have heard before, and largely extends our information. Lastly, the volume has been written with far more literary care than any other account of the journey, and it contains many phrases of peculiar raciness and originality.

The affectionate and loyal disposition of Captain Grant towards his leader is apparent in many passages of the book. It is now, he says, a melancholy satisfaction to him to think that not a shade of jealousy or distrust, or even ill-temper, ever came between them during their wanderings and intercourse. So, again, when Speke left him sick at Karagwe, and departed for Uganda, he remarks:—

At first sight this appeared to some persons at home as an unkind proceeding, leaving a helpless "brother" in the heart of Africa; but my companion was not the man to be daunted; he was offered an escort to the north, and all tender feelings must yield to the necessities of the case. "Strike while the iron is hot" applies to Africa more appropriately than to any country I know; another such opportunity might never occur, and, had the traveller's determination of character been softened, and had he not proceeded without me at that time, we might never again—so little upsets the mind of an African chief—have had the road open to us.

Lastly, when on the route from Uganda to Unyoro, and, as usual, barely masters of their movements, Speke resolved to leave their caravan at any risk, in order to strike the river at its point of issue from the lake. On this occasion Captain Grant says:—

Speke asked me whether I was able to make a flying march of it along with him, while the baggage might be sent on towards Unyoro. At that time I was positively unable to walk twenty miles a day, especially miles of Uganda marching, through bogs and over rough ground. I therefore yielded reluctantly to the necessity of our parting; and I am anxious to be explicit on this point, as some have hastily inferred that my companion did not wish me to share in the gratification of seeing the river. Nothing could be more contrary to fact. My health alone prevented me from accompanying Speke.

It was when three-fourths of this book had been completed that the startling intelligence of poor Speke's death reached the author.

He thereupon remarks as follows, very justly and very affectionately, of his old friend:—

My fellow-traveller had a thorough knowledge of the country, loved its inhabitants, was a practical ornithologist, and would have aided me with his views on all topographical questions. Added to a singular adaptation for the work he had made choice of—arising partly from his imperturbable temper and great patience—Captain Speke was, in private life, pure-minded, honourable, regardless of self, and equally self-denying, with a mind always aiming at great things and above every littleness. He was gentle and pleasing in manner, with almost childlike simplicity, but at the same time extremely tenacious of purpose. This was strikingly displayed in his recent efforts to prosecute his work in Africa, which, had he lived, he would ultimately have accomplished.

It has been a frequent subject of remark that Captain Speke, whether from maladroitness or by intention, never gave sufficient prominence to Captain Grant's share in the conduct of the expedition. Had Grant been a vain man, it would have been an irresistible temptation to him to seize the opportunity of authorship, to express or imply his annoyance. But there is not such a thing as a querulous sentence in the volume. There is not in it the faintest display of self-seeking, or of any other kind of pretension. On the contrary, its expressions are those of an affectionate and chivalrous gentleman, who maintains with unswerving fidelity the fair reputation of his former leader.

Captain Grant's descriptions of Africa have the freshness natural to a traveller who had never before been thrown among negroes. He points his descriptions of their character by comparing them with the Hindoos, with whom he was familiar. Thus—

Our table-attendant . . . was a thorough African, so opposite to what an Indian servant is. Ever naked from head to waist (and looking gross with fatness), he would come up to "lay the table," whistling or singing, with a bunch of knives, spoons, and forks in his hand; having placed the tin lids and pots at our feet, he would squat on the ground beside them and dole out our dinner. Should he have to clean your plate, a bunch of grass or a leaf is generally within his reach; and, if he has to remove the plate, he seldom returns without wiping his mouth. He chaffs his comrades as he sits by you; and, dinner over, you see him eating with your spoons, and drinking out of the teapot or the spout of the kettle.

Grant has always a sympathizing word for the negroes: they are so joyous and reckless, and so like overgrown children; always dancing, singing, or fighting, and utterly careless of the morrow. He has many charming descriptions of village scenes in the earlier part of his journey, all marked by sociability, noisy fun, and busy work. From Zanzibar to Karagwe, the negroes are of the type of Topsy, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." They have strong attachments. Those who had been separated by slavery from their parents in childhood became devoted to some one, it might be to their first master, whom they continued to look upon as their protector and adviser. "On my directing that a party of five should proceed ahead for orders, one man stepped forward and volunteered. His pupil-child, or 'M'toto,' at once made another volunteer, as he would not see his patron risk his life, or be put to inconvenience, without sharing danger himself." The children are as fondly cared for by their mothers as in any other part of the world; not a single instance is known of a mother selling her offspring.

Speaking of the Wanyamuesi, he says:—

The boys . . . practised many manly games as seen in our own gymnasiums—such as jumping over sticks; shooting with bolted arrows, partridge or pigeon, or teaching small birds to sing; making model guns out of cane, going off with a trigger, and having a cloud of sand for smoke; copying our double-barrelled guns, and making them, with nipple, hammer, trigger, &c., out of mud, with cotton for the smoke. They had also made cross-bows; and generally they evinced great powers of imitation.

Grant's description of the more highly organized kingdom of Uganda fully confirms

what Captain Speke's courtesy and ce of the extranordi A native inford said:—

It was not from of life, as he was its being the ancie were it not done would become reb the country swar abound with food rule and prefer hi one, as being mor

The people of neighbours, but to decorum. TI into habits of or we have ever I though there ex frightfully tyrar but nevertheless might convert spectable nation gone some way problem.

A large part of that the most in in Uganda and extracts from closely resemble already given to

It will be rec from a terribly state was carrie Uganda, four m from him. He

On our jour from the head to who went at the r and paining my l and-four, as I ma mile, or less, that joke, and make mumbling languis roofs of their moa tain was by the r resisted; off all v carry away as m politely offering i remaining so lon, that it became ir join as much as p my men did so, as

This volume logists and othe of valuable fact justice to a des interesting and space we can aff So much cou subject of Miani by Speke and C on which Miani point of his i definite statem geographers.

Within sight o three or four m Nile, at 3° 34' N. informed us that viously, accompa as this point, an hence because th not sufficient esoc did not know his having a long be name out upon February, 1863, visited the tree, some letters, but walked twice ro them. They w creeper and bark in the wood. T centre letters we either A without seem to have be perly I had to st I at once concl English, because the tree, as an and also because The illegible lett in thus. M. Not later M. Not we find out for

24 DECEMBER, 1864.

flows, very justly  
his old friend:—

orough knowledge  
stants, was a prac-  
have aided me with  
uestions. Added to  
ork he had made  
his imperturbable  
tain Speke was, in  
ourable, regard-  
ing, with a mind  
s and above every  
pleasing in man-  
ner, but at the same  
purpose. This was  
nt efforts to prose-  
e, had he lived, he  
lished.

subject of remark  
ther from mal-  
never gave suffi-  
Grant's share in  
tion. Had Grant  
ld have been an  
him to seize the  
o express or imply  
e is not such a  
ice in the volume.  
et display of self-  
ind of pretension.  
ions are those of  
rons gentleman,  
erving fidelity the  
r leader.

ions of Africa have  
raveller who had  
among negroes.  
of their character  
the Hindoos, with  
hus—

... was a thorough  
in Indian servant in  
st (and looking gross  
ne up to "lay the  
; with a bunch of  
his hand; having  
t our feet, he would  
hem and dole out our  
clean your plate,  
generally within his  
move the plate, he  
ing his mouth. He  
by you; and, dinner  
your spoons, and  
or the spout of the

apathizing word for  
joyous and reck-  
n children; always  
thing, and utterly  
He has many  
illage scenes in the  
ey, all marked by  
i busy work. From  
the negroes are of  
ncle Tom's Cabin."  
ments. Those who  
slavery from their  
became devoted to  
o their first master,  
look upon as their  
"On my directing  
ld proceed ahead for  
forward and volun-  
or 'M'toto,' at once  
as he would not see  
or be put to incon-  
ing danger himself."  
ly cared for by their  
r part of the world;  
known of a mother

ramesi, he says:—  
l many manly games as  
s—such as jumping over  
ed arrows, partridge or  
birds to sing; making  
ing off with a trigger,  
for smoke; copying our  
ad making them, with  
&c., out of mud, with  
ey had also made cross-  
evined great powers of

of the more highly  
Uganda fully confirms

what Captain Speke has told us of the  
courtesy and ceremony of the people, and  
of the extraordinary cruelty of their king.  
A native informant, speaking of M'tosa,  
said:—

It was not from any love he had for destruction  
of life, as he was an amiable young man, but from  
its being the ancient custom of the country; and,  
were it not done, the fear was that the people  
would become rebellious. Besides which, was not  
the country swarming with people?—did it not  
abound with food?—did they not love the king's  
rule and prefer his sentence of death to a natural  
one, as being more princely?

The people of Uganda are as merry as their  
neighbours, but are thoroughly well drilled  
to decorum. They have been more broken  
into habits of order than any other Africans  
we have ever read of. It really seems as  
though there existed some art of government,  
frightfully tyrannical and bloody to our ideas,  
but nevertheless grateful to theirs, which  
might convert an African people into a re-  
spectable nation. The kings of Uganda have  
gone some way towards the solution of the  
problem.

A large part of Captain Grant's book—and  
that the most interesting—describes his stay  
in Uganda and Karagwe. We do not give  
extracts from this, because his anecdotes  
closely resemble, while they reinforce, those  
already given to us by Speke.

It will be recollected that Grant suffered  
from a terribly diseased knee, and in that  
state was carried in a litter from Karagwe to  
Uganda, four months after Speke had parted  
from him. He says:—

On our journey the stretcher was changed  
from the head to the shoulder of the Waganda,  
who went at the rate of six miles an hour, jostling  
and painning my limb unmercifully. The coach-  
and-four, as I may term it, was put down every  
mile, or less, that the bearers might rest, laugh,  
joke, and make a deafening sound with their  
mumbling language, beating their tongues to  
the roofs of their mouths. . . . If a grove of plain-  
tain was by the side of the path, it could not be  
resisted; off all would dash at the fruit, eat and  
carry away as much as they were able, sometimes  
politely offering me a share, or more frequently  
remaining so long away, as I lay on the stretcher,  
that it became irritating. The best way was to  
join as much as possible with them in their frolics;  
my men did so, and enjoyed the march extremely.

This volume is a quarry whence ethno-  
logists and others will derive a large number  
of valuable facts. It is not at all easy to do  
justice to a description, so full as this is of  
interesting and varied detail, in the small  
space we can afford to review.

So much controversy has arisen on the  
subject of Miani's tree, as to whether that seen  
by Speke and Grant was or was not the tree  
on which Miani cut his name, at the furthest  
point of his journey, that the following  
definite statement will be very acceptable to  
geographers.

Within sight of Apũdo stands a tamarind-tree  
three or four miles from the right bank of the  
Nile, at 3° 34' N. lat., and 32° E. long. The Turks  
informed us that a European had, two years pre-  
viously, accompanied them from Gondokoro as far  
as this point, and had returned to Egypt from  
hence because the rains were heavy, and he had  
not sufficient escort to push further south. They  
did not know his name, but they described him as  
having a long beard, and said we should find his  
name cut upon the tree. My notes on the 1st  
February, 1863, are as follows regarding it:—"I  
visited the tree, on which a European had cut  
some letters, but they were so indistinct that I  
walked twice round it before I could distinguish  
them. They were grown over with a thorny  
creeper and bark, and had been merely scratched  
in the wood. They appeared like—A I A A. The  
centre letters were I and A, and the outer ones  
either A without the stroke, or part of W. Nails  
seem to have been extracted; and to read it pro-  
perly I had to stand upon some lower branches."  
I at once concluded that the traveller was not  
English, because his letters were not deeply cut into  
the tree, as an Englishman would have done it,  
and also because the letters were curiously formed.  
The illegible letters without strokes were scored  
in thus,—A,—as a foreigner writes the capital  
letter M. Not until we reached Khartoom did  
we find out for certain who this traveller must

have been. His name was MIANI (Miami), a  
native of Venice, who has protested against our  
Nile being the proper Nile, because we have placed  
his tree in a position of latitude and longitude  
(obtained by daily observations) different to what  
he made it without scientific instruments.

There seems no room for doubt that Speke  
and Grant have been correct in regard to  
Miani's furthest position. On other geo-  
graphical matters this volume does not pro-  
fess to add to our information. The incon-  
gruity is, however, again forced upon our  
notice between the small size of the river at  
Gondokoro compared to the large size of the  
Kitangule, and the numerous other streams  
crossed between Karagwe and Uganda,  
that feed the lake, to say nothing of subse-  
quent affluents. On the hypotheses advocated  
by Captain Burton, among others that the  
Luta Nzige contributes the outpour of the  
distant Tanganyika, as well as that due to its  
own basin, the incongruity becomes yet more  
astonishing. Notwithstanding all the labours  
of Speke and Grant, the continuity of the  
Nile with the Nyassa is not an ascertained  
fact. Our knowledge of the river-system  
of Central Africa is exceedingly imperfect.  
There seems nothing in the data we as yet  
possess to make it impossible that the  
Nyanza and the Tanganyika may both have  
their outlet on the *Western Coast* of Africa,  
and that the source of the Nile may be  
altogether short of them, and be situated  
between the first and the third degree north  
of the equator.

## LORD DERBY'S ILIAD.

*The Iliad of Homer, rendered into English Blank  
Verse.* By Edward, Earl of Derby. In Two  
Volumes. (Murray.)

[SECOND NOTICE.]

IN our late comments upon the newest  
translation of Homer we fulfilled what  
we think to be the first duty of the critic, in  
giving our readers the opportunity of forming  
their own judgment upon Lord Derby's work  
by copious extracts from it; but, this being  
done, it is now time to consider more closely  
the skill of the workmanship; and we propose  
to examine in detail a well-known and already  
cited passage, comparing it with the perform-  
ance of other distinguished translators; and  
let us, while we do so, bear in mind how  
difficult the task is of translating poetry—  
how hard it is to seize the living fire and  
transplant it still a-glow from one language  
to another. Dr. Johnson has elaborately  
explained to us, in his "Rasselas," how  
almost impossible it is to be a poet; and,  
without his explanation, we might acknow-  
ledge, and partly understand, the case; for  
the poet's genius is so rare among men that  
coarser and commoner humanity is willing to  
worship it, as a portion of the distinctly  
divine essence, as a radiance of divinity yet  
permitted to haunt the earth to open out to her  
glimpses of Paradise. It were a pity if the  
inspiration so seldom granted to one man were  
confined altogether to the expression of one  
language: it is well to try to make the music  
resound in distant shores and to distant ages  
—to persuade the luminous ether to vibrate  
in foreign atmospheres, to bring light to  
those who sit in darkness. To attempt  
this is to attempt a high service worthy  
of honour and gratitude, for the comple-  
tion of which some of our noblest moral  
qualities are called into play. The appre-  
ciation of the poet entails the spirit of  
self-sacrifice, for the translator must reli-  
giously render the thought of another man,  
preferring it to his own; he must also have  
constancy of purpose, enduring energy, and  
patient resolution; and he must add to these  
things a perfect integrity, a fine, subtle, and  
full sympathy with another man's soul, and  
an exact understanding of the words in which  
he reveals it, with the power of sending out  
his own words, too, in sympathetic music.  
These are some few of the ingredients which  
he must fling into the cauldron if he would  
have his invocations answered, and his spirits  
obedient. When all these requirements are  
considered, it will appear that a perfect trans-

lator is a not much less wonderful fact than a  
great poet; and therefore, in his work, much  
imperfection should be allowed for, and all  
merit should be acknowledged and admired;  
—indeed, a just admiration is the worthiest  
exercise of the critic's faculties. It is well  
said by the author of "Philip van Artevelde"  
that "admiration is never thrown away upon  
the mind of him who feels it, except when it  
is misdirected or blindly indulged." But  
the hurry of the present age, with its in-  
tolerance of prolonged attention and reflec-  
tion, leads both to the injustice of unmiti-  
gated contempt and the dotage of unquali-  
fied admiration. To guard against either  
extreme, we must take time to think. In  
the long roll of Homer's translators some  
have been also original poets: among  
Englishmen, Dryden, Pope, and Cowper;  
and even Sotheby was in some sort a poet.  
Tennyson has translated only one passage.

It is this passage which now invites our  
special consideration—the famous lines which  
close the eighth book of the *Iliad*. Before  
proceeding to the examination of the different  
versions, we will give a literal prose transla-  
tion for the benefit of general readers, in this  
respect following the example of that fine  
critic Professor Wilson; nor can we do  
better than make use of that with which he  
has already furnished us, although there are  
one or two inaccuracies to be marked even in  
his prose.

But they, *greatly* elated, upon the space  
between the two armies,  
Sat all the night; and many fires were burning  
to them.

But, as when the stars in Heaven, around the  
shining moon,  
Shine beautiful, when the air is windless,  
And all the eminences appear, and pinnacles of  
the heights,

And groves; and the *immeasurable firmament*  
bursts (or expands) from below,

And all the stars are seen, and the shepherd  
rejoices in his heart;—

So numerous, between the ships and the streams  
of Xanthus,

The fires of the Trojans burning their fires  
appeared before Troy.

For a thousand fires were burning on the plain;  
and by each

Sat fifty (men) at the light of the blazing fire.  
And the horses, eating white barley and oats,  
Standing by the chariots, awaited the beautiful  
throned Aurora.

The adverb "*greatly*," in the first line, is  
redundant—for "*with high thoughts*," which  
the word "*elated*" expresses sufficiently, is  
precisely what Homer says; and, in the sixth  
line, there is something left out—for Homer  
says, "*and from Heaven* breaks upward the  
immeasurable firmament;" but otherwise the  
lines are here exactly rendered; and let us  
see how the poets deal with them. Let  
Chapman, as the eldest, head the list, and  
introduce us to this fine night-scene in the  
tented field.

CHAPMAN.

And spent all night in open field; fires round  
about them shined.

As when about the silver moone, when air is free  
from winds

And stars shine clear, to whose sweet beams high  
prospects and the brows

Of all steep hills and pinnacles thrust up  
themselves for shows;

And even the lowly vallies joy, to glitter in their  
sight

When the unmeasured firmament bursts to dis-  
close her light,

And all the signs in Heaven are seen that glad  
the shepherd's heart;

So many fires disclose their beams, made by the  
Trojan part

Before the face of Illion; and her bright turrets  
shined.

A thousand courts of guard kept fire; and every  
guard allowed

Fifty stout men, by whom their horse eat oats  
and hard white corn;

And all did wilfully expect the silver-throned  
morne.

Here there is much to be condemned, and  
little to be praised: the rhymes are felt to be  
burthensome and unnatural, and the labour  
to produce them is perhaps in part the cause  
of feeble and unfaithful expression, such as