



The Elizabethan.

Vol. V. No. 18. WESTMINSTER PLAY NUMBER, 1888. Price 6d.

THE 'PHORMIO.'

ALTHOUGH the relative merits of the three of Terence's plays which find a place on the Westminister stage have been before discussed in the columns of the play number of *The Elizabethan*, no apology is needed for setting shortly before our readers the peculiar qualities which make the 'Phormio' a favourite with our audiences. The 'Adelphi,' which is considered the best, is remarkable chiefly for its artistic development of character, its deep insight into human nature, and its exposition of moral principle, while the 'Andria' pleases its hearers chiefly through its farcical humour, relieved here and there by touches of exquisite pathos, such as the description of the death of Chrysis, which never fails to charm. But the merit of the 'Phormio,' which occupies a middle place, is contained in its brusque and sparkling dialogue, and a rough humour which runs, without any strained appearance, throughout the play, breaking out occasionally into the farcical, as in the celebrated

'Lawyers' Scene,' and maintained during the last scenes in the character of the henpecked Chremes, thus keeping up the interest in the plot till the curtain falls, a quality which is noticeably wanting in the 'Adelphi.'

The complications in the 'Phormio' are few, but for rapidity of stratagem and surprises in incident, it is unsurpassed; and this, combined with a simple plot, and comic touches of a more apparent nature than in the other plays, have made the 'Phormio' an universal favourite. But it has a further, and even greater recommendation. It possesses a quality which is sure to make its representation successful before a mixed audience. There is throughout a wonderful succession of totally opposite feelings, which are nevertheless made to harmonise easily and naturally. For instance, the sympathy which the audience naturally feels with Antipho, the youth of quick and generous impulse, in his grief in Act I, scene 4, when he learns of the final destruction of his hopes owing to his father's return, is suddenly, but without any awkwardness, relieved by the amusement at his attempts to

hide his trouble, and to simulate a calm and confident demeanour, and at Geta's criticisms on them; again, the pathetic in Phaedria's distress at the prospect of losing Pamphila, if Doria refuses to be persuaded, blends easily with the comic in the extreme repulsiveness of the latter character; and the indignation of the injured Nausistrata, in the last scene of the play, is relieved by the amusing terror of her husband. This combination of grave and gay, of the quiet and the boisterous, wins for the 'Phormio' favour from many on whom the subtle dialogue and artistic finish, which generally characterise Terence, would be lost.

The plot of the 'Phormio' is as follows: The brothers Demipho and Chremes go abroad, the former to Cilicia, the latter to Lemnos, where he has surreptitiously married a second wife, by whom he has a daughter. This daughter, having arrived at a marriageable age, he is very anxious to get off his hands, and, to prevent awkward questions arising, the simplest way appears to be to marry her to his brother's son Antipho, and it is to make arrangements to this end that he takes his journey to Lemnos. On their departure the two old gentlemen leave their respective sons, Antipho and Phaedria, in charge of Geta, an old slave of Demipho, who, in spite of his most sincere wishes to be faithful to his master, soon finds it to the interest of his own shoulder-blades to let the young men have their own way. Antipho at first remains harmless, but Phaedria immediately falls in love with a music-girl, Pamphila, who, however, being the property of a slave merchant, Dorio, has to be bought with a good round sum, which, of course, the old gentlemen have taken good care not to leave with their sons, and consequently nothing remains for him but to get the most of her company that he can by conducting her to and from school. While they are all three waiting for her one day in a neighbouring barber's shop, a young man dashes in with a harrowing account of the distress of a young girl, whose mother has just died, and this story rousing their curiosity, they all start off to visit her and offer their assistance. The young man's details of her beauty appear by no means to have been exaggerated, and Antipho falls in love, and, on hearing that she is an Athenian of good family, is the more anxious to marry her, but is afraid of his father. The assistance of Phormio is here called in, who, by private agreement with Antipho, invents a relationship between him and the girl, and claims the exaction of the law which

compels them to marry. The opening scenes of the play are occupied by Geta giving a description of the above facts to his friend Davus. The former then goes off to the Piræus and returns to Antipho and Phaedria with the news of Demipho's return. Antipho, after various attempts to appear composed, is startled by the appearance of Demipho himself, and rushes off, leaving his friends to fight the battle alone, which they find no easy matter, for Demipho is mad with rage at the news of his son's marriage, and, after a long dispute, they separate in the same state of mind as before.

In the Second Act Phormio appears, and, after enlarging to Geta on the advantages of his character and profession, is surprised by the entrance of Demipho with his three advisers, Hegio, Cratinus, and Crito. An amusing scene now takes place, where Geta, knowing his master is listening behind his back, pretends to stand up for him against the insinuations detrimental to his character made by Phormio. On Demipho discovering himself, the farce is continued by Geta; and Phormio, finding all other attempts unavailable, takes Demipho on his own ground by flying into a passion and then leaves him; the lawyers then give their conflicting advice on the principle of '*suus cuique mos*,' and Demipho goes off, more puzzled than ever, to wait till his brother returns. Here Antipho sneaks back, reasonably ashamed of himself for leaving his friends to fight it out for him, and receives what encouragement Geta can give him; they then see Phaedria coming *ab sua palæstrâ*, Dorio's house, with Dorio himself, who has shamelessly broken his promise to wait till a certain day, and has sold the girl. Antipho adds entreaties, and Geta abuse, which, in combination with Phaedria's tears, succeed in persuading Dorio to wait till the next day, and the three are now left in a fix as to how to procure the thirty minæ in that time.

In the next Act, Demipho comes on with Chremes, who returned, on finding his wife had left Lemnos for Athens, and that they had crossed each other on the voyage. Geta now arrives with the news that Phormio is willing to marry Phanium for thirty minæ, which, of course, is really to pay Dorio for Pamphila, and which, after some objections on the part of Demipho, he extorts from the old men, after which he has to reassure Antipho, who is naturally not a little displeased with the idea, and then conducts Demipho to make further arrangements with Phormio. Meanwhile Chremes stumbles on Sophrona, his

daughter's nurse, and after mutual expressions of surprise, it turns out that it is his daughter whom Antipho has married, which is the very end he wished to bring about, and that his Lemnian wife is dead.

In the Fourth Act Chremes rushes out from visiting Phanium, full of the news to tell Demipho, and, finding him outside, begins his story, but abruptly pulls himself up on discovering Nausistrata, his Athenian wife, is present; and here is an amusing scene, caused by Chremes endeavouring to explain the matter to Demipho without letting it out to Nausistrata. Here Phormio comes on to the stage again, having bought Pamphila for Phaedria, and Geta describes to him and Antipho how he overheard the story of Phanium, and thus the young men's troubles are ended.

But now a new difficulty arises. Demipho demands his money back from Phormio, who of course objects; and on the old man offering persuasive violence, as a last resource he calls Nausistrata out of the house, and tells her the whole story, to the embarrassment of Chremes. After some difficulty a reconciliation between husband and wife is effected; Phormio, as his payment, demands a dinner, and all ends happily.

THE FIRST NIGHT.

The audience on Thursday, December 15, was very large for a first night. As both the 'varsities were already down, there were several young O.W.W. who were, so to speak, homeless, the places which they occupy on the other nights being devoted to the ladies. The curtain rose soon after the appointed time, and the appearance of Davus, whose ruddy locks considerably heightened the effect of the already picturesque slave's dress, was the signal for prolonged applause from all parts of the house. The play seemed to drag rather, all through the first part, but after the appearance of Dorio, there was much more life in it, and the last scenes gained much merited applause, being played with plenty of animation. The Epilogue was received unusually well, and almost all the points, of which there was no lack, were readily caught up.

THE SECOND NIGHT.

There was a great improvement apparent in the acting on the second night. The actors seemed to have lost much of their nervousness, and to feel much more at home upon the stage.

The audience, too, seemed pleased, and although there was hardly any clapping except from the gods, the laughter from the pit as the 'hits' of the play were brought out, showed that the efforts of the cast were appreciated. The Headmaster's party included the Dean, who took the chair, Lord Esher (the Master of the Rolls), the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, the Master of Trinity, Oxford, the Greek Minister, the Archdeacon of Westminster, Canon Liddon, Sir Walter Phillimore, &c.

THE THIRD NIGHT.

A noticeable feature in the third night's performance was the change in the cast, owing to the illness of R. E. A. Hamilton, whose place was taken by A. R. Knapp. The play went with much more vivacity and spirit than before, and but few of the points of the Epilogue were missed. The Prologue, too, gained more of the applause due to its neat and graceful style, and on the whole the play was declared a great success. Among the guests were the Postmaster-General, Sir Patrick Colquhoun, Mr. Justice Stirling, Mr. Justice Kekewich, Mr. Justice Day, the Right Hon. C. J. Ritchie, M.P., Col. Howard Vincent, M.P., the Headmasters of Harrow and Bradfield, and Admiral Sir Augustus Phillimore, while the chair was taken by Lord Devon.

Play Notes.

THE 'Phormio' appears to be the unlucky play of our set. In 1879 only one performance was given, owing to the death of the Princess Alice after the first night; in 1882 the part of Geta had to be taken at a few days' notice, and H. W. Waterfield, who was Captain at the time, recited the prologue on crutches. This year, not only was Phaedria put into the cast little more than a fortnight before the play, but a second Dorio had to be found even after the second night.

The opinions of the daily papers with regard to the play this year were much after the usual style. Some papers are content with inserting a description of the theatre, and a plot of the play, always with some reference to the 'brilliant audience,' leaving the criticism to their more experienced or more literary brethren; others bestow indiscriminate praise, greatly to the delight, perhaps, of those concerned; while a third class give their real opinions, and criticise the

acting as they would any professional performance. We need hardly say that this last class, if not always the kindest to individual actors, is far more satisfactory than the others.

The *Guardian*, the critique in which is always eagerly looked forward to, was very favourable, and its theory that the Prologue was purposely inaudible in parts of the house on the second night, that the press representative might not publish it till after the third performance, is really very ingenious, even if mistaken.

The *Graphic's* notice this year consisted in an illustration, entitled 'The Gods and their Ganymede at the Westminster Play.' Except for some mistakes in details, and the fact that the faces bear no resemblance to the originals, the picture is good.

The different ideas of different newspaper representatives as to the proportion of ladies present on the first night are amusing. One paper declared that there were more ladies than usual, while another thought that representatives of the fair sex were particularly scarce. 'Who shall decide when newspapers disagree?'

The only hitch which occurred was on the first night, when the band went off without playing 'God save the Queen,' and several of those present expressed their surprise that a military band should finish up with the Irish national anthem (!). However, some one in the audience mustered up courage to sing the first few notes, which were taken up with great vigour by all present.

The Prologue was written by Mr. A. W. Verrall, of Trinity College, Cambridge (who, by the way, notwithstanding the statement of *The Times* is not an Old Westminster), and the Epilogue by Mr. W. A. Peck.

◆◆◆
'PHORMIO,' 1887.

DAVUS	C. L. C. Aveling.
GETA	C. S. W. Barwell.
ANTIPHO	H. T. Whitaker.
PHAEDRIA	H. E. Oliver.
DEMIPHO	H. J. Gully.
PHORMIO	R. E. Olivier.
HEGIO	P. Williamson.
CRATINUS	H. L. Stephenson.
CRITO	A. H. Cuming.
DORIO	R. E. A. Hamilton.
CHREMES	W. S. Cox.
SOPHRONA	C. A. Phillimore.
NAUSISTRATA	J. S. Phillimore.

PROLOGUS IN PHORMIONEM,

1887.

O qui scholari adestis huic spectaculo,
Annis quidem anceps si fuit prioribus,
Principium et omnen prologus unde sumeret,
Remque adeo quam cui gratulans praeponeret,
Nunc est; opinor, non in incerto id mihi.
Quidnam Britannis hoc in anno agi placet,
Ut non ea in re principis prosperrimae
Sanctum auspicantes nomen inceptis suis
Valente voto nomen Victoriae?
Quae regna postquam haec optimo moderamine
Terrasque tenuit imperavitque integris
Quinquagens iam mensium feliciter
Finitus orbis has reduxit ferias:
Tempusque nullum tempore in tanto fuit,
Cum non amanda, non reverenda civibus
Clueret ipsisque exteris laudabilis.
Atque universis, vox ut absit absona,
Choris locorum ubique concinentibus,
Minime hic loci tacenda laus inque hac domo.
Debet domus regalis haec regalibus
His rebus interesse, debet et potest.
Quo in genere nec propiora nec propria magis
Officia sunt quam nostra: qui tum cum sacris
Primum peractis principis Victoriae
Vicina faustum fana viderunt caput,
Quod iuris est nostri (ad scientes proloquor),
Primi novo diademati adlaemavimus:¹
Idemque nuper, ipsa in aede ut initia
Regina repetens arbitro populo palam
Grates agebat pro decem lustris Deo,
In non alieno adfuimus adhibiti loco.
Satin' haec quidem in nos gratulatio expetit?
Quae tanta res est, ut hodie arbitrer minus
Vos id quidem vitio esse vorsuros mihi,
Si caetera brevius. Est quidem, ut fit, in bonis
Quod sit dolendum, morsque mortales habet;
Habent quietem muneribus functi suis:
Hic curiae olim, notus hic ipsi scholae,
Ille in maritimis rebus, ille in litteris,
Alia alius arte; nunc ea functi iacent.
Laudemus ergo hos, nostra agamus strenue.
Iam ut eo revortar, unde coeperam; licet
Vos *iubilare*, quo utimur vocabulo,
Velim iubere, tetigit aures aliquis mihi.
Viden' ferentem mulierem prope me manu
Ferulam et coronam adstare capite charteam?
Grammatica (namque adgnosco), ne iubeam tamen
Vos *iubilare*, scrupulum iniecit, satis
Terentius ne id non probet vocabulum.
Quare (ut, quod ipsa praestet, id salvos loquar)
'Nos quidem valemus; si valetis vos, bene est.'
Valete, et ipsum audite iam hinc Terentium.

¹ At a coronation, when the crown touches the Monarch's head, it is the privilege of the Scholars to hail the King or Queen thrice in chorus with the words 'Vivat Rex!' (or 'Regina').

EPILOGUS AD PHORMIONEM.

1887.

PERSONAE.

CHREMES	an English M.P.
NAUSISTRATA	his wife.
SOPHRONA	their grandson's nurse.
PHAEDRIA	their son.
HEGIO	} members of the Bar.
CRATINUS	
CRITO	
PHORMIO	an Irish M.P.
ANTIPHO	a Police Inspector.
GETA	a Government Reporter.

Mob and Constabulary.

SCENE—A town in Ireland; a small platform at the back of the stage.

Enter CHREMES, NAUSISTRATA and SOPHRONA;
CHREMES with a portmanteau; NAUSISTRATA with an
umbrella; SOPHRONA carrying the baby.

NAU. (to CHREMES, who appears unwell.)

Pallidus es, mi vir; melior tu navita ventis
Lemniacis quondam vela secunda dabas.
Nunc ubi legitimā brevius cum conjuge tendis
Huc iter, en! morbus forte marinus adest.

SOPH. Infantem cura: recreet te cura nepotis;
Deliciae! risu quam bene novit avum.

CHR. (sitting down on the portmanteau.)

Sic o sic positum adfatæ discedite corpus;
Non adeo ipse mihi Phormio nauseae erat.

NAU. Phormio nauseae erat! columen vero ille suorum;
In Patribus lumen; natus ad arma fori.

Est illi studium celebrare Domestica Jura;
Saxonis et saevi solvere vincla parat.

Illi non deero: mihi quod tulit optimus olim
Auxilium, patriae jam gerit exanimi.

(To CHREMES)

Non satis Anglorum te consedissee Senatu est!
Nos et Hibernica plebs vult sociare sibi.

Area cum jam clausa Trafalgarensis inique,
Qua modo complebat contio nostra locum,

Arbitrio quos expulerit minitante tyrannus,
Hic profugi fato quaerimus arva nova.

Femina dux facti est; et vir mea facta sequatur,
Ni mavult verbis asperiora pati.

Sed quis adest? natus! miror!

[Enter PHAEDRIA, with HEGIO, CRATINUS, and CRITO.]

PHAE. Salvete, parentes;

Salvos vos NAU. Fili, talia mitte, precor:
Pamphila tuque valetis, ego ipsa Chremesque
valemus;

Quid plura? CHR. (feebly) O certe, Tullius alter
adest!

NAU. Tu taceas. SOPH. Monstrum! Cur non dedit
oscula nato

Ipse pater? PHAE. Pudit. NAU. Perge; viri
officium est.

(PHAEDRIA kisses the baby.)

NAU. Cur ades? uxorem mutant qui trans mare currunt
Plerumque, aut miseros aera aliena premunt.

Idem Anglice.

Enter CHREMES, NAUSISTRATA and SOPHRONA;
CHREMES with a portmanteau; NAUSISTRATA with an
umbrella; SOPHRONA carrying the baby.

NAU. (to CHREMES, who appears unwell.)

You're pale, my husband: ah! you did not mind
The sea, when off to Lemnos with the wind.
Now when you cross the sea a shorter way
With lawful spouse, why are you sea-sick, pray?

SOPH. Mind the dear child! With it drive care afar.
The darling! how it smiles at grandpapa.

CHR. (sitting down on the portmanteau.)

'Oh! give this useless corpse a long adieu!'
Phormio, I was not half so sick at you.

NAU. You sick at Phormio, his party's life,
Light of the Commons, born for civic strife?

To advertise 'Home Rule' all zealous he,
And break the bonds of Saxon tyranny.

I will not fail him—once my friend in need,
So now his fainting country's friend indeed.

(To CHREMES)

To be an English M.P. will not do;
The Irish people wants our counsel too.

Since in Trafalgar Square we're not allowed
To fill the air with our invectives loud,

We, whom the tyrant's threats from home pursue,
'Exiled by fate,' look here for pastures new.

'A woman leads'—and let my goodman stir,
Unless he'd something worse than words endure.

But who comes here? My son! What brings him
here?

[Enter PHAEDRIA, with HEGIO, CRATINUS, and CRITO.]

PHAE. How do? I hope you're—

NAU. That'll do, my dear,
You and your wife are well, and I and Chremes too:

What else?

CHR. (feebly) Oh! Tullius, that smacks of you!
NAU. You hold your tongue.

SOPH. Not kiss your little beauty?

PHAE. I'm shy.

NAU. Now like a man, sir; do your duty

(PHAEDRIA kisses the baby.)

Why have you come? Men cross the sea to get
A change of — wife, or else avoid a debt.

PHAE. Nil horum est. Adventum (animos attendite) paucis

Expeditam ; imprimis psaltria nostra furit.

Vos puerum e gremio matris rapuisse reclamat,
Meque mali queritur participem esse doli.

Hic cito ni redeat, discessio judicialis

Iam mihi promissa est vocibus hystericis.

Cum subit illius tristissima noctis imago,
Labitur ex oculis nunc quoque gutta meis.

Uxor amans flentem flens acrius ipsa tenebat,
Ungue maritales usque notante genas.

CHR. Nos passi graviora : dabit deus his quoque finem.

PHAE. Infantem, genitrix, obsecro, redde mihi.

NAU. Tu prius explana gentem quae causa togatam
Huc ferat. PHAE. Hostili non adiere modo,

Nobis consultorum ut nunc sit opinio juris

Optima de nato quem retinere cupis.

SOPH. Improbe, volturiis puerum tu tradis? PHAE. At
ecce !

Quis venit huc? NAU. Eugae ! Phormio noster
adest.

[Enter PHORMIO.]

PHOR. Matribus e nostris primaria femina, salve !

Accingi nobis nunc opus est operi.

Proclamata fuit quam nos hodie meditatur

Contio. NAU. Quis feret hoc? CHR. Spes mihi
mixta metu est.

PHOR. Scriba, vir impurus, vir sanguinolentus, habenas

Imperii Eblanae torquet in Arce latens :

Hinc illae lacrimae. CHR. Sed non ego lacrimo.
PHOR. Et illinc

Perlege mandatum, dedecus huicce solo.

(Handing to NAUSISTRATA a copy of the proclamation.)

PHAE. Adsunt consulti juris, cultuque forensi

Mandatum hoc possunt dicere quid valeat.

Hegio, tu matri haec edissere vera roganti.

(The lawyers come forward.)

HEG. Incipe tu potius, docte Cratine, loqui.

CRAT. Non ego ; sic potius me Phormio boycottabit,

Ni mea verba placent ; Hegio, tu loquere.

HEG. Hem ! quot sunt homines tot sunt sententiae ; et
his in

Rebus mos suus est cuique ; placetne, Crito ?

CRIT. (slowly) Amplius ast equidem delib- CHR. Vir
doctus ! CRIT. -erandum

Censeo ; res magna est. CHR. Tu, Crito, vir
gravis es.

Praevalet omnino sententia dia Critonis ;

Non ego sum incertus ; res liquet : haud dubium
est.

PHOR. Delirat terrore miser. NAU. Nil ille nec ausus

Nec potuit. Lemnum vult sibi confugium.

PHOR. (to the lawyers)

Fecistis bene : nunc discedite.

(The lawyers go off.)

Non fugiemus.

Huc cito nostratum densa caterva venit.

Saeva coercitio modo saevius excitat iras,

Nostraque per terram pars ubicunque viget.

Bombardis homines mactamus, equosque veneno,

Nec referunt caudas ad sua tecta boves.

Argento ancillas emunximus Americanas,

Campanusque dolus complet adhuc oculos.

Unde habeas quaerit nemo ; sed oportet habere ;

Sic suus huic populo rite Senatus erit.

Sed quamnam infantem huc fertis ?

PHAE. Neither's my object. Just attend awhile,
And I'll explain : my wife is in a rile.

Her grievance is that you have stol'n her brat,

And she declares I had a share in that.

With sobs she vows judicial separation

Unless you make a speedy restoration.

When thoughts of that sad night within me rise

E'en now a teardrop trickles from my eyes.

My loving wife with many sobs and wails

Dug in my tear-stained cheeks conjugal nails.

CHR. We've suffered worse ; and heaven will end this too.

PHAE. Mother, give up the child to us ; now do.

NAU. You first explain what reason made you bring

These lawyers ?

PHAE. Not to quarrel, no such thing ;

But that their skill profound for us may trace

The strictly legal bearings of the case.

SOPH. You monster ! let those vultures have the dear ?

PHAE. Look ! some one's coming.

NAU. Bravo ! Phormio's here.

[Enter PHORMIO.]

PHOR. Best of the mothers of our land, good day !

It's time that we got ready for the fray.

Our meeting's been proclaimed to day, I hear.

NAU. How monstrous !

CHR. Hope is mingled with my fear.

PHOR. The base and bloody-minded Secretary

In Dublin Castle, skulls—a tyrant wary.

'Hence were those tears'—

CHR. I am not grieved.

PHOR. Here trace

This proclamation, insult to our race.

(Handing to NAUSISTRATA a copy of the proclamation.)

PHAE. Here are the learned lawyers ; let them tell us

How far this proclamation can compel us.

Come, Hegio, answer truly to my mother.

(The lawyers come forward.)

HEG. Nay, Sir, Cratinus first, my learned brother.

CRAT. Not I ! To please him if I don't succeed

Phormio will boycott us : no, Hegio, you lead.

HEG. Opinions various as men we see,

Each has his fancy. Crito d'you agree ?

CRIT. The case will some consideration need :

It's weighty.

CHR. Crito, you're of weight indeed.

Crito's opinion, Sirs, is out-and-out

The best. All's now quite clear. I've not a doubt.

PHOR. Fear makes the poor man rave.

NAU. Oh ! he's not done

Or dared : for Lemnos he would like to run.

PHOR. (to the lawyers)

Thank you. You need not stay.

(The lawyers go off.)

Run we will not ;

Here are our faithful followers on the spot.

Coercion to worse lengths the people drives,

While everywhere our little business thrives.

We've dynamite for men—for horses, drugs we find
'em ;

Cattle come home and leave their tails behind 'em.

To wheedle sewing-girls we've crafty ways

Across the Atlantic, and as yet it pays.

It's money you must get, no matter how ;

Home Rule for Ireland answers best—as now.

But what's the child for ?

NAU. (*to SOPH.*) Puerum mihi tradas.
 (*To PHOR.*) Nomen conjecta. PHOR. Num
 Jubilaeus? NAU. Ohe!
 Gladstonius Parnellus O'Brienus hicce vocatur,
 Nobiscumque cupit cuncta pericla pati.
 PHOR. Ecquid in antiquam virtutem animosque viriles
 Excitat hoc nomen tam populare ducum?
 NAU. Quidni? Forsan et hunc olim secuisse juvabit
 Quae possit pretio vendere ligna suo.
 PHOR. Forsitan at latitans, ut nunc latet ille secundus,
 In summo patriam tempore destituit.
 NAU. Haud ita erit. PHOR. Quodsi pro libertate loquendi
 In nervum potius fortiter ire volet,
 Num speretum hunc credis aquam panemque secun-
 dum,
 Ausurumque suas deposuisse—NAU. Quid est?
 PHOR. Verbum id femineis non est satis auribus apta,—
 Quid si custodes tegmina crurum adimant?
 NAU. Nescio; sed sat erit, si dulce huic atque decorum
 Pro patria fuerit deperiisse—gelu.

(*Band plays 'God save Ireland.' Enter mob; ANTIPHO,
 GETA and constabulary bringing up the rear.*)

PHOR. Adsunt Myrmidones Dolopesque; tuisque
 videtur
 Exsequiis rursum tempus adesse, Chreme.
 Ecce! reportatur qui verba notabit; et ecce!
 Fuste notaturus te quoque lictor adest.
 NAU. (*stirring up CHREMES with the umbrella.*)
 Eia age, rumpe moras! nosmet comitatur; et agger
 Sit tibi pro rostris.

(NAUSISTRATA, CHREMES and PHORMIO *mount the
 platform.*)

Nunc, miser, eloquere!
 CHR. (*addressing the crowd*) Semper ego audivi vos
 vectigalia, cives,
 Pro fundis nullo reddere velle modo.
 Semper ego auditor tantum? ANT. Nunquamne
 reponam,
 Vexatus toties raucisono strepitu?
 Haec proclamata est jam contio; vosque tacete,
 Ductores: abeat cetera turba domum.

(*Constabulary disperse the mob.*)

PHOR. Supprime nos quibus est jus coram plebe loquendi!
 Urbem Mitchellii nos meminisse decet!
 ANT. Ne minitare; locum da nunc melioribus.

(*Constabulary clear the platform.*)

Haud hic
 Jurgabis; dixi, Phormio: pelle moras.
 NAU. Phormio, ne fugias; tunc huic pares nebuloni?
 Constabularius hic haud specialis adest.
 O scelus! infantem bombardam ut quisque minatur!
 Vos etiam pueris injicitote manus!
 ANT. Tu pueris placeas et declamatio fias,
 Matrona; hinc aufer te puerumque tuum.
 Phaedria, vesanos tecum hinc abduce parentes.
 PHAE. Sic volo. CHR. Discedo, Fors inopina, probe!

(*Exeunt NAUSISTRATA, CHREMES and PHAEDRIA.*)

PHOR. Turpibus his factis faxo resonare Senatum!

NAU. (*to SOPH.*) Here, give me the baby.
 Now guess his name.
 PHOR. Well—Jubilee?
 NAU. You gaby!
 Oh no—Gladstone Parnell O'Brien—there!
 He's quite resolved with us to do and dare.
 CHR. What, does the mere name of the people's Will
 Such courage in his infant breast instil?
 NAU. Of course; and p'raps some day he'll find it nice
 To retail choppings at a fancy price.
 PHOR. Or like the second, skulking out of sight,
 P'raps fail his countrymen in grievous plight.
 NAU. Oh! no, he won't.
 PHOR. Free speech if to defend
 He wage the contest to the bitter end,
 Think you his bread and water he'll disdain
 And dare to lose his. . . .

NAU. Well? come, please explain.
 PHOR. The word's not for a lady's ear quite *comme il
 faut*.
 What if the warders take his—things, you know?
 NAU. Enough, if he the path of glory sees,
 To perish for his country, and to—freeze.

(*Band plays 'God save Ireland.' Enter mob; ANTIPHO,
 GETA and constabulary bringing up the rear.*)

PHOR. See, the Law's myrmidons already here:
 Chremes, all's up again with you, I fear.
 Look! a reporter dares your words to take;
 Constabulary, too, our heads to break.
 NAU. (*stirring up CHREMES with her umbrella.*)
 Now then, make haste! This way! Some platform
 This mound will do. [seek.]

(NAUSISTRATA, CHREMES, and PHORMIO *mount the
 platform.*)

Now, fool, why don't you speak?
 CHR. I've always heard, good friends, you don't consent,
 For farms and land to pay your landlords rent.
 'Am I to hear it only?'
 ANT. I'll step in—
 It's time enough—and stop his blatant din.
 This meeting is proclaimed—my order's terse—
 You make no speeches, and the crowd disperse.

(*Constabulary disperse the mob.*)

PHOR. Our rights of public speech would you put down,
 Our freeman's rights?—'Remember Mitchelstown!'
 ANT. No threats now, to your betters yield!

(*Constabulary clear the platform.*)

Don't harp
 On that old string; I mean it, so look sharp.
 NAU. Phormio, don't run from this base rascal here.
 These aren't the 'Specials,' so you needn't fear.

(*A constable points his rifle at the baby.*)

You scoundrel! lift your gun against the child?
 ANT. You keep to infants, madam; go and play
 With them: be off and take the brat away.
 Phaedria, just take your foolish parents off.
 PHAE. All right.
 CHR. Ah! thank my stars, I get well off.
 PHOR. I'll make the House resound with their foul deed.

ANT. Tu prius indigenum fac resonare forum.
Turpia te tenet hoc fandi cacoëthes ; habebit
Ante magistratus nunc tua causa locum.

(PHORMIO is removed in custody.)

GETA. Vix opus est hac nocte reportatore ; loquenti
Antipho clausuram tam celere applicuit.
At veniam detis, magnas si forte, Patroni,
Nos nimia fati res levitate sumus.
Fescennina dies haec est ; hoc tempore tantum
Seria sunt nostris aggredienda jocis.
Qui videt haec nostri lusus spectacula, caveto
Ne nos infensos legibus esse putet.
Extinxisse nefas, poenas sumpsisse merentes
Hic bene nitenti semper habetur honos.
Lex patriae prosit ; populis sub legibus Ordo
Conjunctis meritas praebeat almus opes.
Sic valida sub lege vigens et in ordine certo
Floreat aeternum nostra vetusta Domus.

ANT. No, first in Irish law courts you must plead.
Your itch for such 'foul' speech has sealed your
fate,
And now you'll come before a magistrate.

(PHORMIO is removed in custody.)

GETA. You see my note-book's rather useless proved,
So soon has Antipho the 'Clôture' moved.
But, friends, if haply in too light a way
We've touched on themes of weight, your pardon,
pray.
To-day we're privileged : to-night alone
We treat grave matter in a sportive tone.
You who look on to-night must not suppose
That to our country's laws we count as foes.
To blot out crime, to punish guilt has ever
Been deemed a worthy end of high endeavour.
Blest be our country's laws ; a rich reward
May Law and Order to the last afford.
So may our School beneath their firm control
Grow ever greater as the ages roll.

OBITUARY OF OLD WEST- MINSTERS, 1886-7.

- The Ven. JOHN ALLEN, aged 76. Adm. Oct. 4, 1823 ; K.S. 1824-28 ; formerly one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools ; Vicar of Prees, Salop, 1846-83 ; Archdeacon of Salop, 1847-86 ; Master of St. John's Hospital, Lichfield, 1883.
- The Rev. JOHN BENTHALL, aged 79. Adm. Jan. 12, 1818 ; K.S. 1820-4 ; Usher of Westminster School, 1829-46 ; Vicar of Willen, 1852.
- WILLIAM DOWDESWELL, Esq., aged 82. Adm. June 12, 1816 ; M.P. Tewkesbury, 1835-47 ; High Sheriff of Worcestershire, 1855.
- The Rev. CYRIL GEORGE HUTCHINSON, aged 87. Adm. January 27, 1809 ; K.S. 1814-18 ; Rector of Batsford, Gloucestershire, 1841-86 ; Hon. Canon of Gloucester, 1852.
- The Rev. WILLIAM PENRY LENDON, aged 88. Adm. May 25, 1812. Formerly of Monmouth.
- HENRY MAYHEW, Esq., aged 74. Adm. January 14, 1822 ; one of the earliest contributors to *Punch* ; Author of 'London Labour and the London Poor,' and other works.
- The Lord EDWARD RUSSELL, C.B., aged 82. Adm. June 12, 1816 ; entered the Navy, 1819 ; Admiral, 1867 ; Retired, 1870 ; formerly Naval A.D.C. to the Queen ; M.P. Tavistock, 1841-7.
- CAYLEY SHADWELL, Esq., aged 89. Adm. January 1811, Barrister of Lincoln's Inn ; sometime Secretary to his brother, Sir Lancelot Shadwell, Vice-Chancellor of England.
- FREDERICK GEORGE TREVOR, Esq., aged 21. Adm. April 21, 1879 ; Q.S. 1880-83 ; Lieutenant in the West Yorkshire Regiment.
- RANDLE WILBRAHAM, Esq., aged 86. Adm. January, 1814. High Steward of Congleton ; Senior Magistrate of Cheshire.
- JOHN LLOYD WYNNE, Esq., aged 80. Adm. June 6, 1817. High Sheriff of Denbighshire, 1865.

THE 'PHORMIO,' 1887.

It must be confessed that the play was this year looked forward to, both within and without the School, and, in particular, by O.W.W. with no little anxiety. It is pleasant to be able to record that this anxiety has proved almost needless. No one who saw the curtain close upon the play on either night of its representation could doubt that the 'Phormio' of 1887 had given the same enjoyment and met with the same sympathetic appreciation as any previous play. Not that the anxiety was altogether without ground, or that there were no weak spots open to the searching eye of the critic. But, as a whole, play and epilogue were a great success. We may, then, congratulate ourselves that the play of 1887 has been so successful ; and to all who have contributed to that success must be tendered our congratulations on the result of their labours. There was the further drawback this year that several seniors were, for one reason or another, unable to take part in the play. Those who remember Mr. W. Buchanan's Micio in last year's 'Adelphi,' and the Ctesipho of Mr. P. J. Preece, and the Geta of Mr. A. R. Knapp, will see that this was really a heavy misfortune. The cast had to be formed largely from younger and more inexperienced Q.SS., and all the more praise is due to them that they did so well.

Throughout the 'Phormio' was played with great spirit ; it was evident that the hearts of all were in their work, and that the study of the various parts had been undertaken with painstaking loyalty. For the most part the actors worked well together, and the by-play was often well considered. The difficulty of moving over the stage and getting away from it was at times too manifest—not for the first time in a Westminster play. No doubt some of the situations have been made surpassingly difficult by Terence ; but the

difficulty is now and again shown to be not insuperable, as notably in the case of one clever exit of 'Phormio' this year. Too much attention cannot be given to these details; incongruities might often be covered by careful management. For another smaller point, the old men, like many of their predecessors in other years, had a curious habit of passing their staves uneasily from hand to hand, as if they found those symbols of age and dignity rather in the way. A Westminster 'senex' who fully realises that an old man leans upon his stick for support will make an epoch on the Westminster boards. Then, more particularly, there was a tendency this year—though only a *tendency*—to fall into a fault which has been conspicuous enough in the Greek plays at Oxford and Cambridge, but from which Westminster has been hitherto commendably free. It is to hurry the delivery of the words and run them together, as in speaking colloquial English. It is not merely that slowness and deliberation are necessary to distinctness of utterance in using a dead language—the true reason lies deeper. The genius of a synthetic language like Latin is quite different from that of a language which, like English, has become largely analytic, and upon the stage requires a more measured intonation. In an English sentence we may find three or four words in a clause comparatively unimportant, and these may be safely run together or ranged round the one or more significant words. But in the Latin of Terence well nigh every word tells, or should be made to tell, by a deliberate and carefully modulated delivery. The text of Terence, too, repays close study; and what is a mere nothing in the mouth of one actor, may become instinct with subtle humour in another's. Lastly, to recall another very slight matter, it was curiously apparent this year how much the ancients must have lost for want of the cambric pocket-handkerchief; though, for that matter, the pretty lines of Catullus to the brother of Asinius Pollio, upbraiding him for the theft of a kerchief, might be taken to suggest that it was not entirely unknown. But anyhow, the ancients, as depicted by a Westminster cast, are precisely in the plight of Mr. Ingoldsby's 'vulgar little boy,' and when they were tearful, seem sorely embarrassed by their emotion. At any rate, to weep often or profusely into the fingers does not seem convenient.

The comic strength of the 'Phormio' rests largely with the ingenious Athenian gentleman from whom it takes its name. Upon the Phormio of Mr. R. E. Olivier some adverse criticism was passed in the papers and in Dormitory, but no one present on either of the three nights could doubt of the actor's sprightliness and fertility of resource. The character was played on lines which certainly contrasted with the Phormio of the past, or at least the last two representations in 1882 and 1878. But there is a distinct advantage in the presentment of a fresh, and in some measure original, aspect of this important Terentian rôle. Those who please, may prefer a robusiter and more overbearing audacity to the light impudence with which Mr. Olivier

played the part; but they may still appreciate the mastery he displayed of his own conception of the versatile parasite. Certainly he exhibited excellently the easy assurance which is the first requisite of a Phormio, and adapted himself to the various moods of that talented rascal with no little delicacy and finish. Lovers of Terence can have small quarrel with his bright and clever playing. Especially happy was his '*oh tunc is eras?*' in the last act, which could not have been bettered; and, again, his '*Exsequias Chremeti...*' was very effective. A burden in no respect lighter, and in some more arduous, falls upon the slave, Geta. The part was admirably suited to Mr. C. S. W. Barwell (who played Syrus in the 'Adelphi' last year with much success), and, as was to be expected, he filled it admirably. In every respect his Geta showed the advance of a year's riper experience, and a fresh study of the Terentian slave. Mr. Barwell has the good fortune to command a gesture naturally appropriate to the part, and he showed himself fully equal to the delicate shades of meaning and subtle humour of the lines of Terence. From the first he put his audience in good humour, and prevented the early scenes from dragging—a point of much importance. When once an audience has fairly laughed, they are the more ready to laugh a second time. And Mr. Barwell scored early with his '*sectari, in ludum ducere et reducere,*' and again, among other good hits, with his '*feremus aequo animo,*' and his '*in me omnis spes mihi est.*' As Davus, Mr. C. L. C. Aveling succeeded on the third night in bringing to light a comic talent which hitherto had been somewhat hidden. There is a great deal of quiet humour in Terence's minor character for those who know how to seek it, as, for instance, in Sosia or Byrrhia in the 'Andria.' On the third night, Mr. Aveling's '*Jam scio, amare coepit,*' and his '*regem me esse oportuit*' were really funny, and raised a well-deserved laugh. The part of Antipho, the hero of the love-story which forms the pretext of the plot of the 'Phormio,' does not offer the same opportunity to the actor as Pamphilus in the 'Andria' or Aeschinus in the 'Adelphi.' Perhaps, therefore, it was the more fortunate that Westminster secured for the part so graceful and so conscientious an actor as Mr. H. T. Whitaker. He possesses the great natural advantages of a well-modulated and sympathetic voice, and an easy and harmonious gesture, and to these he had evidently added a careful study of his text. He seemed a little lacking in force at times, but perhaps that should rather be set down to the somewhat colourless character of the young gentleman he represented. Certainly Mr. Whitaker filled the rôle with singular grace and happiness, and in a manner to make the reflective frequenter of the play regret that it can never fall to his lot to play the one young lover whom Terence has made thoroughly interesting and attractive, the Pamphilus of the 'Andria.' Mr. H. E. Oliver struggled manfully with the even more difficult, because less interesting, part of Phaedria, and at times with success. He was called upon to undertake the task at very short notice, owing to an unfortunate football accident which disabled Mr. P. J. Preece, who

showed great promise as Ctesipho in last year's 'Adelphi.' It is little wonder, then, if Mr. Oliver showed signs of suffering from inexperience and want of confidence. He deserves great credit for his laudable endeavours. It is not so much matter of surprise that Phaedria should have been rather weak, as that on the whole so little weakness should have been shown by a cast which, as has been already pointed out, laboured under special disadvantages. The aggrieved parent, Demipho, had no want of vigour in the hands of Mr. H. J. Gully. Perhaps it is difficult to combine a due amount of irritation with dignity, but the old gentleman might with advantage have been a little more dignified and a little less querulous. Sustained wrath, too, is apt to become monotonous. Mr. Gully would have done better if he could have infused more variety into Demipho's passion. But he played an onerous part very creditably. The lawyers' scene was amusingly rendered, and if, possibly, some present could remember when it was more amusing, this was no reason for ingratitude to the Hegio, Cratinus, and Crito of this year. Indeed, Hegio's '*Quot homines, tot sententiae*' was delivered by Mr. P. Williamson with a quaint originality of intonation that was inimitable. Dorio, though one speaks with hesitation, seems always a favourite with a Westminster audience. The part was filled to the general satisfaction on the first two nights by Mr. R. E. A. Hamilton. The burly brutality of the slave-dealer was very well given by his representative, and with no little humour, but there is possibly a subtler vein of humour in the part which might have been brought out. A fresh disaster fell upon the cast in the sudden illness of Mr. Hamilton between the second and third nights; but again the good genius of the play rose superior to fate, and found a substitute who could take up the part on the spur of the moment with the ready capacity shown by Mr. A. R. Knapp, the Captain of the Q.S.S., who was unfortunately prevented from taking a part originally. Mr. W. E. Cox caused much mirth by his very humorous display of terror in presence, or expected presence, of his wife, Nausistrata. His '*conclusam hinc habeo . . .*' and his exclamation of abject alarm on seeing that good lady, were excellent. He struck, however, a wrong note on his appearance, inasmuch as a testy irritation at the delinquencies of the young men is too much in the manner of Demipho, and little in accord with the easy-going and timorous Chremes. His '*salve, Geta*' should contrast with, not follow Demipho's, and his '*multa advenienti . . .*' is meant to be mild enough. His is one of those weak and pliant natures that hate trouble, and easily fall into indiscretion, as the event of the Phormio sufficiently shows. The part of the old nurse Sophrona was well filled by Mr. C. A. Phillimore. She might, however, have assailed the quondam Stilpho with greater vigour. Chremes' extreme terror is caused by the pitch to which the old lady raises her voice under the influence of excitement. In this scene, too, Chremes hardly brought out the humour of '*duasne is uxores*,' though an exception must be made in favour of the third night. The cast

and the play concluded brilliantly with the appearance of Nausistrata. Mr. J. S. Phillimore, a younger brother of Mr. C. A. Phillimore, made quite the best of the evening, especially on the first and third nights, and well deserved to do so. There was nothing wanting to the vigour and asperity of Chremes' '*saeva uxor*,' whose words '*virum me esse oportuit*' took substantial meaning. The opinion has been expressed that she looked too young, but while on the whole it is probable that the lady was elderly, it is not quite impossible that she might still have been young enough to maintain a very creditable semblance of youth. Mr. Phillimore's elocution was always clear and forcible, and yet he still kept a reserve of force for the right word. The great success of the closing scene was largely due to him, and it is pleasant to connect so marked a triumph with a name so justly held in honour at Westminster.

The Epilogue was given on all three evenings. It was plain on the first of these that it was plentifully pointed with humorous shafts, which did not fail to find a mark with an audience to a great extent unequal to the task of understanding the Latin. This first impression was more than confirmed on the second and third nights. With the latest phases of the Irish Question, Trafalgar Square, the three lawyers of the Phormio, a baby, and a free fight, all ingeniously combined in the setting of a proclaimed meeting on Irish soil, there was abundant opportunity for telling political allusions and amusing situations, of which the author, Mr. W. A. Peck, richly availed himself. Such familiar sounds as '*urbem Mitchellii*,' '*Area Trafalgarensis*,' '*constabularius specialis*,' of course, everywhere struck home. Mr. Peck's verses drew no less plentifully from sixth-form classics, with here and there a familiar line introduced or adapted. Very aptly from Nausistrata came

'Uxorem mutant qui trans mare currunt.'

Or again the quotation in these lines of Chremes, so cleverly brought in:—

Semper ego audiui vos vectigalia, cives,
Pro fundis nullo reddere velle modo.
Semper ego auditor tantum.

As neatly turned verses the lines which satirise the decrees of Home Rule agitation, and the concluding address to the audience, may be recommended to notice. The line '*Haud referunt caudas ad sua tecta boves*,' has a peculiarly happy turn. It remains to say that the Prologue, which dealt chiefly with the great event which has marked the year 1887 in English history, was from the scholarly pen of Mr. Verrall, of Trinity College, Cambridge, and was spoken, as usual, on the second and third nights by the Captain, Mr. A. R. Knapp.

To the Editor of 'THE ELIZABETHAN.'

DEAR SIR,—Many of your readers were probably, like myself, not a little surprised at the comments upon the dangers of fire at the Westminster Play which appeared in the *Times*' critique of December 23. Some of the statements were almost too palpably incorrect to need an answer; but for the benefit of any credulous and timid playgoers who may have been misled and scared by the misstatements and exaggerations contained in the *Times*' paragraph, it may be as well to condescend to a detailed contradiction of the statements which were most egregiously incorrect or distorted. Something might well be said about the propriety of criticism of this kind upon the essentials of the Play. I for one cannot consider such criticism in good taste from an invited guest—for the critic of the *Times* is as much a guest as any one in the Dormitory. It might even be asked whether the safety or otherwise of a building used for a private entertainment is any business of the *Times*. But the question of good taste is, of course, a matter of opinion; and we may well let it pass, and base our objections upon more practical and indisputable grounds.

First, what are the chances of fire? A few minutes' thought will be enough to convince any *habitué* of the Play of ordinary intelligence that the danger of fire is so infinitesimally small as practically not to exist. It may sound a bold statement, but I can confidently say that there is far less danger of fire upon the Play nights than upon any night during the school year. I have it on the authority of an experienced fireman, that the lighting of the stage is as safe as any in London. The danger of fire at an ordinary theatre arises either from the shifting of scenery or from the fact that the woodwork is so parched by the intense and incessant heat that the merest spark may be sufficient to ignite it. When I point out that the scenery at Westminster is absolutely stationary, and that it lies for nine-tenths of the year in a damp vault, the most timid may repose a perfect confidence in his safety from that quarter at least; and when I add that all the lights in front of the stage are carefully screened, and that the suggestion of a fire arising in one of the cubicles is absurd, because they are not used during the evening, any one who can think a fire anything but the remotest contingency must have a mind of an unusually imaginative and paradoxical cast. Now, this being so, I protest most strongly against the distorted aspect which the *Times* gives the question by treating a fire, not as to all intents and purposes an impossibility, which it is, but as an immediate and pressing danger, which it most certainly is not.

In case of a fire, however—for there is no objection to our humouring the speculative propensities of the *Times*—there would be no difficulty in emptying the auditorium. The audience consists of educated men and women, who could not lose their heads. Most of them are familiar with the auditorium and its

exits, so that there would not be that feeling of uncertainty as to the means of escape which is so powerful a source of panic in a burning theatre. Of this point, indeed, we may be certain, that there would be no rush to the exits. The suggestion of crushing, therefore, is superfluous—except, perhaps, as heightening the effect of the intensely thrilling picture which the *Times* has been pleased to draw for the edification of its readers. Order being preserved, the auditorium would empty easily and naturally in very few minutes. The *Times*' hint that the ladies would fare badly is not particularly complimentary to the chivalry of a Westminster audience. I may safely say that whoever might be crushed, burnt, or suffocated, it would certainly *not* be the ladies. I may add that the *Times* is incorrect in stating that the ladies attend 'in large numbers,' except as regards the first night, there being seats for only thirty on the other two. It is also untrue that the gangways are blocked up with chairs. But the most extraordinary misstatement is that the only exit is by the narrow gangway under the 'gods.' Those who are familiar with the arrangements at the Play will forgive me if I give a somewhat detailed description of them for those who are not. There are, then, *two distinct* exits from the auditorium: one is the 'narrow gangway' which the *Times* mentions; the other is the staircase from the 'gods,' which it ignores. These meet in the broader gangway alluded to in the *Times*, which is fully 6 feet in width. In a few yards this gangway splits into two, one branch leading through the house of the Master of the Queen's Scholars, the other leading straight into the open air by a broad stone staircase. Suppose a fire in front of the stage, and the exit is again perfectly simple. It is as easy as possible to get on to the stage by the raised seats at the sides, and ladies may be seen doing so after any Play night. There is a double passage over the stage, leading out of the Dormitory by a single doorway, and ultimately giving double access to the open air. Here, then, I complain that the *Times* ignores entirely *one* of the *two* exits in front of the stage, while it seems to imply that behind the scenes there are none at all, whereas there are really two.

Of the suggestion of the schoolroom as a substitute for the Dormitory little need be said. The objections are so obvious that I must really apologise for saying anything at all. Indeed, I can only account for the suggestion on the supposition that it comes from one who is unfamiliar with the capacities of the two buildings and the general conditions under which the Play is produced. Not only is the schoolroom entirely unsuited to the requirements of the Play, but even in the matter of exits it is not so well off as the Dormitory. In front of the stage it would have two exits, little if any better than those in the Dormitory, for probably double the number of spectators; while from behind the scenes there would be no exit at all. The mere want of communication between the back of the stage and the front would be an inconvenience altogether intolerable, and the interruption to the school routine which the erec-

tion of the stage and auditorium in the schoolroom must cause would be an objection of a very serious kind. Another difficulty would be the necessity of holding rehearsals after lock-hours outside college. The convenience of having the whole Play prepared and performed in college is self-evident. As soon as the stage is up the zealous Queen's Scholar devotes all his spare moments to private rehearsals upon it. If the stage were Up-school the opportunity of doing so would be denied him during that part of the day which is most available for the purpose. The traditions and associations of more than three centuries, though perhaps, as the *Times* says, 'sentimental,' may be allowed to have some weight; and even those who are not directly interested in them might respect them. The 'sentimental' reason alone is quite valid enough in itself to ensure the retention of the Play in the time-honoured place; but when all practical considerations point in the same way there is little more to be said on the subject. It is to be regretted that the *Times* through inadvertence—for I feel sure that it can only be inadvertence—has admitted into its columns an article which cannot but be prejudicial to Westminster from the totally false colour which it has given to an—at the best—extremely hypothetical risk of fire and a still more hypothetical difficulty of exit.

I am, sir, yours truly,

Μισοψευδής.

POETRY.

FOUR PLAYS.

I.

In childish merriment and eagerness,
Passing with wholesome awe the portal grim,
The theme of direful tale and legend dim,
He mounts the stony stairs amid the press.

And perched at last in far Olympian height,
Watches the gay and busy scene below,
The stage, the figures strange that come and go,
And at the signal claps with all his might.

II.

Torn with emotions too perplexed to tell,
The war tumultuous of hope and fear,
Excited, proud, yet feeling rather queer,
He waits the summons of the prompter's bell.

Step forth to do or die—sees nought beside,
But just a misty sea of faces there;
Yet knows kind eyes beam in the throng somewhere,
And watch his motions with a mother's pride.

III.

Now all arrayed in coat of blameless fit,
In the first pride of undergraduate days,
He comes at this—the first of many Plays—
Among the young Old Westminsters to sit.

With boyish heartiness he greets old friends,
After brief parting, sits and chats and laughs,
Applauds with rapture, and with kindness chaffs,
To understand the Epilogue pretends.

IV.

Last, bent with age he comes, an honoured guest,
After long busy years have rolled between,
To visit once again the well-known scene,
And hail with fresh delight each time-worn jest.

Each well-remembered site that greets his eyes,
Each phrase familiar in his ears that falls,
Some scene, some face of long ago recalls,
And frees a long-pent stream of memories.

NOTICES.

The Editor hopes that the numerous subscribers to *The Elizabethan* who have received notices that their subscription is overdue, and who have not yet paid it, will do so at once, as it is impossible to publish the balance-sheet for the year till they are received.

Contributions for the February number to be sent, not later than February 8, to the Editor, St. Peter's College, Westminster.

Photographs of the cast of 'The Phormio,' 1887, may now be had on application to the Captain, St. Peter's College, price 3s. each.

Morcat.