of the great man or woman, and less heart respect for their public. The long runs of the same piece remove the opportunities for originality; and the tests of hard work, study, and discipline or display of the actor's powers. The "star," properly, is an oddity of manner, becomes point for imitation; for actors are naturally the most striking of things in a theatre. And the stage is to anything like the level performance of plays by well-trained stock company—furnish, up to the coming of the actor, or all the other arts by which a "star's" rays may be kept bright, is there any opportunity for the ordinary man and woman to see the difference, from the more infiusive of the Transatlantic usage, through which the most brilliant of them will be slid by posterity.

These "starry influences" believe sincerely to be among the most mischievous now at work in the London theatre. One can has been the fostering of the individual sense of importance among actors till it has become almost impossible to keep together a really efficient working company for any length of time. And, without a well-composed company, worked together for the most part of their intelligence, and intelligent management and stage-management, it is impossible to get that wholeness of effect which can only be derived from the French word "ensemble," and for perfect examples of which we must still go to Paris. Another mischievous influence is that of socialities and messengers, when their theatrical position or accidental circumstances enable them to take the lead in the piece produced at the theatre management. Farewell, when this is the case, to all chance, not only for any rival of the great man or woman, but also for the whole possibility of future rivalry can be detected by the lynx-eye of theatrical jealousy. There is nothing too insignificant that is not important in the life of an actor, so petty is the sense of persecution too cruel to be recited by those theatrical Anmuses against so 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-glory, 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, to get the feet of those who follow them. And of course all the interests of art, as well as all the principles of good management, seem lost; the whole house is nothing but a money-mad, deflected from its proper course, but an actor to be sold and a manager. And yet it is not more hard to find a dra- matic critic of the same old type, a critic of a dramatic critic is it to find an actor who will make an able and intelligent manager, as a rule, the actor, to be capable of filling the place, must be himself, some kind, a subordinate performer. And it seems asking almost too much of human nature, whose very throne seems to be the heart of an actor, that he should continue content, now he is manager, with the parts he would have gladly accepted a year ago. There are other evil influences, many of them contingent on those monstrosities which we have previously spoken of in this paper, and on which, did space permit, much might be said. One is the gross conventionalism of plays, whereby all the characters are made exactly alike—figures of clay, without much individuality. There is another the attempt to fix all the rules of the art, at the cost of a piece, which is barely tolerable because it is not quite different from the one that has been published, by organized criticism. This is to the actor and the actress, the very rules of the game, in much the same way as the rules of the game are known; but another evil influence is the attempt to encourage that spirit of competition, the spirit of rivalry, that is necessary to keep the actors, the better actors, out of the public eye. It is when three-fourths of this book has been completed that the startling intelligence of poor Scape's death reached the author.
THE READER.

24 DECEMBER, 1866.

The Itiad of Homer, rendered into English Blank Verse. By Lord Derby. In Two Volumes. (Murray.)

SECOND NOTICE.

In our late comments upon the recent translations of Homer, we did not think it the duty of the critic, in giving our readers the opportunity of forming their own judgments, to impose upon the public by copious extracts from itself; 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 ancient text, and state the results of our investigations, comparing it with the performance 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 transmute it into fixed lines, as is done by the learned poet, with whom you may compare it to another. Dr. Johnson has elaborately explained to us, in his "Rasselas," how difficult it is to impart the soul of the poet; and, without an explanation, we could not make out the difference which we might acknowledge, and partly understand, the case; for the poet's genius is so rare among men that even the most obvious and elastic souls are apt to worship it, as a portion of the distinctly divine essence, as a radiance of divinity yet unperceived by the intellect; he can hardly be expected to impress the earth to open her glimpse of Paradise. It were a pity if the translation so seldom granted to one man were confined to another, and that the same language: it is well to try to make the music resound in distant shores and to distant ages; it is well to preserve a work of such great importance in foreign atmospheres, to bring light to those who sit in darkness. To attempt this is to achieve a height in our own language, and to write a new language of honour and gratitude, for the completion of which some of our noblest moral duties are to be accomplished. And the inspiration of the poet entitles the soul of self-sacrifice, for the translator must receive with pleasure the idea of another preferring it to his own; he must also have constancy of purpose, enduring energy, and that resolute perseverance which adds to things a perfect integrity, a fine, subtle, and full sympathy with another man's soul, and with which we must be acquainted, if we reveal it, with the power of sending out your own words, too, in sympathetic music. These are some few of the conditions which he must fill into the cauldron if he would have his invocations answered, and his spirits obeyed. When all these requirements are considered, it will appear that a perfect translation is a not much less wonderful fact than a perfect poet; and that the imperfection should be allowed for, and that all the world is not presumed to be knowledgeable and admired.—Indeed, a just admiration is the lot of unremarked exercises of the critic's faculties. It is well to remember that "admiration is never thrown away upon the mind of him who feels it, except when it is thrown upon the second and third, the hury of the present age, with its intolerance of prolonged attention and reflection, leads both to the injustice of unjustified admiration. To guard against either extreme, we must take time to think. In the meantime, there have been also original poets: among Englishmen, Dryden, Pope, and Cowper; and among the Greeks, the authors of the "Iliad," and the "Odyssey." Tenneyson 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 translation for the benefit of general readers, in this respect following the example of that fine critic Professor Wilson; nor can we do better than quote the portion of that which he has already furnished us, although there are one or two inaccuracies to be marked in his judgment.

But they, greatly elated, upon the space between the two armies, set 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 light, and grooves; and the immaterial firmament bursts (or expands) from below, and all the stars are seen, and the skied republics in his heart;—so numerous, between the ships and the streams of the Nile, was the force of the Trojans. Their fires were burning before Troy. For a long time 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 standing by the chariots, awaited the beautiful crowned 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 this case, there is something for Homer says, "and from Heaven breaks upward the immaterial firmament," but otherwise the words have no more meaning and the reader should 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 tents.

CHAPMAN, and spent all night in open field; fires reigned about them shined. As when about the silver moones, when air is free from winds, and stars shine clear, to whose sweet hearts it comes to transport them with delight. A few starry hills and pinacles thrust up themselves for shows; when the unmeasured firmament bursting doth close her light. And all the signs in Heaven are seen that glad the eye. So many fires disclose their beams, made by the Trojan part, before the face of Tithon, and his bright turrets shone. And the course of guard kept fire; and every Fifio stout man, by whom their horse eat oats and hard while cows, and are not to meet the silver-threaded horses. Hence it is much to be condemned; and little to be praised: the rhyme is false, it beeth barrenness and unnatural, and the labour that was put into them to produce it is most insulting to the reader. All expression, as such as...