

generally altogether the reverse, either paltry and tawdry, or parsimonious and mean,—not unfrequently both. Some of the modern churches seem to have been run up like ordinary building speculations, without regard to appearance, or even to propriety, more especially within, where the only consideration seems to have been to pack together the greatest number of persons in the smallest possible space. If not theatrical in regard to adornment, most of them are fitted up playhouse fashion, with pit, boxes, and galleries; and in most there is an unbecoming secular air—something that looks like a compromise between respect for the service of God and a prudential regard for that of Mammon. It is not on account of the absence of those enigmatical fancies and architectural riddles which Mr. Lewis recommends with so much enthusiasm, that our modern church architecture deserves to be reproached; but reproached it justly may be for the absence of all dignity, solemnity, and impressiveness. There is nothing in the churches calculated to give a devotional tone to the mind; much, on the contrary, that is cold and worldly in its character. Far more of the dignity and impressiveness suited to ecclesiastical architecture is to be met with in many a humble village church, where if there is plainness even to rudeness, there is also a quiet simplicity, and nothing of pretence or paltry affectation. There may be homeliness, but it is unpolluted by frivolity or vulgarity; which is far more than can be said in favour, or even excuse, of many things, which, however clever they may be, architecturally, as mere designs, are altogether deficient in religious sentiment and feeling, and, therefore, have no pretensions to be regarded as productions of art, since no attention is paid to the conditions required. Of merely mechanical and technical ability there may be much—perhaps much to please the critical eye; still there lacks the one thing needful—the manifestation of intellectual power: and with this remark, in which Mr. Lewis will, no doubt, cordially acquiesce, we shall dismiss his work.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

HAYMARKET.—Writing for the stage is either easy or difficult, according to the way in which the dramatist sets about it. To the few who desire to represent human life and character in action, without violating the consistency of nature, it is so difficult, that the instances of success may be soon numbered; to the mass of playwrights, who take the shorter method of disregarding truth and originality, and seek their materials not in the world but in plays, the task is "as easy as lying": one turn of the theatrical kaleidoscope, with the addition of a few bits and scraps of modern phantasmagoria, accomplishes the feat. The public are taken with the trick, and seem never tired of seeing it performed; they like the artificial objects which they have been used to; nature "puts them out;" and no wonder, since they so seldom get a glimpse of it on the stage, which "holds as 'twere the mirror up to"—itself. This short way to success Mr. Bourcicault treads with the ease and confidence of experience. 'London Assurance' was a triumph of the instinct of appropriation; and though his second attempt proved a failure, it was not without merit of the same kind. 'Alma Mater, or a Cure for Coquettes,' a less ambitious exploit, has been completely successful, if to elicit applause and laughter from that portion of the audience whose taste was hit, and to be called forward to receive the greeting of delighted admirers, be success: and such proof of it, we dare say, satisfies both author and manager: why should it not, since the piece pleases the public? and "those who live to please, must please to live." All that is necessary for us to say is, that the scene is laid in Oxford, and as the incidents of college life are professed to be represented, many persons on the stage wear trencher caps—though even this item was incorrect—and there is a great deal of hallooing and boisterous hilarity, with some saucy dialogue, that tells for repartee, and a pretty sprinkling of jockey slang; that passes for knowledge of the world; had the stable-boy talked as absurdly as the college tutor, the piece would surely have been hissed, but the author knew his audience too well for that. The principal persons—characters they can scarcely be called—are an intriguing widow, played by Miss Glover; a contradictory old bachelor, by

Mr. Farren, who, hating women, yields to the first word of flattery from his cherished aversion, the wily widow, and being called *Sarcasm* is never sarcastic; *Count Pavé*, an adventurer, who is duped and ridiculed all round; *Gradus*, a student, who gets drunk on the eve of becoming senior wrangler; an Irishman, a coquette, a lover, and the usual *et cetera* of a modern comedy. The most objectionable characteristic of the medley, is the want of good faith and right feeling incidentally shown throughout: it has a tone of heartless insincerity, that gives a scampish character to the whole affair.

MISCELLANEA

Paris Academy of Sciences.—Sept. 12.—A report was read on the production of sugar from maize.—A paper by M. Huan, on the means of preventing accidents on railways by the breaking of an axle-tree. The invention consists of such a modification of the wheel of the locomotive, that if the axle should break, the wheel itself becomes an axle, and prevents further accident.—M. Arago, in allusion to the opinion expressed by several persons as to the electricity of whirlwinds, mentioned to the Academy some observations made by M. Hortola on a storm, on the 24th ult., in the department of the Aude. This gentleman relates that on the occasion referred to the iron bars of windows, the gutters of sheet iron, the plates of insurance companies, and other metallic objects were carried away by the whirlwind, thus indicating the presence of electricity.—The Academy of Sciences of Naples having charged M. A. Nobili to inquire into the circumstances connected with the oscillary movement of the sea in the Gulph of Naples, the result of his inquiry was this day communicated. It appears that M. Nobili has studied the variations of the mean level according to the direction of the wind, and has found that the greatest elevation of the mean level takes place in the west-south-west winds, and the smallest in those of the north-north-east. This is also the case on the western coast of Sicily. M. Chazallon has also taken some observations on the tide at Toulon, from which it results, that the full tide of the evening is much higher than that of the morning.—The next paper read was a communication from M. C. Martins, on the distribution of the higher order of the vegetation on the coast of Scandinavia and the southern slope of the Grimsel in Switzerland. All the botanical travellers who have visited Switzerland and Scandinavia, have been struck with the difference of the two countries, when comparing the latitudinal distribution of the higher order of vegetation on the coasts of Sweden and Norway with that of the vegetable zones on the higher Mountains of Switzerland. The southern slope of the pass of the Grimsel, in the Canton of Berne, presents, however, a remarkable analogy with the succession of the vegetable zones of the North. The following table shows the mean altitudinal and latitudinal limits of the principal trees common to the Grimsel and to Scandinavia:

	Latitudinal limits.	Altitudinal limits. Mètres.
<i>Fagus Sylvatica</i>	60° N	925
<i>Quercus Robur</i>	61	800
<i>Arbores Fructiferae</i>	63	1,060
<i>Corylus Avellana</i>	64	1,060
<i>Abies Excelsa</i>	67 40	1,545
<i>Pinus Sylvestris</i>	70	1,807
<i>Betula Alba</i>	78 40	1,975

If we compare the zones of vegetation, the analogy is not certainly perfect. On the Grimsel, the altitudinal limit of the oak is inferior to that of the beech, whilst in the North the beech disappears sooner than the oak; but on the Grimsel these limits are much more approximated than is generally the case in Switzerland, the difference of their level being only 125 mètres. They approximate, therefore, as in Scandinavia, where their extreme limits only differ by one degree of latitude.—M. Arago laid before the Academy two fowling-pieces, the invention of M. Matthieu, and mentioned the following advantages. After each discharge the gun immediately recocks itself, and a new charge is conveyed in the direction of the barrel. This is repeated five or six times, and with such rapidity, that the gun can be discharged five times in three seconds. If the sportsman does not wish to fire with this rapidity, he can stop the action, and wait any time he pleases between each discharge. M. Arago went on to state, that the combinations of the mechanism were such as to

prevent accidental explosion. This invention is not new. Baron Heurteloup, more than two years ago, produced a fowling-piece and a musket on this principle, and, according to report, he has made such improvements that double the number of charges of M. Matthieu's gun may be fired in almost the same space of time.

Antarctic Expedition.—The *Guernsey Star* has published the following extract, from a letter dated in May last, from the Falkland Islands:—"Captain Ross and the Antarctic expedition are now here. The *Erebus* and *Terror* came in contact, on endeavouring to escape an iceberg, in the seas of the Southern Pole. The expedition will positively be here for five or six months, to repair the vessels and to make observations. Captain Ross has erected an observatory at the old French fort built by Bougainville. A most interesting series of observations is carrying on. Those upon the pendulum are noted every quarter of an hour. Astronomical observations are also carefully made by the officers. Thermometers are placed both above the ground and under it; mine, with my barometers, are now doing duty with the rest, and have the honour to be registered also. The anemometers, showing the direction and force of the winds, will add much to the valuable information afforded by Captain Sullivan, R.N., respecting these islands. Pluviometers are also carefully registered. A tide-gauge is by the jetty, and an excellent magnetic observatory, where the dip, intensity, and variation of the needle are carefully registered by able observers. The officers relieve each other in regular watches on these duties; and I never met with such devotees of science. You would be delighted to see Captain Ross's little hammock swinging close to his darling pendulum, and a large hole in the thin partition, that he may see it at any moment, and Captain Crozier's hammock is close alongside of it. The floor of this room is mother earth, from our want of timber. Captain Ross has been so kind, at my request, as to add to these observations another series, to ascertain the rate of evaporation in these islands; and Hooker, the botanist, is also so good as to draw up a report on the grasses, the prevailing graminæ being considered as unknown in Europe. The splendid tussock grass is the gold and glory of these islands. It will, I hope, yet make the fortune of Orkney and Irish landholders of peat bogs. Every animal here feeds upon it with avidity, and fattens in a short time. It may be planted and cut like the guinea grass of the West Indies. The blades are about six feet long, and from 200 to 300 shoots spring from one plant. I have proved, by several experiments, that one man can cut 100 bundles in a day, and that a horse will greedily devour five of these in the same time. Indeed, so fond of it are both horses and cows, that they will eat the dry tussock thatch from the roofs of the houses in preference to good grass. About four inches of the root eats like the mountain cabbage. It loves a rank wet peat bog, with the sea spray over it. Indeed, when the sea beats with the greatest violence, and the sea spray is carried farthest, then the tussock grass thrives the best on the soil it loves. All the smaller islands here, though some of them are as large as Guernsey, are covered with tussock, which is nutritious all the year. The whole of the gentlemen in the expedition are delighted with the Falkland Islands, and express themselves as being more pleased with them than even with New Zealand. Some think them in every way better for colonization, even with the drawback of wanting timber trees. When the observations made during their voyage are published, you will be surprised at their favourable account of the climate. In addition to all these scientific observations, the surveying department is exploring and surveying different harbours, sites for different objects in a new settlement," &c.—[So little is known of the Falkland Islands, that our readers may not be sorry to be reminded, that about two years since (see No. 654.) Mr. Mackinnon, who had been officially engaged in their survey, as mate of H.M. cutter *Arrow*, published an account of them; and that in 1833 (No. 299-300) we published two letters containing much minute and interesting information, from an officer then serving on board the *Tyne*, which ship had been sent there expressly to resume possession on the part of the British Government. Our correspondent made mention of the particular grass referred to in the