be grasped with choking gratitude. Still, in spite of these obvious shortcomings, the performance is original, able and steadily interesting, and possesses, moreover, that rare merit of consistency which implies thought and design and earnestness of artistic effort. Mrs. Tree does not appear to especial advantage in the rather colorless part of the heroine who is wooed and won so easily; but Miss Frances Ivor gives an astonishingly good performance of the unhappy wife and mother, who pays so dear a penalty for her almost forgotten error. The emotion in the part is not complex, but there are very few actresses who could give it such truthful and sympathetic expression. All the subordinate performers are efficient, and the general representation is uncommonly smooth and well proportioned.

A Yellow Indecency

The Editors of The Yellow Book attracted attention to that quarterly at first by the novelty of its make-up, if not by the originality of their ideas. People laughed at the thing, but they bought it; and they found some things between its covers that were worth reading. While there was much that was absurd in it, there was the saving grace of apparent earnestness, and one felt that the young men who were responsible for it at least believed in their methods and had definite ideas in their heads. In subsequent numbers of the quarterly, there was a decided falling-off, and people were merely bored by the vulgar eccentricities of Mr. Beardsley's pencil and Mr. Max Beerbohm's pen. This would not do. The Yellow Book must be talked about—it must startle the reader, at whatever cost. The fourth volume, now at hand, will be talked about, but the price to be paid for its notoriety is a high one—the loss of the respect of decent people. There is nothing clever in the indecent poems and stories that go to the making of this number. They simply pander to a depraved taste. We sometimes tolerate indecency when it is clothed with art, but the indecencies of The Yellow Book are not clothed at all. The illustrations are of varying merit. There is a very good head of John Davidson by Will Rothenstein, and a portrait of George Moore by Walter Sickert, which explains some of the peculiarities of "Esther Waters." Either Mr. Moore is the most extraordinary-looking man that ever lived, or this portrait does him rank injustice. It is simply terrifying—a plum-pudding eaten at bedtime could not conjure up worse dreams than a sight of this picture. If Mr. Moore were as sensitive as Mr. Whistler, he would bring action against The Yellow Book for libellous misrepresentation. Never having seen him, we do not know how he looks, but we are quite willing to affirm that no human being ever looked like this picture.

The portrait of Mr. Beardsley which we reproduce is from a photograph, and is known among his friends as "The Gargoyle." There is much more of a likeness, no doubt, than the so-called portrait by himself published in the third volume of The Yellow Book.

London Letter

The announcement that Mr. Andrew Lang has written a romance will be of considerable interest to a wide circle. It seems that his study of the life and times of Joan of Arc has suggested to Mr. Lang that there is much unused material here for fiction, and, in effect, he has just finished a story on the subject, to be called "The Monk of Fife." Mr. Arthur D. Innes, whose energetic editorship of The Monthly Packet has done much to forward the fortunes of that periodical, has secured the serial rights in the romance, which is to begin its course very shortly.

Mr. Gosse's amusing letter to the current Athenaeum, on the subject of book-plate collecting, casts a搜索ing side-light on the annual meeting of the Ex-Librera Society, which took place at the Society's new residence in on Wednesday. Mr. Gosse says: "I scarcely a week passes but he receives, from some English or American enthusiast, application for the gift of his book-plate, and he now puts the question by with a smile, reminding his correspondents, with good reason, that the book-plate is a personal possession with which outsiders can have positively no concern. The number of persons interested in the collection of other people's book-plates seems, however, on the increase, for the Secretary of the Society, in his annual report, noted an increase of fifty in the membership of the present year; there being now no fewer than 430 names upon the books of the Club, of whom a hundred reside in the United States. For the rest, there seem to have been various interesting items in the exhibition. A collection of plates by Albert Dürer was supplied by Mr. G. I. Ellis and Mr. C. W. Sherborn; the Ulster King-at-Arms sent a number of Polish book-plates of the eighteenth century; and Mr. H. W. Fincham a series of American plates. There were, also, a number of books upon the subject, including John Guilpin's "Display of Heraldry" from the Italian heralds. Enthusiasts upon the subject declare the exhibition to have been the most complete of its kind ever attempted in this country.

The new magazine which Mr. Hall Caine's brother is to edit is rapidly approaching completion. It appears, as I have said in a former letter, that it will pinearkly strongly of the nature of The Strand, alike in form and in the character of its contents. It will, however, cost half the price—three-pence. There will be illustrated stories, portraits of celebrities, short stories and the like, and Mr. Caine will probably add to these features occasional excursions into the more serious fields of literature. But the main aim is popularity. It is curious, by the way, to note that every recent attempt towards periodical literature has followed, more or less, in the steps of Sir George Newnes. Yet the circulation of the Strand is unaffected; indeed, it increases from month to month. Speaking of Sir George Newnes, one is reminded of the Exhibition of the Book and News Trade, which took place on Tuesday at St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster. The show was organized in the interests of the Newsagents, Booksellers and Stationers' Benevolent Fund, and most of the leading newspapers were represented. The publishers were not conspicuously to the fore, Mr. Fisher Unwin, Messrs. Cassell and Messrs. Ward, Lock & Co. being the only ones to make any considerable figure. The exhibition, however, was distinctly interesting, and many people were crowded about the new lineotype machine, which was to be seen in full work at one end of the room. In his opening speech Sir George Newnes spoke kindly of his own Five-Hits, and maintained that by its means much useful knowledge was diffused among the people at large.

Dr. Robertson Nicoll is always discovering fresh talent—a matter, by the by, upon which I note some interesting comments by The Lounger in a recent number of The Critic. I am told that his latest novel is a Welsh writer of short stories, and Mr. Parry Owen, whose tales have been so attractive, some time ago introduction in the English Weekly. It is possible, then, that when the vogue of the Scotch story passes away, we shall have, in turn, a Cymric revival. Doubtless, we shall hear more of Mr. Parry Owen in the near future.

Yet another series—this time from Messrs. Cassell & Co. of La Belle Sauvage. This one, which is to be handy like the Pseudonym, will be edited by Mr. Max Pemberton, and promises, at any rate, to begin well, for the initial volume, A King's Diary, is to be by Mr. Percy White, whose extremely clever