

## AN ACTRESS IN THE FAR EAST.\*

NOWADAYS everybody can travel round the world. With steamships and railways whose regularity of movement is akin to that of the heavenly bodies, it is possible even to make social and professional engagements along the world's circumference and be again in one's haunts in London or New York, in unruffled temper, to keep appointments made months before. Mrs. Miln is one of those happy creatures who, like Dr. Holmes' friend, enjoys life with "four feet on the fender." With her husband she started on a theatrical tour over the beaten track through Asia. England, with all her conquests and her many lands stolen, bought, occupied, leased or coveted, has now as many coaling stations, ports, cities, and colonies of English-speaking people from Aden to Yokohama as there are beads on a rosary. He who receives much newspaper mail from Asiatic lands knows how often the "strolling players" are seen by gentlemen in swallow-tailed coats and ladies in low-necked dresses who speak English, and how much space the Anglo-Indian, Malay, Chinese, and Japanese newspapers give in praise or criticism of the players.

Mrs. Miln, after seeing the world as it looks from the footlights, has had the pleasure of visiting many homes of Asian and Eurasian people, and hence has made many acquaintances under tropical and sub-tropical skies. When at home, by making diligent use of the books in the British Museum, she has been able to add literary and historical perspectives to her sketches. Consequently she tells us not only about things of "contemporaneous human interest," but also about what happened to these sun-burned people's ancestors. She also takes the species missionary, puts the vari-

ous specimens on pins, and looks at them through the microscope of literary criticism and the highly colored lenses of mercantile society in the ports, and delivers her inquest and verdict upon them. She is very fond of the native peoples, and tells us a good deal that is delightful about the Hindoo, Burmese, Chinese, and Japanese ladies, all of whom, of course, are delightful and charming. Her general style of talk about the Oriental ladies may be characterized as superlative. Everything is in the highest degree. She will have nothing said against her darlings. The style of her chapters is exactly like that of a rattling chat at a five o'clock tea; every lady is elegantly dressed and has on the most delightful millinery, and nothing disagreeable is allowed to mar the tone of the stylish gathering, while over all rises the fragrant aroma from Oriental decoctions. As an Englishwoman she uses the abominable vulgarism 'rickshaw, and of course the spectacles with which she looked upon the details of Japanese life, even upon the brothel quarters, were those loaned by Mitford. The book is finely printed and is richly illustrated with clear pictures from photographs, which have been carefully selected. Those who enjoy a bright and superficial sketch of a traveler, who saw life in its best aspects along the beaten route of travel on the sea fringes of Southern Asia, should get and read this book.

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\*When We Were Strolling Players in the Far East. By Louise Jordan Miln. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. \$4.50.