



THOMAS DIXON AS HIS OWN LEADING MAN

afraid she agreed so readily partly because she did not understand French very well."

Perhaps it is because we have so much respect for Mr. Jack London as a novelist that Mr. London as a playwright,—or perhaps "Theft" it would be more exact to say Mr. London as the author of the published play *Theft*—so thoroughly exasperates us. For, taken all in all, *Theft* is about as poor a piece of work as a man of talent could be guilty of perpetrating. With Mr. London's ideas of political economy we have no quarrel. They are the ideas probably held by most of the reasoning men of the country to-day. But for his exposition of them in the wooden characters, and the ridiculous situations of *Theft*, we have nothing but the most outspoken criticism. The purpose play is very much needed in this country, but first of all it must be a good play, which *Theft* is not. We suggest to Mr. London that before he attempts to give *Theft* a successor he re-

read the purpose plays of the younger Dumas.

Last year we printed a picture of Mr. Hall Caine showing the Manx novelist as understudy in a part in one of his own plays. **Mr. Dixon on the Stage** Mr. Thomas Dixon has recently been playing a similar rôle. A few weeks ago the leading man in Mr. Dixon's play *The Sins of the Father* was drowned at Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina. There was no understudy for the part, and rather than have any of the dates for which the company was booked cancelled, Mr. Dixon, on the day following the tragedy, went on the stage himself. Newspaper clippings from various Southern cities in which *The Sins of the Father* has appeared seem to indicate that Mr. Dixon is far from being a poor actor.

Poets, nowadays, may be practical men, and their poetry is likely to be the result of determined **An Anachronism in Bohemia** morality, of an intense will to do their work well. Where is the old, Bohémian spirit of Henry Murger, the



RICCARDO CORDIFERRRO



COUNTRY LIFE PRESS. THE NEW HOME OF MESSRS. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE AND COMPANY AT GARDEN CITY, LONG ISLAND

time-honoured belief that the poet must be more careless, more improvident, more unaccountable and more unexpected than other men? Although the spirit of Murger may have become relatively extinct in our American world, yet it has lived very vividly among certain groups of foreigners in New York. Even there, however, it shows signs of partial decay, as it did even in the last pages of Murger's book, when the then successful artists and poets would no longer dine at cheap table d'hôtes.

The recent appearance of a volume of verses, in pure Italian, called *Singhiozzi E Sogghigni*, by Riccardo Cordiferro, published by the *Araldo Italiano*, covers a wide range of Bohemian, poetical creations, stretching back to 1893 and continuing to the present time. In 1893 was founded *La Follia*, an Italian weekly journal. Two brothers, recently arrived from the vicinity of Naples, were the editors, publishers and contributors. The paper consisted of two pages, mainly poetry, suggesting the spontaneous passion of the lower part of the Italian peninsula. Riccardo Cordiferro was the poet and his brother Marziale was the "practical" man. Speech was free, and after a while, Riccardo Cordiferro sometimes wrote his poems for the next issue of the paper from the interior of a jail where he had been unkindly imprisoned for criminal libel. Both brothers ate when they had the chance, and the appearance of the paper was in the hands of Providence, and, therefore, irregular. Gradually quite a little band of orthodox Bohemians gathered about the devoted pair, and the paper grew, Cordiferro pouring in his verses every day

and the prose-writers increasing in numbers and "news" sense.

After a while, the practical Marziale actually married and, with a rapidly increasing family, began to lean toward the charm of the strictly bourgeois life. Also he made political connections and the Italian quarter grew. Now he has a house, servants, and is a prosperous person and is not often seen in the lowly cafés of the Italian quarter. He is a "solid" man. His brother, Riccardo Cordiferro, however, keeps the old traditions relatively intact. He is better dressed than of old and a little more regular, and the paper now has ten or twelve pages and many advertisements, and the temptation for a poet to see the eloquence of American ideas is very strong. Yet Cordiferro still nurses the Muse, and the present volume, which is a collection of poetry largely published in *La Follia* during this entire historical period, shows in the latter pages almost as much fiery spontaneity as in the earlier. And Cordiferro proudly maintains that, in spite of his clothes and the money he can borrow from his brother, he is still a poet at heart—a contention with a good deal of basis when one examines this book, so full of tumultuous feeling and lyric emotion.

The fact that before her marriage to George Haven Putnam, the publisher, Emily James Putnam, author of *The Lady*, was dean of Barnard College, lends an element of peculiar personal interest to her treatment of woman's social and economic status

**Emily Putnam**