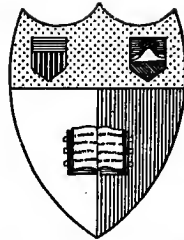




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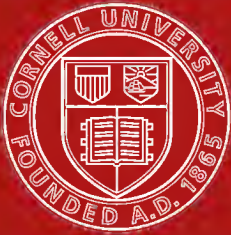




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GABRIEL HARRISON,

44 COURT ST., ROOM 69,

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Subscribers' Price, \$6.00.



Photo by Brady, 1858.

Edwin Forrest.

EDWIN FORREST:

THE ACTOR

AND

THE MAN.

CRITICAL AND REMINISCENT.

"THE BLIND MIGHT HAVE SEEN HIM IN HIS VOICE,
AND THE DEAF HAVE HEARD HIM IN HIS VISAGE."

BY GABRIEL HARRISON,

Author of "The Life and Writings of John Howard Payne;" The
Drama of "The Scarlet Letter;" The Tragedy of "Melantha,"
"The Progress of Music, Art and the Drama in Brooklyn,"
and "The Authenticity of Shakespeare's Likeness,"
Etc., Etc.

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*ROBERT F. CLARK,
Superintendent.*

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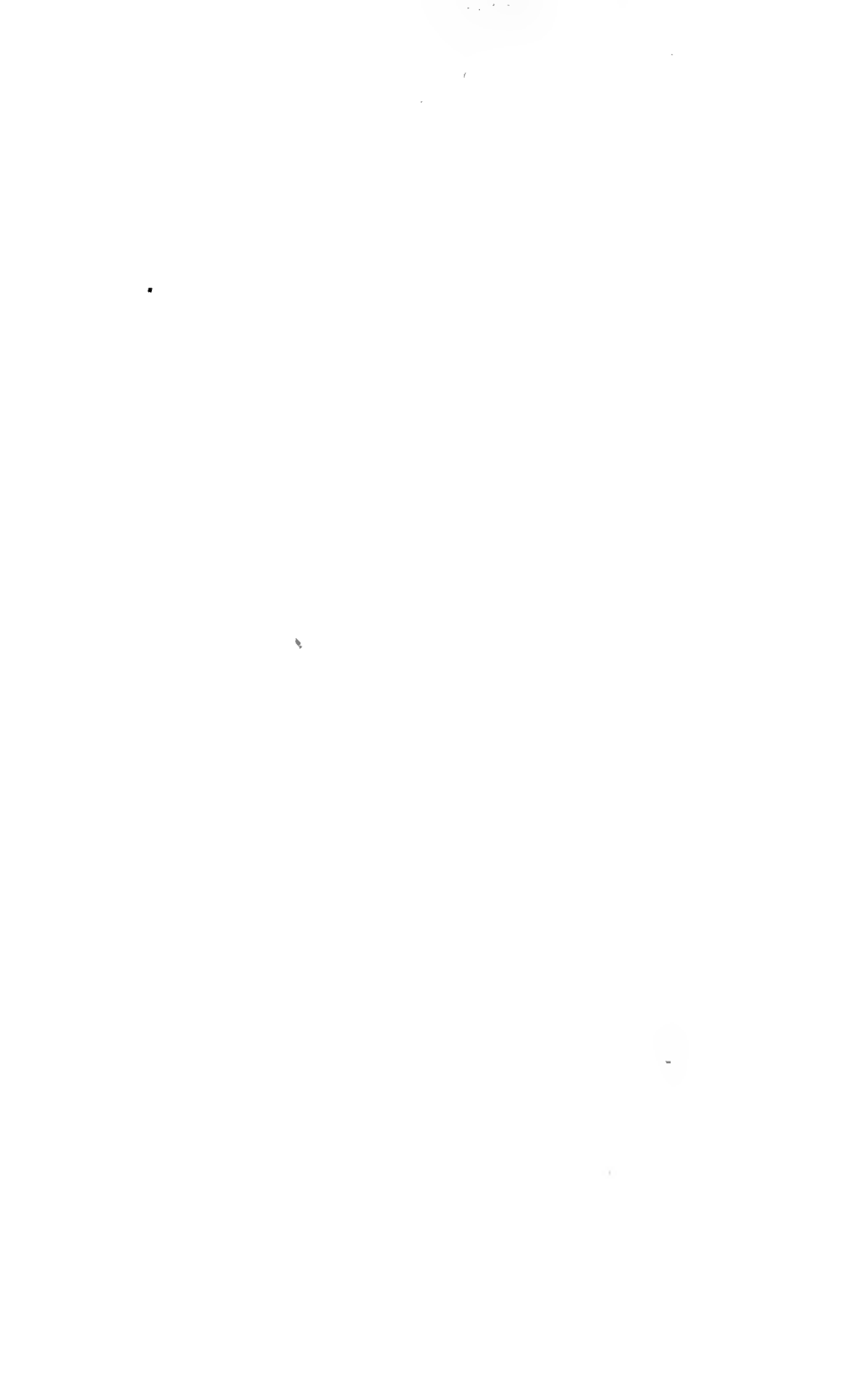
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EDWIN FORREST,

From his favorite portrait, from a Daguerreotype, by Brady, 1852.

PREFACE.

The writer of these sketches having seen Mr. Forrest act on many occasions from the time he was twenty-five years old to the last days of his life, at the age of sixty-seven years, and having very frequently seen him in all of his celebrated characters, can speak of him as an artist from ample knowledge and matured judgment and with truthfulness. To this was added personal acquaintance and friendship with Mr. Forrest during many years. Doubtless friendship may sometimes lead a man to speak too highly of his friend's abilities, yet the critic who entertains as warm an admiration for the art, if not even warmer than his personal regard for the artist and the man, may feel vigilant and overscrupulous, for fear of being unconsciously swayed by partiality, and dazzled by the lustre that friendship lends to genius.

Other actors than Mr. Forrest are presented and described expressly for the purpose of contrast, to estimate properly the several prominent artists named.

The essay on "The Four Othellos" was suggested by a rare old pamphlet, published in the days of Garrick, Quin and Barry, entitled "A Treatise on the Passions, with a Critical Enquiry into the Theatrical merits of Garrick, Quin and Barry. The first considered in the part of *King Lear*, and the two last opposed in *Othello*."

This gave the writer an opportunity to compare Edwin Forrest in the characters of *Othello* and *Lear*, with the above-named great English actors.

Edmund Kean is introduced as one of the actors who, by his masterly rendering of *Othello*, made the immortal group of four.

The illustrations of Forrest are from a set of photographer's negatives, found in the Forrest Home, never before published, and worked up with appropriate backgrounds by the writer. The likeness of Forrest and the costumes are carefully preserved in every particular.

The portrait of Kean is from a choice picture presented by Forrest to the author, and was said by him to be the best likeness he ever saw of Kean.

Those of Quin and Barry are from the best authorities.

FORREST AS VIRGINIUS.

THE DRAMA IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH—THE OLD PARK
THEATRE, NEW YORK—ITS AUDIENCE—THE PIT AND
BOXES—MRS. DUFF AND OTHER STARS.

THERE are times, after a day's hard work, when, as we throw ourselves in an armchair for rest, a train of thoughts will come freighted with graphic reminiscences of things that happened in the early years of our life. They come upon us like a soft zephyr, with a saddening sense of touch to the mind that makes one feel for a moment as if tears wanted to answer the salutation. It is as if our youth, like a spirit, had come back to talk over the things of the past. It is in the night time, when the noises of the day are hushed, and all around seems wrapped in the arms of sleep, that an incident of the past, or some dear dead friend, or a lovely girl that we once adored, will stand so boldly before us in form and color that they seem palpable. Sometimes the gleam of firelight or of the flickering lamp will seem to outline upon the wall in flashings of lights and shadows the subjects

of our wakeful dreams. How strange a thing is memory! Some things that occur are like pregnant seeds that plant themselves in the brain to germinate into forms of incidents that once had been, and, like a will o' the wisp, live for awhile and grasp our attention. A few nights ago, tired and thoughtful, I dropped myself into an old family armchair that at one time belonged to my grandmother, and was built in the days of the Revolution. I say built, because it is so large that it looks like an edifice, and invites many tenants. It extends its great arms with a generous expression. Sometimes when I approach it I think I see my old grandmother, ponderous in form, lifting herself out of the chair to make room for your humble servant. Now when seated within its capacious breadth I lighted a cigar and playfully threw out rings of smoke, and in the ascending misty circles I saw pictures of things that occurred in my life long ago. At last I was landed in front of the old Park Theatre, New York, about the year 1836. I was in the midst of a great crowd of people who were struggling and fighting to reach the pit door of this famous temple of the dramatic muse—made famous because the dramatic genius of England and America had appeared therein—the Hallams, Hodgkinsons, Wignall, Fennell, Cooper, George Frederick Cook, the courtly Holman; Conway, the father of the Brooklyn manager; Jefferson, the precious

germ from which our great "Rip Van Winkle" sprung; Hilson, Wilson, Barns, the Placides, Edmund Kean, the marvel of the British stage; the elder Booth, father of our glorious Edwin; the elder Wallacks, father and uncle of Lester Wallack; Matthews, Tyler, Mrs. Melmouth, Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Oldmixon, Mrs. Bartley, Mrs. Wheatley, Mrs. Sharp, Miss Johnson, Clara Fisher, Ellen Tree, and other lights of the stage—a peerless galaxy of dramatic talent and genius.

In those early days I made one of the crowd, and anxiously elbowed my way to the outside pit door of the old Park Theatre. In a few minutes the door was opened, then, like a turbulent rising and falling of waves, the mass of human beings swayed to and fro, and the crowd broke with a crash against the partition on the inside of the entrance containing a little round hole known as the ticket office. Then came the scramble. Coats were split up the back, hats were crushed under feet, and the shouting of "Two," "Three," "Five," "Six," as the person jammed his fist through the hole to get his tickets. Then the rush for the only pit entrance, braced with iron bars, where the door-keeper took the tickets. Many had used the precaution to purchase their tickets in the morning at Windust's. The Shakespeare, as it was called in those days, a restaurant where actors and critics, writers of the day, and the bloods of the town most did congregate for delicious drinks and the repast that

qualified the words of Shakespeare that hung over the door to the hotel: "Let us live that we may live." The pit was for men only, the better class of men, while the gallery took the roughs. In a few moments more we had passed the ticket taker and we were tumbled into a seat—a long wooden bench with a strip of wood for a back, covered by a coat of lead color paint. Others in rapid succession scrambled into places, and so it continued for almost fifteen minutes, till the rush was over. Then came a quiet, and many in the pit would stand up and look at the ladies and gentlemen entering the so-called boxes, which were nicely covered benches that would hold about ten persons. The larger number of the ladies and gentlemen were in full dress, the ladies without hats, so that all could see the play. Often among the boxites we would see the best intellects of the nation—sometimes a Webster or a Clay; lawyers—Ogden, Hoffman, Colden; doctors—Francis, Hosack, Nelson, Bayley, McDonald; the poets of the day—Irving, Hallock, Bryant, Willis, Morris, Prosper M. Wetmore; editors—M. M. Noah, Webb, Locke, Burr, Clark; artists—Trumbull, Vanderlin, Dunlap, Morse, Inman, Smith, Ingham, Cole, Durand; the wealthy John Jacob Astor, Duncan C. Pell, and others that counted their hundreds of thousands. And so, while waiting for the play to begin, we were amused until the "First Music" was called. In those days two pieces were performed by the orchestra before the

curtain went up. From the moment I first took my seat I could feel myself expand with great expectation of what I was to see, and with the peculiar atmosphere of the theatre, formed by the combination arising from the escaped gas and the painted scenery. Then my eyes were fed to a perfect fullness when I read the text of the play bill, which had the following heading, with the star actor's name in immense letters :

Park Theatre.
The Great Tragedian,
EDWIN FORREST,
In the character of
Virginius!

Then followed the cast of characters, filled by the names of Barry, Clark, Richings, Wheatley, Fisher, Povy, Mrs. Sharp and other favorites who had risen to fame as stock actors of the theatre. Then I could look around with infinite satisfaction to see the theatre packed from pit to gallery. All was expectancy, the overture was finished and up went the curtain; you could have heard a pin drop amid that vast congregation of breathing humanity. The scene represented a street in Rome. Servius and Cneius entered, but their words were little heeded, so intense the desire to see and hear the great actor. In a moment more Virginius stood before 3,000 gazers; there he stood like some grand ideal

statue fresh from the chisel of a master artist, while the thunder of applause greeted him again and again, and died away only through the inability of the audience to continue their mark of admiration for the great actor of the Republic. All again was silent until the rich, round tones of Virginius' voice captivated the ear with the interrogation :

“Why did you make him Decemvir,
And first Decemvir too?”

The quick and earnest manner in which the inquiry was made interested the hearers and drew particular attention to the conversation between Virginius and Titus. The tone of voice and the natural manner of utterance showed that a true artist was before the house, and that they were about to behold a dramatic picture emanating from the spirit of genius. It was as when the artist first takes hold of the drapery that covers his picture, and, in the lifting, you catch the first glimpse of harmonious coloring that at once leads the mind to the conclusion that the work is a great one, and as when, in the removing of the whole drapery, you behold a work so finely wrought that it is forever photographed in form and color upon the mind, to be seen whenever the desire dictates. Mr. Forrest approached the performance of a character as a Guido would the composition and the completion of a picture ;





By Gabriel Harrison.

FORREST AS VIRGINIUS,

"Go on, you see I am calm"

outline, breadth of light and shadow, tone of color, —
handling, feeling — all were there carefully con-
sidered in order to make a work perfect in unity. —
Nothing too expressed, but full of truth and
sensibility. In Forrest's picture of Virginius the —
human heart had been fully consulted; the
character as drawn by the author is shorn of
mental subtleties—a plain, honest soldier, and a
father full of domestic love, and with nothing
to treat of but simple facts that require no
scholarly research for interpretation. To display
this character Mr. Forrest possessed every quality,
intellectual and physical. He was the Roman
father without any of the strut and pompous
manner with which most actors invest the charac-
ter of Virginius. He was simple in his carriage,
plastic in his reading, and gave a perfectly natural
representation. All the developments of the
passions that belonged to the character were
given with so much fidelity to nature that it —
lent a reality to all the surroundings of the
stage. It seems impossible to picture with the
pen how sweetly his elocutionary powers touched
his words when addressing his daughter Virginia;
it was as sweet and delicate as the song of the
bullfinch; seeming to warble within its heart,
sending forth a tender, low, half smothered tone,
that moved across the portals of hearing with the
most pleasurable sensation. There was, too, a
quality of fondness in his manner toward his

daughter that portrayed not only the manly care of the father, but an endeavor to fill by look and voice the place of the dead mother. It was as if a sunbeam had suddenly illumed his face when Virginia first entered, and, placing herself upon his knee, said:

“Well, father, what’s your will?” And he answered:

“I wished to see you
 To ask you of your tasks—how they go on
 And what your masters say of you; what last
 You did. I hope you never play the truant?
 I am sure you do not. Kiss me!”

The parental manner when he gave her the kiss and all that followed in the scene was indeed holding the mirror up to nature. It was astonishing with what an acute observation Mr. Forrest grasped all the finest shades of human expression. And how perfectly he represented them in the portrayal of all his characters. This was the evidence of a great and a perfect nature in himself. His careful presentation of them gave the evidence of his assiduousness and determination to be a great artist. His work was full of detail, which alone can make a great result. The suggestive school of art expression was not of Forrest’s belief. It is nothing more than the dream of the real. There is no realization in it. It is like the cage without the bird. We know what the cage is meant for, but the object, the important feature, is not

there; true life is absent. The new school of acting introduced in "society plays" is suggestive indeed of the dead body without the breath, the eye without light, words spoken without the detail of expression. The human body without gesture proves a mind not fully at work over the human organism. Gesture is the accompaniment that helps to give full expression to words; and the bodies of such artists as Garrick, Kean, Siddons and Forrest spoke words in every movement. Genius is evidenced in details only, and correct detail is perfection. Nothing could be more beautifully tender and in accordance with the principles of human nature than when he betrothed his daughter to Icilius. It showed a great moral nature overflowing with goodness and love for his child, and every word, look, tone of voice and motion in the following speech demonstrated the perfect father :

“ Didst thou but know, young man,
 How fondly I have watched her since the day
 Her mother died and left me to a charge
 Of double duty bound—how she hath been
 My pondered thought by day, my dream by night,
 My prayer, my vow, my offering, my praise,
 My sweet companion, pupil, tutor, child!
 Thou wouldst not wonder that my drowning eye,
 My choking utterance, upbraids my tongue,
 That tell thee she is thine.”

At the close of this little speech the house was silent and seemed to feel that Virginius had really

given his child to her lover, never to claim her fully as his own again. The contrast to this quiet and tender piece of acting stands out in massive boldness to the scene in the third act, when Lucius brings the tidings to Virginius that Claudius had claimed his daughter Virginia as his slave. The wonderment expressed in Mr. Forrest's face was an expression never to be forgotten. He absolutely changed color and for a moment stood speechless. When he said

“Claimed her! claimed her for his slave!
On what pretence?”

His next speech was so full of intensity that the audience at once took a personal interest in the situation. The twitching of his fingers, the contraction of the muscles in his arms and legs and his very toes that protruded through his sandals seemed grasping at the stage in his efforts to keep calm, at the words,

“Go on, you see I am calm.”

The next passage was like the heaving of the mountain top before it bursts asunder and sends forth its impetuous volcanic fury as when he uttered,

“Did he not strike him dead?”

These words were spoken in a high keynote, like the crackling of the lightning when it strikes near, and then the sudden change of voice and

relaxation of his whole frame was in fine contrast when he abruptly spoke the words,

“ True, true, I know it was in the presence of
The Decemvirs ”—

His

“ Thank Jupiter! I am still a father ! ”

had a quality of rapturous intensity that makes it difficult to describe. The transition of expression on his face from the word “ Silence ” to “ Father ” was like when the pulse suddenly stops at the moment of danger and as suddenly beats again. Add to these wonderful effects the grandeur of his figure and his voice so fine in all its notes, the most critical mind concludes there is nothing finer in dramatic expression to look for. In his pathetic scenes he was resistlessly eloquent ; ’twas like the sad sound of the waves breaking along the lonely shore in the gloom of night and carrying away the sands of the beach, and so his flood of sorrowful voice carried the tears of his audience.

However well this great actor performed the several scenes imperfectly sketched, yet the trial scene before Claudius was the one great and perfect centre light in his picture of the Roman father, and so emphasized that it gave value to all the surrounding gradations. It was not a garish light. It was not rendered or placed for dramatic effect. It was not done for the purpose of trick to tickle the fancy of the uneducated taste and pander to the desire for pomp and fustian ; it

stood in perfect relations to truth, the truth of human nature. His manner of acting lent a reality to all the other characters upon the scene. None that ever saw Forrest as Virginius could forget his entrance before the tribune, bearing Virginia upon his arm. His firm step showing the calm resolution within his heart, his manner of holding her close up to his side, one arm around her slender waist and the other hand grasping her hand. It was the thousand tendrils of parental love reaching everywhere toward his child, like the ivy with its myriad clings to the object it would hold on to. Who could forget the Roman dignity of his figure? Who could forget the silence that pervaded the theatre, the motionless actors on the stage waiting to be thrilled by his artistic work? The silence was profound; it was like the silence that pervades that sphere where noises cannot exist. It was the ominous prelude to the action of something great. Never did an audience before wait so long and patiently for the actor to say his words. When Virginius first addressed the tribune:

“Does no one speak? I am defendant here,
Is silence my opponent? Fit opponent
To plead a cause too foul for speech.”

The clear, pure tones of his voice were like vibrations struck from perfect chords by an Orpheus and found an echo in the hearts of his audience. Each now in turn anxiously listened for the words of the shrinking and abashed Claudius.

How intense and graphic was Mr. Forrest's by-play when he finds that nothing but the death of his daughter by his own hand could save her from the pollution of the heartless Decemvir. For a moment despair and perplexity were upon his face, but when he discovered the knife upon the butcher's stall, his facial expression, electrical as the lightning that illumes the murky clouds, pictured the outline of the true intensity of the fearful storm. The poet cannot express with words what the tragedian expressed in a single look—the consolation in the thought of his child's death rather than her dishonor by Claudius. The smile that followed as he looked into Virginia's face was full of pathos as he moved toward the butcher's stall to reach the knife—his patting her on the shoulder as he changed her position from his right to his left arm that he might reach the knife, the taking of the knife, the hiding of it under the folds of his toga, the fondness he expressed in his words, "My dear daughter," and his quick and fervent kisses upon her upturned lips striving to press them into her very soul, the gush of tears that wet his words—

"There is but one only way to save thine
honor—'tis this,"

and quick as the motion of the human arm could do it the knife was pressed into her heart. The storm had broken; its lightning had wreathed its

searing folds around the instrument of death. The blood streamed from the fatal blade; the daughter's blood stained the father's hand. And then the thunder tones of his mighty voice crashed through the theatre in exclamations :

“Lo! Appius; with this innocent blood
 I do devote thee to the infernal gods!
 Make way there! * * *
 If they dare this desperate weapon that is
 Wet with my daughter's blood, let them!
 Thus! thus it rushes amongst them! away!
 Away there! away!”

The reckless manner in which he rushed through the guards of lictors, the shrieks of Servia when she saw Virginia fall to the stage, the groups of friends that gathered around the prostrate virgin, the bloody knife on high flashing from right to left as Virginius cut his way through the ranks of soldiers, formed a picture of dramatic terror that thrilled the audience and excited them to wild shouting and waving of handkerchiefs. Round after round of applause followed the descent of the curtain, and repeatedly was the actor forced to acknowledge the overwhelming approbation of the crowded house. The enthusiasm arose from absolute great acting, unassisted by pomp of scenery or glitter of costumes. For these things Mr. Forrest cared comparatively nothing. His power over his audience was the magic of genius and the effect was lasting. No less perfect was

his portrayal of the delirious scene in the fifth act. His demented look, the calling of his "Virginia, Virginia." It was a call dictated by a dethroned mind ; a sound that seemed to come from a mysterious vault. There was a half wakefulness in it like the utterance of thoughts in dreams. It had the touch of pity and was manifold in its meaning. It was a reverting form of sound that turned back to the place where it came from, and fell dead where it was born. Then came the awful picture as he kneeled over the strangled body of Appius Claudius. The sigh he gave that burst the spell that bound him, as Icilius placed within his hands the urn that contained the ashes of his daughter, the folding of the sacred chalice to his heart, the relaxation of his limbs and falling to the stage exhausted. All were of one masterpiece. When the curtain dropped on this performance the whole audience stood up and clamorously called for the artist. Women, noble and fearless women, waved their handkerchiefs and split their gloves in their plaudits ; they would not leave the house until the exhausted actor stood before them, and then cheer upon cheer shook the building. As the playgoers left the theatre they carried with them the image of the great picture which the artist had presented to their eyes and ears and hearts. They alluded to the several finer passages of his rendering. They did not allude to a scenic

artist, whose skill had been besought to lend to the drawing properties of the play-bill. No costumer's name had been paraded with the extravagant cost of dresses. No half column advertisement had been resorted to. No vulgar pictures of half naked men and women had been placed in every window to insult decency. The actor's great merits alone had packed the theatre with an intelligent and select audience. His fame rested on the fact of his genius, and he maintained his reputation as a great artist and an honorable gentleman to the hour of his death.

I have seen in my time all the great star actors and actresses of Europe and America, including the celebrated Cooper, the elder Booth, the elder Vandenhoff, the elder Wallacks, Charles Kemble, Charles Kean, Hamblin, Joseph Jefferson, Davenport, Edwin Booth, Charles Dillon, McCullough, Barrett, Irving, Hackett, Mrs. Duff, Matilda Heron, Fanny Kemble, Charlotte Cushman, Rachel, Ristori, Clara Morris and Mary Anderson, but none of them in their best representations equaled Forrest in elocution, grandeur, electrical force and detail of finish. The one that came the nearest to Forrest in all these requisites of a great artist was Mrs. Duff. It is here almost impossible to neglect this opportunity of alluding to this wonderful elocutionist and actress. She flourished upon the American stage from about 1825 to 1840, when, like some new star

of great purity of light, she quietly came among the dramatic luminaries, and as quietly and mysteriously disappeared. It is to us the most mysterious thing belonging to the history of the stage that this lady's genius was not early and fully recognized and ranked with the celebrated Sarah Siddons. It is with me impossible to conceive anything nearer to dramatic perfection in voice, elocution, facial expression, gesture and graceful movement than was possessed and rendered by this accomplished and beautiful woman. Her delineation of Mrs. Haller in the play of the "Stranger" was as perfect as could be wished for, her face delicate and refined in all its outlines, her rather large gray eyes full of soul and intelligence, her figure of medium height with fine proportions, every personal trait excited the most refined admiration, and lent a charm to her, alike on and off the stage, that can only be expressed by likening her to some sainted sister. When quite a young man, as early as 1835, I performed the character of the Golden Farmer to her Elizabeth in the Franklin Theatre that stood in Chatham Square, New York City. As an amateur at the time, and having performed the part of the Golden Farmer, I was called in to assume the part for two nights on account of Mr. William Sefton's sickness, the original of the character. The privilege of having acted with this lady, and seen her perform all her best

characters, enables me to write and speak knowingly of her public and private merits.

To the character of Mrs. Haller she was singularly adapted. Her slight figure and her naturally sweet and sad face, together with her mellow voice, seemed to be of the very nature of the character she represented. Her colloquial portions of the dialogue were simple. Her command over the feelings of the audience was truly wonderful. In the last scene of the play she wrought her hearers to a pitch of excitement that commanded tears for applause, and we never could envy the feelings of any man who could sit unmoved while her tender, passionate voice was thrilling and awakening the soul to a perfect sympathy with the sentiments expressed in the words. Never before, and perhaps never again shall we hear a stage shriek so appalling and piercing as when suddenly turning she beheld her child that the divorced husband had returned to her. Her sobs and the kisses of joy were heart-rending. Her Jane Shore was another performance she distinguished by many beauties of the highest dramatic order. Her piteous accents, her solemn and effective delivery, her classic attitudes, made more beautiful by their naturalness, in fact, her whole delineation of this character is worthy of the highest eulogy. One of her critics, when she performed Jane Shore to Mr. Thomas S. Hamblin's Hastings, in Tremont Theatre, Boston, said: "We

confidently assert that every beautiful passage she recited received additional poetic beauties as it flowed from her lips. We quote some lines that her look and actions have so impressed upon our mind that we feel no fear that the fine picture will ever fade from our memory :

“ ‘ My form, alas ! has long forgot to please.
 No roses bloom upon my faded cheek.
 No laughing graces wanton in my eyes.
 The scene of beauty and delight is changed,
 And haggard grief, lean looking, sallow care
 And pining discontent—a woful train—
 Dwell on my brow.’ ”

“ When informed by Gloster that Hastings still stubbornly opposed the designs of those who would usurp the rights of Edward’s infant heirs she exclaimed :

“ ‘ Does he ? Does Hastings ? ’ ”

with a sudden lightening up of her depressed eyes that was electrical, she fell upon her knees, and exclaimed :

“ ‘ Reward him for the noble deed,
 Just heaven ! ’ ”

These words were said with so much intensity of supplication that it took from us our sense that it was an illusion, and not reality we were gazing on.”

I saw her perform the character of Belvidera in Otway's tragedy of "Venice Preserved." The celebrated Cooper and Hamilton were the Jaffier and Pierre of the occasion. It was a wonderful cast of characters, and however well these two fine actors performed their parts, Mrs. Duff outshone them both. Her Belvidera was a performance of exquisite finish in all of the delineations of love, sorrow, anguish and madness. The transformation of her features from the gentleness of confiding love into the firmness of fixed resolve, when she declared that she would hasten to the Senate and reveal her suspicions of treasonable designs against the State, was as astonishing as it was sudden and beautiful. Her strictly classical and intellectual countenance was so flexible and obedient to her will and appropriate to the meaning of what she said that we felt that she must suffer while she was acting. As I remember Mrs. Duff's voice, it had no great power of physical force, not so much as might be wished for in some dramatic situations, but for mellowness, delicate sweetness, harmony and management, it was everything that the most refined and cultivated ear could desire. Her tonics and accentuations lent a charm to her utterances of the English language. This woman, as the editor of the *Boston Dramatic Mirror* truly said at the time, has not been appreciated, and a stigma rests upon the theatre-going public that she has not been more highly valued; that, while she put

forth the best energies of her mind and soul for public amusement, yet she has created less sensation than those far inferior—or the tricks of a juggler, who swallows a sword, or pulls yards of ribbon from his enormous mouth. Alas! that I have not the power of eloquence that would even to a faint degree picture the vocal and facial expressions of such perfect artists as Edwin Forrest and Mrs. Duff. In knowing that they are of the past, and can be seen and heard no more, it suggested the words of Macduff :

“ ‘ Let me seek out some desolate shade
And there
Weep my sad bosom empty ! ’ ”

FORREST IN BROOKLYN.

RECOLLECTIONS OF HIS PERFORMANCE OF METAMORA IN
THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC—A REVIEW OF THE PERSONA-
TION OF THE INDIAN CHIEF—THE STRUGGLE OF
DRAMATIC ART FOR ADMISSION TO THE ACADEMY.

IN 1858, Brooklyn began to give strong evidence of its rapid growth, and many of its principal citizens began to see the necessity not only of an increase of public buildings, for city and business purposes, but for large and elegant places of amusement for the accommodation of the citizens who did not care to go to New York for operatic and dramatic entertainment. In those days the public had none of the facilities for rapid transit it has at the present time. The slow plodding stage, or the almost equally slow street-car were the means of conveying the amusement seekers to the theatres and opera houses three or four miles uptown in New York. These facts seen and felt, Judge Greenwood, Alden J. Spooner, the writer, and several others called a meeting at Music Hall, (Brooklyn Museum), to

take into consideration the building of the Academy of Music. The meeting proved so inceptive to the result, that the public indorsed the idea with considerable enthusiasm. Several other meetings followed, and finally, on the evening of October 22, 1858, almost fifty enterprising citizens of Brooklyn attended at a public meeting to consider the necessity of erecting a first-class building for opera and concert purposes. Edward Whitehouse was called to the chair. A. A. Low and several other gentlemen made strong speeches in favor of amusements in Brooklyn, and Judge Greenwood offered the following resolution :

Resolved, That the time has come when the citizens of this rapidly growing city should have a building where they can obtain the benefits to be derived from innocent and instructive amusements, and, instead of being obliged, as they now are, to go beyond the bounds of their own city for such purposes, a building should be immediately erected of sufficient capacity to accommodate the largest audience which will likely be drawn together.

Other resolutions provided for a joint stock corporation, with a capital of \$200,000. Whereon Mr. A. A. Low, Edward Whitehouse, Judge Greenwood, A. M. White, H. E. Pierrepont, Luther B. Wyman, S. B. Chittenden, E. D. Plympton and others were appointed to form definite plans for the object. Shares were held at \$50 each, with the inducement that each subscriber to the amount

of ten shares should have free admission to each performance, but not the right to reserved seats. The stock was soon taken, and on May 18, 1859, the following gentlemen were appointed as a committee on the building: A. A. Low, S. B. Chittenden, S. F. Thomas, H. E. Pierrepont, L. B. Wyman, A. W. Benson and E. T. Lowber. Mr. Eidlitz was selected as the architect; John French, mason; T. Reeves, carpenter; and Henry Callio, scenic artist. The building was completed at the cost of \$200,000, and opened free of debt—a fact seldom occurring in the erection of an opera house.

The Academy of Music was duly inaugurated on Tuesday evening, January 15, 1861. S. B. Chittenden, President of the Board of Directors, delivered the opening address. The Committee on Entertainments were L. B. Wyman, S. B. Chittenden, Dr. A. C. Hull, Judge Greenwood, W. M. Richards and J. W. Degrauw. The inauguration consisted of two performances. The first took place on January 15, 1861, consisting of a vocal and instrumental concert, under the direction of Theodore Eisfeld; Madame Colson, soprano; Signor Brignoli, tenor; Signor Ferri, baritone; Signor Susiani, basso. The second entertainment, Thursday evening, January 17, consisted of a grand promenade and ball. At the close of the first performance the drop curtain, representing the temple of Apollo, was slowly let down

to the stage in front of the crimson curtain, when of a sudden the full force of 1,000 jets of gas was turned on, producing almost an electric effect, illuminating, as it did, the fine effort of the artist, and revealing more definitely the splendid proportions of the house, together with the beauty and the grace of the audience.

When the building was first opened it was intended that the drama should not enter within its "sacred walls," but that the opera, concerts, and balls would fully occupy its stage and floor. This, however, proved to be a mistake. Such entertainments were not in sufficient demand to support the building. Besides, a large and highly respectable proportion of the public desired and demanded its performance at the Academy. Several of the best managers of New York made application, but were refused the building for theatrical purposes. A committee from the Board of Directors was appointed, consisting of Judge Greenwood, R. R. Raymond and W. Lambert, to decide whether the drama should be admitted to the Academy, and to their honor and the enlightenment of the City of Brooklyn, be it said, the committee reported favorably. It was not long before the words of the great dramatists resounded amid the pillars and archways of the grand temple, and the genius of Shakespeare (not Bacon) and Sheridan transmitted their glorious thoughts to the portals of human hearing. Hackett, Forrest, Booth, Davenport

and Wallack at last had their say, and, by their genius, left the moral impress of the drama on the minds of thousands.

The first dramatic performance given in the Academy of Music took place on Monday evening, December 23, 1861. It was given under the management of Henry C. Jarrett. "Hamlet" was the play, with E. L. Davenport as Hamlet, and beautifully he did his work. J. W. Wallack performed the part of the Ghost; Polonius was played by Mark Smith; Laertes, by J. H. Allen; Horatio, by H. Langdon; First Grave-Digger, by Thomas Placide; the Queen, by Mrs. J. W. Wallack; Ophelia, by Mrs. I. B. Barrow. The rest of the cast was proportionately good. Prices of admission were \$1.00, 50 cents, and 25 cents. Four performances were given, consisting of "Hamlet," "School for Scandal," "Othello," and "Damon and Pythias." The Academy was packed from parquette to dome, and the drama became a success in Brooklyn. The next essay at the drama in the Academy of Music was by Edwin Forrest, under the management of James N. Nixon, which took place on February 10, 1862. Forrest had new scenery and every detail prepared for "King Lear," "Jack Cade," "Richelieu," "Damon and Pythias," "Metamora," the "Gladiator," and "Hamlet." The cast of characters was good, the principal support of the great tragedian being John McCullough, and Madame Ponisi. On the opening

night, Forrest performed King Lear; McCullough, Edgar; Madame Ponisi, Goneril; Mrs. R. N. Forrester, Regan. The seven performances given by Mr. Forrest passed off with great success. The house was crowded every night, which gave another proof that the drama was a much needed amusement in Brooklyn.

While I consider Mr. Forrest's Lear, Richelieu, Othello and several other characters as far more masterly than Metamora, yet I feel here, as I now write, as if I would like to sit down and honestly consider the great, dead king of the American stage in his performance of Metamora. It cannot fail to interest Forrest's old admirers, and those who never saw the great actor will have the opportunity of looking at a pen-picture of a performance that was novel and grand. Never shall I forget the peculiar impression his acting made on me the first time I saw him perform the character of Metamora. For many years previous, I had seen him as Damon, William Tell, Rolla, Brutus, Virginius, Othello and such other characters as were enacted by the star actors in those good old days of the legitimate drama. The peculiar impression arose from the entire change I saw in the manner of everything he did in the character he was representing—his walk, the inward turn of his feet, the carriage of his whole body, the gestures of his arms, the new and strange inflections of his voice, and even the manner his head posed

upon his shoulders. In fact, it was a new human nature; a nature I had failed to discover the slightest likeness to in any other character I had seen him perform. But, however, new the effects which he produced in the part of *Metamora*, they nevertheless seemed in perfect unison with a human nature that presented before me the form of a new type of man, that had for the first time been made the leading character, of a five act tragedy, and represented by a man of genius who did the work in accordance with all the marked characteristics of the purely native Indian of America.

My fancy had frequently been excited to red heat, while reading Cooper's admirable Indian novels, and thereby I was led to expect something remarkably picturesque in the new stage creation of "*Metamora*." But in Forrest's representation of the character, I was carried far beyond Cooper's influence, for I seemed to stand amid the wild lands with the vast free air around me, and all the strange and beautiful inspiring songs of nature uttering their melodious chorus into my ears. The woods and the fields echoed the Indians' martial clamors, and the wild groves and the trackless forests presented themselves with revivifying effect upon my mind. I felt myself in contact with the red man of the new land, and could more clearly understand the peculiar grandeur of their wild nature. If there was any

one character Mr. Forrest represented which should stamp him as a man of genius, it was *Metamora*. In its performance he had nothing to depend on but himself. It was an ideal which he had wholly created. No other actor or author had ever presented the Indian character in such completeness for the stage before. By force of those circumstances, Mr. Forrest had to be entirely original in all that he did in the part. The features of the character, as he represented it, were not the mere offspring of the imagination that presents whatever wild and romantic forms of thought the brain may happen to conceive. Truthfulness to nature controlled all his conclusions in the study of *Metamora*. So deep and thorough was his study of the Indian mind and heart that he could not fail to present a perfect portraiture of the highest type of the native Indians of the Western Continent. Mr. Forrest told the writer that, in order that he might grasp more fully all the distinctive characteristics of the Indians' nature, he went among them and sojourned with them for several weeks. He adopted their habits, shared their food, slept in their huts, mingled with the chiefs of their tribes, smoked the pipe of peace, and left the prints of his own moccasins on the hunting-ground in the gloom of the dense forests, and the crack of his rifle echoed along the rocky sides of the hills and lakes. When he returned to his study at home, he was fully acquainted with the

wind struck both bough and chief, and away he went into the stream below. With his rifle slung across his shoulder, he swam to the shore where Forrest sat, and to Forrest's exclamation of "What in Heaven's name made you fall into the water?" the young chief shook the cold water from his robes like a dog, and said: "Ugh! too much bush!" Ever after when Mr. Forrest was pestered by that sort of people who talk too much, he would give his Indian grunt and say with great significance, "Too much bush!"

"One touch of nature makes the whole world akin." Never was this truth more emphatically demonstrated than in Mr. Forrest's performance of *Metamora*. Many of the little speeches which the great actor pronounced as from the lips of the Indian king were so finely and truthfully inflected that they dwelt with much force and meaning in the memory of the hearer and became at the time constant quotations, and were as familiar upon the public's tongue as the name of Washington. They became household words, and boys ten years old could be seen and heard almost anywhere taking the position of *Metamora* similar to Forrest's and exclaiming: "*Metamora* cannot lie!" Older persons would frequently quote: "The good man's heart should be a stranger to fear and his tongue ever ready to speak the words of truth." "You have sent for me and I have come. If you have nothing to say, I'll go back." The bold and

fearless manner in which he (Mr. Forrest) uttered these last words were never to be forgotten. There was so much of the peculiar nature of the wild man of the forest given in look and tone that the minds of the audience were so deeply impressed that their tongues were ever ready to quote the pertinent words.

No stronger evidence could be given of the actor's merit than the fact that the whole public became, as in this case, respondent to the strokes of his masterly touches by an effort at imitation. A genius that absorbs vital traits and embodies them so powerfully that all kinds of people see and feel its truth, must be of the highest order. Cooper, with all his fine description of the Indian character, has not given a picture equal to that which Forrest presented upon the stage as *Metamora*. It would be impossible to excel the picturesque and romantic grandeur that Mr. Forrest's appearance presented, at his first entrance in this character. The scene represented a glen with the ledges of rocks rising to a considerable height at the back of the stage, with trees, shrubs, twisting vines and wild flowers hanging in festoons, while, upon the highest parts of the projecting rock, he stood in a position wonderfully effective. He was leaning forward with his bow drawn, with the arrow sprung to its head, which in a moment swept from his hand. Then with a wild interjection, "Ha!" he bounded

to the rocks beneath, and so off the stage. In a few seconds he entered with his left arm bleeding, as if bitten in a tussle with a wild beast. Oceana, a white maiden, entering at that moment, and seeing the condition of the Chief, at once stripped her scarf from her waist, and offered to bind his wounds, which he, with a sort of heroic hesitation, at first refused, but at length accepted. Mr. Forrest's pantomime acting here, serving as a prelude to his first speech, was full of strange interest. For several moments he looked at Oceana with a stern and contemptuous expression, as if thinking of the harsh treatment his people were receiving from the white man, and disregarding or despising the wounds upon his arms. But the "Maiden of Eagle Plume," unhesitatingly wrapping her scarf about the strange chief's arm, he seemed to admire the act, and his face that, a moment before, was like a gloomy thunder-cloud, lightened up with a pleasant smile as he gazed upon the girl with the assurance that he was her friend.

His first scene with his wife, Nahmeokee, was intensely novel, and seemingly so real that it became almost an annoyance to know that it was a mere representation. His dream was related to Nahmeokee in a sub-sonorous voice, full of superstitious suggestion, and in a way that almost carried conviction that what had appeared to him in his sleep, would surely come to pass. After

he had directed his wife to bring his child from the couch of leaves and the robes it was resting on, he placed them at his side, and formed a group that was a fit study for pictorial illustration. Forrest had frequently startled me by unexpected tones and inflections of voice, but the utterance of the following passage satisfied me that he was capable of producing any sort of expression that he might desire. The deep and tremulous quality of his voice was like the subdued bass of the great organ, the stage seemed to be a reverberating sounding-board, and lent an additional awe to the words when he said :

“ Nahmeokee, the power of dreams has been on me, and the shadows of things that are to be have passed before me. My heart is big with great thought. When I sleep, I think the knife is red in my hand, and the scalp of the white man is streaming with his blood.”

Here he raised his figure to an additional height, lifted his right arm to the level of his shoulder, grasping his long bow, he looked directly into the eyes of Nahmeokee, and listened for her answer which did not please him and slightly ruffled his temper, and then with a clear, orotund voice, which in the change and quality was so unexpected that it resembled the sudden sweep of the winds when it stirs the crisp leaves and hums through the leafless branches of the forest, he said :



By Gabriel Harrison.

FORREST AS METAMORA,

"Nahmeokee, the power of dreams has been upon me, and the shadows of things that are to be, have passed before me."

“ Yes, when our fires are no longer red in the high places of our fathers, when the bones of our kindred make fruitful the fields where the stranger has planted his golden grain amid the ashes of our wigwams, when we are hunted back like the wounded elk far toward the going down of the sun—our hatchets broken, our bows unstrung and the war whoop hushed—then will the white man spare us, for we shall be too few for their eyes to see.”

And so in many other passages of this novel play did he captivate his hearers with his wonderful eloquence, attitudes, gestures and voice. To particularize all the passages of striking vigor and beauty would need more space than a brief sketch will afford. In the last act of the play, when Metamora finds there is no rescue for his tribe; that the English surround him on every side, and he fears that his wife, Nahmeokee, will fall into the hands of the enemy, Forrest reached a level of activity that seemed perfect in every consideration. No theory of the passions can teach the actor to express true pathos. It is the one particular quality in our nature that has no counterfeit. The actor must feel intensely, or he cannot express feeling so as to excite the sympathy of his audience. It is only a fine nature, full of sensibility, aided by mastery of elocution, that can produce the genuine tones and the broken utterances of sorrow. True, we all have the pathetic chord within us to a

lesser or a greater extent; but it requires the master artist to touch it skillfully, and to elicit a hearty response from others. It is latent, as the sweetest music lies in the strings of the harp, waiting the touch of its master. And when it speaks, it is felt by all. It is felt and expressed by the wild Indian of the forest, as well as by the more civilized white man. It may have some difference in its manner of expression, but, nevertheless, it expresses itself, and here I allude to the distinct and peculiar manner in which Mr. Forrest expressed the pathos of *Metamora*. It was not like the pathos of Damon, when he leaves his wife and child to go and meet his death at the block. It was not like the pathos of Brutus, when he condemns his son, Titus, to death, nor was it like that of Virginius, when, in his waking from madness, he remembers his daughter, Virginia, as they place the urn within his hands, containing her ashes. Forrest's pathos in *Metamora* was a pathos that could belong to none except the red man. It was not wet with tears. It was the brave Indian's pathos, as distinct as is the color of his complexion.

In the following passages of the play *Metamora*, after telling Nahmeokee that he was "weary with the toil of blood and battle," asked for his "little one," that "he might take him to his burning heart to quench its fires, and quell its tumult." But *Metamora* knew not that his child lay dead on the

buffalo robe beneath the shadows of the tall oak, near at hand. Nahmeokee spake not a word, but trembling and in silence led him to the spot, she removed a branch of wild flowers from the child's face. Metamora started, looked at the child for a moment, then dropped upon one knee, and in rapid movement felt the child's head, arms, and legs. Convinced that his child was dead, his head fell low upon his bosom, and he heaved a sigh that was heard in every part of the theatre. Then, lifting the child with his strong arms, he stood erect, looked into its face, and with murmuring sounds as if talking to himself, he said, "Dead, cold?" He then placed his child on the robe, led Nahmeokee slowly toward the footlights, she slightly sobbing the while, and, placing his hand upon her shoulder, he said in a voice full of tears, a voice deep with pathos:

"Well, is he not happy? Better that he should die than live to be the white man's slave. Do not bow down thy head. Look up, and let me kiss the hot drops that flow like rivulets over thy face. Thou wilt see him again in the happy spirit-land, and he will look smilingly on thee, as—as—I do, Nahmeokee."

The expression of smiling was in his voice only, while his face was full of hopeless grief. His manner and utterance indicated an intensity of feeling that was overwhelming, and penetrated every heart in the theatre. After striving with his

emotion for a few moments, he turned suddenly to his wife, and with a fearful meaning in his face (not on the Delsarte principle of facial expression, but on the soul's principle), he asked :

“ Fear ye not the power of the white man ? In his cruelty he might bind these arms that have so often embraced thy babe to its nourishing fount ; yes, bear thee off to the far strange land for the gaping wonder of strangers to taunt at. No, Nahmeokee, we are now alone, defenseless, and cannot fly, for the foe is all about us, thick as the flies over the dying elk. We cannot fight ; our tribe is scattered like the leaves of the Autumn. This is the only weapon I have saved unbroken (drawing his long knife). It is stained with the white man's blood and has reached the heart of the traitor. It is my only friend and treasure.”

Drawing Nahmeokee close to him with his left arm, and clasping her firmly around the waist, he extended his right hand with the knife pointing heavenward, and with an alluring falsetto voice he painted a picture that seemed to take form upon the very atmosphere of the theatre. The eyes of the audience followed in the direction of Nahmeokee's that seemed to see the spirit of the child floating in the “ thin air,” when with the following words he finished the play :

“ I look through the thin air and see our infant borne onward to the land of the happy, where the

fair hunting grounds know no storms, where the flowers are ever in bloom, and where immortal braves are ever present in the sight of the Giver of all good! Look, Nahmeokee—see—the spirit of our murdered babe beckons to thee!”

Lowering his right arm, and grasping her still closer, and while she seemed to see the image of her child, he said:

“Hark! Off in the distant woods I faintly hear the tread of the white man. The crackling branches betray his approach. They are upon our trail! Listen! Your babe is calling. The home of the happy is made ready for thee!”

With these words he pressed the knife into her heart, while the emotions of hope and fear were vivid upon her face. With a slight struggle and a kind look up into his eyes, she gave a long, deep sigh, and in an instant more she was dead in his arms. He kissed her and placed her beside her dead child. At this moment the white soldiers stealthily had found their way to the top of the rocks and stood pointing their muskets at him. He turned and recklessly thundered his curses at them. They fired, Metamora fell, and crawled in the agony of death to where his wife and child lay, and, in the effort to kiss them, he died.

The grand old and the modern poets have not painted a picture for originality and heroism equal to Forrest's death scene in “Metamora.”

Forrest in the early part of his career as an

actor belonged to the romantic school of acting, sustained, however, with a naturalness and a refinement that placed him among the classic artists of the stage. His gifts were many. He knew how to costume his grand figure to the greatest advantage. He was graceful in movement. His positions were always picturesque, and his voice of such wonderful power and flexibility that he constantly charmed the eye and ear. All these gifts fitted him for the romantic character of *Metamora*, and his performance of it came as near to perfection as it seems possible to attain.

THE FOUR OTHELLOS.

QUIN, BARRY, KEAN AND FORREST. THE "ELDER"
BOOTH, ETC.

WE are of the opinion that Shakespeare's character of Othello gives the tragedian a larger scope for the expression of his dramatic genius than any other creation of the great dramatist. We have come to this conclusion after a careful study of the character, comprehending, as it does, a larger number of human passions to be expressed by the actor.

We feel a sense of surprise when we recognize the fact that so many actors have made great reputations by their performances of Richard III, Hamlet, Lear, and Shylock, while few claim a like degree of eminence for their representation of Othello. Still the English stage has been graced by three actors who were famous in the character of the jealous Moor—Quin, Barry and Edmund Kean, and one American, Edwin Forrest.

In analyzing the conception, and the manner in which the three first-named gentlemen represented

the character of Othello, we are inclined to give Barry the recognition of being the best. He seemed to see and feel more clearly the human nature Shakespeare imparted to the character of the Moor. Indeed, he seemed to possess to a larger extent the requisites for the representation of the character.

He was of a tall figure, well-proportioned, and handsome without effeminacy. His voice was sweet and flexible; possessing all those tones necessary to express the tender passions of grief, love, and pity; but lacking that power and force to express the passion of rage which is often required in such characters as Othello and Lear. He won his audience in the representation of the character of Othello, as Othello won Desdemona, by the manner in which he told the story of his life:

“The battles, sieges, fortunes he had passed,” and for which she “gave him a world of sighs.” In no part of his performance of Othello did he show any disposition that would stigmatize the character of the Moor with the name of brute, as have many of the actors who have attempted to represent the character. Quin and Garrick were both battling for the recognition of being the best Othello; when, of a sudden, young Barry, fresh from Dublin, came before a London audience, and, by his masterly performance of the Moor, wiped the Moorish “black” from off their faces, and stood first in this particular character.



SPRANGER BARRY,

Born 1719. Died 1777.

This new actor for some years remained the most dreaded and most brilliant rival the Roscius of England ever had. Garrick became third in the part of Othello, and finally gave up the character to Quin and Barry

John Barnard in his "Retrospections of the Stage," says: "He saw Barry perform the part of Othello, and thought it was a fine performance in spite of all that Garrick's partisans said against it. They sneered at him as the silver-toned lover, and yet were sagacious enough to admit that his Othello was good; not considering that the character of Othello, containing in itself all the highest and most opposite elements of tragic character, requires greater abilities to do it justice than any or all of Shakespeare's other conceptions. To say, therefore, that a man plays Othello well, is to pronounce the highest eulogium. It is to affirm that he achieves the loftiest flight of Shakespeare's genius, and bodies forth the chief writer of the British stage."

Leslie, in his life of Reynolds, remarks: "There was in Barry's whole person such a noble air of command, such elegance in his actions, such regularity and expressiveness of features, and in his voice such resources of melody and tenderness, that the greatest parliamentary orators used to study his acting, for the charm of his stately grace, and the secret of its pathos."

Cibber preferred Barry's Othello to Betterton's,

or Barton Booth's. Davies remembered seeing Cibber in the box on the first night of Barry's Othello loudly applauding him—a practice by no means usual with that austere old critic.

Quin was a great actor in many parts, and for awhile stood alone as the favorite of the London audience till Garrick entered as Richard III, and swept across the British stage like a planet, leaving a gap between him and all other actors that was not closed up until the grave was closed upon him. Quin, like Barry, possessed a fine personal appearance for the part of Othello. His voice had greater depth of tone and greater force for the expression of rage, but, by using too much effort in the passionate scenes, his voice would break, and would not last till the end of the play, while Barry, superior to Quin in his knowledge of elocution, would have his voice as fresh, smooth and round at the end of his performance as at the beginning. With these distinguishing features in these two actors and the distinguishing features of Kean and Forrest, which we shall illustrate further on in the part of the Moor, we will endeavor to show which of the four great actors was the best Othello.

Quin, in all of the scene before the Duke in council, and especially in the speech:

“Her father loved me; oft invited me,”

was perfectly calm, and did not show the least



JAMES QUIN.

Born 1693. Died 1766.

emotion. Even when accused by Brabantio, that his daughter,

“In spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, everything,—
To fall in love with what she feared to look on!”

he was calm as a marble statue, while Barry showed a restlessness to defend the honesty of his purpose in wooing Desdemona, and in the same speech gave emphasis to his “travel’s history,” of being taken “by the insolent foe,” and uttered the words :

“She loved me for the dangers I had passed ;
And I loved her that she did pity them.”

with a fervency that proved the Moor’s love for Desdemona was from his heart, and not a mere animal passion, or pretty words only to catch the ear. So these two fine actors differed throughout the play ; Quin finer than Barry in the passionate scenes, while Barry would claim the admiration of his audience by the exquisite tenderness of love he expressed toward Desdemona, and caused them to agree with the sentiments of the Duke when he said :

“I think this tale would win my daughter, too,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.”

Quin, in many parts of the play, and especially so in the fourth act, was rude and harsh towards Desdemona. Barry, in the same passages, was

emphatic, but still maintained the conduct of a gentleman. The curtain fell on Quin's performance of Othello with the audience in full sympathy with Desdemona; it fell on Barry's performance, with their sympathy for the Moor. Not but that Desdemona had been wrongfully treated, but that so noble and so fond a lover as Othello should have been so willfully and so successfully duped by such an infernal villain as Iago. If the text is closely studied and logically expressed by the actor, we conclude that Barry was nearer right than Quin in his conception and acting of the character. Edmund Kean did some parts of the Moor better than Quin or Barry.

Somehow we feel that Othello should be a grand and graceful figure, and so far as these gifts are concerned, Kean lacked them both. His figure was short and square-cut about the shoulders. He possessed a muscular formation about the chest and arms. There was a knottiness of outline that could hardly claim the admiration of such a delicate creature as Desdemona. It seems perfectly natural that a refined and beautiful woman would require something more than the heroic man only. The quality of tenderness would naturally be looked for. Kean's performance of the Moor showed more of physical effort than either of the two actors mentioned. His third act was a succession of electric flashes, accompanied with the reverberating thunders of his voice.



Drawn and Engraved from life by Jno. Wm. Gear, London.

EDMUND KEAN AS OTHELLO.

Отн.—“ My demerits may speak unbonneted,
To as proud a fortune as this I have reached.”

He amazed his hearers by its loudness and his wonderful rapidity of enunciation of syllables and words. In his rage of jealousy, fire streamed from his eyes, and the emotions of his body were so great that he shook the spangles from off his silk tunic. His was the intellectual face—a face expressing the deep-cut lines of thought; lines that had been helped to their peculiar formation, perhaps more by the struggle, turmoil and worryment of life than by any of the more soothing and tender passions and sentiment which would form the face of one whose life had been more fortunate. His eyes were polished jets, large and penetrating, and produced an instant effect. There was no expression of love in them. Deceit, anger and revenge was their field of power. Coleridge said that “seeing Kean act was like reading Shakespeare by lightning-flashes, so brilliant and so startling were the sudden illuminations, and so murky the dull intervals.” His nose was long and thin, and inclined to turn upward at the end, with the nostrils large. His cheek-bones were rather high; his mouth well-formed with upper lip cut sharp, and resting with great firmness upon the lower lip, which was inclined to a fulness in the centre; his mouth was exquisitely modeled for articulative purposes. His chin protruded, and assisted in giving good form to his profile. His neck was short and very muscular. His larynx was large, showing wonderful voice-power. His

was a highly interesting face, but with nothing in it to fascinate the fair sex, while Quin and Barry, by their many manly beauties, claimed female admiration at once.

The above description of Kean's person is from a picture presented to the writer by Edwin Forrest, who said it was the only true likeness of Kean he had ever seen. The picture represents Kean as Othello, and was engraved on stone from life by John William Gear, of London.

Forrest knew Kean personally, and performed the part of Iago to his Othello at the old Albany Theatre, New York.

We have remarked that the character that has the greatest variety of human passions to express, will afford the larger opportunity for the expression of the actor's genius.

It would be a long essay to show all the reasons why Othello is more difficult to portray than Hamlet, Lear, or Richard III. A mere epitome on so grand a subject seems ridiculous, and yet a few words of comparison may be acceptable.

However beautiful a type of man Hamlet is, and however fine and scholarly the rhetoric, and smoothly his words may flow, and however deeply his philosophy may strike, and however much others (and great minds, too), may and do admire the character as the finest of Shakespeare's creations, still he seems more of an ideal creation than a purely human type, a sort of mysterious being

with too little of the several passions discoverable in all humanity alike.

He remarks

“Blessed are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune’s finger
To sound what stop she please.”

“Give me the man
That is not *passion’s* slave, and I will wear him
In my heart’s core, aye, in my heart of heart.”

These very remarks show more than a human control over the laws of human nature. In fact, throughout the play, while he sees what ought to be done, he “nothing does” and complains:

“Is it not monstrous, that this player here
But in a fiction, in a dream of passions,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann’d,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in’s aspéct,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!”

And then he remarks again:

“What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.”

If he had all these functions, he could not have controlled them, so as not to act them

and constantly prevaricate, pervert, and quibble about his uncle's and his mother's guilt. But, long before the end of the play, he would have avenged his father's wrongs. Then again he admits himself to be

“ A dull and muddy-mettled rascal,
 Like John a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property, and most dear life,
 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
 As deep as to the lungs. Who does me this?
 Why I should take it: for it cannot be,
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
 To make oppression bitter.”

With all these contradictions, whatever human nature he may have, is kept pent up, and is allowed to express only the one desire to prove his uncle's guilt. We might call him a purely contradictional character, as his one prominent faculty, and, thereby, all his other passions, were checked and made expressionless.

He is like a beautiful iceberg, incapable of reactional effects. We can weep with Lear; we can sympathize with Othello; we can hate Richard; but Hamlet does not excite his audience to a single emotion or passion; he drags you along with him, and you do not know why, unless it is by the charm of his words and of his scholarly

manner. He is calm, over-rational, and inclined to colloquy. Honor and self-respect are his guiding motives. He has no love, and whatever love he professed for Ophelia, was cold and void of rapture; it was without a soul, and seeming to spring more from external causes than from his heart. Although he exclaimed over Ophelia's grave:

“I love Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,
 Make up my sum.”

Yet, by the deliberate harshness of his feigning of madness before her, by his denying that he ever loved her, or gave her aught as evidence of his affection, and telling her to go to a nunnery, together with causing the death of her father by his own hand, all of which drove her to madness and death, one is forced to conclude that his exclamation over her grave was mere words, and not an evidence of love. Hamlet is the best of talkers, and the actor who performs the character has a fine opportunity to express a scholarly quality of elocution. He has no such electric forces to inspire the actor's blood to action as exists in the character of Othello, Lear, and Shylock. Hamlet must see, and know, and prove more than necessary before he acts. And it is not until a few moments before his own death, that he believes the King to be guilty of the murder of his father, when Laertes exclaims, while dying:

“ Hamlet, thou art slain.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand.”

“ Lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again ; Thy mother's poisoned ;—
I can no more ; the king, the king's to blame.”

Then comes Hamlet's conclusion at last, when he sees crime and death all around him, and shouts :

“ The point
Envenom'd too !—then, venom, to thy work !”

and stabs the King to death. Prevarication is the plot of the play from beginning to end. We have made these comments on the character of Hamlet, simply to show that all his incentives are doubts and not inspirations. This precludes the possibility of great acting. Thomas Betterton and John Philip Kemble were considered fine Hamlets, but neither of those gentlemen were impassioned actors. They were slow and scholarly, and had but gleams of the fiery impulses that belong to a nature perfect in all the sensibilities. Neither of them was a great Othello.

Edmund Kean was greater in Othello than in Hamlet. He was also great in Shylock, Lear, and Richard III. Nor did the elder Booth work himself to such grand results in Hamlet, as he did throughout in Richard III, Lear, and Sir Giles Overreach. While he performed the part of Othello with force, yet, singular to say, he was much finer as Iago than as the Moor.

In fact, we doubt if a finer Iago ever walked the stage. We saw him perform the part of Iago, many times, to excellent Othellos; among them Thomas S. Hamblin, and the famous Cooper; but Booth, as Iago, became the attraction of the night. We must not omit here to say that the elder Booth was the best Hamlet we ever saw; and though, as a whole, it was not equal to his Sir Giles Overreach, or his Richard III, yet he enacted some scenes with wonderful effect, especially the closet-scene, with his Mother and the Ghost. In this scene, where the Ghost appears, he would absolutely change color and thrill his audience.

The character of Richard III is based on the one human incentive—ambition, with a hellish nature to advance it; nor is it even expected that fine voice or noble looks should be required to advance the captivating powers of the character; and yet Garrick, Cook, Kean, and the elder Booth all made greater fame in Richard III, than in the character of Othello, although the latter is so replete with the higher qualities of human nature.

King Lear, next to Othello, has grand opportunities for dramatic expressions—parental love, old age, tenderness, rage, sanity and insanity, all combined—giving a broad field of expression for the mental, moral, and spiritual powers. Garrick in his day stood alone in the part of Lear.

Edmund Kean and the elder Booth, throughout the play, were better in Lear than in Othello. The character of Lear is worthy of the actor's highest consideration in proportion as they advance towards old age. Forrest has left a splendid record as Lear. But, with all the good points for fine acting, that abound in the characters of Lear, Richard, and Hamlet, still Othello affords finer opportunities for the display of dramatic genius. Othello is complete in a fine manhood. He has breadth of mind, grandeur of ideas, a keen sense of honor, and a refined and intense fervor of love, from which sprung his violent passions—jealousy coupled with remorse. His strong imagination leads him into error. But we should not forget the nature of a Moor, and the artful cunning used by Iago to awaken the latent passion of jealousy in one of Othello's nature. In no instance did this Venetian villain put forth a proposition, or even a hint that Desdemona was false, but he used some incident connected with Desdemona's conduct that Othello had seen with his own eyes. The train of thought once awakened in Othello of the possibility of Desdemona's perfidy, Iago used every opportunity, by further suggestions, so as to keep Othello's conclusions increasing in the one direction. The handkerchief spotted with strawberries, which Othello gave to Desdemona as a dear memento, found in the possession of Cassio, is perhaps the

most masterly invention that has ever been conceived by human genius. In fact, everything that Iago suggested to Othello's mind would naturally lead even a much calmer nature to conclude the same as Othello did.

We do not mean to say that an actor can only play that character well which is nearest to his own nature. If so, we might infer that the men who could perform the part of Iago with such consummate skill as the elder Booth or Young did, were natural villains, like Iago. But we do say that the genius of some actors is more attracted towards a certain line of characters. We have seen some young actors perform the characters of old men with remarkable skill, and the best piece of acting we have seen by Miss Mary Anderson was her representation of Meg Merrilies, an old hag of seventy years, when Miss Anderson was only eighteen years old.

Forrest's nature leaned more towards such characters as Othello, Damon, Virginius, Coriolanus, The Gladiator, Metamora, William Tell, Rolla, and Jack Cade. In all of these characters he was more successful than in such parts as Hamlet, Richard III, Shylock, Sir Edward Mortimer, and Sir Giles Overreach. He was not great as Lear till he approached old age, and felt himself assimilate with the character through change of natural tendency. It was so with his Richelieu. These two characters became the greatest achievements

of his dramatic genius. Forrest always performed those characters well which agreed with his own emotions. Naturally, Forrest was like Othello—large in integrity, sensitiveness, and love, grand and broad, like the characters in which he was most successful. Now, had the character of Othello been especially written for Mr. Forrest, it could not have fitted him better. His life, too, like the Moor's, had been scorched in going through the hell of deception in marriage, evidenced by his own eyes, and not fancy, nor the mere illusion of devilishness, as if from some hellish spirit. His life had been blasted, and he had writhed like the Moor. His nerves and fibres had been stretched to their utmost tension of agony, and all his finer sensibilities had been tortured and awakened by an experience that enabled him to express the character of Othello. He seemed to feel that there was a galling relationship between him and the Moor. His audience, acquainted with all the facts of his marriage troubles, sympathized with him and felt, too, this relationship vividly and fully embodied.

Forrest's first entrance, as the Moor, in his rich, purple velvet robe, heavily bullioned with trimmings and jeweled with emeralds, lent a fine contrast to his copper-colored face. His costume, however, was not Moorish or Venetian; it assumed a more fanciful character, wholly unlike the costume of the period. We fail to agree with the manner



By Gabriel Harrison, 1871.

OTH.—“ Let him do his spite ;
My services which I have done the seigniory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints.”

in which any of the actors have dressed the Moor. Kean wore a white spangled tunic, brown leggings, and a nondescript hat, which were as far from correct costume as Forrest's. Barry and Quin dressed the Moor in the English court-suit of the period. F. Reynolds tells us he saw Barry act the part of Othello "in a full suit of gold-laced scarlet velvet, a small cocked hat, knee-breeches and silk stockings." Costuming for the stage had not at that time reached the perfection that soon followed these celebrated actors, and is used at the present time. But, in fact, even now, the part of Othello is not properly costumed. Othello was in the Venetian service as a General, and, as a matter of course, would adopt the usual clothes of the citizen, or the uniform and badges of his military rank. And, therefore, his costume should be strictly Venetian.

Forrest, from the moment he first entered as Othello, was thoughtful, dignified and calm, and gave the Moor a bearing that showed he was fit to command others, and to guard his own actions, both on the field and in the council chamber.

And when Iago cautions Othello :

"That the magnifico is much lov'd;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the duke's;"

and may divorce him, Forrest spoke the speech beginning with the words :

"Let him do his spite:"

in a reserved and respectful manner, showing his modest confidence in himself, and that his past services to the State might claim for him as much sympathy from the Council as could Brabantio. Quin and Kean spoke the words with the emphasis of defiance; Barry ran through with little or no concern, as if expressing a feeling of vanity.

In the next action of the scene, where Brabantio and Roderigo, with officers, enter to arrest Othello, and Iago with the rest, draw their swords to fight, Forrest calmly said :

“Keep up your bright-swords, for the dew will rust them.
 Good signior, you shall more command with years,
 Than with your weapons.”

His manner here showed his mental superiority over all others present, and expressed just what the author intended. Quin shouted: “Keep up your bright-swords,” and rushed in between them; Kean half drew his sword and took a threatening attitude, while Barry, with his sword drawn, struck up their weapons, and exclaimed: “Keep up your bright-swords!” and then posed himself before he finished the sentence. This sentence has always been printed with a period, and not the note of exclamation.

In answer to Brabantio's violent words,

“Lay hold upon him; if he do resist,
 Subdue him at his peril.”

When the combatants crossed swords in the centre

of the stage, Forrest used a rapid and persuasive utterance in speaking the words :

“Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go,
To answer this your charge?”

Quin, Barry and Kean expressed the words with anger and exclamation. This was wrong, as one of Othello's characteristics is forbearance. His education as a soldier taught him this ; he had been used to “feats of broil and battle,” and was not easily disturbed by small affairs ; besides, he had already been cautioned by Iago that Brabantio leaned “to bad intent,” and was therefore prepared to meet Brabantio with restraint and reason.

In the Council scene before the Duke, Forrest's style of speech was simple and colloquial ; there was a quiet dignity in his manner, and it did not become emphatic till he spoke the words :

“She swore, In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange ;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wond'rous pitiful :
She wish'd she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man : she thanked me ;
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake ;
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd ;
And I lov'd her, that she did pity them !

He used a mellow and fervent quality of voice that spoke the love he bore the gentle Desdemona, and ending with the words "that she did pity them" in a deep, sub-sonorous tone of voice that stirred the blood of his hearers to sympathize with the words he uttered.

Quin and Kean rendered the most of this scene with a decided pompousness of style. Barry was more like Forrest, humble but dignified, and as if he felt himself in the presence of higher authority than his own. At the entrance of Othello in the second act after his return to Cyprus, and after meeting Desdemona, Forrest's fervency in expressing his love for Desdemona was fully up to the keynote of the author's words. The picture he formed when he embraced Desdemona was classically beautiful, standing, as he did, perfectly erect, pressing her close against his manly figure, and looking upon her face that rested upon his bosom. All through the speech his voice was of a rich, flute-like quality, and, when he struck the words: "O my soul's joy!" it was on a high note, and finished the sentence:

"And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high; and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven!"

with a low note, picturing in his voice the ascent and fall of the laboring bark, climbing the hills of seas and falling to the depths below. When he said:

“If it were now to die,
 ’Twere now to be most happy ; for, I fear,
 My soul hath its content so absolute,
 That not another comfort like to this
 Succeeds in unknown fate.”

There was a fervency of expression in look and voice that pictured the Moor’s love for Desdemona as being truthful and undying. Neither Quin or Kean had the love-notes in their voices to express so fully the quality of feeling that seems called for in the words. Barry had the voice, but we doubt whether he expressed the passion of love with the same amount of intensity.

The next scene that claims our attention, Scene II, Act II, outside the castle gate, where Iago incites Cassio and Roderigo to combat, and Othello enters from through the castle gates—here Forrest came in haste with scimitar drawn, head bare, and exclaiming, with fine effect,

“Hold, for your lives”

and, rushing in between the combatants, stopped the fighting, and then, in rapid articulations, spoke his words down to

“He dies upon his motion—”

The rest of the speech was colloquially expressed. The action of the scene, as it were, fell from the condition of a raging storm to a perfect calm. The effect was powerful upon the audience, and a

death-like stillness pervaded the house when Iago began to speak,

“I do not know ; friends all but now, even now.”

In this scene Quin was monotone, stiff and loud, expressing words only. Barry's action in the entrance was similar to Forrest's, but he had not the power of voice to express the scene with such powerful effect.

Quin showed dignity without rage, while Barry made an effort at rage without dignity. Forrest expressed all, and produced command and obedience to his will. Kean was all fire, quick and passionate, and, with his sword in his hand, dashed in with a recklessness that was startling, knocked up their weapons that was dangerous to the men who held them, and, after the fighting was stopped, continued angry, which took from the dignity of the character.

When Othello discharges Cassio from his service, Forrest acted with respect and regret ; Barry behaved as if he was a gentleman stripping a valet de chambre and not a General cashiering an officer. Nor was he less mistaken in the style of his address to Montano ; his upbraidings were destitute of firmness ; Quin showed a spirit of anger, like Kean, all through the scene.

In the speech,

“How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?”

Forrest looked at Cassio for a moment with wonderment at his condition.

When he addressed Montano, asking him :

“What’s the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion, for the name
Of a night brawler? Give me answer to it.”

he did not snap at him in the last sentence as Quin, Barry, and Kean did, but spoke rather in the sense of a request.

But, as a critic of the day says, who had seen Garrick, Quin, and Barry perform the part of Othello : “We must now prepare to give our attention to how these three great actors performed the great third act of the play. The great fault I have to charge these actors with, is their betraying a consciousness of what is to succeed, or, in other words, becoming jealous before they have reason for it. Iago in all his speeches, that work up Othello to the condition of jealousy, does not drop a single word that Desdemona was disloyal ; but only gives his friend to understand that he has a secret which he is unwilling to communicate, that concerns him. Othello may have some doubts as to the integrity of Cassio, but does not harbor a suspicion against his wife’s honor. The mistake commonly begins at “Ha !” which Mr. Quin utters as a mark of reflection ; Barry, of rage. To be the better able to determine which of their judgments is best, take the whole passage :

Othello—I'll know thy thought.

Iago—You cannot, if my heart were in your hand ;
Nor shall not, while 'tis in my custody.

Othello—Ha ! ”

The increase of rage at the daring and obstinacy of Iago is natural enough. But why should the jealousy begin here, more than at any other foregoing passage of the play? And, besides, the artifice of Iago is destroyed by this means, who, seeing the reason of Othello dispossessed by a torrent of contending passions, seizes on the opportunity of pouring into his mind a suspicion, which at another time would have been denied admittance ; and so with no other preparation for the rising storm, which he knew how to direct, he comes plump at once with

“O, beware my lord, of jealousy.”

This, I take it, is the most obvious explanation of the passage, and therefore decree in favor of Barry. Quin, in the words of Mr. Cibber : “is more than excellent in his endeavors to conceal from Iago the grief and anguish that his doubts of his wife gave him in the words : “ Not a jot, not a jot.” But he is far short of his rival, Barry, in the whole speech,

“This fellow's of exceeding honesty.”

The character of this speech is a mixture of deliberate reasoning and wild starts of rage. Quin considered it in this light only. Barry gives

it with fire to the one part and sedateness to the other ; his fury begins at :

“If I do prove her haggard,”

and subsides at

“Haply, for I am black :”

then a sudden reflection destroys his coolness, and the thoughts of her being gone, when his only relief was to loathe her, turns him into a fresh tempest of despair. Barry was fine in this scene. The rage that ensues upon the sight of Iago, who was the cause of Othello's affliction, is not to be much commended as executed by either Quin or Barry. Barry's action and attitude with the staggering backwards with Iago convey a strong idea of wrestling. Quin's method of collaring and quitting, and then collaring again, does not correspond with my conception of the whole speech, which has a connection from beginning to end. But, to give the mind an opportunity of cooling, by a walk across the stage, is an error on the part of Mr. Quin. I do not much admire the utterance of either Quin or Barry in this place ; the growl of Quin is as far from right as the vociferation of Barry. Quin lacks fury ; Barry a forcible energy.

Barry's behavior towards Desdemona in the two last acts, expressing tenderness, love, grief and pity, is more in accordance with the author's meaning, than the stern, brutal and unfeeling conduct of Quin.

I cannot agree with Barry's too frequent introduction of weeping, or shedding tears, in several passages of the play, but he has the pleas of youth and inexperience. I leave him to time for correction, but if, through vanity, he continue the fault, he must expect public admonition. With one hint more, I shall leave him, and that is with regard to his habit, when he expresses grief, of throwing his body out of the line, his head projected and his body drawn tottering after. I have seen an applauded player, puffed with the low ambition of being the distinguished performer, crack his lungs, split his own trembling pipe and our ears, in order to catch an ignorant *Bene* from the hard hands of the gallery. It is Macklin's peculiar excellence not to attempt the obtaining more consequence or a higher regard than the author has thought fit to allow him.

Heaven protect me from those bellowing blusterers. Go, ye Herods, and learn that sentiments and passions can have energy and force, without noise and vociferation. Reform, ye Ranters! or by Thalia, Clío, and all the Nine, whose inspirations you have villainously abused, I'll attack you in the face of the audience; and with the pipe of Gracchus, force you to moderation; ye Termagants!"

The critic of the above has drawn a just and strong picture of the manner in which Quin and Barry performed the character of Othello. While

we have not fully quoted all he said on the subject, yet we have extracted enough to quite satisfy us to an inference as to which of the two actors named is entitled the recognition of having been the best Othello, and here must decide in favor of Barry.

We will now discuss how Edmund Kean interpreted and performed the last three acts of Othello.

All the critics who saw Edmund Kean perform the character of Othello, have left the record that he was wonderful in some parts of the play. True, there is much in the character that suited the disposition and genius of this weird child of nature, the wizard of the drama, one whose early life partook of the characteristics of the sunburnt, swarth children of the fields and forests, and whose youth was made a wandering at the side of his heartless mother; acting the part of a sort of pack horse, bearing her pomatums, perfumes, and other commodities for sale. Hardships, cruel treatment, and starvation in his babyhood and childhood, had developed all his sensibilities, taught his mind and heart spontaneity of action, a nervous vitality that was like to sparkling electricity, which would send his blood bounding through his brain with the action and vividness of lightning. In the utterance of passion, his brain acted like magic upon his voice, which would produce startling effects. And, therefore, in all the

passages in Othello that required strong action he stood without a peer.

Doran, one of the finest historians of the stage, says that Kean's Othello "was full of attractiveness, despite of some exaggerations of acting." When told by Iago :

"Beware of jealousy,"

commanded the admiration of his audience.

In the tender scenes he had as much power over his "bad voice"—as his adversaries called it—as John Philip Kemble had over his asthmatic cough, and attuned it to the tenderness which he had to express.

In the passionate scenes, Kean was unsurpassable; and in the third act, none who remember him will be prepared to allow he ever had, or is ever likely to have, an equal."

John Philip Kemble said of Kean's Othello: "If the justness of its conception had been but equal to the brilliancy of execution, it would have been perfect."

It is evident that Doran had not seen Kean perform the part of Othello, and we hold that an actor's criticism of a brother actor should be accepted with careful consideration, or even caution. Artists differ so much in their methods and conceptions of characters, in accordance to their own sensibilities, that contemporary actors should seldom or never criticise each other. In

our remarks on the four Othellos, we prefer to take our standpoint by the side of the eye-witness, and, for that purpose, offer in substance the criticism of the professional critic. The *European Magazine*, one of the reliable journals of the days of Edmund Kean, in speaking of his performance of Othello, says: "Kean's *friends* tell us that his Othello is, without any exception, the highest effort of genius on the stage. This may be so, but if it were so, we would have less fault to find. This we will endeavor to show, by a very simple analysis of the play. Desdemona, young, beautiful, of high descent, gifted with all her sex's softness, rejects the proffered suits of contending nobles, and by an act of filial disobedience, gives her affections to a Blackamoor. Why? Because her heart confesses him to be in mind one of the most exalted of the human race. Proud of this inestimable treasure, the happy Othello's generous bosom is consequently the seat of unbounded love. This is the test we shall put to the acting of Mr. Kean. Shakespeare, with that exquisite skill by which he reduces apparent contrarieties to the strict rule of nature, opens a glorious field for his sooty hero to display the grandeur of his character. We mean his summons before the midnight Senate, immediately subsequent to his clandestine marriage. Such is the moment chosen by our immortal Bard to reconcile us to the gentle Desdemona's choice. But how

little does the un-turbaned Moor vantage by this prolific incident? Mr. Kean does not present himself with the nobility of an illustrious chieftain proud of his own unsullied honor and his brilliant fame; on the contrary, he bursts unceremoniously upon his "very noble and approved good masters"—turns his back upon the august assembly; and, instead of displaying a dignified conviction that the "round, unvarnished tale" of a soldier, rude in speech, will assert its own conscious rectitude, he folds his person in mystery, while his sullen brow turns with malignant passion. What a prelude to his address! Instead, again, of a magnanimous being, on whom the poet has lavished the utmost power of his art to show how nearly weakness and sublimity may be associated in the frail mechanism of mortality, we find, as it were, a created subject for the subtle Iago to act his villainies upon. Instead of a pure, unruffled stream, almost imperfectly swollen into an impetuous surge, terrifically majestic, Mr. Kean represents a boisterous torrent relentless in anticipated destruction. He does not brood over the conflicts of his soul with alternate pauses of agonizing calmness, dignity and passion; he does not feel that his nature shrinks from the *shadow* of suspicion; he grasps at the *reality*; he fondles it. In his paroxysms with Desdemona, he never betrays a sentiment of affection; he spurns her supplicating beauties with loathing; he will not permit us to lament a noble mind artfully wrought

into the extravagance of madness; his frailty is characteristic with his action, which is uniformly savage as his purposes are desperate. We sat immediately behind the orchestra, and regret to say that Mr. Kean's energies either do not accord with nature, or accord only with its most unamiable attributes. His mental sufferings are not visible in the suffocation of his throat, or the inward agitation of a lacerated bosom; they are wholly confined to the rolling of his imperative eyes, and the workings of his unwearied jaws; which latter have a perpetual masticating motion—a sort of *fee-fau-fum* about them, ready to prey upon a carcass, or to satiate in human blood. In short, he substitutes fierceness for pathos, and is a barbarian instead of a distracted lover. *Is this new reading?* Besides, Louis the Voluptuary could not feed on *toujours perdrix*; and when *variety* can be afforded to the public taste, legitimately, we cannot unravel why characters should be injudiciously and indiscriminately usurped. Again, Mr. Kean does not always “catch the manners living as they rise,” even in the splendor of his own element: for, if there be any moment throughout the play at which that gentleman could hope for unqualified success, it is that in which he *ought to dart* upon Iago, vociferating, “Villain, prove my wife a whore,” etc., because reason has entirely forsaken its empire, and the rage of the deluded Moor has attained a climax which would license him to *rush* on his fiend-tormentor like one

resolved to ravage and devour. But Mr. Kean chooses to aim at courting the graces at this most inauspicious event. He, very politely, throws himself into an attitude of fancied elegance, mechanically resting his hand upon Iago's shoulder. Now these observations, rough as they may appear, must be salutary, we offer the touch-stone to Mr. Kean's talents; not to divest him of genius, for that would be impossible, but to elicit the temperature of that genius.

Another critic of the day tells us that Kean's person is very small, considerably under the middle height; that his voice was sonorous but harsh, and not prepossessing. Yet with these disadvantages, he gave a high interest to his performance of Othello, and excited those emotions which we ever feel in the presence of genius, that is, the union of good powers with fine sensibility. It was this that gave fire to his eyes, energy to his tones, and such a variety to all his gestures, that we might almost say his body thought. We thought his third act was particularly fine. The tone of his voice and look of distress with which he delivered:

“Oh, now forever

Farewell, the tranquil mind! farewell, content!

Farewell, the plumed troop, and the big wars

That make ambition virtue, Oh, farewell!”

was admirable, as was, also,

“I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.”

Kean's figure is wanting in importance for a commanding character like the Moor's, and in some scenes we thought him tame and unimpressive." We gather from all we have read of Mr. Kean's performance of Othello, that it was a brilliant and startling performance, abounding in electrical flashes of passion, and voice-variations more marvelous as such, than true to nature, and to the requisites of the character he represented. Kemble's summing up, however, when he said of Kean's Othello: "If the justness of its conception had been but equal to the brilliancy of execution, it would have been perfect," covers the ground completely. We could add the opinions of other critics, but the sum and substance of their remarks are more of wild enthusiasm than sound judgment. The father of the writer was personally well acquainted with Edmund Kean, and often saw him perform the character of Othello, and said that Kean's third act of Othello was like a shower of meteors, dazzling and bewildering in startling effects. And then, in other parts of the play, dull to disagreeableness. We have sufficiently reviewed the manner in which Quin, Barry, and Kean performed Othello to show their best points in their characterization of the Moor.

Having already pictured Mr. Forrest in the first and second acts, we will now endeavor to describe how he performed the remaining three acts of the play. Of course, we will show more detail in our

remarks, for the reason that we saw him perform the character a dozen or more times, and are thereby better able to show a more highly finished picture of his rendition of the Moor, than we could of the actors we never saw.

Edwin Forrest formed, to a large extent, a school of acting of his own. It was a combination of the styles of John Philip Kemble and Edmund Kean. He took from the Kemble school the repose and grandeur of action, and from Kean the fire and electrical touches that made Kean so famous; but his pathos and tenderness and perfection of elocution were his own. The three combined made a school of acting so perfect in all its parts that perhaps it has never been equaled before or since. In personal appearance he was unlike either of the two actors named. Kemble was tall and stately, and slow in speech and movement of body. Kean was small in body and quick of speech and movement. Forrest was gladiatorial, grand in movement, and with a voice of wonderful quality and so highly cultured, that he could express any quality of sound necessary to illustrate all the passions from tenderness to rage, or fully to satisfy every demand that the traits of Othello might require. With all these requisites, the character of Othello seems almost to have been written with special regard to him. The character amalgamated with his own nature as readily as oil is seized by fire.

Besides, his domestic troubles had a tendency to make him feel deeply those pangs that wrung the heart, and destroyed the reason of the Moor. We had seen him perform the character of Othello several times, long before his domestic troubles, and saw him enact the part a dozen times or more after his divorce, when filling his memorable engagement of sixty-four nights in the character at the Broadway Theatre. His every look, motion and every tone of his voice were inspirations drawn from his own nature, and as perfectly fitted to the words of the author as atmosphere fits its space. This was so evident that the whole audience immediately felt those parts of the text that had even a remote allusion to the circumstances of his own domestic troubles. He seemed to feel that there were many features in the character of Othello that alluded to the story of his own life, and he wore this aspect throughout the play, and his audience took up the points and sympathetically applauded him.

Forrest's entrance in the third act, coming down the stage—through the centre arch-way of the scene, apparently reading a letter, and with Iago at his left centre, who observes Desdemona and Cassio at right hand first entrance, was impressive, and showed excellent stage business for the commencement of the third act.

At Iago's words :

“Ha! I like not that.”

Forrest was still reading the letter, when he said :

“ What dost thou say ? ”

And while he did not purposely see Desdemona, Cassio and Emilia, still he seemed to know that they were there, and to his remark :

“ Was not that Cassio parted from my wife ? ”

Iago strongly interrogated.

*“ Cassio, my lord ? No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty like,
Seeing your coming.”*

For an instant Forrest looked at Iago as if much impressed by his emphasis on the last part of the sentence ; then Forrest’s mind from this moment was particularly drawn to all that Iago said about Cassio. Iago’s emphasis on the above speech was the opening wedge that let into Othello’s brain the name and the person of Cassio in association with his wife.

Immediately on this Desdemona’s beseeching Othello to reinstate Cassio, calls his attention still more strongly to the words uttered by Iago with so much inference, and when Forrest, while holding her hand, said :

“ Went he not hence now ? ”

It was pointedly expressed as if searching for something hidden, and she continued :

“ That he hath left part of his grief with me ;
I suffer with him. Good love, call him back.”

Forrest acted as if he was somewhat displeased. While this was no positive evidence that the Moor was already jealous, still it showed that Othello's mind was disturbed, and that further hints, light as air, would fan the spark into flame. Iago, an apt student of human nature, saw this, and at once began his hellish work of leading the Moor into the wildest suppositions. Desdemona still importuning Othello to give Cassio back his place, Forrest grew restless, and in haste said, as if wishing to get rid of the subject :

“ Pr’ythee, no more ; let him come when he will ;
I will deny thee nothing.”

All other actors, the writer has seen perform the part, spoke these lines in the tones of affection.

Desdemona's next speech shows that she was not pleased or satisfied with Othello's answer, whereupon Othello requests her to leave him that he might get rid of her further importunity. During this scene between Desdemona and Othello, Iago stood watching them, and when Desdemona leaves, he begins his work again, by a sort of inferential interrogation, asking him :

“ Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love ? ”

Forrest was very much impressed with these questions, as if he thought them too familiar, and,

with deep thoughtfulness and emphasis, inquired :

“ Why dost thou ask ? ”

Iago :

“ But for a satisfaction of my thought ;
No further harm.”

This indifferent remark of Iago still led Othello to further inquire :

“ *Why of thy thought ?* ”

Here Forrest, looking Iago directly in the eyes, and with intense inquiry, caused Iago to say, as if surprised :

“ I did not think he had been acquainted with her.”

Then Forrest's

“ O, yes ; and went between us very oft.”

was said with a careless, falling inflection, as if about to drop the subject, but Iago's quick response with marked surprise and prolonged sound on the word of

“ Indeed ? ”

caused Forrest to suddenly turn and exclaim :

“ Indeed ! ay, indeed :—Discern'st thou aught in that ?
Is he not honest ? ”

Iago—“ Honest, my lord ? ”

Othello—“ Ay, honest ? ”

Forrest here made it evident that he associated Cassio with his wife ; he thought perhaps of

Cassio's person, his color, and his own swarth color, as further on in the scene he alludes to this fact in the following words:

“Haply, for I am black ;
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have;”

From the words “Ay, honest,” it is evident in the text, Othello was aroused to jealousy, and so Forrest conceived and acted to the end of the play.

The next speech that follows shows the Moor's intensity of suspicion.

“By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some *monster in his thought*
Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something.
I heard thee say but now,—thou lik'dst not that,
When Cassio left my wife ; what didst not like ?
And when I told thee—he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing thou cry'dst,
“Indeed ?”

*As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit : If thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.”*

Iago still works upon him until Othello exclaims :

“By heaven, I'll know thy thought.”

To which Iago replies :

“You cannot, if my heart were in your hand ;
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.”

Then the exclamation of

“Ha !”

as Forrest gave it, expressed vexation at Iago because he would not become explicit, and satisfy his suspicions. Then Iago adroitly turns the exclamation of "Ha!" to still further account by telling Othello:

"Beware of jealousy."

This proves that Othello gave sufficient evidence in action that he was jealous, and that it commenced at the word "Indeed," and that Forrest's exclamation of "Ha!" was correct, and in accordance with the idea of the author.

Many of the long speeches in the third act gave Forrest ample scope for exquisite elocution, as well as the opportunity to employ his wonderful vigor of action. His pathos was soul-rending; it fell upon his hearers like the moans of a distressed and lamenting spirit that had lost all that the human heart and soul had held dear, and was hopelessly ruined.

The speech:

"I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known."

was in every sense rendered in a style far superior to that of Kean. Kean read it rather in the spirit of vexation, while Forrest intoned it with a fine quality of tearful voice, regret and sorrow. So pronounced was this effect that you could almost see the shattered ruins of his hopes.

That speech, wonderful in human intensity and rhetorical beauties containing the words :

“O, now, forever,
Farewell the tranquil mind!”

was uttered by Mr. Forrest with the expression of a broken heart. His voice had a tremulous minor-key of the flute, that tuned the hearts of his hearers to a sad condition, as if his grief were a part of their own. After this followed one of those demonstrations of passion, for which Kean and Forrest were both so justly celebrated, in quality of voice and utterance of words.

The transition from Forrest's round, sweet, mellow notes of pathos to the crackling thunder-like peal, when he seized Iago by the throat, was wonderful in the extreme in the following :

“If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more.”

and so on to the end of the speech. It amazed his audience. It was at the end of this speech that Kean rushed for the sofa that stood on the stage at right hand second entrance, and thereon threw himself to recover from his absolute exhaustion before he could go on with his next speech ; during which interval thunders of applause and waving of hats and handkerchiefs would continue till the great little actor would begin his next sentence.

Forrest changed the action, and rushed for the profiled column of the wing right second entrance, and rested there while the audience gave him a like ovation of applause.

Forrest was equal to Kean in all his passionate scenes. When young he had caught the quality of Kean's fire and rapidity of speech, but Forrest's pathos was more touching, and seemed to come more from the actor's heart than any trick in elocution; it was real.

In the fifth act Kean did not subside in his passion of jealousy. He did not give the text with that reasoning quality, a sort of half relenting on the part of the Moor, as if looking for an excuse to murder her whose love had grasped every function of his body and reaching into his heart and soul. Kean continued, in spite of the text, to act like a prowling wolf, thirsting for blood to assuage his grievances that were eating out his vitals.

Forrest's tempest of passion had quieted down, and he looked upon the ruins of all his life hopes, as the mariner looks upon the stranded wreck, hopeless, but still prepared to meet his fate. Convinced of his wife's guilt, he deliberately considered that the "be all and end all" was to be expiated by her death. In the scene where he demanded the handkerchief, he did not rant as most all other actors do, but rather demanded it as an explanation of her innocence with Cassio.

The agonizing speech that followed Desdemona's exit in Scene II, Act IV, beginning with :

“ Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction ; had he rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head :
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips ;”

was so expressed as to elicit the pity of the whole house.

“ But, alas ! to make me
A fixed figure, for the time of scorn
To point his slow and unmoving finger at.—
O ! O !”

Here the expression of disgust on Forrest's face was powerfully depicted.

Forrest did not in any part of his conversation with Desdemona treat her as if he was an Italian bandit, or a low butcher. He showed the Moor in a refined light, as a man fit to be respected by all with whom he came in contact, and all the harsher speeches with her were tempered with a subdued emphasis, as it should be in the presence of a lady. We have had one actor in this country that the press prated about being a great Othello, and who had the audacity in the presence of a refined audience to slap Desdemona in the face with a letter he held in his hand—take Iago by the throat, throw him upon the stage, and place his foot upon his neck. This was an Italian conception of Othello.

Forrest opened the fifth act of Othello with a

death-like solemnity. The chamber scene was simple in character; beneath an arch in the back centre of the stage was the high-post bedstead, with pure white curtains hanging close together, while through a large window on the left of the stage, the moonlight dropped its cold silver rays across its folds. On the right second entrance was a draped table, with a single candle burning. Othello was discovered sitting at the table musing. The deep, subdued tones of his voice were like the muffled bass notes of a cathedral organ. His position was meditative, looking up. There was inspiration in the pose, and while it was grand, it was simple.

The utterance of the words:

“It is the cause, it is cause, my soul,—
Let me not name it to you, ye chaste stars!—
It is the cause.—”

Here he rose from his chair, walked over to the bed of Desdemona, and pulling aside the one-half of the curtain, the moonlight fell upon her sweet face, beautiful in slumber. He for one moment looked at her, walked back to the table, and after another pause he thoughtfully said:

“Yet I will not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.”

And then with a long deep sigh he uttered the words:

“Yet she must die.”

Another pause, as if he felt a dread of the murder on his own account, and then sought an excuse in the thought :

—“else she'll betray more men.”

At this point he dropped himself into the chair and, in a condition of despair, as he raised his head, his eyes happened to fall upon the flaming candle, and, in a moment, he rose, took the candle as if to puff it out, and do the murder by the moonlight, and after the words :

“Put out the light, and then”—

came a metaphorical reasoning on

“Put out the light?”

with an interrogation and not an exclamation-note as it is always printed, and then he continued in a deep, sad voice :

“If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me :—but once put out thine,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature.”

Looking at Desdemona,

“I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume.”

He then placed the candle upon the table, and slowly walked to the bed, and with a sad voice he uttered :

“When I have plucked the rose
I cannot give it vital growth again ;
It needs must wither :—I'll smell it on the bush.”

Kissing her, and in ecstasy he spoke the words :

“O, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword!”

The residue of the speech was uttered in the intense quality of pathetic regret. If ever elocution reached perfection, it was in Forrest's utterance of this speech. If a speech has ever been duly considered, and artistically expressed in movement, pauses, inflection, and stage business, all these were accomplished by Forrest in this instance.

In the colloquial questions that followed between Desdemona and Othello, previous to his smothering her, he showed no harshness, but acted more in the spirit of pity, and seemed to feel that there was no more alternative in her case than in that of Brutus when he sentenced his own son Titus to death. At the words spoken by Desdemona :

“Alas! he is betrayed, and I undone.”

Forrest enclosed himself behind the curtains by pulling them together, and the struggle between him and Desdemona was not seen by the audience. It was almost noiseless; you faintly heard the words of Desdemona as if smothering beneath the pillow when she said :

“But while I say one prayer.”

and Othello's words :

“It is too late.”

had an awful significance. Then for a moment or two there was a dead silence, until Emilia knocked at the door twice, and when she called:

“My lord, my lord! what ho! my lord! my lord!”

Forrest suddenly pulled the curtains apart, and partly looked out toward the door where Emilia was knocking, and with an expression of horror and fear, said:

“What noise is this?”

and looking at Desdemona once more, he drew his dagger, closed the curtains, and finished the murder, with the supposition that he stabbed her to the heart, a slight groan from Desdemona giving the final token of her death. Forrest showed great wisdom in the management of this scene, and while the audience felt the horror of the situation, still there was a sense of refinement in the act that accorded with the text and with the nature of Othello. We have seen other actors enact this scene and make it in every sense revolting.

Kean and Barry acted this scene with less propriety. They smothered her with the pillow in sight of the audience, and finished her death by *slowly* pressing the dagger into her heart. Forrest, in all the passionate parts of Othello “in the very torrent, tempest (as I may say) whirlwind of his passion, had a temperance that gave it a smoothness,” and did not offend the

soul "like some robustious, periwig-pated fellow who tears a passion to tatters, to very rags, and splits the ears."

When Iago is brought in, Forrest did not look like some maddened devil ready to rush at Iago and hew him in pieces, but stood amazed when he said :

" Are there no stones in heaven,
But what serve for the thunder ?"

His next speech :

" I look down towards his feet ;—but that's a fable ;
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee ! "

and then with one plunge of his sword, he wounds Iago. This action was done more in the spirit of reaction than in passion, and his last speech of all :

"Soft you : a word or two, before you go."

expressed an exhausted condition, hopeless, and heart-broken :

" And smote him—thus."

He stabbed himself with a Venetian dagger ; staggered to the bed ; fell upon one knee, and kissed Desdemona, as he said :

" I kissed thee ere I killed thee :—No way but this,
Killing myself to die upon a kiss."

and fell relaxed upon the stage.

For close study, Forrest seemed to be more perfect in the fifth act than any other act in the

play. All the emotions which he presented were not of the traditional emotions of the actor; they were the emotions of the heart and soul, and beautifully draped by the assistance of his art; they were beyond his control. The expressions of his face, voice and gestures were all truths that demonstrated that he had passed through the furnace of domestic affliction, which had moulded him to the very form and temper of the Moor.

As an honest critic who has seen all of the best actors in the last fifty years, I do not hesitate to say that, from all I have read and seen, so far, Shakespeare's greatest Othello was embodied by the genius of this American actor, and that Forrest's performance of Othello was as distinctive a work of his own art, as Betterton's Hamlet, Barton Booth's Cato or Garrick's Richard III.

Mr. Forrest gave up playing the part of Othello several years before his death. The fact of his ill health, sciatica, which had troubled him for many years, prevented him from exerting great physical action, especially his walk in such characters as Othello, Damon and Coriolanus.

In the last two or three years of his stage life he principally performed Lear and Richelieu, and these two characters, perhaps with Othello, became his masterpieces.

There is no doubt that the great Edmund Kean was Forrest's first inspiration to the character of Othello. Forrest when quite a young man

performed the part of Iago to Kean's Othello at Albany, New York. Forrest told the writer that he never could forget with what fear and trembling he attended his first rehearsal with Kean, and yet how kindly he conducted him along in the business of Iago, young Forrest, in the third act, becoming inspired by some of Kean's utterances, discarded custom, and assuming a new position by leaning upon Kean's shoulder and said:

“I speak not yet of proof.

Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
Wear your eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure:”

This bit of business was so new to Kean and the utterance of the words so peculiar in inflection and emphasis, that the great Kean turned to the young American actor, and said: “That is good; do so to-night; you will make an actor.”

Shortly after the time of this anecdote, Kean left Albany, and was received in Philadelphia at a grand dinner. On this occasion Kean was called on for a speech, and there he introduced the name of young Forrest with whom he had just acted in Albany, and predicted that he was the coming genius of the American stage. Kean's words were prophetic.

FORREST AND GARRICK.

CONSIDERED IN THE CHARACTER OF KING LEAR,

SHAKESPEARE'S tragedy of King Lear is such a dramatic creation that, after a studied reading, the mind is apt to wonder at the genius of the man that could comprehend, feel and express human nature so fully and perfectly. We not only allude to the chief character of Lear, but to the whole group of characters that make up the dramatic personæ. Previous to Shakespeare's handling the subject of Lear, there had been written several stories and poems concerning the old King and his three daughters, and one anonymous play, entitled "The True Chronicle Hystorie of Lear, King of England, and His Three Daughters."

It is said by Charles Knight—one of Shakespeare's best commentators—"that the diction and the construction of this anonymous play was in every respect worthless." Yet, from these frivolous suggestions, Shakespeare has constructed a five-act tragedy that has not been equaled by any

work of the ancient or the modern poets. It stands as distinctively alone as a human dramatic creation, as do the pyramids of Egypt for mechanical construction. The plot of the play has none of those grand incentives that belong to the heroic, like Brutus or Coriolanus. Lear is an old king, past his four score years, full of all the components that make a complete human nature, with none of the passions left out, fond, choleric, quick, passionate, yet just, and with an ardor of parental love for his three daughters that seems to transcend all other emotions. Of these three daughters, he loves his youngest, Cordelia, the best, yet, for the reason that she would not fallaciously express the extent of her love for her father; he deprives her of her rightful portion of his royal estates. The two sisters, however, Goneril and Regan, treat the old King unkindly. They deprive him of his followers, cause him to be houseless, to be exposed to the storm, and by their ingratitude, drive him to a condition of frenzy. Upon these facts, domestic and simple in character, rests all that constitute the emotions, and direct the acting in the character of Lear.

We know of no other play of Shakespeare's that possesses less plot connected with the leading character, and no play wherein the author has given a larger display of truly, natural characteristics and natural diction. Lear has but one string upon the harp of human passions put out of tone,

and makes all the discord of his being, and that is the treble note of parental affection; upon which the human heart expresses the most intense passions—passions that can stretch the string to snapping. This offered the bard the great opportunity of giving to the world a tragedy based upon the highest moral character.

The contrast of the extreme old age in Lear and the tender youthfulness of Cordelia, truthful and gentle in every trait of womanhood, gave breadth for light and shadow in the expressions of the human sensibilities, not to be excelled by the skill of dramatic construction. The ideas, words and sentences that flow from the lips of Lear, Cordelia and Kent are so natural, and spring from such natural causes that to read them only, personifies them in form, movement and looks. In these three dramatic creations, the bard drew comparatively nothing from the laws of rhetoric to adorn the diction, but presented nature simple and ungarnished.

Cordelia is the perfect embodiment of truthfulness. Her every principle of truth springs from an inborn condition that she could not change, any more than she could change the color of her eyes. Her love for her father was of a saintly nature, and is intensely expressed in the following words:

“Oh, Regan! Goneril! inhuman sisters!
 Had he not been your father, these white hairs
 Had challenged sure, some pity. Was this a face

To be exposed against the warring winds?
 My enemy's dog, though he had bit me, should
 Have stood that night against my fire."

Again :

"Oh, my dear father: Restoration, hang
 Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
 Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
 Have in thy rev'rence made. He wakes."

What sentiment was ever nobler and more penitent than is uttered in the words of Lear to Cordelia :

Cor.—"Oh, my dear, dear father!" (Kisses him.)

Lear—"Be your tears wet? Yes, faith, pray do not weep."

"I know I have given thee cause, and am so humbled

With crosses since, that I could ask
 Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
 That thou couldst grant it;
 If thou hast poison for me, I will drink it,
 Bless thee, and die."

Cor.—"Oh, pity, sir, this bleeding heart, and cease
 This killing language."

This is the perfect ideal of human nature expressed through language.

All the characters in this play are wonderfully expressed in this naturalness of language. The words fall from their lips as the dew falls from the leaves. One would think that Shakespeare saw

through all the emotions of the human heart, and all conceptions of the mind with as much certainty as the photographer sees the forms placed in front of his lens.

We can understand how Shakespeare could comprehend and express all the conditions of human nature, which he had met with every day during his own time of life, but to express the conditions of thought that belong to extreme old age, and so exactly portray them is one of the rare marvels of authorship.

One of the most wonderful traits of Shakespeare's genius, was his wonderful ability of taking poorly-told fictions and creating from them the most highly-wrought plays. Four of his finest productions sprang from scanty outlines, viz. : Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, and King Lear.

His delicate susceptibility, like the spark that expands the prairie fire, could boundlessly spread and range to the boundaries of all human emotions. Pope says, that "to form a judgment of Shakespeare's works we are not to apply the rules of Aristotle, which would be like trying a man by the laws of one country who lived under those of another. No, heaven-born genius acts from something superior to rules, and antecedent to rules, and has a right of appeal to nature herself." Shakespeare has no compeer or parallel. His larger and more penetrating intellectual eyes saw far beyond what any of the ancients discerned in

the classics of dramatic construction. The dramatists of old talked to the gods; Shakespeare, to the human soul. He teaches us to aspire to our best—the possible; not to something we cannot reach, in the impossible.

His lessons are to human flesh and blood, and not to stone Jupiters and Hebes. The lesson Shakespeare's *King Lear* teaches, is one that reaches into every family that has a child.

Under the electric light of his own perfect humanity he points out the deformities that sometimes exist in his fellow beings. He always takes the extremes to illustrate the lessons he gives. In the instance of *Lear*, he takes the gentler sex, from whom we have the least right to expect harshness to the parent, and makes them responsible for driving the father to despair and unreason through their unfilial ingratitude. Next, to make the lesson still more impressive, he places the old King beneath the flashes of lightning, the bursting of thunder-peals and the pelting rain. To heighten the situation, excite our pity, and make the lesson more imperishable, he associates the old King with "Mad Tom" who, in his squalid dress of rags and straw-waist-belt, lends the stormy night a weird effect equal to the witch scene in *Macbeth*.

Shakespeare's imagination seemed to have covered every known human characteristic, and then wafted away into a world of his own, from which he drew

forth and embodied in written thought, the beautiful, the ugly and the classic in every conceivable form.

The representation of Lear has been attempted by a less number of actors than any of his other leading characters. There can be named three actors only, that made reputations by the part: Garrick, Kean, and Forrest. Garrick was the first great Lear. In his performance of the character, he startled the English people, and attracted audiences of the highest intellectuality. His performance of the old King was a revelation. No other actor, before his day, had started the tears of sympathy and pity for the broken-hearted old King. It is more than likely that it was Garrick's greatest piece of acting. It is certain that he was found less fault with in this character by his captious critics. One of them, however, with a larger insight into the character of Lear, and with much more honesty of purpose than the others, remarks:

“So far as Mr. Garrick's figure is concerned, I fear that frail nature has been a little unkind, but, as the advantage of a fine figure is merely an accident, the want of it should never draw an imputation, so long as there is no offenses in the proportions of the body, and, though his want of stature may lessen the dignity of some characters, yet it is proper enough for others; nay, this defect adds to Mr. Garrick's merits, for by his

great acting he conquers a defect and a prejudice. The face is more essentially concerned in acting than any other part of the body. It may not be amiss to state how the features of our little hero are formed. His lively and piercing eyes are particularly happy in the expression of sudden joy, or quick rage, but they do not express the passions of love, grief, or horror, with sufficient force. As the face is the index of the mind, the voice is the interpreter, which with Mr. Garrick is various, articulate and humorous, but not lasting, which, to the mortification of his hearers, it generally (in the jockey's phrase), rides resting, and stops before half the course is run."

"Let us now take a view of him in acting, and see if he is artful in concealing his natural blemishes, and for this purpose, we will consider him in the character of Lear. We rather chose this character, as it is considered his best, and where he is most right, we have the fewer faults to find. The portrait that Shakespeare has given us of Lear is that of a good-hearted man, easily provoked, impatient and hasty in resolution. The poet himself, who seldom fails to direct the actor, has thought an apology necessary, at the opening of the play, for what might seem immoral in the conduct of his hero by ascribing it to his nature, "'Tis said I am choleric;" and then, as an evidence of his innate goodness, at the end of the play, causes him to say:

“Ungrateful as they were,
 Though the wrongs they have heaped on me are numberless,
 I feel a pang of nature for them yet.”

This is a sketch of Lear's moral character, and the point should not escape the notice of the actor. But I am sorry to say that Mr. Garrick is neglectful of these two attributes in Lear's nature. In the curse, at the end of the first act, the passage should be rendered with rage, quick and rapid as a whirlwind—a perfect frenzy. There should be no premeditation, no solemnity. Lear's character conspires to render such behaviors absurd; nor can I pardon Mr. Garrick's shedding tears at the end of the speech, while the whole passage is a climax of rage—his strange mixture of anger and unmanly sniveling of grief is unnatural, and lowers the character of the King to the imitation of a vexed girl. We would advise Mr. Garrick to get his artist friend to draw the enraged monarch in this passage, and see if he will make use of a handkerchief in the King's hand. It is a trick on the part of the actor, alike ill-judged as well as the applause of his audience.”

“The transition from one passion to another by sudden contrast may please the groundlings, but it must grieve the judicious. I have been the longer on this particular point, for the reason that Mr. Garrick traps the unwary by the same bait in his “unreal mockery” in Macbeth, and two

memorable speeches in the first scene of *Charmot*. I hope he will hereafter never let these faults rise in judgment against him. We all now know how the shilling came under the candlestick. The trick is discovered.

The next scene in which I think that Mr. Garrick is wrong, is in the second act, where the poor old King is exposed to the fury of the storm; and that no circumstance of horror might be omitted, the poet has surrounded him with darkness, and, to increase our pity, Shakespeare has artfully contrived to heighten the situation by throwing Lear into madness. Let us look at Garrick's deportment in this scene. As madness may be defined as right reasoning on wrong principles, yet there must always be a consistency in the words and actions of a madman, we find that lunatics engage their thoughts on the subject that first disturbed their imaginations, and therefore why should Mr. Garrick engage his mind by sitting on the stage and picking and playing with straws. His daughters' ingratitude was the cause of his immediate distress, and, as his mind lingers over his situation, the thought of his royalty comes to him, and his mind becomes engaged with royal prerogative.

—“ I pardon that man's life.
 You cannot kill me for coining. I am
 The King himself ;
 Ay, every inch a King ! ”

and, therefore, grandeur of action should express these words, and not the pulling of rags and straws, and sitting down cheek-by-jowl with Edgar. This might be a proper representation of a mad tailor, but by no means can it relate to the idea of King Lear.

Nor should he be less earnest in all his stratagems, the "shoeing of a troop of horses with felt," should be delivered with rapture, as if he had hit upon a masterly expedient, and not expressed as if emanating from an idiot.

As they are the principal faults in Mr. Garrick's acting of the part of Lear, we will now point out those beauties that serve to make him popular with the public. His acting in the first act, with the exception of the curse scene, is masterly. The choleric man with Kent, and the discovery of his daughters' ingratitude, and, indeed, where quick rage is expected, he does the poet great justice. His manner, too, of expressing the feebleness and age of the old King throughout the play is well sustained, and, though in his mad scenes he is faulty, yet in other parts of the play his judgment and execution demand the highest applause. There is a mixture of distraction with joy, that he expresses as

"Was it not pleasant to see a thousand,
With red-hot spits come hissing in among them."

This I have never seen equaled, nor can he be excelled where the tortures of Lear's mind

and the fatigues of his body throw him into a swoon; Garrick's approach and execution of this is inimitable; such a death-like paleness, and inactivity of his limbs can only be described by Shakespeare's own words:

“He is, indeed, death's counterfeit.”

Nor can we forget the manner he recovers from his madness and recollects Cordelia; the passions of joy, tenderness and grief and shame are blended together in such a masterly manner, that the imitation of his facial expressions would do honor to the pencils of a Rubens or an Angelo.”

“I could mention other beauties and other faults but, I shall be silent, and for once pleased with Tate's alterations of Shakespeare, because it has prevented my commentary on Mr. Garrick's manner of dying, about which I know I should have some disputes, in making these remarks, I shall esteem myself happy if my hints can improve the general taste of the public, or convey the least instruction to a very great—I wish I could add, a perfect actor.”

This is an honest criticism of Garrick's Lear; no one can deny that his Lear was a great performance with the exception that he too frequently introduced the trick of crying which took from the dignity of the character, and was not in accordance with the sense of the author.

Barry, also, performed the part of Lear in opposition to Garrick, and Mr. Besenger, one of the literary men of the day, wrote the following lines on the comparative effect of the performance of King Lear by Garrick and by Barry :

“ The town has found out two different ways
 To praise the different Lears ;
 To Barry it gives loud huzzas,
 To Garrick, only tears.”

A similar contest was carried on between Garrick and Barry in the character of Romeo, of which, with all their respective excellence, the town grew tired, and it occasioned the following epigram, which appeared in one of the newspapers, and was extensively copied :

“ Well ! what to-night ? Says angry Ned,
 As up from bed he rouses,
 Romeo again !—and shakes his head,
 Ah ! plague on both your houses !”

Garrick himself became tired of the contest as the audiences began to fall off, and wrote the two following epigrams :

“ So revers'd are the notions of Capulet's daughters,
 One loves a whole length, and the other three-quarters.”

“ Fair Juliet, at one house, exclaims with a sigh,
 No Romeo is clever that's not six foot high ;
 Less ambitiously t'other does Romeo adore,
 Though in size he scarce reaches to five feet and four.”

The Juliets were, Mrs. Cibber to Garrick, and Miss Nossiter to Barry.

Mr. Hazlitt, in one of his outbursts of criticism on Kean, published in the *London Magazine*, said: "This excellent actor, who flung himself completely into the character of Othello, fails to grasp and comprehend the character of Lear. We had thought that Mr. Kean would take possession of this time-worn and venerable figure, that has outlasted a thousand storms, and, like the gods of old, when their oracles were about to speak, shake it with inspiration—that he would set up a living copy of it on the stage. But he failed, either from insurmountable difficulties, or from his own sense of the magnitude of the undertaking. In his conception of the character, he was too violent at first, and too tame afterward. He sunk from unmixed rage to mere dotage. He made the well-known curse a piece of downright rant. He tore it to tatters, and made it from beginning to end, an explosion of ungovernable physical rage, without solemnity or elevation."

If Kean made it "an ungovernable rage," he made it right; it was the nature of Lear to do so, and we are inclined to think that, if Kean did any part of Lear in accordance with the spirit of the author, it was those parts expressing rage. It was this wonderful power that made him great in Othello, and other characters, but Mr. Hazlitt soon becomes lost in the mazes of his own criticism, and says, "Kean was very great in the second act," where Lear seems absolutely stunned

by the ingratitude of his children, and cries out in his bewildered manner :

“I will do such things—
What they are, I know not:—but they shall be
The terrors of the earth.”

The critics then spoke in very high terms of Kean's Lear, yet we are forced to conclude thus, as he did not perform the part as frequently as many of his other great characters ; he was, in reality, not King Lear.

FORREST AS LEAR.

Kent—"I grieve to see him
With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd
As render majesty beneath itself."

Gloster—"Alas! 'tis the infirmity of his age,
Yet has his temper ever been unfix'd,
Choleric, and sudden."

Such is the character of Lear, as told in Shakespeare's own words, at the beginning of the play, and in accordance with Shakespeare's directions, Forrest performed the character.

Forrest, in his first scene, as he was seated upon the throne, was the picture of majesty, crowned with years. His interview with his daughters was stately, as became a king. He gave great importance to the speech, beginning with: "Give me the map," and became more impressive and solemn, when he addressed his daughters:

"Which of you loves us most that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first."

and after he had listened to Goneril and Regan, he stepped quietly down from the throne, and,



By Gabriel Harrison.

FORREST AS KING LEAR,

"Ay, every inch a King!"

standing in the centre of the stage, he looked at Cordelia with intense inquiry, and seemed delighted, as he said to her :

“ Cordelia, speak :
 What canst thou say to win a richer third,
 Than what thy sisters gained ? ”

and, when she replied :

“ Nothing, my lord.”

it appeared like a thunder clap to his senses ; he turned upon her in overwhelming astonishment, and interrogated :

“ Nothing can come from nothing ; speak again.”

From this moment Forrest's mind was awakened to the wrathful condition of the King's temper, and reached a wrathful climax at the words :

“ Peace, Kent !
 “ Come not between a dragon and his rage ! ”

The touch of pathos which he put in the words :

“ I loved her most, and in her tender trust
 Designed to have bestow'd mine age at ease.”

reached a fullness of parental love equal to his harsher nature. The whole of this scene was expressed with great anger, but with a dignity that bespoke his royal birth. His scene with Oswald, his contempt for the knave, and the expression of amazement at Goneril's licentious insolence were flashes of vivid acting, never to be forgotten.

His delivery of the curse was perfect. He did not extend it beyond the author's meaning. It was free from all the rant with which actors generally vulgarize it. At the beginning, when he threw away his hat and staff, and fell upon his knees, there appeared to be some method about his delivery, as if the brain was striving to invent thoughts that could express his spleen, but, as he went on, his thoughts flowed faster until his mind became an uncontrollable temper of words that thrilled and horrified his audience, and, at the words :

“ How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child;”

the actor appeared absolutely exhausted, and was kept from falling to the stage by the assistance of Kent and the physician.

When we take the nature of the curse into consideration, we are apt to wonder how a father could launch such thoughts upon his child, no matter how bad she might have been, unless his whole mind was so completely wrecked through his four scores of years, that it tottered on the brink of insanity. But Shakespeare's genius did not always stop at realities; it swept on into the boundless ideal, and, through his inventive genius, he made a universe of his own, over which he presides sole monarch.

But, in the second act, Lear begins to be a

severer trial for the performer, as the deep impression of Shakespeare's genius stamps itself upon the mind and heart. What rank the actor should hold who is able to play Lear well throughout, is of no easy decision; he must have many qualities that seem contradictory; at one time the haughty and impatient King, the harsh and yet doting father, the scornful, and humble exile, and the frenzied; a compound of them all; full of high-blooded pride, and fatherly sorrow, and human anguish, and regal resentment, and thus burdened with the miseries of the insulted parent, and a ruined man, he goes through the whole history of a broken heart. He is stretched upon the rack, till he has felt the pangs of its last fracture, and then loses all feeling more. His passion has nothing of solitary excitement or single suffering. His daughters' ingratitude is deepened by his own rash generosity, by his sense of shame, and by the torturing privations of his nature; and he is lashed into frenzy at once by the united fury of the internal and the external storm.

What rank this play should take among the tragedies of its great author, is still more difficult of decision. The marvelous mind that summoned this whole powerful array of visions, has clothed them with a portion of his own splendor. They all bear the lineaments of their superior origin. They all speak with "most miraculous organ;" and we should conclude that Shakespeare's Lear

is the most allied to humanity and the most touching of all his creations. Richard has a wild devotedness to evil, and a restless desire to consummate crime; Macbeth struggled against the temptations of beings that rule the elements, and, when he at last stands on the edge of the gulf, growing more magnificently portentous even from his thicker envelopment in "that dunnest smoke of hell," is almost removed from the common sympathies of this world. Hamlet, a prevaricator until he falls into the trap of death, without a tear or a sigh for his loss; while Lear is but a man undone. His majesty gives him no elevation above the humbler feelings; his chief sufferings are of the wounded heart, and the subversion of his reason is the work of the same arrow that might strike into a peasant's brain. But his royalty is not useless in the great author's hands. It throws an intenser light on his agonies, like the flash in the midnight of the storm. The height from which he falls, makes the concussion but the more complete, and leaves his mind mutilated beyond all chance of vigor to come.

Forrest's conception of this momentous character was satisfactory in all of these respects. He did not perform the part of Lear, although Lear was four score and upwards, as a decrepit old man with bended form and broken voice. He made Lear's body harmonize with his mind, which in thought and intellect was vigorous; not one feeble thought escapes Lear's lips. There is a

force and power in his diction that demonstrates a strong condition of the body. Nature is never out of harmony with itself—weak body, weak voice and weak expressions in thought, and, if Lear was frenzied in his old age, it came from an over vigorous brain that bounded the blood through his heart and body as does the maddening of intoxicating spirituous liquors. Garrick made Lear feeble in bodily action, made him a sick man; abnormal in condition, speaking thoughts so strong that they were a contradiction to his bodily weakness; and, by a whimpering manner and broken tones of voice, he too often lessened the dignity of the character and intention and powers of the poet's thoughts.

Lear specially says :

“O let not woman's water drops
 Stain my man's cheek ! * * *
 No, I'll not weep,
 I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
 Or ere I'll weep.”

Forrest showed no physical failure until his scene in the last act with Cordelia, when he declared that the battery of life with its forces was exhausted, and the elements no longer existed to create reaction. It was a hopeless relaxation, as when the snow is dissolved by the heat of the sun, and melts away. This contrast to his vigor in the earlier scenes, told that the storm of life

had crushed him, and that the worn fibres which held the body to the soul would melt away without a struggle; and so he died.

Forrest's sentiment of perplexity in Scene IV, Act II, on the discovery of Kent, placed in the stocks, was admirably expressed, and when Goneril and Regan refused the old King entertainment for the night, and proposed to cut short the number of his followers, he appeared as if stunned, as if some nerve-centre had been shifted from its place, and he was endeavoring to realize the situation. At this moment he stood at right centre of the stage, looking heavenward, and said :

“Hold now, my temper, stand this bolt unmoved,
And I am thunder-proof.”

So intensely was this uttered and with such a peculiar quality of voice, that it sounded as if it came from the brain, and not from the vocal organs. Motionless he stood all through the heartless words of Goneril when she uttered :

“Hear me, my lord,
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command t'attend you?”
“What need one?”

And here the thunder was muttering—the distant portentous storm—that was soon to break in full wrath on the head of the houseless old King. Forrest still stood in an upright position, with

uncovered head, and in a subdued, and beseeching manner he uttered the words:

“Heavns, drop your patience down!
 You see me here, ye gods! a poor old man,
 As full of grief as age, wretched in both!
 If it be you that stir these daughters’ hearts
 Against their father, fool me not so much
 To bear it so tamely; touch me with noble anger!
 O let not womens weapons, water drops
 Stain my man’s cheek!” * * * *

“No, I’ll not weep,
 I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
 Or ere I’ll weep.
 O gods, I shall go mad!”

All this was so intensely done that the audience felt a thrill of pity for Lear’s situation, and wondered how the human heart could reach the hardened depravity of his two daughters

His opening scene in the third act amidst the storm with his grand figure towering, and in a rage of exclamations equal to the frenzy of the night, was a dramatic picture that exalted the admiration of his audience beyond description.

“And thou, all-shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o’the world.”

was given with a height of voice and pose of body that were the zenith of grandeur:

“Rumble thy fill! fight whirlwind, rain and fire!”

All these explosive expletives were rendered in the expression of frightful anger.

“Hide, hide, thou murd’rer, hide thy bloody hand!
 Thou perjurd villain! holy hypocrite!
 That drink’st the widows’ tears,”

revealed the bitterness that choked up his agonized heart against the ingrate and unmerciful, and then with a dizzy speed he whirled around on the stage, and, pressing his hand to his brow, he said:

“My wits begin to turn,”

and, in a broken and shivering voice, he continued to Kent:

“Old as I am at heart, I’ve one place there
 That’s sorry yet for thee.”

The scene that followed with “Mad Tom,” as Forrest performed the character, revealed a tired physical condition, and a human heart crushed and bleeding. Reason still held her throne, as, in pathetic tones, he read the following speech:

“Thou think’st ’tis much that this contention’s storm
 Invades us to the skin; so ’tis to thee;
 But where the greater malady is fixed,
 The lesser is scarce felt. The tempest in my mind
 Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
 Save what beats there.—Filial ingratitude!”

* * * *
 To shut me out! * * *
 In such a night as this! O, Regan, Goneril!
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
 O, that way madness lies; let me shun that:
 No more of that.”

Here the great actor made no attempt at sobbing tones to gain the tears of his audience. He spoke the words in reasoning wonderment that such things could be, and so pointedly were they expressed that every heart felt their sting, and pity let her tears flow.

When poor Tom rushes from his hovel, Lear took almost a childish interest in his actions, and pitifully asked him :

“Tell me, fellow, didst thou give all to thy daughters?”

It was said as if he had forgotten his own misery to sympathize with him.

The next point which Mr. Forrest made with astounding effect upon his audience, was his reply to Kent's remark: “He hath no daughters, sir.”

“Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.”

Not until Mr. Forrest reached the words :

“Off, off, ye vain disguises, empty lendings,
I'll be my original self. Quick, quick! uncase me.”

did he commence to show the unreason of 'Lear's mind. Kent's words which follow immediately after “Uncase me.” “Defend his wits, good heaven!” confirm Forrest's judgment on this point; and again immediately after Lear asks Edgar: “Tell me, is a madman a gentleman or a yeoman?” Kent remarks: “I fear'd 'twould come to this; his wits are gone.” All of Lear's

words previous to this are logical in every respect. Garrick and all other actors commenced to act the sense of madness at the opening of Scene I, Act III, at the words: "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!" while Forrest commenced at Scene III, Act III, as quoted. And it was here that Forrest's face changed to a condition of vacancy, his eyes wandered, and with his hands he would throw his long, white hair from off his temples as if desiring coolness for his fevered brow. And although he seated himself upon the stage cheek-by-jowl beside Edgar, he did not play with straws and pick at his dress as if an idiot, as Garrick and most actors have. There was a dignity in all of Forrest's actions that still arrayed him "Every inch a king." After this all his business with Edgar showed a mind distracted, but with a sort of method in his madness, until at last, exhausted by a fevered brain and bodily exposure, and while walking and saying:

"Hist! make no noise, make no noise; draw
The curtain; closer, closer; so, so, so,—we'll go
To supper i' the morning; so, so, so!"

he swooned asleep, fell into the arms of Kent and Gloster, and, gently snoring, was carried from off the stage amid the dead silence of the audience. Forrest was the only actor that ever introduced the act of snoring in the scene. And nothing but the most masterly acting could make

the disagreeable sound adapted to the ears of a refined audience, and especially so in the representation of tragedy.

In Act IV, Scene IV, Shakespeare causes Lear to say some few things that indicate real madness, but the majority of his sayings reveal epigrammatically the profoundest truths and good sense. After a careful study of Lear's mind, through the words which the great dramatist caused him to speak, we fail to see that Lear is really mad. To be mad or insane, is to be without clear reason. The words mad or insane cannot be applied to temporary delirium, and therefore Lear is not mad, he is delirious only, and the actor who represents Lear in the condition of madness, makes a mistake ; at least we think so. Lear's entering upon the stage with a wreath of flowers upon his head, and a bundle of straws in his hand, is the work of a lunatic.

Such antics might emanate from the disturbed mind of a low-bred person, but not from the mind of one who had been possessed of fine intellect, and the high position as a king. Lear's reply to Gloster's words,

“That voice I well remember ; is't not the King?”

Lear—“Ay, every inch a king! When I do stare,

See how the subject quakes?

I pardon that man's life.”

This was one of Forrest's finest utterances in the whole play. Forrest's acting in the rest of this

scene was of a subdued nature, reason struggling to express truths, which were received by his audience as gems of philosophy gleaming through a fevered brain. His last scene over his dead child, Cordelia, in the expression of grief, is beyond description. The painter's brushes and colors might have been able to outline his position and the expression of a broken-hearted face, but the pen cannot utter his voice, nor express the thoughts in his eyes, and the distortions of mouth and brow. His performance of Lear was a master-piece, made so by his constant study of the text, which had so grafted the character into himself that it became his second nature.

In making these comparisons between Forrest, Garrick, Quin, Barry and Edmund Kean, we have done so with all due respect to the genius of the four English actors named. We have compared Forrest in only two of his characters, Lear and Othello. We have not introduced him in Richard the III against Garrick's Richard, for the reason that we believe that Garrick was superior in that character to any other actor that ever performed the part, nor have we placed him in opposition to Kean's Shylock, which will perhaps never be equaled again, nor have we placed Forrest in contrast with Kemble's, Kean's, or the elder Booth's Hamlets, for the simple reason that all three of these actors were in many respects better suited to that part than Mr. Forrest.

We might, with perfect safety, place Forrest as Coriolanus, opposite to John Philip Kemble in that part, and gain another Shakespearian character for the American actor. The reader will readily understand that the criticisms and comparisons on these eminent actors spring from no national feeling, but from the standpoint only of inquiry, as to which of these great actors came the nearest to a correct interpretation of the incomparable author

Henry Chroley, critic of the "London Athenæum," at the time Forrest was performing his round of characters in that city, said, "I shall never forget to my dying day the wonderful manner Mr. Forrest represented the character of King Lear. There is a force without violence in his passionate parts, which he owes to his physical conformation; but which he throws into the body of Lear that makes him perfectly kingly. His curse-scene was most awful and withering, especially that part where he slides down upon his knees."

Professor Wilson, a gentleman of the highest culture, standing at the head of one of the first colleges in Scotland, and who had seen Edmund Kean act many times, remarked in one of his press-articles on the acting of Forrest, that "he was the greatest actor he had seen since the days of Kean," and that "Forrest's Othello and Lear were fully equal to Kean's, and in some respects even better."

Mr. Forrest drew crowded houses while in England, and was very much admired as an actor, and yet was a victim of the contemptible jealousy of Mr. Macready, who, fearing that Forrest would absorb too much of the public's attention, did all he could to depreciate the American actor, both as an artist and a man. In this Mr. Macready succeeded, and Forrest, disgusted by Macready's conduct, left England and returned to his native country, where he was received with enthusiasm and open arms. *It is a well-known fact, that on one occasion, when Mr. Macready visited this country, Mr. Forrest had an engagement in the same week at the Bowery Theatre, when Mr. Macready was to appear at the Park Theatre, and out of delicacy and glorious manhood, he put off his engagement at the Bowery Theatre, that it might not appear that he was running in opposition to the celebrated English tragedian. Further comments are unnecessary.* But the day of retribution overtook Mr. Macready when he soon after visited America. Mr. Forrest's friends and the public vindicated his cause, and Macready suddenly returned to England again.

If you desire to know of the envious and jealous disposition of the famous English actor, Macready, all you need do is to read his autobiography, wherein he confesses that his envy and jealousy of the slightest applause bestowed upon an actor performing in the same play with him, had been

a curse to his life. We can here tell an anecdote to illustrate the fact of Macready's jealous disposition. I happened to be a member of the old Park Theatre company in New York when Macready was playing an engagement there. The play was Macbeth, with Macready in the lead, and John Dyott, a clever English actor, as Macduff. The writer was with Macready in his dressing-room, when the thunders of applause greeted Dyott's fine acting in Act IV, Scene III, where he says :

“ What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,
At one fell swoop?”

when, on hearing the applause, Macready exclaimed, “ Heavens, what's that ?” I answered, “ Why, it's the applause for Dyott's fine scene.” “ Great God, the *gallery must be very full,*” responded Macready ; inferring that none but the lower class in the gallery would applaud Dyott. However, both of these two great men, Forrest and Macready, who commanded so much public attention, are now at rest, where neither jealousy nor the thunders of applause can ever more disturb their peace. Amen.

FORREST AS DAMON.

AS a play "Damon and Pythias" is remarkable for dramatic situations. Its arrangement of incidents, and their progress from scene to scene, and act to act, are in perfect harmony with all the laws necessary for a well-formed classic tragedy. Yet it is but a five-act play, that has really no other merits than its well-jointed dramatic action. The language is of ordinary dramatic character, and its blank verse only occasionally elevates beyond mediocrity. Still, a good actor can find many opportunities in the play to attract the full attention of his audience and gain much applause.

Two actors only, however, made reputation and money by the performance of Damon. The first was Thomas Cooper, the latter Edwin Forrest. The writer had the good fortune of seeing both of these gentlemen perform the character. We saw Mr. Cooper in Damon, in his declining days, when his physical fires could not flame to the higher wrought dramatic situations in several parts of the play. This gentleman was a very fine actor. His figure was beautifully proportioned, and with



By Gabriel Harrison.

FORREST AS DAMON.

DAMON.—“I stand a Senator, within the Senate house.”

a fine voice and good elocution, together with a finished education, he was equal to the most classic character in the English language. He invested the character of Damon with a dignity and classicness way beyond the diction of the author. When young, he must have been remarkably fine in the role; and fully deserved the praise given him for his masterly performance of the part.

We saw Forrest in the character of Damon when in the very prime of his life—when every condition of his wonderful physical being could readily cope with all the situations in the play. If the play had been purposely written for him, it could not have more closely fitted his peculiar requisites for the part. His grand and massy figure (as our illustration in the book proves) was more than equal to Damon's broad and generous quality of democratic mind, and devoted friendship.

The picture represents him at the moment he answers Dionysius, and says:

“I stand
A Senator in the Senate house!”

The pose expresses a quality and repose seldom, if ever equaled by any of the great artists of the stage.

His speech before the Senate, beginning with the words:

“Oh! thanks for these few voices! but alas!
How lonely do they sound!”

was given with a quality of intense pleading, that would have penetrated any heart but that of the obdurate tyrant, Dionysius.

His scene with his wife and child when he bids them farewell, was full of pathos, and always drew tears from his audience.

The startling scene with Lucullus, when he tells Damon that he has killed his horse to prevent his return to redeem his pledge with Pythias, was never surpassed in physical acting. His climactic picture in the fifth act was thrilling in the extreme. His having fallen from his horse in his effort to return in time to rescue his friend, his dress bespattered with mud, his bruised head with blood trickling down over his face, caused his audience to shudder, and demonstrated that the dramatic qualities of Mr. Forrest's mind were equal to the strong situation the dramatist had so graphically suggested.

While here alluding to Forrest's Damon, it is our duty to speak of Madam Ponisi, who for many years supported Mr. Forrest in all his great characters whenever he performed in the city of New York. Her performance of Hermion, the wife of Damon, was a remarkable piece of acting. The character amounts to one or two short scenes only, but her fine womanly figure, her pleasing, frank face and her perfect utterances of the English language commanded the attention of her audience and fitted her as the wife of Damon.

Her Lady Macbeth, and Emelia, in Othello, were dramatic pictures that rendered her famous with her New York audiences. This charming lady was born in Huddersfield, England. She first appeared in London, December 26, 1848, at the Surrey Theatre; in America at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, October 7, 1850. For many years she has been one of the leading ladies at Wallack's New York Theatre. She was divorced from Ponisi in 1858, and married Samuel Wallis, a stage machinist of much merit.

Forrest during his theatrical career had two distinct styles of acting,—when young the romantic school of acting commanded his attention, and in such characters as Damon, William Tell, Bertram, Rolla, Gladiator, Jack Cade, and Metamora, he glorified himself. But in these characters he never was melo-dramatic. He had no tricks, and whatever the characters, he always invested it with the qualities of naturalness. In his older days—say from the time he was fifty, to the close of his life, he chose such characters as Othello, Lear, Coriolanus and Richelieu. Here he was in the deep ocean of dramatic literature, and delighted in the deeper research that expounded the higher conditions of writing; and thereby became more classic in this style of acting. It is a fact, that the greater number of celebrated actors have at the age of fifty relaxed in their study, and flung themselves into the arms of pleasure and rest

so naturally wished for after a toilsome student-ship and labor for years. But it was not so with Mr. Forrest. An opposite neighbor and friend of his told the writer that whenever Mr. Forrest was at home in his Broad street mansion, he could very often see him, with his student lamp at his side, as late as two o'clock in the morning, and when spoken to on the subject of over-study his reply was, "He could not help it" that "his mind seemed to be new opening to the abounding beauties in Shakespeare and the better class of dramatists." And it was from these reasons that Forrest was a far greater actor at sixty-five than at fifty, while other actors have been greater at fifty than at sixty-five.

THANKSGIVING DAY WITH FORREST.

HIS HOSPITALITY AND CHARACTERISTICS.

ON the 18th of November, 1872, the writer received the following letter from Edwin Forrest :

“ PHILADELPHIA, November 17th, 1872.

GABRIEL HARRISON,

Dear Sir :—It is my desire that you visit me on Thanksgiving day, Thursday, 25th, and take thanks with me. There will be none other present. We can enjoy my library, and have a feast of reason conjoined with the feast of the repast. *Come Early.*

Yours, with high regard,

EDWIN FORREST.”

Mr. Forrest always had respect for himself in what even he did in friendship or business, and, therefore, he expected and demanded respect from others. If he made an appointment or a promise, he never failed to keep it, unless circumstances beyond his control prevented him. If he liked a man, the more attention he expected from him, to demonstrate that he was not mistaken in his

estimation of him. He was zealous for his friends, and would do anything in his power to help them, and prove his appreciation of them.

The italicized "Come Early" in his note was the key to a hearty welcome; but what his "Come Early" really meant was to be solved by experience only. I rang the door-bell of his mansion at 8 A. M. with fear that I was intruding at too previous an hour, but when I asked the attendant if Mr. Forrest was up, Forrest's rich, round voice thundered down the stairs: "Up? up? I have been waiting an hour for you." This was an agreeable surprise, and made the writer feel that he was indeed welcome. I was conducted into the library, containing over twenty thousand volumes. The size of this large room was about 20 x 60 feet, with a height of 16 feet. The furniture was of black walnut. His desk stood nearly in the middle of the room, and near it was an Elizabethian table, which was made in the days of Elizabeth, and was purchased by him while in London. On it was a large glass case, silver-mounted, and in it the *first folio edition of Shakespeare's works*, 1623. This, of all his many treasures, was his greatest, and when he alluded to it, his tone of voice changed, and his very eyes expressed profound respect and admiration for the dramatic genius contained in that one volume, which has done more for the advancement of the stage than all the other dramatists of the world, ancient and modern.

Forrest had social desires and instincts, but his personal friends were few. This came, perhaps, from his unavoidable doubts of sincerity of men in general. He, himself, was profoundly sincere, and, therefore, he despised a dissembler. By this rather suspicious habit, it is probable that he lost friendships that would have been a profit and a pleasure to him. He possessed a large sense of humor, and could enjoy and tell an anecdote, or a story with inimitable force. Never vulgar, others never dared to be vulgar in his presence. There was always a dignity about him that dignified others, and yet, a manner withal, that inspired self-confidence.

He was a good listener, and often asked others to talk. Perhaps the most social friend he ever had was James Oaks. He knew more of the secret nature of Forrest than any other associate. His most intimate literary and financial friend, from whom he took his best advice concerning his readings and the management of his estate, was Mr. James Lawson, of Yonkers, New York. This gentleman, to my personal knowledge, was a scholar of high culture and refined taste,—a graduate of Edinburgh College. Mr. Lawson was the author of several plays in verse. One of them, a tragedy in five acts,—“Giordano,”—was performed at the old Park Theatre, New York, in the early part of his life. Two others—the “Maiden’s Oath,” and “Liddesdale, or The Border Chief,”—were

written in the latter part of his life as a means of industry and amusement. They were all elegantly printed, and circulated among his best friends. The writer is the fortunate possessor of a full set, autographed by the author. If as dramatic compositions they lack somewhat in dramatic effects, they nevertheless abound in scholarship, and show a deep insight into the human heart. Appleton's Cyclopædia makes mention of Mr. Lawson.

Daniel Dougherty concludes the trio of Mr. Forrest's executors and particular friends. As a legal adviser to Mr. Forrest, he has been as true as steel and as stubborn as the trade-winds; and, as an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Forrest's style of acting and oratory, he has absorbed enough to fully entitle him to recognition as "The Silver-tongued Orator" of the day.

The writer's Thanksgiving day in company with the great American tragedian was made pleasurable in every respect. The old dramatists were pulled down from their shelves. Anecdotes were rehearsed of the old actors and managers. We laughed together, and when we reached the subject of the old folio edition of Shakespeare, 1623, it was done with a reverence that made it sacred—only less so than the sacred tomb of the great dramatist. He carefully unlocked the case that contained the volume, and carefully placed it upon his desk for examination. As I undertook to turn over the leaves of the precious volume, he gently

moved my hand away and performed the task himself, fearing I might handle the treasure too rudely. He exhibited other rare things of the stage that had belonged to Garrick and to other celebrated actors of the English stage. Then he conducted me through his art gallery, that contained some few pictures of value:—an original portrait of Nell Gwynne, a portrait of Forrest by Gilbert Stuart, a statue of himself in the character of Coriolanus, by Ball, a fancy subject of a little girl by Meyer, a group of three large-sized pictures that expressed “the morning, the noon, and the evening of life—childhood, marriage and death,” beautifully painted by Bellows; a portrait of Napoleon the I, and a few other works of art that had considerable merit. But among all these pictures, there was no picture of himself in character, excepting a few photographs without appropriate backgrounds, such as *Metamora* standing on an ingrain carpet. After all the paintings and trophies had been commented on, he conducted the writer to the basement of his house, and exhibited a perfect little theatre, containing scenery, footlights, and room enough to seat at least two hundred people. “Here,” he said, “I have had little children perform a whole play, which I have rehearsed them in to my great pleasure.”

This remark was another proof of his tender heart; it showed that a half century of buffets

with the hard world had not chilled the impulses of youth; the garden of boyhood was still green, and had its blooming flowers to soothe the memory of old age.

Then the summons to dinner was made, and we were conducted to the dining-room. The table was simply dressed, with everything on it that was to be eaten and drank. He placed me directly opposite to himself, and carved the turkey with a skill that showed the dexterity of an epicure; he handed to me my plate of good things, and then furnished his own plate, and, before he sat down, he said: "God be praised." At first, the conversation was slow, and, as if anxious to talk, he said: "Tell me something." To which I responded and said: "Yes, I was about to make a speech." "A speech! to whom? and about what?" he inquired. "To you, and about you." Then I arose and remarked: "Come, let us imagine that this is the occasion of a dinner given by America's greatest tragedian, Edwin Forrest, and the orator of the occasion is your humble servant. Thus I begin:

"GENTLEMEN:—The occasion is one that must give us all alike a great pleasure. We are partaking of the hospitalities of Edwin Forrest, America's greatest representative of the drama, the fame of whose genius as an actor has reached beyond the confines of his own country, and, in the immortal group of the greatest actors of the world, his

place will be as high as the highest. Genius is not the exclusive gift of the great Bestower to any one particular nation or people, but wherever it may be found, it becomes the nation's pride. Therefore, as Americans, we feel the same right and pride to admire and laud our Forrest, as England her Garrick or France her Talma. Indeed, as Americans, it is our duty to foster native genius or talent in whatever branch of literature and art and mechanics, it may demonstrate itself. It is a nation's duty to look after the perpetuity of her children's fame, as it is the mother's welcome duty to afford or direct the sustenance of her own offspring. To carry out this great principle, we find that all nations of Europe have used the art-preservatives to illustrate and send down through the avenues of time the features of those who, by their genius and industry, have helped to make their nation illustrious.

“Garrick, Siddons and the Kembles had their Reynolds and Leslie to make imperishable their features, and to express their attitudes and passions so wonderfully pictured by their artistic genius in the portrayal of Shakespeare's marvelous creations. It is more than likely that these actors themselves gave the means and encouraged the artists in their work. These actors of old looked after themselves, but our Forrest, either through too much modesty, or lack of proper appreciation of

art-preservatives of himself, is, to this late day of his life, without a single illustration in any way equal to his own merits as an artist. This is a fact deeply regretted. Had there been a lack of means to palliate this fault, we could feel it an excuse; but it is the contrary, for we know that the great American actor is the richest actor the world has ever admired. Now, as the matter stands, we have the right to say, that Mr. Forrest should feel it his bounden duty to look without delay for his Leslie and Reynolds. Besides, there are other things that Mr. Forrest can do which will be of vast importance to his profession. In the days of Shakespeare, there lived two actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, and, though not very eminent in their profession, they were devoted to it, and did a service to the drama and the whole world, that should cause them to be remembered by mankind and immortalized in bronze and granite.

“Seven years or less, after all that was mortal of the Bard of Avon had been consigned to the chamber of the dead that lie under the pavement of the Church of the Holy Trinity, at Stratford, these two actors came together, and, perhaps over a social goblet, they said; ‘Come, let us not forget our old companion Shakespeare; let us gather from the book-keepers of the theatres the manuscripts of all his plays, and give to the world the first complete printed edition of his

works.' And they did it in the first folio, 1623. This was an act of such mighty importance to literature and genius, that no shaft can reach too high, no eulogium over-praise, and no art-achievement be too grand to express the gratitude of mankind to these two actors, who, by their forethought, preserved, to all future time, the immortal genius that will ever be an enlightenment to the world. Therefore what a glorious opportunity is open for some generous and appreciative spirit, to place in some metropolitan park, a group statue to these two worthy men."

At the conclusion of these remarks, Mr. Forrest suddenly rose from the table with his face flushed with color, and exclaimed, with much emphasis, "It shall be done. I shall go to Boston next week to give three readings; and, immediately on my return, I will call a meeting of my executors here, have you meet them, and talk the matter over."

We then returned to the library, and I further suggested the foundation of a Dramatic College for the proper education and instruction of those who desire to become members of the profession. The rest of the day was spent in discussing the merits of the great actors that had adorned the stage. He seemed to favor Edmund Kean as the grandest; and, as on a previous occasion, drew from his portfolio the portrait of Kean that illustrates this volume, stating that it was the best

likeness of the "great little man" he ever saw, and gave the writer *carte blanche* to have it painted by an artist of my own selection, for his gallery of pictures; but here came a pause that verified the old adage: "Man proposes, but God disposes." For, before the picture could be finished Mr. Forrest was no more. Victor Nehlig was the artist selected. Mr. Forrest's executors could do nothing in the matter, as there was no written statement, or, as they thought, to give them authority to have the picture finished. However, we here give a letter from Mr. Forrest on the subject.

METROPOLITAN HOTEL, }
NEW YORK, February 23, 1871. }

GABRIEL HARRISON, Esq.,

My Dear Sir.—If Saturday next, the day after to-morrow, should be fine weather, I should like to visit with you the studio of the artist whom you think qualified to paint the portrait of Edmund Kean.

Will you call on me, about half-past eleven on that day, if you have nothing else to do, and oblige,

Yours sincerely,

EDWIN FORREST.

On the next day after Thanksgiving Mr. Forrest left Philadelphia for Boston, to give there three readings; and there, on Saturday afternoon, December 7th, 1872, he read the entire play of Othello, which was the last time he appeared before the

public. In three days after this he was at his home in Philadelphia; and on Thursday, December 12th, 1872, he died from a stroke of apoplexy. He expired at 9 o'clock, A. M.

Thus came death and prevented the realization of all the many beautiful things he contemplated and proposed to do, and at a time, too, when he expected to take a long rest at home, withdrawn from the labor of his profession, and first awaked to a realization of his own importance as an artist through an "intercession (as he said) of one who had more highly appreciated his genius than he himself." For no great man ever lived who took less pains to nourish his fame than Edwin Forrest. In this fact he stands alone. On many occasions, through his modesty, he has even ignored the critic and the artist who desired to illustrate him favorably, and gained their ill-feelings in place of their friendship and applause.

Could he have lived six months longer, all of the beautiful inspirations that came to the writer at the dinner-table would have been realized. The portrait of Kean, the pictures of himself in characters, the Dramatic College, and the Group-Statue, had all by the hand of death been dissolved from a hopeful realization to a mere dream of the past.

In contemplating the character of Edwin Forrest, we cannot well understand how a man of so much good sense in his art could be so obtuse

in those things that were of vital importance to his personal fame as a man and an artist, especially as we knew Forrest was a man who appreciated keenly the merits of others, and enjoyed the fine arts. He knew their usefulness, and would often express his admiration for art and others to a degree of almost girlish sentimentality. He looked upon his collection of engravings, representing all of the celebrated actors of Europe, as among the most valuable and interesting of things in his possession, and yet he had not a picture of himself in character that was worthy of a place in his portfolio. Was it modesty that caused this neglect? Yes, as the following anecdote illustrates. In showing me slowly through his portfolio, he quickly passed over a head of himself in mezzotint by John Sartain. I requested to look at it, and said it was pretty good. He took it from my hand, and placed it upon the table. He put the portfolio away, but, in a few minutes, he returned for the picture, and was about placing it in the collection, when I remarked I would like to have it. He replied: "Yes, I was waiting for you to ask for it, fearing that you did not think enough of me to make it worth the asking for." On another occasion, when in New York, he asked me to take him to some of the studios of my artist friends. The day was a beautiful one, and as he stood looking out of the Metropolitan Hotel window down on Broadway, he said: "How

I would like to walk the streets in this beautiful sunshine, and look into the shop-windows as other people do," and I answered, "Why not? we have only a few blocks to go." "Yes, but then the people stare at me so that I become confused." Both of these cases were evidence of native modesty, which even the constant appearing before thousands of auditors had not yet modified to a condition of personal confidence.

A man can always feel better pleased with himself, when recognized by a truly great man, and it was always so with the writer when in social intercourse with Edwin Forrest, Edgar A. Poe, Fitz Greene Halleck, and others, for the reason that we felt there must be something of value in ourselves to be so recognized. When with Forrest, we could not help but feel his genius in a more vivid sense. We not only felt him as a man but as the actor, and could afterward see him in a double sense, upon the stage, in some powerful scene in *Damon*, *Virginius*, or *Lear*. I think that almost any man will feel far more interested in the presence of a great actor than in the presence of a genius representing some other profession.

Forrest, with all his modesty, loved to be thought well of, and could accept delicate praise with evident pleasure. At one time I spoke to him with much admiration of his performance of *Richelieu*. He remarked: "I can do it better; I was not well last night." A few days after, he

sent a note with a check for a private box, and requested me to bring some friends to see him act Richelieu. We selected Judge John Greenwood and Alden J. Spooner, of Brooklyn, gentlemen well versed in the drama, and excellent critics, the latter for many years the editor of a famous newspaper. We got to the theatre a few minutes late, but he did not let the curtain rise till we were seated in the box. This was a great compliment to his guests, and showed a determination to do good work, and I feel perfectly assured that, had we disappointed him by not coming, he would have felt it so keenly that his performance of Richelieu would have been a comparative failure.

His performance of Richelieu on this occasion was marvelous and soul-stirring. He did everything in the rendering of the character that fell within the scope of his dramatic genius, and frequently his acting was so impressive that his audiences went beyond applause of the hands, and lavished their praises and comments of the tongue. It was on this occasion of his last engagement at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, New York, 1871, less than a year previous to his death. The following anecdote occurred, and demonstrated to what a wonderful reality the actor can work himself. Between the fourth and fifth acts of the play, Mr. Forrest sent word to my friends and myself that he would like to have us ride home with

him to the Metropolitan Hotel, and sup with him. The invitation was gladly accepted, but, on the way to the hotel, he gave evidence of a bad cold by frequent coughing. At the supper table, Judge Greenwood remarked to Mr. Forrest: "I cannot understand how you can do such fine acting with such a bad cold." Forrest, surprised, answered: "I have no cold," and coughed again. "There," said the Judge, "you coughed now." "Oh, that's nothing; that's my Richelieu cough. It will be well in the morning."

Forrest had introduced this cough into the character of the old prelate who, it is said, in his old days, was much troubled with a hacking cough. And Forrest acted the part with so much intensity that it took hours for the assimilation to pass away.

During the same engagement of twenty nights, he invited the same party of gentlemen to see him perform the part of Lear. The note contained the following words: "Come and see me play Lear to-night; I am quite free from pain, and feel like acting." Forrest never grew tired of his profession, and, when in good health, he enjoyed his work with much pleasure, and, like the true artist, he not only anticipated his task, but, when done, he would contemplate the result with gratification. Like the great painter, he saw the touches, the color and the forms that gave the breath of life to his composition. But with

the actor, is not the pleasure more intense than with the painter? It must be. The actor has every function of his being brought into action, while doing his work. He feels himself decorated for the occasion. He feels his nerves vibrate to his whole sensibility. He hears the appropriate tones of his voice, answering to the heart and the soul of the character he is representing. The very action of his muscles and the bounding of his blood from heart to brain thrills with pleasure. His fingers tingle, and he feels the pallor of his face, and almost the chill of death in his dying scene. All these sensations pass over him while standing in the presence of a theatre full of people, and he listens to the magic music of applause that causes the indescribable satisfaction of soul and mind by the endorsement of his fellow-beings in his own presence.

The painter sits alone in his studio, and calmly works out his results with no crowd about him to shout into his ears their approbation. He may hope for success, but it is still doubtful to him whether his work will strike the pulses of the people. What must have been Mr. Forrest's feelings at the conclusion of his performance of Lear, on the night in question, when the audience, men and women, at the end of each act rose to their feet and greeted him with the thunder-bursts of approbation. Every fiber of his being must have thrilled to the grand huzzas of his admirers. It

is such occasions as these that make a man feel that a great God has made him. Pale he stood before his audience, with an expression upon his face that told them his heart was flooded with tears in gratitude for their appreciation. To him this was the one moment that brought the reward for his whole life-work—for he had breathed life into the dead King, and made him a moving being, speaking the inspirations of the soul and genius of Shakespeare; and by his own genius, in spontaneity caused his audience to express their admiration for the great dramatist. We had seen Forrest act hundreds of times before, but on this occasion he seemed to excel himself. At the conclusion of his performance, he sent word that he was too much exhausted to see me in the green-room, but to call on him to-morrow. I called; the door from the hallway that led into his parlor was open, through which I could see him seated in a contemplative position. I tapped on the side of the doorway. The old hero looked up and saw me. For a moment we looked at each other in silence. I walked in, and as he arose to greet me, I said to him while grasping his hand: "What, in the name of God, were you trying to do last night?" "Act Lear," was his reply, and then with a pathetic quality in his voice, he looked up and asseverated: "And, so help me God, I will never play Lear again!" I questioned why; he answered: "I fear I may blemish my art-work of last night." And he never did play Lear again.

How much self-knowledge and commentation abounds in the words: "I fear I may blemish my art-work of last night." How much reverence the old master felt for his art, and the result his years of study had brought to fruition. How deeply he must have felt his work, and respected it, to give up his life-picture of the old King, fearing that another touch would mar its perfection. Forrest was a severe student of every character he ever undertook to perform. Every detail was looked into that could assist him to a correct estimate of the character. In his study of King Lear, he even went so far as to visit lunatic asylums, that he might study the age and facial expressions of the insane. This fact he stated to the writer, as the following letter bears evidence :

" PHILADELPHIA, September 4th, 1871.

GABRIEL HARRISON, Esq.,

Dear Sir :—The photograph of Lear I sent you is rather a portrait of a general quiescent state of lunacy and not of any paroxysm or specific revealment of any point in the performance, and, so far, I think it is worthy of much commendation.

But I desire to sit again, that I may strive to get that vacant expression of the eyes that I have so frequently seen expressed by those poor wretches whose minds have been shattered by lunacy. This has been one of my most difficult studies, and I have often felt it so expressed when I have been performing Lear. Next month, when I resume my professional life, I

hope to be able to sit for another picture of King Lear, which shall be more pronounced in this respect than the one you have. If you could be here at the time, you might greatly assist the pose, and judge of the expression.

Truly and sincerely yours,

EDWIN FORREST."

There is another evidence in this letter that redounds to the great credit of Mr. Forrest, and that is, he never felt himself above criticism. In fact, he would ask his friends, those whose opinions and education he respected, what they thought of his acting, and, when their suggestions were to the purpose, he would willingly adopt them. He was one of those actors who did not think because he was a great public favorite, and had been lifted far above thousands of his profession, that he was perfect in everything that he said or did upon the stage. He was humble, and was willing to listen to the judgment of others.

Mr. James Lawson's estimate of Forrest as a man and an artist is justly expressed in the following letter, written shortly after Mr. Forrest's death :

"YONKERS, N. Y., February 12th, 1872.

MY DEAR MR. HARRISON :

I was at Mr. Forrest's funeral, but I hid myself away from the crowd. I received a telegram, announcing the death of Mr. Forrest, and I arrived in Philadelphia

at 5 P. M., Saturday. Mr. McArdle met me at the depot, and carried me in Forrest's carriage to the house. My feelings were acute, and I observed very little. I only remember seeing Oakes. I could not stay, so, after a sad look on the face of the dead, I went back to the Continental Hotel. Sunday, I went back to the house, and consulted about the funeral. Early on Monday morning—day of the funeral—I took my last look of the dead, and kissed the cold clay cheek. Oakes gave me a lock of Forrest's hair. I was one of the pall-bearers, and rode in the coach with Oakes, Forney and Dougherty. It was a dreadful day—rain and snow. You may not remember, but on the way the sun shone for a moment. I turned to Forney, and said: "Don't forget:"

"Blessed is the corse the sun shines on." As you know, we all went to the grave; it was soon over, and we left the great actor, alone to his fame and eternal in his rest.

Yes, I can say everything that is noble about Forrest as a man. He had no selfishness. He was generous to a fault, and easily imposed upon. As a companion, he was exceedingly interesting, and I always felt it a gratification to be with him. He was a sunshine and a consolation to every one with whom he was intimate. I knew him well. At the time of his divorce troubles, he resided with me for several weeks, and it was then I learned to know his inner self, and discovered a heart that was truly grand, and a manhood way beyond the world's estimate of him.

As an actor, he was the greatest I ever saw, and I have seen the great Edmund Kean and Cooper, and,

while they startled me with their dramatic genius, yet Forrest was more satisfactory, and gave me less to find fault with. His voice was the finest I ever heard, and he spoke the English language perfectly. These are simple facts, and I can say no less. But why should you ask for my opinion of Forrest as an actor, while no one that I know has a finer insight of Forrest's acting than yourself. You appreciate him fully, and with an artist's eye you have drawn him as he is—the tragedian of the age—perhaps of all ages. Your description of him as *Virginius*, *Othello*, *Metamora*, and *Lear* are truthfully given in your letters to me, and touch me to the heart. Where did you get the quotations from *Metamora*; had you the MSS? but I recognized them all. The latter part of your letter is truly pathetic; it went to my very soul; it is sweetly poetic, that passage particularly:

“The sweetest music lies in the harp, awaiting the touch of the master hand to express the melody.”

The thought expresses Forrest's elocution so exactly that I could hear his fine voice as I read the passage. You should some day feel it a duty, as Forrest's friend, to write a critical work on his genius, and, until you do it, full justice will not be done him as an artist.

When the weather is more moderate, I hope to call on you in Brooklyn, and offer my thanks for your letter of sympathy. Come, see me; my doors are ever wide to you.

Ever truly, yours,

JAMES LAWSON.”

William R. Alger, in his voluminous work on the life of Forrest, has said many fine things

about the tragedian. We had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Alger at the time he was writing the life of Mr. Forrest, and we were in full sympathy with his work; and, at the request of Mr. Alger and Mr. James Lawson, we did all in our power in assisting him to a proper estimate of Forrest's merits as an actor. Mr. Alger, however, became impressed with the idea that Mr. Forrest was a melo-dramatic actor, against which we took a decided stand to the contrary. This fact Mr. Alger admits by inserting the following letter from the writer in opposition to Mr. Alger's mistake—
Vol. II, page 543 :

“Harrison, writing to the biographer of his friend, in protest against the epithet melo-dramatic, records his estimate thus: ‘Are the wonderful figures of Michael Angelo melo-dramatic, because they are so strongly outlined? Is Niagara unnatural and full of trick because it is mighty and thunders so in its fall? When I looked at it, its sublimity made me feel as if I was looking God in the face; and I have never thought that God was melo-dramatic. I have seen Forrest act more than four hundred times. I have sat at his feet as a pupil-artist learning of a master-artist. In all his chief roles I have studied him with the most earnest carefulness, from his *tout ensemble* to the minutest particulars of look, tone, and posture, and motion. And I can say, that without doubt, he was the most honest, natural, finished, and

powerful actor that ever lived. Whenever I saw him act, I used to feel with exultation how perfectly grand God had made him. How grand a form! how grand a mind! how grand a heart! how grand a voice! how grand a flood of passion, sweeping all these to their mark in perfect unison! My memory of him is so worshipful and affectionate, and so full of regret, that I can see him no more, that my tears are blotting the leaf on which I write.’”

We mention the fact of assisting Mr. Alger to a proper estimate of Mr. Forrest's style of acting, for the reason that he used much of the writer's description of how Mr. Forrest performed the parts of *Virginius*, *Metamora*, *Othello*, *Brutus*, etc., in his own book, and as part of the same is used in this work, we do not wish to be accused of plagiarism. In several parts of his work, he gracefully admits the fact of our assistance, and we felt it an honor to be of service to Mr. Alger. He is a man of genius, as his work on the “*Genius of Solitude*” shows. It is a work that will ever remain a gem in English literature.

The following letter from Mr. Alger shows how willingly he listened to the judgment of others who knew more about Mr. Forrest's merits as an actor than himself. His experience in matters of the stage was not abounding, but, like a faithful servant to his subject, he desired to do Mr. Forrest full justice, and to a considerable extent

he took heed of the opinions of those who all their lives had been more or less associated with the drama.

“NEW YORK, December 30th, 1874.

MY DEAR MR. HARRISON:

I have just received your very interesting and suggestive letters. Mr. James Lawson has sent me your notes on Mr. Forrest's acting in *Virginius*, and I have read them with extreme pleasure. They will be of great service and value to me. Any similar pictorial reminiscences which you can give me of his other roles, I shall be exceedingly grateful for.

I am now settled in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, Room 386, up next to the sky, where I want much to see you and hear you talk about the great actor.

Your notes on *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, and *Coriolanus* have come safely to hand. Also your description of Forrest's *Othello*. I shall avail myself of all you have written freely. Please accept my thanks for your great kindness.

Ever gratefully, yours,

WILLIAM R. ALGER.”

This is a noble admission of facts, and is in every way worthy of Mr. Alger.

It is a fact, as Alger says: “The knowledge and culture of Forrest were in no sense limited to the range of his profession. He was uncommonly well educated, not only by a wide acquaintance with books, but also by varied observation and experience of the world. Another trait in Forrest,

to which all his friends will testify, was his perfect freedom in private life from all theatrical affectations. His bearing was natural and honest. With an actor so powerfully marked as he, this is not common ; most great actors carry from their professional into their daily life some fixed strut of attitude or chronic stilt of elocution, or pompous trick of quotation. It was not so with Forrest, and his detachment from all such habits, and his simplicity were an honor to him, and a charm to those who could appreciate the suppression of the shop in the manly assertion of dignity and rectitude. His speech attracted attention only from its uncommon ease and finish, not from any intention. The actor, it has been justly said, is so far contemptible who keeps his mock grandeur on when his buskins are off. It is easier to be natural than to act. But when all is said, the greatest quality and charm of Forrest was his softness and truth of heart, the quickness, strength and beauty of his affections, and the reverential gratitude he had for all who had in any way served him, by word or deed."

Mr. Alger is no less correct when he says :

"Forrest will live a great tradition in the history of the stage. He will live as a learned and versatile histrionist in the exact photographic embodiment of his costumed and breathing characters. He will live as a diffused presence in the retreat he has founded for his less fortunate

brethren. He will certainly live in the innumerable and untraceable but momentous influences of his deeds, and effluence of his powerful personality and exhibitions caught up by sensitive organisms and transmitted in their posterity to the end of our race."

Mr. Edwin Forrest as an actor was, perhaps, the best-abused man the dramatic critics ever attacked. This condition occurred more frequently after the misunderstanding between him and Mr. Macready. The national press at that time was crowded with critics of English birth, and they, through their sectional feeling, made the mistake of revenging themselves on Mr. Forrest as an artist and as a man. Honest criticism on all matters of art is a necessity, but, when perverted for libelous purposes, in striving to destroy the merits of the artist, it becomes an assault both contemptible and cowardly.

Of all the newspapers of the country that did the most in an effort to depreciate Mr. Forrest's merits as a man of genius, the New York *Tribune* took the lead. This is a singular fact, for the reason that the *Tribune* was an American paper in all other particulars. It admitted into its columns a series of articles against the American actor, written by an Englishman by the name of William Stewart, who, at the time, was acting as the manager of the New York Winter Garden Theatre, and was striving to write up a new star by

sacrificing Edwin Forrest. This vampire of a critic, who never had any other than selfish motives in his association with the drama, boasted and admitted that when he attacked Mr. Forrest as an artist, he had really never seen Mr. Forrest act. That spleen and venom actuated this man is proven in his admitting that he had never seen the artist he audaciously attempted to criticise.

We are in favor of the proper freedom of the press, and are in favor of honest criticism, but we cannot tolerate or uphold criticism that attempts to strike at the art-genius of any man, under the bias of national prejudice, or to satisfy the spleen and jealousy of the low critics who have no other than selfish motives to satisfy.

Among my many reasons for estimating Mr. Forrest so highly as an actor lies in the fact that he did not establish his reputation on the performance of one or two characters only, as has been the case with most of the celebrated actors. Garrick established himself more particularly on masterly performances of Richard and Abel Drugger; John Philip Kemble on Hamlet and Coriolanus; Edmund Kean on Shylock and Lear; George Frederick Cook on Richard and Sir Archy McSarcasm; Macklin on Shylock; Charles Young on Iago, and so with many other prominent actors and actresses. But Forrest's reputation as an actor rests on all the characters he performed. If we closely analyze Mr. Forrest in the character

of *Virginius*, we wonder at its perfection. If we review critically his *Othello*, we come to the same conclusion. His *Coriolanus* stands before us in a grandeur of dignity worthy of the great old masters in art. While thus considering and comparing his *Damon*, *William Tell*, *Macbeth*, *Rolla*, *Richelieu*, *Spartacus* and *Metamora*, we are undecided to say which one of these representations was the most perfect ; then up comes his *Lear*, the study and delight of his old age, and perhaps here we will rest longer in our admiration than on any other of his dramatic creations, and call it a dramatic climax—a perfection in the noble art of acting. It was a revelation of what genius can do by ceasing to be one's self and assuming another spirit into the same body.

FORREST'S ELOCUTION.

THE POWER AND THE CHARM OF THE HUMAN VOICE.

THERE was a handful of critics who strove to depreciate Mr. Forrest as a *rant*er, but we never heard such a remark come from the lips of one who could define the word *rant*. Rant, according to Webster, is: "Violent speaking, noisy and boisterous sound of words, without proper articulation." Nothing could be more foreign to Mr. Forrest's style. Elocution has been a life-study with the writer, and we do not hesitate to say that Forrest was the finest elocutionist we ever heard. He was a scholar in the matter of speech, and paid careful attention to the proper tones and utterance of words. He was never out of time, and always gave the movement of words that the sense of the author called for. Forrest was a wonderfully made man; indeed, he was a gladiator in physique, and had a voice of power suitable to his physique. Its flexibility and melody were equal to a church organ, and could roll forth the deep tones of thunder, or the tender notes of the flute. If the critics meant that a powerful voice was rant, they misapplied

the term. Forrest never undertook to suppress his acting, or soften his voice to please those who were shocked by the tones of a strong voice. He never stopped to measure the size of the place he was speaking in. He did not adapt the passion he was rendering or the power of his voice to the shape or size of the theatre. His sensibilities were so finely strung that he could not otherwise than make himself fully equal to the rhetoric of his author. We can safely say that there was no part of Mr. Forrest's study that commanded more of his attention than elocution. Never did he utter a word that was disagreeable to a properly attuned ear, and in the very fire of passion his syllables, accents, and words were finely enunciated. The same fault was found with Kean by those critics who either wanted to find fault in order to appear wise, or whose hearing had been educated to whispers only.

How many actors and clergymen we have heard, who, although possessed of a naturally fine voice, yet from the want of a knowledge of elocution, allowed their voice to go to ruin, and missed the exquisite effects that lie in a correct delivery of the English language. We have always found actors who did not understand elocution, striving to talk too low down on the vocal chords, or on a very high key instead of talking on the middle notes, and up in the forepart of the mouth by the use of the lips and tongue. This being the

case, they could not fail to injure the voice and waste nervous vitality, because they were on a constant strain. The higher tones will exhaust quicker than the lower, for the reason that the nerve-tension of the brain has to be greater to act on the greater tension of all the vocal ligaments. In striving to articulate with the vocal chords, we attempt an impossibility, for the reason that the vocal chords cannot touch each other. We sound a vowel on the vocal chords, but must bring the lips together or touch the tongue somewhere to articulate a consonant.

Many actors are found pompously strutting the stage, thinking erroneously that movement and gesture are the finest work, without the knowledge of elocution, which develops the music and eloquence of talent, nay, even of genius. What is the mere movement of an army compared to the sounds of the battle-field? What the flight of a swallow to the song of the nightingale?

And yet these actors grandly bestriding the stage, exposing their ignorance of their vernacular language and incurring personal injury and disease, insist that elocution is not a necessary study for the actor. They make the poor excuse that it has a tendency to make them stiff and formal in their delivery. This is not so. It is the only way to make them graceful. The true study of elocution teaches how properly to apply and to use the laws of nature so as to make them gracefully

natural, both in speech and gesture. No man can speak his words gracefully without begetting graceful action of the body and movement of the limbs. The first begets the latter. It is a law in harmony with nature itself. Knowledge leads to grace, for the reason that knowledge gives confidence of being right in what we do. And a man cannot be a fine actor without the knowledge of elocution, any more than he can be a fine musician without the knowledge of the science of music. Elocution is to the actor what grammar is to the writer. It forces him to be correct in the expression of his meaning. Assuming that Malibran or Patti had ignored the study of solfeggios which instructed the vocal membranes, mouth, tongue and lips how to do their work in the most natural manner, could they ever have become such wonderful singers and met with their wonderful triumphs, which have astonished the world and leave their names imperishable in the history of music?

Most of the celebrated actors were fine elocutionists; we can mention Barton Booth, Thomas Betterton, Spranger Barry, Charles Young, John Philip Kemble, Charles Kemble, Edmund Kean, Charles Kean, James E. Murdock, Ann Oldfield, Mrs. Pritchard, Sarah Siddons, Fanny Kemble, Miss O'Neil, Mrs. Duff and many others, who, by their perfect utterances of the English language and their knowledge of phonology, charmed and

captured their audiences, and made themselves famous.

We thus dwell on the subject of elocution with the hope that it will induce those who propose to adopt the profession, to give the subject their full attention, and by the study of elocution cause the stage to have in the future a less number of mouthers of the English language than it has at the present time.

We frequently go to the theatre and hear words mispronounced. This is done without the slightest regard to the spelling of the word, accentuation or the law of phonetics. They defy the laws of punctuation, and make periods out of every stop, with the exception of the *period*, where they are sure to rise in inflections, and thereby destroy the meaning of the author. Of course, these people expose their ignorance by showing that they have no education in the grammar of their own language, and while they may look personally well upon the stage, from their fine feathers they assume, still the bird can't sing, and, in the speaking of their own language, they are like unto the cawing of a crow; compared to the true elocutionist, whose articulations are like to the warbling utterances of the canary-bird, no matter how rapid in action. Colley Cibber, who was an excellent actor and author, saw Thomas Betterton act, and in his autobiography speaks in the following terms of Betterton's elocution: "Betterton was an actor,

as Shakespeare was an author,—both without competitors,—formed for the mutual assistance of each other's genius! How Shakespeare wrote, all men who have a taste for nature may read and know; but with what higher rapture would he still be read, could they conceive how Betterton played him! Then might they know the one was born alone to speak what the other knew to write! Pity it is that the momentary beauties flowing from a harmonious *elocution*, cannot like those of poetry be their own record; that the animated graces of the player can live no longer than the instant and motion that presents them, or can at best but faintly glimmer through the memory an imperfect attestation of a few surviving spectators. *Could how Betterton spake be as easily known as what he spake, then you might see the muse of Shakespeare in her triumph with all her beauties in their best array rising into real life and charming her beholders.* But, alas! since all this is so far out of description, how can I show you Betterton."

There cannot be a stronger proof of the power of harmonious elocution than the raptures it has lifted an audience into, even when listening to the fustian of an author. There are some passages in Lee's "Alexander the Great," that are almost without sense, yet when spoken by Betterton his audience were excited to thunders of applause. Does this not prove that there is as much

enchantment in the well modulated voice of the actor, as in the words of the author or in the sweet and well governed voice of the great singer? "If I tell you that there was no tragedy for many years more admired than 'Alexander the Great;' it was so more through Betterton's and Barton Booth's refined and masterly elocution than anything the author did for the verse of the tragedy. Such being the case, where then must we look for the success of the tragedy but in the grace and harmony of the actor's utterance? Thus we may see what an irresistible power may arise from a judicious elocution." In the just delivery of poetical measure,—particularly where the sentiments are pathetic,—it is wonderful upon how minute a sound depends the necessary effect for the proper expression.

The voice of the singer is not more dependent upon the *time* and the form of the melody through the means of properly formed *inflections*, than the sense and movement of verse is dependent upon elocution. The touches of accentuations and emphasis arising from a fine elocution, are like the touch of the violinist who is perfectly true to the laws of harmony, which make the forms of melody that aroused the mind and soul to a keen sense of feeling. •

As we have sometimes great composers who cannot sing, we likewise have great writers who cannot read their own lines respectably well. Of

this truth Dryden, one of the best English masters of harmony in verse, is a strong instance. When he undertook to read his play of *Amphytron*, before the actors, at the theatre, it was so poorly done that he destroyed many of the best points in his own composition, and the play came very nearly being refused for the stage. But on the contrary with Mr. Lee, who was so fine an elocutionist of his own lines, which were far inferior to Dryden's, that on one occasion after he had read his play at rehearsal, Mr. Mohun, a celebrated actor, threw down the manuscript of his part and said: "Unless I were able to play it as well as you read it, it were to no purpose, should I undertake it." Cibber further remarks in great admiration of the fine elocution of a young actor by the name of Mounfort, who, though not remarkably handsome, was so graceful and fine in his elocution, that he at once became resistlessly charming. The very tone of his voice suited the thoughts he uttered, and as Dryden says:

" Like flakes of feathered snow,
They melted as they fell."

Ann Oldfield, one of the most beautiful women that ever walked the stage, was celebrated for her elocution. Her voice was sweet, strong, and melodious, and all her utterances were distinct and judicious, and although she was not really a great actress, yet her elocution was so fine that she

was always welcomed by her audiences either in tragedy or comedy.

Davies, in his remarks on Mrs. Cibber, says, that "perhaps her elocution was never surpassed. Yet in her smooth voluble enunciation not a syllable of articulation was lost to the ear—and by this she was a perfect mistress of dramatic eloquence." Mrs. Siddons up to her time surpassed them all in variety of tones and application of proper tones and forms of inflections to the sense of her author. Her voice when she first began as an actress was not strong; in fact so weak that she was always much concerned as to the size of the theatre where she was next to play, but by constant use of the vocal organs she made her voice equal to the capacity of any theatre. Thomas Campbell, who wrote her life, agrees with Cibber as to the power that lie in elocution,—how it puts poetry into action, when there is little or none on the poet's pages.

Matilda Heron was one of the most original actresses that has ever trod the English stage,—we say original, for the reason that she was the first and only actress that ever introduced the French vernacular forms of inflections into the English language. Indeed she was a French actress transformed into an English woman with French thoughts expressed with French qualities of voice, inflections and pauses. She was a French Camille, and so on in every character she ever represented.

In fact had Miss Heron enacted the character of Jane Shore she would have made her English woman with French idioms and slurs of voice peculiarly French. It is the peculiar delicacy, detail, and refinement of the French qualities of sound that give the French actors greater power over their audiences, than the actor of any other peoples, and especially so in tragedy. What Matilda Heron did might be called the introduction of the French school of acting into the English language. However, she is the only person that ever did it, and, while there were many who tried to imitate her, they all failed, for the reason that she was inimitable. It was the same case with Edwin Forrest, whose school of acting was perfectly his own. Because Mr. Forrest was a grand figure, and had a voice with the power of thunder in it, many actors thought all they had to acquire to be equal to the great tragedian was to accumulate fat, learn to bellow like a bull, and thereby sweep the dramatic monarch from his throne.

While we hold that Miss Heron was correct in introducing the French idioms of sounds in *Camille*, she was wrong in introducing them to the character of Nancy Sykes. Nancy was English in every characteristic, and her French inflections did not agree with her English gestures. Besides, English speak more discretely, while the French language in speech has more of the concretes, that is,

forms of sounds that slurs from the last syllable of a word into the first letter of the next word following. The actor, to be correct, should be an Englishman when he represents an Englishman ; Frenchman when he represents Frenchmen, and so on through every nationality, in inflections of voice and gesture.

We are here taking up a little more time on the subject of elocution than, perhaps, the strict object of this book should allow, but we shall be pardoned for our anxiety on the subject, when we tell the reader that the subject of elocution has been so much neglected by the members of the dramatic profession for some time past, that the theatre is rather becoming a place where the public can hear the English language more completely debauched than anywhere else—not as it used to be when scholars went to the theatre, to learn how to talk the English language with grace and correctness.

However, we must not here stop our discourse until we point out the wonderful power of the voice in speech. We mean a good voice, with the quality of melody in it, and used with a knowledge of the proper tonics. The voice is the only phase that has the power to express the unmistakable condition and quality of the *soul* that exists in acting. The power is more demonstrable in tragedy than in comedy. Lady Teazle requires it as a channel only to her playful utterances

of words, but in such a character as Bianca in Millman's tragedy of "Fazio," which comprehends all the subtler conditions of the human heart and soul, the voice must have a quality and culture to express those intense passions of love, the mother, the wife, and the perilous situations that drive the mind to madness, or else the author is not fully interpreted. The voice in speech has more power to express the finer qualities of the soul than either singing or instrumentation. The latter stirs you to admiration only; while the former excites the listener to flowing tears, sobs and even to convulsions. Such is the result emanating only from a mastery of elocution, which acts upon words, and so perfectly assimilates the voice and its articulative touches, that the speaker can cheat the soul out of its tears.

"A good voice," says Emerson, "has as great a charm in speech as in song. The voice, like the face, betrays the nature and disposition, and soon indicates what is the range of the speaker's mind."

A recent writer on the charms of the voice remarks: "It is noted how careful Plutarch was in his enumeration of the ten Greek orators, to speak of the excellence of their voices, and the pains they bestowed in training their voices. Biographers of the elder Pitt are as careful to tell us how happy were the combinations in his voice of sweetness and strength, it having all the silver clearness, which delighted a later generation in Sir William

Follett's, and even when it sank to a whisper, it was distinctly heard."

Of one of Belzac's personages we read: "Sa voix pénétrante remuait les fibres les plus insensibles du cœur." And that may remind us of what Mrs. Opie told Haydon of Byron's voice: "It was such a voice as the devil tempted Eve with; you feared its fascination the moment you heard it." Messinger's virgin martyrs tell Angelo:

"That voice sends forth such music that I never
Was ravished with a more celestial sound."

Apostrophizing the wonders of the human voice, Longfellow, in "Hyperion," "recognizes it as the organ of the soul, which reveals itself only in the voice. The soul of man is audible, not visible."

When Cleopatra is impetuously asking the messenger as to the attractions of Octavia, her rival with Antony, "Didst hear her speak? Is she thrill-tongued or low voiced?" "Madam, I heard her speak, she is low voiced." "That's not good," was Cleopatra's answer. "Frederick the Great," Carlyle says, "had a fine toned voice that was even musical in swearing." "Charles Fox," Mary Metford remarks, "had a voice that was listened to with transport." To Eckermann, the sound of Goethe's voice "was beyond compare. It was alternately thunder with all the round tones, and then the organ minor key."

We could go on and quote from all the great poets and writers of every civilized nation, lines devoted to their admiration for the charms and power that lie in the human voice. But we must conclude by alluding to two actors of remarkable talents, who, had they been possessed of a fine quality of voice, would have had far greater power over their audiences, and left their fame transcendent to the one they have. We allude to William Macready and Charles Kean. Both of these gentlemen were most excellent actors, and had every accomplishment for the stage, with the single exception of elocution. They both had the great fault of uttering their words in the back part of the mouth, in front of the palate, producing a rasping and thick quality of sound, and with it a hesitation in speech, like a stammer. They were also mechanical in their utterances, and while they gave you the blank verse of their authors, yet it was so stiffly measured that it became painful to the ear.

Perhaps no better scholar ever walked the stage than Charles Kean. He was an honored graduate of Oxford. Macready, too, had high claims to scholarship. It always seemed strange to the writer, that these two gentlemen, who were so observant of gesture and all the details of the stage, should have so carefully neglected the culture of the voice, and the great charm that lies in the articulations of the flexible

English language. Their manner of speaking their words with hesitation, frequently interrupted the sense of the authors, thusly,—“t-to-be—er-n-not t-to be, That is—er-the question.” This fault was stronger in Macready than in Kean, and yet, with this bad feature in their acting, they were two of the finest actors that ever trod the English stage. Kean’s last act of Macbeth reached almost to perfection, and Macready’s “Werner,” by Lord Byron, was one of the most classic dramatic renderings that ever graced the stage. We will now conclude our remarks on elocution and the charms of the human voice, by once more calling attention to the wonderful voice-organ possessed by Edwin Forrest. Nature had been most bountiful to him in this respect, and he was, moreover, blessed with the good sense to see and feel the gift of this bounty, and added thereto the industry to cultivate it to the highest condition in his power. He could bend it and twist it into all manner of forms of sounds with as much ease as the skillful artificer can the most flexible piece of wire, and, singular to say, that while Mr. Forrest could not turn a simple tune, he had the ear to discern to the utmost minuteness the musical properties in words—never missed the right key-note, and constantly charmed you with his masterly eloquence, and melody of speech. Now, it is a singular fact that Forrest, with none of the advantages of college education like Macready and

Charles Kean, should show far more scholarship in reading of blank verse than either of the two actors mentioned, not but that they made their listeners understand their author, but did not give or impress their audience with the beautiful and natural finish which Forrest gave to the utterances of either verse or prose, which he produced through his masterly elocution.

Mr. Forrest was an excellent English scholar. He was a good grammarian, logician, and rhetorician, for without these studies how could the actor appreciate the gifts of the deep thinker and elegant writer? He had a sufficient knowledge of the French and German languages to enjoy the reading of the best authors. He wrote an excellent hand, and always wrote to the purpose, and with an eye to brevity. The following letter is introduced to show his autography.

Philadelphia.

Decem.^r 29. 1865.

Gabriel Harrison Esq.

Dear Sir,

Your kind letter
of 22 inst. came duly to hand and
also the photographs of the Shakespeare
Bust, together with the book which
is creditable alike to your taste and
research, and is another graceful
tribute, to that genius, which was
not of an Age, but for all Time.

Many thanks for your kind
remembrance of me, and believe
me very truly and sincerely yours,

Elwin Forrest.

FORREST'S LAST APPEARANCE UPON THE STAGE.

FOR some two or three years previous to his death, Mr. Forrest had given strong evidence that the whole of his once grand fabric was falling to pieces. Less than a year previous to his disease it was thought that he could not recover from an attack of sickness when he was performing the character of Richelieu in Boston, an occasion which was his last appearance upon any stage as an actor.

Shortly after Mr. Forrest's death, I wrote to Mr. James Oakes, who attended Mr. Forrest at the time of his sickness and last appearance, and requested him to give me a true statement of Mr. Forrest's condition on the night in question. The following letters in reply from Mr. James Oakes, written in his off-hand manner, are highly interesting, and possess more value from their simplicity of style than a statement adorned with an effort at rhetoric :

“49 LONG WHARF, }
BOSTON, May 11th, 1873. }

GABRIEL HARRISON, Esq.,

380 Wyckoff Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

My Dear Sir:—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 8th, which came to hand only this morning, it being post-marked 10th inst; and the contents carefully noted. The last time Forrest acted was Tuesday evening, April 3d, 1872, at the *Globe Theatre*, this city; the play was *Richelieu*, on which night he was very ill, and I was with him behind the scenes during the entire performance; and I very much feared he would not be able to get through the play. I led him from his dressing room, with the assistance of his dresser, to the wing, where I had a chair placed for him to sit in, waiting for his cue, during the three last acts, and he was so weak that he was unable to raise himself from the chair, and he would say to me: “Oakes, lift me up, and let me go on!” I would put my arms around his body, and raise him to his feet, when he would in a quick and nervous tone say: “*Steady me; steady me; get me before the audience, my friend, and I will finish the play, but it may be the last!*” Alas! it *was* the *last* time he acted. From the theatre, after the play, I accompanied him to his hotel, where a physician had been summoned, and remained with him day and night without taking my clothes off, until the 24th of April, 1872, *twenty-one days and nights*, as the physician said his life depended more upon nursing than the skill of his physician, and advised that two trained hospital nurses be procured to take charge of him.

Forrest looked earnestly into the face of the physician and said: "I want my friend Oakes to take care of me. If careful nursing will save my life, he will save it." For nearly the whole of this time his life seemed to hang upon a thread. *Virginius* was advertised for the night following *Richelieu*, Wednesday April 4th, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Forrest could be kept in bed when the hour arrived at which he usually went to the theatre to dress; his disease was pneumonia, and after a few days typhoid set in. After about twenty-one or twenty-two days he began to improve, and about the last of April or first of May, he started from Boston to go to Philadelphia, in charge of Mr. McArdle. Upon getting to his home in Philadelphia, he continued to improve in general health for two weeks, with the exception of a slight attack of gout, for which he persisted in taking a patent medicine, that came near killing him; and the last of May, I was sent for by Mr. McArdle to go to Philadelphia, as he thought Forrest very dangerously sick. I went, and, with the exception of about two weeks, remained until August, at which time his health was so good that he decided to give readings the following season, instead of acting. His first reading was in October, in the Academy of Music, Philadelphia, then in New York, and Brooklyn,* and

*Mr. Forrest gave his first and only readings in the City of New York, November 19th and 22d, 1872, at Steinway Hall. The following ladies and gentlemen honored his two readings in New York, by attending in a body, and each wearing a white satin badge with the following inscription in gold:

"In honor of the first public reading in the City of New York of Edwin Forrest, November 19th, Hamlet; November 22d, Othello, 1872. Thomas H. Morrell, J. W. Pointer, Jr., Thomas J. McKee, W. A. Fraser, T. W. Warren, W. F. Hyer, R. H. H. Steel, H. H. Morrell, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Frederickson, A. Toedteberg, Miss Emma Toedteberg, Gabriel Harrison."

We attended both of the readings in New York, but regret to say that they were given to almost empty benches; still, while the forces and delicate nerve touches of the once masterly actor were abated, and not so sensitive to electric action, yet we

returned to Philadelphia. He then came to Boston, and opened, I think, December 2d or 3d, 1872, read "Hamlet" and "Othello." *The last time* was on *Saturday afternoon, the 7th of December, 1872, which was the last time he ever appeared professionally*, and this was in the Tremont Temple, this city. I dined with him that afternoon after the reading, and after dinner accompanied him to the railroad station in season for him to take the 9 o'clock sleeping cars for New York; he was in fine spirits, and as well as I had seen him in two years, apparently; Mr. McArdle was with him. Before parting, he arranged for me to go to Philadelphia, and pass the holidays with him. *This was the last time I ever saw him alive.* He went from New York to Philadelphia on Sunday evening, December 8th, 1872. He died Thursday, December 12th, 1872. The last letter he ever wrote was addressed to me, dated December 11th, 1872, which was mailed for Boston, came here, and remailed to me at Philadelphia, where I finally received it as I stood beside the cold and pulseless body of my friend whose hand penned the letter but a few hours before. During his last engagement in this city, at the Globe, he acted "Lear" and "*Richelieu*."

I remain, very sincerely,
and cordially, yours,

JAMES OAKES."

could see and feel beneath the glimmer of the dull light what had been; yet, for all this, he read Hamlet and Othello enshrined in the garb of profound judgment, and enlightened his listeners with the words of the great dramatist. What matters it, if his audience was not large? The man still was there, that had a thousand times thrilled packed audiences that, by their verdict, had placed his high pedestal in the temple where genius is ever revered.

The greatest of actors and actresses have failed to attract at last, neglected by the public who should worship them for what they have been, and honor them none the less for their age.

“49 LONG WHARF, }
BOSTON, May 12th, 1873. }

MY DEAR MR. HARRISON :

In my hurried letter to you yesterday, when telling you of the last performance of Forrest as an actor, in *Richelieu*, and how very weak he was, I neglected to state that, while sitting at the wing, he was so distressed for breath you could hear him wheeze from the front to the back of the stage, and yet, when I lifted him from his chair to his feet, and *steadied* him to make his entrance, it seemed to me that he *must* drop upon the stage, but, instead of it, the instant he was in sight of the audience, he appeared to be inspired with superhuman strength! It was the *indomitable will* of the dear old fellow that carried him through that night. His physician told me before we left the hotel, that if I saw Forrest getting weaker, to give him a spoonful or two of whiskey at times during the performance. When I asked him to take it, he looked earnestly into my face, and said: “*No! Oakes, if I die on the stage to-night, they will find no rum in me! I will not touch it, even to save my life, and will die with harness on!*”

After the performance, McArdle, his dresser, and myself were compelled to lift him into the carriage, as he was too weak to walk alone; as I told you yesterday. I went with him to his hotel, and was with him night and day for twenty-one days and nights. During this time, his death had been announced twice, I think, in this city. Besides the care of the dear old fellow, I was receiving and answering telegrams from all sections of our country, making inquiries of the state of his health. After he had recovered, he said

to me: "Oakes, you have saved my life this time, and I hope that God, in His Great mercy and goodness, may grant that you may be with me at my last hour, and with your own friendly hands close my eyes!" But, alas! it was not so ordained. Dear, dear, old friend, he died alone!! But, my dear Harrison, why, what is death but life in other forms of being? Life without the coarser attributes of man, the dull and momentarily decaying frame which holds the ethereal spirit in, nay, binds it down to brotherhood with brutes? There is no such thing as death. What's called so is but the beginning of new existence,—a fresh segment in the eternal round of change. It is in *God's Justice*, that those who sincerely love each other here shall meet in a brighter, happier sphere on the "other side!" I wish the dead *could* come back and talk with us.

But, alas! they *do not!* ,

I remain, very sincerely,
and cordially, yours,

JAMES OAKES.

GABRIEL HARRISON, Esq.,
Brooklyn, N. Y."

In some respects, Forrest's last appearance was like Thomas Betterton's, at least so far as sickness and pain are concerned. Betterton was announced to make his last appearance, and went forth from his home writhing in pain from the gout; he is lifted from his coach, carried to his dressing-room, dressed and made ready for the part of Melantius. By loving attendants, he is carried again from his dressing-room to his stage entrance, goes on, and struggles through his

performance. Betterton's exit from the stage was a made occasion; his pain was sustained and made lighter by the fact that the occasion was the most important one of his whole life; all London was there to cheer and make happy the hour. The house was crowded with the choice spirits of learning and beautiful women to give the old warrior a brilliant farewell.

Forrest never in his life, at entrance, or exit of his dramatic career, made a special occasion for himself. His career as an actor was always a success in the numbers of his audience; and the amount of money that rewarded his efforts, came without any of those gushing appeals to the public too often made use of, even by actors of fame and wealth. Of all actors, he was the most independent of public favors, and sought no laudations of the press, but stood upon his merits only. This peculiar condition did not come from any vanity or moroseness of disposition on his part. It resulted from the fact that there seemed to be no necessity for it; no, the last appearance of the American tragedian was not anticipated by crowds of people who went to the theatre to huzza him into retirement. Although sick, he went forth from his home with nothing to uplift him to his task but the ordinary routine of business, duty, simple duty—not glory or profit—urged him to his work, and, in the effort to do his work, he nearly died.

His last season of 1871-72, after he had been

before the public for nearly fifty years, was one that might make proud a much younger and fresher actor. In this his last season, between October 1st and April 14th, he traveled over seven thousand miles, acted in fifty two different places one hundred and twenty-eight nights, and received the profit of \$39,675.47. This great success was gained on the simple announcement of his name; without the assistance of extra scenic effects,—pictures in windows and blazing street-posters. His last appearance upon any stage was a simple event, with a result as uncertain as the shading of to-morrow's sky. Not for extra gain did he go to the theatre that night, nor for an ovation, that would read well upon the pages of his life's history—he went there attended by his friend only, who, with loving hands, helped him to his feet while faint and trembling with weakness, and barely able to fulfill his engagement with his audience. But the strong manhood within him almost challenged death rather than forfeit his word with his audience, and while he was enacting some impassioned scene, did not some still-voice whisper in his ear, amid his agonies of pain and the applause: "This is thy last time!" True, that his death did not come to-morrow, nor to-morrow, yet the morrow soon came, and the writer too soon stood beside the dead body of the greatest actor probably that the world has ever known, and if not the world, yet undeniably the greatest actor of the New World.

FORREST'S DECEASE.

THE death of Mr. Forrest, although sudden, was hardly unexpected. His sickness in Boston, a few months before, was of a nature calculated to shake his constitution severely ; further, he had well-nigh lived out his allotted span of three scores and ten. He was, however, quite competent to attend to his usual avocations up to the very morning of his death. On Wednesday evening he appeared to be in his usual health, and had a pleasant talk with Kate, his old and faithful housekeeper, who had resided with him for twenty-one years, about the dusting of the pictures in his gallery. On this evening he did not retire till eleven o'clock. His breakfast was ready next morning (Thursday) at 8.30, and the bell was rung ; there was no reply. His heavy tread descending the broad stairs as usual, was unheard, and the bell was rung the second time without response. When the faithful Kate entered the library, and proceeded towards Mr. Forrest's bedroom, adjoining it, she heard a strong breathing, and on entering found him stretched across the

bed, lying on his back with one arm hanging over the side of the bedstead. She spoke to him; he could not answer. She then called in his friend, a neighbor, Mr. James Rees ("Colley Cibber"), who summoned a physician, Dr. Corbet, but the great actor was dead before the doctor reached his bedside.

Word was immediately sent to James Oakes, of Boston; to James Lawson, of Yonkers, New York; Gabriel Harrison, of Brooklyn; Daniel Dougherty, Colonel Forney and McMahan, of Philadelphia. It is supposed that the attack of apoplexy came on while he was using the dumb-bells, which he was in the habit of using every morning for a few moments, as he still clasped one in his left hand that rested upon the bed. There was but one picture upon the walls of this room, a life-size portrait of his mother, which hung over the head of his bed.

On the morning of his death, December 12th, 1872, Mr. Rees immediately telegraphed to me that my friend Forrest was no more. I left for Philadelphia, and was at the side of the dead dramatic king by 2 P. M. of the same day. That night, with Oakes, Dougherty and McArdle, we sat up with the dead body still lying upon the couch where the spark of life went out. The first impression the writer felt as we removed the sheet from his placid and manly face, was not the emotion of tears, but: "Here lies King Lear

dead ;—not Forrest—but *Lear*.” The impression was painfully vivid, and I felt every scene as he appeared and acted the part for the last time at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, New York. I could see, too, in the mists of my memory, his Othello, Macbeth, Coriolanus, Damon, Virginius, Metamora, William Tell, Gladiator, Jack Cade, and Richelieu, standing before me, as if they were mourners over the decease of their proudest representative. I felt it an honor to stand in the presence of the noble dead,—an honor to be one of the small group of the living who had enjoyed the privilege of being a dear friend, and a mourner at the shrine of a deceased genius. I could not help thinking, too, and, with contempt, of those critics of the press who, through their gallishness, jealousy, or ignorance, had so often abused the high position of the critic by belying Mr. Forrest as a man and an artist. Of course, other men of genius have been derided and made sport of, but the amount of bitter vituperation that was loaded upon his head, made him an exception to the rule. Yet why should we complain? His worthiness, in every sense, braved the storm, and his fame alike as a man and as an artist is imperishable. Acting as one of the committee to receive guests to the funeral from other cities, I was placed in a position to judge how sincerely his death was regretted by men of letters and genius. There was no paraphernalia about his funeral; it was a simple

preparation that would no more than befit the burial of a private gentleman ; no efforts were made to make the occasion attractive by inviting prominent men to attend the funeral who had never been in sympathy with him or his profession—no displaying of the body in decorated church. It was a simple funeral that harmonized with the words of Antony: "I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him," and yet the occasion was made grand in the extreme, for it was the people's funeral of a people's great actor. They gathered in mass about his late residence, and almost broke in the door, hours before the time of the funeral, in their anxiety to look upon the face for the last time that had so often subdued their hearts and startled their nerves by the power of his dramatic genius. For two hours and forty minutes a constant stream of human beings marched by his coffin, and, as they took their brief last look, they brushed away the tears that obscured their dimmed sight. The scene was one that subdued the heart to profound respect for the dead. All along the route, for over two miles, the sidewalks were lined with people to see the simple exhibition of hearse and sixty carriages. No drums, no flags, no plumed horses drew the masses to the scene. It was the merits of the honorable citizen, and the people's actor, that caused the crowds to stand for hours beneath a gloomy sky, against bleak winds, sleet and rain. The approach to the

church-yard was choked for blocks by dense crowds. The funeral procession had to pause until the guardians of the peace made a narrow way to the narrow house that was to contain all that remained of the tragedian. Unlike Garrick's funeral, there were no stage-tricks and vanities used to make inharmonious the thud of the heavy earth as it fell upon the coffin. No Lords and Dukes, and state-coaches lent glitter to mar the solemnity of the occasion. Everything was sympathetic and truthful.

The following is a notice of the funeral, taken from the Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*, Monday, December 16th, 1872 :

EDWIN FORREST.

THE LAST SAD RITES—SCENES AT THE HOUSE—FLORAL OFFERINGS—
NOTABLES PRESENT—THE PALL BEARERS, ETC., ETC.

To-day the last rites were paid, and the remains of Edwin Forrest placed 'neath the earth whence he sprung. All day yesterday the home of the deceased tragedian, situate at the southwest corner of Broad and Master streets, was the object of many mournful pilgrims, who, whilst they could not gain admittance to the premises, seemed to take some little comfort in gazing at the building wherein the greatest of American actors died.

Last evening the body of Mr. Forrest was carefully dressed in a full suit of black, by his friends, Joseph McArdle and James Oakes, Esq., of Boston, and placed in a black, cloth-covered, silver-mounted casket, the same being literally covered with floral offerings.

Madame Ponisi sent a magnificent cross and wreath from New York. Miss Jane Coombs ordered by telegraph a splendid floral crown. A beautiful wreath was also forwarded from Boston by two young ladies.

During yesterday some fifty special invitations were sent out, which were printed on black-edged paper and enclosed in mourning envelopes. The following is a copy of one of the same :

“DEAR SIR :

You are requested to attend the funeral of the late

EDWIN FORREST,

which will take place on Monday next, December 16th, at 1 o'clock P. M., from his late residence, No. 1346 North Broad street.

December 13th, 1872.”

This morning, at an early hour, the throng of visitors commenced pouring in, and despite the inclement weather the tide kept up until the funeral left the house. The body was laid in state in the rear parlor, or gold room. At the northern end stood a large French plate mirror, and at the other a handsomely carved *étagère*. On the west side stood a piano upon which rested the coffin lid and a handsome black walnut case, enclosed in which was a beautiful representation in ivory of the Crucifixion of Christ. Upon the piano rested a number of floral tributes, amongst them being three crosses of immortelles, one being from Mrs. Jno. W. Forney, another from Mrs. Geo. W. Fairman, and the third from Madame Ponisi. There were also a box of flowers and a handsome crown furnished by persons too modest to affix their cards.

At the head and foot rested the laurel wreaths and japonicas, kindly furnished by Mr. Thos. Mackenzie, florist. The face of the dead looked almost life-like. As the visitors filed in, between two rows of policemen, they marched along

the north side of the hallway into the parlor, around the coffin and out on the south side. There was no vulgar crowding nor any undue manifestation of sorrow, although all seemed deeply impressed with the scene.

THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FUNERAL

were under the direct charge of James Oakes, Esq., Daniel Dougherty, Esq., Jno. W. Forney, James Reese, J. McArdle, and Gabriel Harrison, the latter from Brooklyn. Amongst the floral tributes, a wreath presented by Miss Neilson, the actress, a basket of flowers from T. H. Morrell, of New York, and a crown of flowers from Jane Coombs.

The following named prominent parties had also been specially invited: Jay Cooke, John T. S. Fernon, General Cadwalader, Gabriel Harrison, of Brooklyn, Rev. E. W. Hutter, J. B. McMinn, Dr. Wm. Elder, General Bingham, Geo. Fairman, Chief Justice Thompson, Eli K. Price, Esq., Wm. B. Mann, Esq., Judge Sharswood, Col. Page, Rev. A. J. McConomy, Hon. T. A. Scott, Jno. Rice, Chas. J. Ingersoll, Esq., and Wm. Wheatley.

There were also present: Thos. A. Hall, of the Walnut Street Theatre; T. J. Hemphill, late of the Walnut Street Theatre; Francis A. Duffee, Lewis Morrison, T. H. Morrell, of New York; W. H. Bailey, Lewis Baker, Barton Hill, Charles Walcott, and other members of the profession. The celebrated Count Johannes, of New York, was also noticeable.

Shortly before 2 o'clock

THE RELIGIOUS SERVICES

of the Episcopal Church were conducted by Rev. Mr. Newlin, of the Church of the Incarnation, and Rev. Mr. Boyer, of St. Paul's. At the end thereof the lid was placed upon the coffin, and it was carried out and placed in the hearse, the pall bearers being as follows: Colonel Jno. W. Forney, James Oakes, Esq., James Lawson, Daniel Dougherty, Dr.

Jesse R. Burden, Dr. Jacob Gross, George W. Childs, and Colonel James Page.

Upon the lid of the coffin, upon a silver plate was to be seen the inscription : "Edwin Forrest, born May 9th, 1806—died December 12th, 1872."

THE FUNERAL CORTEGE

moved off in the following order :

Hearse.

Pall Bearers.

Domestics lately employed by deceased.

Lotos Club of New York, headed by Mayor Hall of New York.

Members of the Dramatic Profession.

Citizens generally.

There were about sixty carriages in all, and the affair was conducted in a very unostentatious manner. The funeral procession moved direct to St. Paul's Church, on South Third street, below Walnut street, where the remains were interred without any especial religious ceremonies, other than a simple prayer at the grave.

The most notable feature of the whole sad affair was the scene at the coffin when the domestics of Mr. Forrest's household assembled to take their farewell look at the dead. Reverently they in turn stooped and kissed the cold, marble-like lips, then stood gazing for a few minutes at the one they had loved in life, and then, unable longer to control themselves, hurried away to hide their tears.

"Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust,"

were the few words said, as the body, amid the dead silence of the multitude, was lowered into the vault that contained the remains of the Forrest family, as follows :

William Forrest,	born	1758,	died	1819,	father.
Rebecca Forrest,	“	1763,	“	1847,	mother.
Leaman Forrest,	“	1796,	“	in So. America.	
William Forrest,	“	1800,	“	1834.	
Henrietta Forrest,	“	1798,	“	1863.	
Caroline Forrest,	“	1802,	“	1869.	
Eleanor Forrest,	“	1808,	“	1871.	

The above record is taken from the books of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, standing on Third street, Philadelphia. The vault which contains the bodies is in front of the church, near the sidewalk.

The writer, who was deputed as a committee to see the vault closed,—perhaps, for the last time,—regretted that the tragedian's burial place was not chosen in the grounds of the “Forrest Home,” a place in every way appropriate, and affording opportunity for monumental expression.

In a city like Philadelphia, where all is progress, and where, as it is in all rapidly growing cities,—old land-marks and burial-places are swept away to make room for improvements, the sacred remains of the great actor should be removed at the earliest possible period, while there still remains the dust to mingle with the grounds of the “Home,” and make the place more endearing and hallowed than it can be without them.

EPILOGUE.

What other actor like Forrest, stood
Before great audiences in tragic mood,
Equal to him in grandeur, fire, repose,
Or rival in the magic of that voice which rose,
From softest tenderness to passion's fire,
Entrancing human souls like Orpheus' lyre?
Who else so lived Lear's madness, love and fears,
And drew such torrents of applause and tears?
His Moor, his Damon, and his Richelieu—
Dramatic pictures peerless stand in view,
Like Garrick's Richard, and like Macklin's Jew.
The brilliant orb, alas! has taken its flight—
Leaving deep shadows, where it long shed light—
Yet fleeting shadows, as of vanquished night.

APPENDIX.

THE FORREST HOME.

IN the United States, until the "Forrest Home" was established, there has been no generous institution that provided a refuge for those members of the dramatic profession who suffered absolutely from need. There was an Association in New York entitled the "American Dramatic Fund," founded in 1848, but its principles and means were not far-reaching enough to be of any material help to the profession at large. It had but few members, and to others outside of these the Association was of little or no use. It had an existence of some forty years, and in 1888 concluded to close the concern and divide among the remaining few members whatever amount of cash on hand.

In Philadelphia and Boston there have been and are similar associations, but none of them with breadth of purpose, or a probability of continuance.

A more recent institution has been founded in New York City known as "The Actors' Fund." The objects of this organization come much nearer the necessities of the dramatic profession. The "Actors' Fund" is now doing good work, that cannot fail to be of salutary effect. Its helping hand is extended to hundreds

of the sick, and the poor of the profession. They have founded a beautiful cemetery for their dead, and erected a monument thirty feet high, where all alike may lie memorialized within its peaceful shadows. Of all the members of the profession, none have done more, or taken a greater interest in the establishment of the "Actors' Fund" than Manager A. M. Palmer, of New York.

"The Forrest Home" is of an entirely different character from "The Actors' Fund." It is a Home to all intents and purposes, governed as it were by the whole people, and so conditioned by the bequest, that instead of time interfering with its continuance, it will help it, for the reason that the estate is so situated, that its value must increase and will therefore have the means to sustain the institution in the future.

Besides, an institution founded upon the principles of "The Forrest Home" cannot be looked upon strictly in the light of a charity. It is no more a charity than is a public school or a church. It is a duty of man towards man, and is a Christian and a natural human law to care for those that are unable to care for themselves. Those who partake of the hospitality of "The Forrest Home" are men and women who are left almost alone in the world, and, by their age and sickness, are left without the capacity to earn that self-support which they would most gladly do, were it in their power. None are admitted to the "Home" other than those who have earned a good name as members of the profession.

In conformity with the will, the "Home" was opened for the reception of inmates on the 2d day of October, 1876. The present Board of Managers are Daniel

Dougherty, E. M. Hopkins, Thomas Cochran, Joseph Moore, Jr., Andreus Hartel, and J. Ferd. Zimmerman.

The first Superintendent of the "Home" was Joseph McArdle. A. B. Rue next filled the position, but was not restricted to the office. On May 28th, 1883, Mar-don Wilson was appointed to the position.

In this "Home" all the inmates become, as it were, members of one family. They can enjoy the sunshine of its broad and cultivated grounds. They can nurse the flowers, enjoy a gallery of fine arts to gladden the eye, satisfy the mind with a large and ample library—such as is required to complete and to enrich any well furnished and intellectual home.

"The Forrest Home" is situated in the Twenty-third Ward of Philadelphia, fronting on the old Bristol Turnpike, near Holmesburgh. It consists of a large and well-built mansion, surrounded by twenty acres of lawn, grove and garden. The farm attached to the mansion contains ninety acres, with farm house, barns, and all necessary outbuildings.

"The Home" has a burial lot in North Cedar Hill Cemetery, near Frankford.

The Library contains 7,000 volumes, rich in dramatic works and the best literature. The library, parlors, dining-room, hallways, and bed-rooms, abound with works of art of Mr. Forrest's own selection. Ball's great statue in white marble, representing Mr. Forrest in the character of Coriolanus, adorns the main hall—the entrance to the mansion. The statues of Tragedy and Comedy, that for so many years graced the front of the old Chestnut Street Theatre of Philadelphia—and are proud relics of the illustrious past of the drama, stand on the lawn immediately in

front of the mansion. The great old trees that festoon their graceful foliage over the entrance to the "Home," lend the place a majesty that exhilarates the heart and fills the mind with reverence and respect for the spot that has become the home of the actor.

Everything is kept in most excellent order, and looks as if nothing else were required to make the abode the charming place for peaceful retirement.

It is the first institution of the kind ever devoted to the profession of the stage; and Mr. Forrest, in the provision for this "Home," placed the seal upon the nobility of his own character, and his bright name and lofty fame, that will last as long as philanthropy has a place in the human heart,—as long as the theatre shall remain the centre of human attractions, attended by myriads of delighted spectators.

THE WILL OF EDWIN FORREST.

I EDWIN FORREST, of the city of Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania, do make and publish this my last Will and Testament.

I give, bequeath and devise unto my friends, James Oakes, Esquire, of Boston; James Lawson, Esquire, of New York; and Daniel Dougherty, Esquire, of Philadelphia, all my property and estate, real and personal, of whatsoever description and wheresoever situated, upon the trusts and confidences hereinafter expressed; and I also appoint them my executors to administer my personal estate and bring it into the hands of said trustees; that is to say, upon trust:

First—That they the said trustees, the survivors and survivor of them, shall be authorized to sell all my real estate, at public or private sale, at such times as in their judgment shall appear to be for the best advantage of my estate, excepting from this power my country place, in the Twenty-third Ward of the city of Philadelphia, called "Springbrook," and to convey to purchasers thereof a good title, in fee simple, discharged of all trusts and obligations to see to the application of the purchase moneys; and such purchase moneys, and the proceeds of all the personal

estate, shall be invested in such securities and loans as are made lawful investments by the laws of Pennsylvania, and shall be in the joint names of the trustees under my will. The investments which I shall have made my executors or trustees may retain or change as they may think for the best advantage of my estate.

Secondly—Upon trust, to pay to my two sisters, Carolina and Eleanora, jointly, while both remain single, and to the survivor of them until her marriage or death, which shall first happen, an annuity of six thousand dollars, in equal quarterly payments, in advance, from the date of my decease; and should one marry, then to pay the said annuity of six thousand dollars unto the other until marriage or death, whichever event shall first happen; said annuity, however, not to be a charge upon any real estate which shall be sold, but only upon the proceeds, and upon trust to permit my sisters, and the survivor of them, to use and occupy my country place called “Springbrook,” with the necessary furniture and utensils and stock, until marriage or death as aforesaid, free of all charge for rent, and to take the income and profits thereof; and the said trustees shall pay the taxes thereon, and keep the same in repair.

Thirdly—To take and hold all said property and estate in trust for an institution which they will call “The Edwin Forrest Home,” to embrace the purposes of which I hereinafter give the outlines; which institution shall be established at my country place called “Springbrook,” certainly within twenty-one years after the decease of the survivor of my said sisters, and sooner if found judiciously practicable.

The following is an *outline of my plan* for said "Home," which may be filled out in more detail by the Charter and By-Laws.

ARTICLE I. The said Institution shall be for the support and maintenance of Actors and Actresses, decayed by age, or disabled by infirmity, who if natives of the United States shall have served at least five years in the theatrical profession; and if of foreign birth shall have served in that profession at least ten years, whereof three years, next previous to the application, shall have been in the United States; and who shall in all things comply with the laws and regulations of the "Home," otherwise be subject to be discharged by the Managers, whose decision shall be final.

ARTICLE II. The number of inmates in the "Home" shall never exceed the annual net rent and revenue of the Institution; and after the number of inmates therein shall exceed twelve, others to be admitted shall be such only as shall receive the approval of the majority of the inmates as well as of the Managers.

ARTICLE III. The said corporation shall be managed by a Board of Managers, seven in number, who shall in the first instance be chosen by the said trustees, and shall include themselves so long as any of them shall be living, and also the Mayor of the city of Philadelphia for the time being; and as vacancies shall occur, the existing Managers shall, from time to time, fill them, so that, if practicable, only one vacancy shall ever exist at a time.

ARTICLE IV. The Managers shall elect one of their number to be the President of the Institution; appoint

a Treasurer and Secretary, Steward, and Matron, and if needed, a Clerk; the said Treasurer, Secretary, Steward, Matron and Clerk subject to be at any time discharged by the Managers; except the Treasurer, the said officers may be chosen from the inmates of the "Home;" and the Treasurer shall not be a Manager, nor either of his sureties. The Managers shall also appoint a Physician for the "Home."

ARTICLE V. Should there be any failure of the Managers to fill any vacancy which may occur in their Board for three months, or should they in any respect fail to fulfill their trust according to the intent of my Will and the Charter of the Institution, it is my will that upon the petition of any two or more of said Managers, or of the Mayor of the city, the Orphans' Court of Philadelphia County shall make such appointments to fill any vacancy or vacancies, and all orders and decrees necessary to correct any failure or breach of trust, which shall appear to said Court to be required, as in case of any other testamentary trust, so that the purposes of this charity may never fail or be abused.

ARTICLE VI. The purposes of said "Edwin Forrest Home" are intended to be partly educational and self-sustaining, as well as eleemosynary, and never to encourage idleness or thriftlessness in any who are capable of any useful exertion. My library shall be placed therein in precise manner as now it exists in my house in Broad street, Philadelphia. There shall be a neat and pleasant theatre for private exhibitions and histrionic culture. There shall be a picture gallery for the preservation and exhibition of my collection of engravings, pictures, statuary, and other works

of art, to which additions may be made from time to time, if the revenues of the Institution shall suffice. These objects are not only intended to improve the taste, but to promote the health and happiness of the inmates, and such visitors as may be admitted.

ARTICLE VII. Also as a means of preserving health, and consequently the happiness, of the inmates, as well as to aid in sustaining the "Home," there shall be lectures and readings therein, upon oratory and the histrionic art, to which pupils shall be admitted upon such terms and under such regulations as the Managers may prescribe. The garden and grounds are to be made productive of profit as well as of health and pleasure, and, so far as capable, the inmates not otherwise profitably occupied shall assist in farming, horticulture, and the cultivation of flowers in the garden and conservatory.

ARTICLE VIII. "The Edwin Forrest Home" may also, if the revenues shall suffice, embrace in its plan lectures on science, literature and the arts; but preferably oratory and the histrionic art, in manner to prepare the American citizen for the more creditable and effective discharge of his public duties, and to raise the education and intellectual and moral tone and character of actors, that thereby they may elevate the drama, and cause it to subserve its true and great mission to mankind, as their profoundest teacher of virtue and morality.

ARTICLE IX. "The Edwin Forrest Home" shall also be made to promote the love of liberty, our country, and her institutions, to hold in honor the name of the great Dramatic Bard, as well as to cultivate a taste and afford opportunity for the enjoyment

of social rural pleasures. Therefore there shall be read therein, to the inmates and public, by an inmate or pupil thereof, the immortal Declaration of Independence, as written by Thomas Jefferson, without expurgation, on every Fourth day of July, to be followed by an oration under the folds of our National flag. There shall be prepared and read therein before the like assemblage, on the birthday of Shakespeare, the twenty-third of April in every year, an eulogy upon his character and writings, and one of his plays, or scenes from his plays, shall, on that day, be represented in the theatre. And on the first Mondays of every June and October the "Edwin Forrest Home" and grounds shall be opened for the admission of ladies and gentlemen of the theatrical profession, and their friends, in the manner of social picnics, when all shall provide their own entertainments.

The foregoing general outline of my plan of the Institution I desire to establish, has been sketched during my preparations for a long voyage by sea and land, and, should God spare my life, it is my purpose to be more full and definite; but should I leave no later Will or Codicil, my friends, who sympathize in my purposes, will execute them in the best and fullest manner possible, understanding that they have been long meditated by me and are very dear to my heart.

They will also remember that my professional brothers and sisters are often unfortunate, and that little has been done for them either to elevate them in their profession or to provide for their necessities under sickness or other misfortunes. God has favored my efforts and given me great success, and I would make my fortune the means to elevate the education of

others, and promote their success and to alleviate their sufferings, and smooth the pillows of the unfortunate in sickness, or other disability, or the decay of declining years.

These are the grounds upon which I would appeal to the Legislature of my native State, to the Chief Magistrate of my native city, to the Courts and my fellow-citizens to assist my purposes, which I believe to be demanded by the just claims of humanity, and by that civilization and refinement which spring from intellectual and moral culture.

I, therefore, lay it as a duty on my trustees to frame a bill which the Legislature may enact as and for the charter of said Institution, which shall ratify the Articles in said outline of plan, shall authorize the Mayor of the city to act as one of its Managers, and the said Court to exercise the visitatorial jurisdiction invoked ; and prevent streets from being run through so much of the "Springbrook" grounds as shall include the buildings and sixty acres of ground. Such a charter being obtained, the corporation shall be authorized, at a future period, to sell the grounds outside said space, the proceeds to be applied to increase the endowment and usefulness of the "Home." And so far I shall not have built to carry out my views, I authorize the said Managers, with consent of my sisters, or survivor of them, having a right to reside at "Springbrook," to proceed to erect and build the buildings required by my outline of plan, and towards their erection apply the income, accumulated or current, of my estate. And should my sisters consent, or the survivor of them consent, in case of readiness to open the "Home," to remove therefrom, a

comfortable house shall be procured for them elsewhere, furnished, and rent and taxes paid, as required in respect to "Springbrook," at the cost and charge of my estate, or of the said corporation, if then in possession thereof. Whensover the requisite charter shall be obtained, and the corporation be organized and ready to proceed to carry out its design, then it shall be the duty of said trustees to assign and convey all my said property and estate unto the said "Edwin Forrest Home," their successors and assigns forever; and for the latter to execute and deliver, under the corporate seal, a full and absolute discharge and acquittance forever, with or without auditing of accounts by an auditor of the Court, as they may think proper, unto the said executors and trustees.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this fifth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-six.

EDWIN FORREST. [SEAL.]

Signed, sealed, declared and published as and for his last Will and Testament by Edwin Forrest, in our presence, who at his request and in his presence, and in presence of each other, have hereunto set our hands as witnesses thereto.

ELI K. PRICE,
H. C. TOWNSEND,
J. SERGEANT PRICE.

WHEREAS, I, Edwin Forrest, of the city of Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania, having made and duly executed my last Will and Testament in writing, bearing date the fifth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-six, now I do hereby declare this present writing to be as a Codicil to my said Will, and direct the same to be annexed thereto and taken as a part thereof.

And I do hereby give and bequeath unto my friend James Lawson, Esq., of the city of New York, the sum of five thousand dollars.

And, also, to my friend Daniel Dougherty, Esq., the sum of five thousand dollars.

And, also, to my beloved friend Miss Elizabeth, sometimes called Lillie Welsh, eldest daughter of John R. Welsh, broker, of Philadelphia, the sum of five thousand dollars.

And, also, to my friend S. S. Smith, Esq., of Cincinnati, Ohio, the sum of two thousand dollars.

And, also, to the benevolent society called the Actors' Order of Friendship, "the first one of that name established in Philadelphia," I will and bequeath the like sum of two thousand dollars.

In Witness Whereof, I, the said Edwin Forrest, have to this Codicil set my hand and seal, this fifth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-six.

EDWIN FORREST. [SEAL.]

Published and declared as a Codicil to his Will, in our presence, by E. Forrest, who in his presence and at his request have signed as witnesses in presence of each other.

ELI K. PRICE,
H. C. TOWNSEND,
J. SERGEANT PRICE.

WHEREAS, I have this day, October 18th, 1871, provided my friend James Oakes with an annuity of twenty-five hundred dollars during his life, I have erased from this Codicil and do revoke the five thousand dollars' legacy to him, and now do bequeath the said sum of five thousand dollars intended for James Oakes, to my beloved friend Miss Elizabeth, sometimes called Lillie Welsh, eldest daughter of John R. Welsh, broker, of Philadelphia. This five thousand dollars is to be given in addition to the sum of five thousand dollars already bequeathed to the said Miss Welsh, making in all to her the gift of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

In Witness Whereof, I set my hand and seal.

EDWIN FORREST. [SEAL.]

Witnesses present at signing:

GEO. C. THOMAS,
J. PAUL DIVER.









