



FAMOUS
AMERICAN ACTORS
OF
TODAY

Edited by

CHARLES E. L. WINGATE

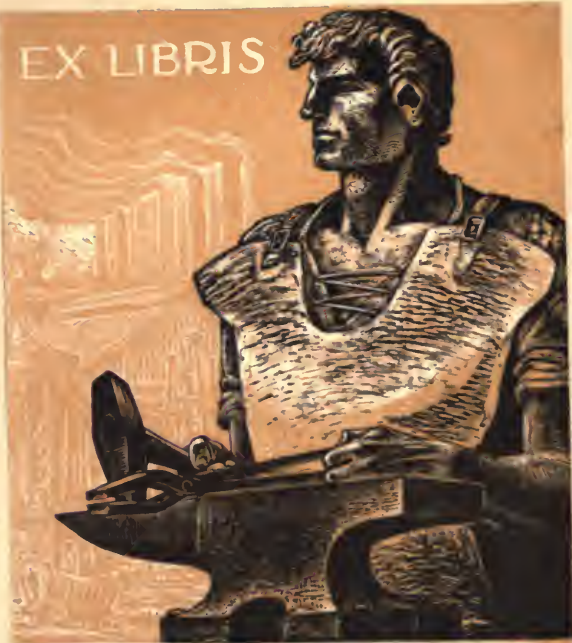
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F. E. MCKAY



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JOSEPH JEFFERSON AS RIP VAN WINKLE
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FAMOUS
AMERICAN ACTORS
OF
TO-DAY

EDITED BY
FREDERIC EDWARD MCKAY
AND
CHARLES E. L. WINGATE

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS

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P R E F A C E.

THIS volume is not designed for the use of theatrical people alone. Inasmuch as the various chapters are written by authors who are recognized as authorities upon the subjects coming under their pens, as well as writers experienced in pleasing the public, it is hoped that the book will fill a helpful corner in the biographical department of home libraries, while at the same time it acquaints general readers with the careers and methods of work of our American actors.

Although the theatre has existed in this country for a century and a half, and in these later days has flourished wonderfully, the literature of the stage is meagre. Of histories there are none that cover the entire period; of biographical works there are very few, and none that deal, after the manner of this volume, with any considerable number of contemporaneous actors. The central idea of "Famous American Actors of To-day" is to bring before the reader each noted player as he is viewed by a writer who either has known the actor personally, or has made an es-

pecial study of his professional work. In this way there is produced, with varied characteristic style, a series of reliable biographies and accurate criticisms out of the routine order.

The idea of the book was conceived by Mr. McKay, and the carrying out of the project was enthusiastically assisted by all the contributors. The time of "to-day" was limited (with one exception) to the decade just closing. The order of arrangement of the essays is purely artificial, and is not intended to indicate rank of any kind. First, the long-established stars are presented; then the younger stars, with the notable stock actors; then the special character comedians.

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JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

BY EDWARD KING.

DISTINCTION and repose are the salient features in that delightful artistic temperament which has given to Joseph Jefferson so prominent a place in the front rank of his contemporaries, and leaves him, at the close of more than half a century of active work on the stage, one of the most popular of our actors. Edmond Scherer, in writing of George Eliot, somewhere says that there is no art without reflection; but that reflection is nevertheless the most dangerous enemy of art. If we had not the ample assurances contained in Mr. Jefferson's entertaining biography that he has made every one of his important impersonations the subject of careful reflection, we should still have learned the fact from the nature of his work. He has known how to reach and keep the golden mean between the reflective mood which obtrudes upon art, and that which gives it the truth without which it is valueless.

The touching of this golden mean is a sure indication that Mr. Jefferson possesses genius. It is genius alone which has enabled him to invest certain types with a distinction which they did not originally possess. It is genius alone by means of which he wrought

out the subtle pathos of Rip Van Winkle, a character which crystallized in his mind, according to his own confession, very much as all the finer literary creations of great authors crystallize. And it is genius which has given him the secret of that repose in art so sought after, and so rarely attained, by all dramatic artists of merit in our generation. We are wont to speak of a person of Mr. Jefferson's acquirements as a "finished" artist; and when we thus indicate that he has reached the limits of perfection in his art, we mean that the originality which furnishes distinction, and the repose which makes the originality impressive, are apparent in all that he does.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Mr. Jefferson's genius is that it developed steadily for a long number of years under what might be described as adverse circumstances. The wandering life of barnstorming, drifting along the currents of great rivers, and giving Thespian performances on flatboats and steamers, or following, as in Mexico, the fortunes of an army, gave admirable opportunities for observation, but did not offer that attrition, that constant submission to critical audiences, which in most countries is thought necessary to the formation of correct dramatic taste. For a long term of years the commercial value of his art was of necessity foremost in the young actor's mind. He rose by the slowest of gradations, from the tiny child who danced Jim Crow, to the aspiring young man who saw a chance for fame in the carving out of Asa Trenchard, as an American type to stand the test of time. Behind him was an ancestry of actors, and on his mother's side he was allied to the lively nation which has always

been pre-eminent in theatrical art. He met and acted with and studied most of the actors and actresses prominent in his youth.

But these were not advantages sufficient to have given him his present post of honor, had he possessed merely talent. The apprenticeship of poverty, and the vagrant life of the adventurous actor, served to discipline his genius until he knew exactly in which channels his energy would be best directed; and then he achieved fame, no longer by slow paces, but by leaps and bounds.

I can think of no other eminent comedian to whom Mr. Jefferson may more fitly be compared than to M. Got, save that I should be inclined to deny to the latter the same fine degree of genius perceptible in Mr. Jefferson's temperament. The dean of the great company of the *Comédie Française* had a very different youth from the creator of Rip Van Winkle. While the American actor was acting in raw country towns, and making long journeys from one farming community to another, the Frenchman was studying at the College Charlemagne, getting a little experience of the civil service; and finally entering Provost's class at the Conservatoire, where he had to put forth every atom of talent to secure the second, and finally the first prize for comedy.

The only rough life which he saw was in a year's compulsory service in the army in time of peace. With the exception of this single year, he was from tender youth up in the midst of a brilliant and highly polished society, where talent was the rule rather than the exception; and for fully fifty years he acted steadily at the first theatre in the world. The mere

fact of being thus steadily anchored in the centre of a great cosmopolitan capital where chances for observation are almost infinite, and come to him daily without the smallest disturbance of the even tenor of his life, would seem of immense advantage to the French actor.

Yet while he has acted a great many more types, he has founded none which surpass in natural humor and pathos those to be found in Mr. Jefferson's repertory. He has cultivated no superior qualities of voice, presence, or gesture. If Mr. Jefferson were to-day to have provided for him a succession of plays, as good from both the literary and dramatic standpoint as those in which M. Got has had the honor of appearing, he would stand fully abreast of him, and there are delicate qualities in which he would excel him.

The force of genius has enabled the American to draw from inferior opportunity and surroundings a series of results quite as brilliant as any single ones which are the outcome of M. Got's exceptional training. There is a weird and tender charm in Mr. Jefferson's Caleb Plummer to which the distinguished professor of the great institution where France's best dramatic artists are trained can never hope to attain. And while M. Got, as he descends with measured step into the mellow vale of fourscore years, manifests a decided tendency to preach in his *rôles*, thus divesting them of much of their dramatic force, Mr. Jefferson remains at less than seventy untouched by mannerisms, and as sprightly and gracious in the elder comedy as he is quaint, shrewd, and original in the peculiar American types with which his name and fame are so closely associated.

Does he think that his art has been in any degree hindered or narrowed by the constant travel and the modern system of "combination companies," of which he found himself forced to be one of the pioneers? On this point he expresses himself only with marked reserve. In one paragraph of his autobiography he remarks that "it is the freshness, the spontaneity, of acting which charms. How can a weary brain produce this quality? Show me a tired actor, and I will show you a dull audience." This would indicate his dislike of the system which drags a company over two or three States in a week, and brings them now and then to the interpretation of a brilliant comedy, demanding utmost verve and *brio*, at the close of an exhausting journey. "Yet," he adds, "the systems by which the talents of actors became distributed to-day are adapted to the growth of the country." It would seem as if in this little phrase Mr. Jefferson had embodied an unconscious condemnation of the "system" to which he has been compelled to submit, but which, had he not possessed positive genius, might have caused the wreck of his artistic career.

It is always a grave thing to claim the possession of genius for any living artist, literary or dramatic; and the great multitude which, in Mr. Jefferson's case, is already more than half persuaded, usually demands some proof in support of the assertion. In the present case there is abundant material for the support of the claim; and it is to be found not merely in romantic and picturesque *rôles* like Rip Van Winkle, but in smaller and more Meissonier-like studies with which the galleries of his repertory are hung.

Mr. Jefferson had excellent opportunities of study

which have been denied to some of his contemporaries; and he improved them to the utmost from the earliest period when he began to feel originality stirring within him. He had encountered all that was best in the acting talent of his day before he struck out a single new creation from the quartz of his own observation; and it is enormously to his credit that he borrowed no traits, no mannerisms, no eccentricities, from any of the great players. He studied their knowledge of the stage and made it his, but it would have been repulsive to him to copy from them.

Meantime he was accumulating a vast fund of curious observation of typical phases of human nature, with which he was ready to enrich any creation the hazard of the stage might allow him to present. It is of no special consequence to us that the elder Booth taught him to play Marrall in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," save that it shows what good technical training he received. But it is intensely interesting to trace the blossoming of such a charming, fresh, and original character as Asa Trenchard from the knowledge of Yankee types obtained during a wide experience of travel, when those types stood out in bold relief, because they were strongly contrasted with the Western and Southern types most frequent in the regions covered by the youthful actor's theatrical tours.

Mr. Jefferson acquired no sectional hobbies in the matter of dramatic art, and apparently no prejudices against any particular style of plays except bad ones. While his first thought was to make a popular bill, it is certain that he would with difficulty have consented to any of the extraordinary horse-play which has been introduced on the stage to-day, and which constitutes

a veritable assault upon dramatic art. The stock companies with which he had the privilege of associating at Southern theatres and in Philadelphia would not have tolerated any tendency to what the French call "the over-charging of rôles." Their taste was still pure, because it was based upon a genuine reverence for their art, and a love for all its noble and dignified traditions. Ineffective they may at times have been; grotesque now and then because of some failure of scenic resources or improper rehearsal; but wilfully clownish, never!

The invasion of the domain of high comedy and melodrama by the farce and the *bouffonnerie* of the country fair was not even dreamed of when Mr. Joseph Jefferson, a young actor who had but recently attained his majority, was engaged to act "first comedy" under the stage management of Mr. John Gilbert, at the Chestnut-street Theatre in Philadelphia. It was there that he first undertook the important part of Doctor Pangloss, which has since been a source of delight to hundreds of thousands in his enthusiastic audiences; and the picture which he has given of himself, gravely taking lessons in Latin pronunciation that he might correctly give the quotations which the learned doctor was so fond of retailing, and at the same time learning what the quotations meant in the vernacular, is at once amusing and instructive for the student of his career.

Although his originality had not been specially noted at the time of his Baltimore engagement in 1853, we may be sure that the young actor who held his own so well in a company made up of Wallacks, Davenport, Murdochs, Placides, and Adamses, felt his own power, and awaited with confidence the hour of its public rec-

ognition. The actors of the younger generation, as they contemplate with astonishment and a delight with which there may be a slight blending of envy, the ease, polish, and wonderful adornment of Mr. Jefferson's various rôles in the elder comedy, and especially the distinction which characterizes even the smallest of them, must reflect sorrowfully that there are no longer any such chances for learning the real traditions of the rôles as was afforded him. What they learn from him will be clear gain of artistic advancement; but let them beware of original conceptions in classical comedy. Mr. Jefferson himself has left it on record that it is "dangerous to engraft new fashions upon old forms."

The rising actor found his imagination stimulated by constant meeting with capable actors in good resident stock companies. As the painter who lives in an atmosphere saturated with art, where the picturesque is to be found at every street corner, and the attrition of artistic comradeship abounds, finds a constant and unfailing stimulus which he would miss were he to go to more prosaic surroundings, so the actor absorbed from a hundred minds new and varying views of each histrionic effort. What a vast advantage over the career of the rising actor of to-day, playing one part scores and scores of times in succession, and using up his energy and time in uncongenial travel between the performances!

In his twenty-eighth year, Mr. Jefferson was engaged as leading comedian at Laura Keene's theatre in New York City, and made his first bow on the western side of the metropolis in "The Heir-at-Law." The local critics who accused him on the morning of his *début* of "gagging" the character of the renowned Dr. Pan-

gloss have since been the objects of the actor's attention. Mr. Jefferson points out that most of the old comedies are "filled with traditional introductions good and bad," and that a dramatic artist is as much at liberty to use one set as another. He further implies that the critic is hardly excusable for not being familiar with the text of all these introductions and interpolations.

Whatever may have been this early New York verdict on Mr. Jefferson's Dr. Pangloss, there was nothing but praise from the great majority of critics and auditors when he appeared as Asa Trenchard in "Our American Cousin." Tom Taylor certainly struck an original note in the play, and by paying, possibly, an unconscious homage to the national character, gave it strong chances for popular approval. Yet the play might have slept in manuscript until this day had not a fortunate accident brought it to the attention of Laura Keene's business manager, who read it, liked it, and handed it to Mr. Jefferson for his verdict.

Real genius generally recognizes its opportunity, and this proved true in the case of Mr. Jefferson. He tells us that it was the chance for developing the attitude of early love, for impersonating the enthusiasm and *gaucherie* of a boyish passion, with all the occasions it would give for refined comical effects, that first attracted him to Asa Trenchard. But it is probable that the attraction was also due to other things, — and especially to his recognition of his own possession and mastery of all the details necessary for clothing Asa with flesh and blood and with abundant Yankee humor. The man awaited the revealing *rôle*, and chance placed the revealing *rôle* in his hand.

But Mr. Jefferson did not create Asa Trenchard

as Mr. Sothern built up Lord Dundreary, and as Frédéric Lemaître, long before him, had built up Robert Macaire on the Paris stage,—by making it an eccentricity. He made it a real study from life, and the charmed audiences hailed the “truth to nature” with tumultuous applause. I can think of no other Yankee type so ingenuous and interesting in our literature, unless it be the half-forgotten one of Israel Potter, due to the skilful hand of the late Herman Melville. Mr. Jefferson’s fine sense of art appeared in the “make up” of Asa, as well as in the masterly way in which the energetic shrewdness of the Yankee was developed; and the swift directness of the love-scene in the opening of the last act has served as a prototype for many lesser scenes, handled by lesser actors, for nearly a generation since that night in Laura Keene’s theatre.

It is curious that in this play Mr. Jefferson should have found a situation ready to his hand calculated to bring out his strong qualities of fixing the attention by a kind of magnetic emphasis. It is that in which he is telling the English girl with whom he is in love the tale of his uncle’s death in America. While relating the story he asks the girl’s permission to light a cigar, and does in fact light it with a paper taken from his pocket,—his uncle’s will, made in his favor, and disinheriting the girl. The amount of good acting necessary to bring the fine heroism of this situation home to the hearts of an audience can be appreciated only when one has seen the *rôle* in the hands of an incapable comedian. Mr. Jefferson’s magnetism and repose in art give it a charm and fascination which no one else could impart to it.

This quality of charm in repose — I mean without any makeshift expedients of voice or gesture — is so much a part of Mr. Jefferson's identity that it is noticeable off the stage in his daily intercourse with his friends. This is not usually the case with actors, nor with people of the creative temperament in letters or in art. The author may be magnetic in his books and repellent and unsympathetic in his conversation. The lovely enthusiasm which casts a halo round an impersonation from Shakespeare may have vanished at the supper-table, leaving the actor cold and dark. But this could never be true of Mr. Jefferson, the delightful quaintness of whose humor alone would be enough to redeem him from such a charge. He has a way of investing even the simplest incidents of life with a whimsical charm and grace which give them double value. I remember hearing him tell, at a breakfast party in Louisville, some years ago, a little story of his visit to a learned pig at a country fair. Neither of the Coquelins could have exceeded him in the quaintness of the plain effects by which he brightened his story; and the climax, when assuming his grand air of repose he calmly and slowly said, "I assure you that the animal could read! It — was — be-wil-dering!" was remarkable. The mere enunciation of the words served to set the company into convulsions of laughter.

After a brief experience of "starring," into which the young actor had been tempted by his success as Asa Trenchard, and by the gradual rise of his reputation for the last ten years, Mr. Jefferson went to the New Winter Garden, where Dion Boucicault sat enthroned upon heaps of adaptations from foreign authors, and there he began another artistic career of

great merit. It was there that he gave to the world his impersonation of Caleb Plummer, in the play of "Dot," or "The Cricket on the Hearth."

This exquisite creation, so beautiful and touching that it is enough of itself to guarantee an actor's fame, was justly regarded as a far more convincing proof of Mr. Jefferson's greatness than Asa Trenchard. It was conceived in a mood of exalted pathos, and so high was its key that Boucicault rudely cautioned the young actor against having "nothing left for the end of the play." This remark indicates that the veteran adapter had not at that time learned to appreciate the largeness of Jefferson's scope. When he came to give the benefit of his experience to the reconstruction of "Rip Van Winkle," years afterwards, in London, he made no such remarks. He knew then that he was in the presence of a master.

Caleb Plummer had been an experiment, and a daring one, for an actor who was associated in the public mind with comic *rôles*. But it was completely successful. The homely and tender poetry of Caleb's character touched every heart. The delicious quaintness of the rags and tatters, the inimitable hitch in the walk, the clasped hands, the appealing looks, the quavering voice, were all creations; everything was new; nothing was vulgar; the glow of genius was over the whole. Here was Dickens's eccentric eloquence upon the stage, but to it was added the nameless —

"Light that never was on sea or land."

A long step forward had been taken. The actor who can make the public laugh with him enjoys but an uncertain tenure of its affections. He who can make

the public both laugh and weep has hooked it to him with bands of steel. M. Got as the old servant in "*La Joie Fait Peur*," Mr. Jefferson as Caleb in "The Cricket on the Hearth," have been very close to the hearts of the playgoers of this generation, who would not thus have cherished them had they seen them only in merrier and hollower rôles.

Next came the thoroughly American play of "The Octoroon," which at the time of its production was full of food for angry discussion. Boucicault sketched in masterly outlines the characteristics of North and South, and with a subtle skill for which he has never been sufficiently praised he painted half a dozen thoroughly typical Northern and Southern characters. If Salem Scudder lacked the rounded ripeness, the consummate grace, the Rembrandt-like effects of light and shade to be found in Caleb Plummer, it abounded in manly sentiment delivered with caustic humor, in an almost pre-Raphaelitic distinctness of sectional portrayal; and a grand sympathetic undertone of freedom ran through it. In point of minuteness of detail it must yield to many other characters in Mr. Jefferson's repertory, but in naturalness it yields to none. Salem Scudder might be a townsman of the mythical author of the "Biglow Papers." His wit is as sharp, his utterance of it as sententious, as that of the immortal Hosea. The actor who created Salem Scudder is gifted with imagination as well as with experience, observation, and originality.

It is the imaginative tinge in Mr. Jefferson's temperament which left him discontented with all rôles in which he appeared until he stumbled upon "Rip Van Winkle." I use the word stumbled respectfully:

the accidental perusal of Irving's "Sketch-Book," while reposing on the fragrant hay in the old barn in Paradise Valley, was the turning-point in the actor's life.

The image of the quaint Dutch-American vagabond arose in his mind at first faint, then clear and distinct. There is no finer testimony to the originality of his artistic sense than is to be found in the fact that he borrowed so little from the old versions of the plays of "Rip Van Winkle" which had been acted by his father, or by the renowned Hackett, or by Burke. And the proof that the image of Rip sprang into his mind with that spontaneous quickness which marks the genesis of all immortal artistic creations, is to be found in the energetic manner in which Mr. Jefferson at once went to work to build up Rip's wardrobe without having written a single line of his play. He looked over the old dramatic versions of the weird story, and rejected all that gave a distinctly melodramatic tinge to it. Then he built it up, bit by bit, in realistic fashion.

The wonderful force of the impersonation is due to the adroit manner in which the realistic and romantic are contrasted. Now they almost meet and touch, and the spectators hold their breaths as the dusky wing of the supernatural appears above the luminous scene; now they travel on parallel lines, and now stand out in full relief, opposed to each other. The same felicitous skill in dealing with the ghostly and unknown, the same recognition of human limitations even in presence of the superhuman which mark Hamlet as the work of genius, are perceptible in the reclothing of the legendary vagabond of the Hudson's banks with flesh and blood. The difference is only in degree.

In a passage in "The Life and Letters of Washing-

ton Irving," the great author has recorded the pleasure which he derived from seeing Mr. Jefferson play a part in one of the old comedies at Laura Keene's theatre; and he mentioned the resemblance of the young actor to his father in look and gesture. If the writer of "The Sketch-Book" had been able to foresee the enormous popularity which a simple sketch of his would receive, thanks to the exertions of that young actor, how his heart would have throbbed with gratitude and pride!

Mr. Jefferson has told us that his aim in creating Rip Van Winkle was to have a *rôle* in which laughter and tears were closely allied, and he hit the mark. He hit it so well that the last scenes of the play might be acted in pantomime before foreign audiences and the result would be the same,—the people would laugh and weep with him. It is not strange that, having found this *rôle* so perfectly adapted for producing the effects best suited to his genius, he should have clung to it for years, to the exclusion of others, and should have carried it triumphantly around the world.

Yet the actor had not infused into the first draft of his play quite enough of the purely human, as contrasted with the superhuman, interest; and his first performance of the *rôle* in Washington told him so. The audiences were delighted, but the actor still sighed for something to make the picture complete. This was furnished him by the skilful hand of Dion Boucicault, when, in 1865, Mr. Jefferson arrived in London from Australia, and determined to introduce Rip and himself at the same time to English audiences.

The Royal Adelphi swung the door wide open to receive him. On Sept. 30, 1865, Mr. Jefferson, who

had been nearly five years away from home, in Australia and in long sea voyages, brought out a new and improved version of the play. The success was instantaneous. London furnished sympathetic audiences for one hundred and seventy nights in succession before "Rip Van Winkle" was withdrawn from the boards.

In England the illusion of the theatre is still more powerful, especially with the middle and lower classes, than in this country. People give themselves freely to laughter and tears; they hiss the villains, applaud the display of virtue, and are ready to lend a hand in defence of the innocent and oppressed. For Rip Van Winkle their sympathies were so thoroughly aroused that when, in the closing scenes, their imaginations were excited by the spectacle of the sublime old vagabond—victim of the dark sorcery of the spirits of the mountains—struggling out from his enchanted sleep, and returning, like a dead man from his grave, among the living, they burst into passionate weeping. No grander triumph was ever achieved by an American actor than by Mr. Jefferson during the London run of "Rip Van Winkle."

I once asked a distinguished French critic what he thought of Mr. Henry Irving. He answered that Irving got effects which were quite unknown on the French stage by his eloquent silences, and by the impressive manner in which he "posed" in an attitude. He said that he had been particularly struck with this quality in "Louis the Eleventh." Mr. Jefferson has even in greater degree than Mr. Irving, and without any of the latter's mannerisms, this faculty of impressing an audience by his simple attitude, without uttering

a work or making a gesture. It would be easy to cite a dozen cases of this kind from "Rip Van Winkle."

It is by his purely American creations that Mr. Jefferson's claim to lasting fame is established. Sprightly as he may be in the elder comedy, we enjoy far less the spectacle of his appearance in a play by Sheridan, which he has ventured to curtail to suit modern notions of theatre-going, than in those *rôles* peculiarly his own. It is not without regret, too, that we reflect on the priceless services to dramatic art which he might have rendered had he been surrounded by a brilliant stock company, and permanently engaged at one metropolitan theatre for the last twenty years. But it is idle to cavil at a lack for which the recent organization of theatrical business is alone responsible.

The gracious personality of Joseph Jefferson is held in highest respect by all Americans. The shrewd and comely face lighted by keen humorous eyes, the form still alert although years weigh on it, the sympathetic voice, the magnetic look of the great actor, are in the memories of millions. And whether he is reposing in his luxurious home among the moss-hung live oaks of Louisiana, or breathing the salt breeze on the Massachusetts coast, or making a professional tour westward, he is always surrounded by friends who respect his genius, and are grateful for its many manifestations, and for the honor which it bestows upon the American stage.

MME. JANAUSCHEK.

BY PHILIP HALE.

FRANCESCA ROMANA MAGDALENA JANAUSCHEK was born at Prague, July 20, 1830. She was the fourth of nine children of pure Czech blood. They say in envious Prussia that the Bohemian father always hesitates in determining the profession of his child—whether to educate it as a musician or a thief. Janaushek at first studied the piano, intending to be a virtuoso. An accident to her hand checked this career; and, as she had a mezzo-soprano voice that promised success, she prepared herself for opera at the Prague Conservatory. A professor of dramatic action persuaded her to study for the stage as a play-actress. She was about sixteen years of age when she made her *début* at Prague as Caroline in the comedy “Ich bleibe Ledig.” She soon afterward appeared in a modest way at the theatres of Chemnitz, Heilbronn, and other small towns. She was a member of a travelling company. She succeeded at Cologne; and finally, at the age of eighteen, she was engaged as leading woman at the Stadt Theatre, Frankfort, where she remained ten years, playing in the pieces of the classic repertory. A dazzling star, she blazed triumphantly in other cities of Germany, as at Munich, where she was engaged for



MME. JANAUSCHEK.

four months by the mad King of Bavaria, who honored her by praise and royal gifts. In Austria and in Russia her triumphs were repeated.

After Janaushek had finished an engagement at the Royal Theatre, Dresden, she came to the United States; and she made her first appearance here in New York, at the Academy of Music, under the management of Max Maretzek, Oct. 9, 1867. She made her American *début* as Medea, and in German; for, although she then spoke several languages, she did not learn English until the season of 1873-1874. From New York she went to other American cities. Her repertory included, among other plays, "Medea," "Marie Stuart," "Deborah," "Gretchen," "Egmont," "Don Carlos," "Cabale und Liebe," "Braut von Messina," "The Gladiator of Ravenna." During her first season in this country she appeared in polyglot performances, playing, in German, Lady Macbeth to Booth's Macbeth, while the other members of the company spoke English. At that time her repertory was almost wholly classical; yet she never appeared in this country in parts that she considered her best, for she did not believe that such plays would interest American audiences.

During the season of 1873-1874 Janaushek played, speaking the English language. She at first was seen as Deborah, Medea, Marie Stuart, Brünnhilde. Her success was so great that she determined to make America her home. Her repertory increased. She added "Winter's Tale," "Henry VIII.," "Marie Antoinette," "Woman in Red," "Adrienne Lecouvreur," "Mother and Son." She appeared also as Meg Merrilies; but she regarded the playing this part as a business mistake, because she allowed herself to be

identified with the part, and thus gave the public the idea that she was really a very old woman. Perhaps this belief was an exhibition of super-sensitiveness. To the mass of theatre-goers she was the most popular in the dual *rôle* of Lady Dedlock and Hortense in "Bleak House," or "Chesney Wold" as she first called the play. To the critics she appeared to even fuller advantage in "Brünnhilde" and "Come Here." She reached her zenith about 1887 as Brünnhilde.

Janauschek produced these plays in America: "My Life," by Harry Meredith; "The Harvest Moon;" and "The Doctor of Lima," by Salmi Morse. She has lectured on the drama; she has given readings; she was chairman of the drama committee at the Professional Woman's League. Always an earnest student of everything pertaining to her art, she collected books relating to the stage.

Her latest appearance on the stage (1895-1896) was in "The Great Diamond Robbery," in which melodrama the breadth and the dignity of her art ennobled a part that other actresses would deem unworthy of their attention.

This is the bald and imperfect sketch of a stage career of nearly fifty years. I do not even vouch for complete accuracy, as there are conflicting statements in carefully recorded interviews with the actress herself. To verify the alleged facts concerning her first years would be almost an impossible task; for the records are loose, or beyond recovery. Even in this country, where theatres are so frequented, where so much attention is given to dramatic affairs by the newspapers, there is no authentic record of the history

of the stage, though local records have been kept by amateurs in certain cities. It is strange that no one has done publicly for New York or Boston what Noël and Stoullig have done for Paris since 1875. The historian of the future will find the task still harder; for in many instances he will be unable to discriminate between the romantic weavings of the press agent and the actual facts. Actors as well as singers are notoriously careless as to dates of birth, *débuts*, creations; and many autobiographers are notoriously neglectful of important dates, or positively inaccurate in statements concerning year and place.

Janaushek struck the key-note of her art when she said to a friend who commented on her playing the part of the receiver of stolen goods in "The Great Diamond Robbery," "Every time I go on that stage I take all my past reputation in my hand." This sincerity and this artistic pride have characterized her long and honorable career.

In her youth Janaushek enjoyed the inestimable advantage of drill in routine work, which is regarded as drudgery by the inspired, who in these days jump upon the stage through caprice, or, bored by social duties, led by personal vanity, influenced by domestic unhappiness, say to themselves, "Come, now, I'll be an actress; it is true I have never studied the rudiments of art, but experience is the great master." After instruction in the school, she began practically in humble parts. She was in stock companies, where the carefully drilled *ensemble*, not the brilliancy of a star accentuated by the feeble twinkling or the dark-

ness of the surroundings, was the attraction. Thus did she learn the lessons that are only acquired in a stock company; and it is no wonder that in the course of rather pessimistic remarks concerning the future of the American stage, she said lately, "Since the destruction of the stock company, there is no school for the education of actors."

Brought up in an atmosphere of art, where classic models were reversed, where trash was flouted by managers as well as by audiences, it is not surprising to find her in this country protesting against the majority of the theatrical productions of the past dozen years, productions, to use her own words, "crowded with only frivolity and shallowness, absurdity and foolishness, stupidity and giddiness, and any amount of vulgarity; void of all natural sentiment and ideal perception, void of high and noble principles, void of all and every poetical fancy. 'The public *must* be amused' is the cry of the theatrical manager. 'The public should be instructed and elevated, and *can* be amused,' is the cry of the artist."

It is true that Nature planned her for heroic parts. Her voice, that might have adorned the opera house, was the noble instrument that lent itself to all emotions. To the thoughtful critic one of her chief triumphs was obtained solely by the varying intonations in "Come Here." It is said of her, as it was said of a distinguished American actor, that her recitation of the Lord's Prayer is a marvel of elocution, and that even in Czech the effect on a hearer unacquainted with the language is overwhelming.

The noble expressiveness of her face, the stateliness of her figure, the sense of reserve strength in repose,

the grace and the intensity of her gesture, — these were natural gifts, enlarged by training, controlled by artistic intelligence. An heroic woman, suggesting primeval emotions; titanic in bursts of passion.

Brünnhilde is now a well-known character to opera-goers, and several distinguished dramatic singers have played in this country the heroine of the Nibelungen Trilogy; but with the aid of Wagner's Music it is doubtful whether any one of them equalled in tragic force the memorable performance of Janauschek. The Brünnhilde of the play is the Brünnhilde of "Götterdämmerung," — the deceived, outraged, jealous wife, who meditates and carries out dire vengeance. She is a plaything of Fate, as Jocasta, or Medea, or Iphigenia, or any tragic figure of antique drama. There was a marvellous vitality in the performance of Janauschek; there was something more than an impersonation; there was utter forgetfulness of the assumption of a part: Brünnhilde herself emerged from the forest, and among wild people loved and hated fiercely.

Her versatility was shown in concentrated form in "Chesney Wold," where, as the coquettishly sensual, maliciously sly, vitriolically minded French maid, she alternated with the cold, haughty, arrogant Lady Dedlock, who, in spite of her caste and pride, had known passion, and shame as the reward of passion. The question here is not one of psychological truth; whether, for instance, such a character as Hortense ever existed. The question is this. Given the premises, what were the dramatic conclusions arrived at by Janauschek? That which in itself was tawdry and melodramatic was heightened by temperament in the sane control of art.

For in Janauschek is the rare combination of temperament working harmoniously and generously with art, to the glorification of each. Temperament is indispensable, beyond price, beyond the attainment of art; but let temperament run riot, and there are in a performance a few great native moments, with dreary half-hours of commonplace and crudity. For temperament alone sees only a few points that interest, and to these points all else is sacrificed; or it is better to say that when nothing appeals to temperament, then there must be a Macedonian cry to art. Now, a woman like Janauschek in the detail always holds the attention by reason of her art. The hearer is conscious of the approach of great moments; the crescendo on the stage is synchronous with the crescendo of interest in the pit; there is no sudden, unexpected appeal that misses fire; art and temperament together enchain the audience, and prepare for the final climax, which, when it comes, comes as though inevitably, and with irresistible force.

Here is a woman that is the last of the actresses of "the grand style." There are highly endowed women now upon the stage, — actresses of finesse, actresses of realistic force, actresses of neurotic feeling that inspire morbid interest by morbid treatment of morbid subjects. These women are artists in their respective ways. But there is no one to be compared now to Janauschek in the breadth and the finish, the nobility and the sweep, of her art. False realism has brought with it false and cheap acting. A hero talks with his hands in his pockets for a half-hour, and is praised chiefly because he acts just as he would carry himself at a club. In many ways there has been a shrinkage

in artistic values. How petty all the *fin-de-siècle* hysteria, the cocotte sentimentalism, the stage debate between duty to a nagging husband and the idea of separate womanly dignity in a profession, seem in the presence of deserted Medea, or Brünnhilde treacherously abused! And yet the audience seems impatient of the older art; and it forgets the goddesses of the older art to whom it once bowed the knee, and before whom it swung the censer.

This country owes a mighty debt to Janausчек, for her influence has been steadily and courageously for that which is pure and noble and uplifting. Perhaps the best and final tribute to this woman, who now looks back over a career untarnished by any cheap device to gain popular favor, or any eagerness to set applause-traps, is this sentence of golden praise from Professor James Mills Pierce:—

“She is one of the few actors I have seen in my time who have thoroughly known how to unite the most intense truth of feeling with nobleness of form and perfect training; to infuse into the simplicity, exactitude, and moderation of the realistic school the divine fire of genius.” And many will say with him: “I shall always look back on some of the occasions on which I have seen her as among those which afforded my fullest glimpses of the possible greatness of the stage.”

EDWIN BOOTH.

BY HENRY A. CLAPP.

THE keen sense of loss which has come to the American people because of the death of Edwin Booth may well be shared by all the English-speaking communities of the world. If Mr. Irving be left out of view, it is plain that for many years Mr. Booth has had no rival as a tragedian among those actors who use our language; and it is equally plain that there is to-day not even a candidate for his vacant place.

As for Mr. Irving, it is fair to say that neither his career nor his success has been precisely upon the plane of Mr. Booth's. By turns a comedian, a player of melodrama, an attempter of tragedy, and a master of farce, Mr. Irving, in his picturesque and versatile talents, has ever displayed an eccentric quality of which there was not a trace in the American performer. Mr. Booth will be remembered as a classic tragedian; while it is more than probable that Mr. Irving's Louis XI., Mathias, and Dubosc will be recalled when his Hamlet and King Lear have quite slipped out of general recollection.

The student of the history of the English stage will

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EDWIN BOOTH AS HAMLET.

not find, outside of the Kemble and Kean families, a person whose equipment would vie with that of Edwin Booth ; including within the word "equipment " all that may be reasonably expected from tradition, heredity, and surroundings in early life. Mr. Booth inherited from his father, Junius Brutus Booth, — an actor accounted by many competent critics the greatest of his brilliant period, — a definite bent and a full gift. He was born to the buskin as truly as Edward III. was born to the royal purple ; in his infancy and youth he breathed the atmosphere of the stage, and histrionic traditions and aptitudes came to him as a part of his birthright. Edwin was undoubtedly inferior to his father in that plasticity which may be cultivated, but cannot be acquired ; yet his temperament was admirably well adapted to the needs of his craft, and especially of that department of the actor's art to which, after a little experimenting at the outset of his professional life, he wholly devoted himself. In Mr. Booth's nature there was a remarkable combination of sensibility, thoughtfulness, power, and reserve. His intellect was vigorous, intuitive, and singularly lucid. Physically he was nobly equipped for his work : with a voice of exceptional purity, range, and carrying power ; with a figure of medium height and size, but well knit and proportioned ; and with a mobile face, finely, almost faultlessly, chiselled, lighted by dark eyes of extraordinary brilliancy and depth, and marked in repose by a cold but highly distinguished beauty. The histrionic art has ever been a jealous mistress to her followers ; and no class of professional men and women are, as a rule, so completely absorbed by their work as are actors and actresses. In this respect Mr. Booth

surpassed even the custom of his class. For forty years all his strength and industry, all his powers and parts, were concentrated upon the study and practice of his art. Ambition to excel and to shine was of course one of the feeders of the zeal which burned with such a pure and steady flame; but it was only one. He was an actor as Shelley was a poet, Raphael a painter, Mozart a musician,—an actor by every instinct of his nature, by the impulse of every drop of his blood. It may well be believed that what is called “society” lost much by his seclusion; but the social or unsocial habit of such an artist is not to be criticised. He knew what he had to do, and how best or only he could do it; and through his fidelity to the law derived from that knowledge he wrought not only to his own best advantage, but to that of the entire community and nation.

Mr. Booth's peculiar quality as a player was the natural product of his endowment and mode of life. As an artist he lived an ideal existence. He was too quick and keen not to profit by his inevitable contacts with men; but assiduous reading, study, and toil in the closet or on the stage, supplied both the substance and the color of his performance. In a man less richly endowed by nature such a life might have brought forth but barrenly; with Mr. Booth it seemed to be the condition of his most fruitful achievement. Well has the artist lived whose hours have been spent in lofty intimacy with the great poets and dramatists; and so it was well with our tragedian. His habits and associations were at once the consequence and the cause of his artistic temper. Under the guidance of the chosen companions of his life, he became incapable

of vulgarity ; and as a player he became the shining exponent of that school of acting whose chief characteristic and distinction is ideality.

All that was corporeal of the artist fitted well to his fine spiritual conditions. Some of my readers can recall his first appearance as a leading player at the Boston Theatre thirty-six years ago, and will remember that, like all other artists, he had his early faults and crudities of method ; but the process of correcting and ripening was rapid, and for a quarter of a century or more Mr. Booth was recognized as the best accomplished actor of our stage. Free and graceful in motion, with carriage and step which lent themselves with equal and perfect ease to the panther footfall of Iago, the dignified alertness of Macbeth, and the stately progress of Othello ; with a beautiful face whose mask was as wax under the moulding fingers of passion ; with a voice whose peculiar vibrant quality had an extraordinary power to stir the soul of the listener at the very moment of its appeal as music to the ear, — all of Edwin Booth that was, in the choice phrase of Shakespeare, “out of door,” was “most rich.” And, without unduly exalting the mere material of his art, it is worth while to dwell for a moment upon the service which he constantly rendered to the ever-imperilled cause of pure and elegant speech. “Orators,” teachers, preachers, many actors, — some in one way, some in another, and some in nearly every conceivable way, — set the example of bad utterance of our language. Mr. Booth’s tongue might well in its kind have secured for him the praise which Chaucer’s pen won for the first great English poet ; for in his speech he was a “well of English undefiled,” reviving and refreshing the

ancient tradition, which is now dying of inanition on English and American soil, — that the stage is the natural guardian of the nation's orthoepy. A faultless pronunciation, an enunciation distinct, clean, and clear, without formalism or apparent effort, an exquisite feeling for the sweetness of words, and a perfect sense of their relation to one another, united to give to his delivery exemplary distinction, and to make it a model and a standard. And, at a moment when the art seems almost to be lost to our theatre, one must recur with melancholy pleasure to his mastery of the noble art of reciting English blank verse. The vast majority of our players helplessly and hopelessly stumble nowadays in the attempt to interpret Shakespeare's lines: if they essay the rhythm, the meaning suffers a kind of smooth asphyxiation at their hands; if they devote themselves to the thought, the verse degenerates into a queer variety of hitchy prose. Mr. Booth at no point of his career seemed to find any serious difficulty in putting into practice the theory to which all the great actors and critics before his day had subscribed, — that in Shakespeare's blank verse sound and sense are as a rule so vitally united that what makes for the life of the one conduces to the life of the other; or, rather, that the master poet uses the melody and the flow of his measure as an implement in the expression of the idea or the emotion, almost as if he were a composer of music, employing words in lieu of tones.

It is understood that no one can achieve high success as an actor who is not a master of the art of elocution, using the word "elocution" in its amplest sense. Such a master was Edwin Booth. Very few of our players are capable of dealing as he dealt with a

difficult text, in such a fashion as will keep that perfect relation of word to word, and clause to clause, by intonation, cadence, breathing, pause, and emphasis, which shall convey to the ear and mind of the listener the thoughts of the dramatist in all their fulness, power, beauty, and just proportion. A definite touch here and a slurring there, a firm grasp of one end of this phrase and of the other end of that, a scramble or rush toward the close, coupled with an attempt "to make a point," — that is a fair account of all that the commonplace actor ever attempts in dealing with long poetical or declamatory passages. Clever old Colley Cibber had upon this theme a word which, indicating the magnitude and delicacy of the player's task, will help us to distinguish the inferior histrionic artist in this kind from the superior: "In the just delivery of poetical numbers, particularly where the sentiments are pathetic, it is scarce credible upon how minute an article of sound depends their greatest beauty and effect. The voice of a singer is not more strictly ty'd to Time and Tune than that of an actor in theatrical elocution. The least syllable too long or too slightly dwelt upon in a period, depreciates it to nothing, which very syllable, if rightly touched, shall, like the heightening stroke of light from a master's pencil, give life and spirit to the whole."

Nearly all great actors experiment with a variety of parts early in their professional lives ; and some players continue the experimenting process through their entire careers, though the general tendency of middle and later age is of course toward the stability of repetition. In his first years upon the stage, Mr. Booth was moderately tentative, but soon settled himself to an almost

steady presentation of what may be called the classical characters of the English theatre. In his repertory were all the first men's parts in the chief tragedies of Shakespeare, except *Timon*, *Posthumus*, *Coriolanus*, and the *Antony* of "*Antony and Cleopatra*;" and also *Shylock*, *Benedick*, and *Petruchio* in the maimed one-act summary of "*The Taming of the Shrew*." In the histories, he played *Gloster*, — both in the familiar *Colley Cibber* perversion of "*Richard III.*," and in the excellent acting version of Shakespeare's play prepared for him by *Mr. William Winter*, — *Brutus* and *Cassius* in "*Julius Cæsar*," and, in 1887 and for a short time thereafter, *Richard II.* in the drama of that name. On several occasions during the first half of his career he essayed *Romeo*. Outside the Shakespearian drama, his principal parts were those of *Sir Giles Overreach* in *Massinger's "A New Way to Pay Old Debts,"* *Don César de Bazan*, *Sir Edward Mortimer* in "*The Iron Chest*," *Claude Melnotte*, *Pescara* in "*The Apostate*," *Ruy Blas*, *Brutus* in *John Howard Payne's* tragedy, *Bertuccio* in "*The Fool's Revenge*" (*Tom Taylor's* version of "*Le Roi s'Amuse*" of *Victor Hugo*), and *Richelieu*. All the characters in this group except the last three he practically dropped from his acting list for a long time in the middle of his professional life, but some eight or nine years before his death "revived" them, in the stage phrase, for performance in *New York*, *Boston*, and some other cities.

I have spoken briefly of *Mr. Booth's* fine physical equipment, and of the excellence of what may be called the outward part of his technique. But to attain success nobly and truly in the presentation of the characters which have been enumerated, it was necessary

that great conditions of mind, temperament, and spirit should be united in the impersonator. Mr. Booth's intellectual strength and lucidity were of prime importance to all his achievement, and conspicuous factors in all his work. I have no means of knowing what Mr. Booth's ability and desire were on other lines of study; but of Shakespeare and the other English dramatists he was a close, intuitive, and discriminating student, often showing scholarly ability in judging of texts and readings, and constantly displaying such a mastery of the great playwright's thought in sum and in detail, as is possible only to a vivid and refined intelligence working strongly and assiduously. Justly to conceive, as an actor should conceive, a character like Hamlet, Iago, or Shylock is a true intellectual gift, and has been given to a comparatively small number of performers.

Mr. Booth's mind's eyesight was clear as crystal: he read, saw, understood, conceived; then, by the operation of the artist's constructive faculty, brought all the portions of his conception together, each clearly defined in itself, and definitely related to every other; and when all had been, as it were, fused, or rather brought into a vital union, within the alembic of the spirit, the living product appeared. From time to time, of course, his conception of great characters changed, as his views of them were changed by further study or observation; lines were deepened in one place, and softened in another; colors were darkened here, and clarified there — perhaps the entire character grew or lessened in size or sweetness or spirituality, or even was so modified in significant particulars as to produce a new effect. But at each stage of the process the artist's thought was clear and vivid, and fairly and in-

tuitively related to the writer whom he sought to interpret. A good example of these changes may be noted in passing. Mr. Booth's youthful idea of Shylock was of a literary and conventional order, according to the prevailing tradition of the stage; it made prominent and predominant all the best traits of Shakespeare's creation, and exhibited the Jew as a victim of persecution and an avenger of the wrongs of his race and religion, showing him as a figure of heroic qualities and proportions. Then a remarkable change took place in the artist's idea; and he proceeded to suppress the ideality of his conception, and to strengthen in it all that was rudest and of the coarseness of common clay. His father's Shylock had been likened to a roaring lion, and described as "marked by pride of intellect and intense pride of race." Edwin Booth's was now an ignoble, greedy, malicious usurer, a creature of tremendous but vile and vulgar passions, sometimes hideously jocular, in the trial scene fawning upon Portia after the ruling in his favor, incapable of exaltation except for some rare brief moment, appealing to the spectator's imagination only on the lower side. This impersonation was, in its way, very human, and effectively embodied a conception of Shylock which may be easily defended as natural and Shakespearian. Gradually Mr. Booth made the tone of his impersonation more sombre, dispensed with his lighter touches, and presented a personage of greater power and depth, though still of common mould. At last he came to a theory of the character in which the extremes of his former conceptions were avoided; out of which was evolved an impersonation of remarkable justness, consistency, and fulness, wherein neither the essential baseness of Shy-

lock's nature nor the frequent dignity born of his passionate purpose was sacrificed. The depth and intensity, the lodged hate, the inflexible will, the stubborn spirit, and the fanatical conviction of the Jew were indicated with continuous and imposing power; but Shylock was not represented with the loftiness of a Greek sage or of a Christian martyr because of the force of his evil passions and resolved temper. In this final assumption, Shakespeare's composite thought and unrelenting neutrality in the invention of Shylock were supremely well expressed; yet every one of the previous impersonations had been lucid, intellectually vigorous, and fairly interpretative of the master dramatist.

Through these qualities of intellectual force and clearness, used with the patient discretion of a close student, Mr. Booth became possessed of that rarest of histrionic possessions,—a large style. The phrase is applied with flippant frequency to many artists, and seems to be comprehended about as seldom as it is merited. Upon the stage a large style is characteristic of the actor who is conscious, at every moment of his performance, not only of the needs of that moment, but of the total value and color of the character he is presenting, and of the relation borne by the passion of the instant to all the stirs of passion which have preceded it. With the mere reading of the definition, the observer of our modern stage has a painful vision of the small, deformed, fragmentary, spasmodic methods prevailing even among our more ambitious actors, who for the most part are well contented if they can utter any passion with a vaguely befitting naturalness. In the playing of such artists, Juliet, Imogen, and Parthenia have but one mode of ex-

pressing tenderness ; Rosalind and Viola but one kind of vivacity ; Gloster, Spartacus, and Lear but one form of rage. Many examples of Mr. Booth's largeness and artistic fulness of style might be cited. His Iago is especially in point. In his scheme of that character also, there had been an interesting process of development. Midway or moderately early in his career, Mr. Booth apparently decided that he must fit his performance of the part to his physical limitations. He made Iago a light, comfortable villain, and bore down upon that side of the crafty Venetian's nature which allies him most closely with common humanity. But later he darkened the hues of his conception, and steadily increased its force, impetuosity, and profundity. As thus finally presented, his Iago was a masterpiece in respect of its breadth and finish of style, and was consummate in its malign beauty. In immediate appeal to the eye and the taste of the spectator, it was exceedingly interesting : a fascinating man, whose gayer air had the crisp sparkle of a fine winter's day ; whose usual thoughtfulness was easy, poised, unaffected, potent, but not ponderous ; whose talk was sensible, shrewd, and just cynical enough to relish to the taste of the worldly ; whose wit was astonishingly keen, quick, inventive, prolific, and uttered with exquisite aptness by a tongue which drove or clinched a nail at every stroke ; handsome in face, graceful and free in motion and in manners, polished, frank, and rich in *bonhomie*. In the deeper portions of his nature, Mr. Booth's Iago was endowed with an intellect as swift and subtle as electricity, and, like that mysterious element, capable of playing lightly over surfaces, or of rending the toughest obstacles in sunder. His temper

was like some ethereal quicksilver in its sensitiveness, adapting itself to every mood of those whom it sought to influence; and in its intensity of malevolence and potency of maleficence, his spirit had that right satanic quality which stopped not short of a consuming desire to torture and "enmesh" "all" good men and women, "ensnaring" them both in "soul and body," and did not fear to thrust its blasphemy into the very face of the Almighty. In diabolic force and blackness Mr. Booth's assumption was, I suppose, inferior to that of his father and of some of the other actors of the old heroic school. But in absolute self-consistency, in perfectness of proportion, in the maintenance of a most "politic state of evil," and in the unfailing relation of every point and particular of the conception to every other, and to the total scheme, it was as noble an illustration of largeness of style as has been afforded by our modern stage.

Intellectual force and lucidity—of which, as has been said, Mr. Booth was possessed in an extraordinarily high degree—are essential to the conception of dramatic characters, and to the presentation of such characters in a large and finished style. The ability deeply to move and convince the spectator by performance is derived from the possession of another quality or set of qualities. To identify this quality or these qualities is not easy. Neither patience, nor close observation of nature, nor superior mimetic skill, nor even sincerity, nor all these together, will necessarily furnish the player with the power to enter into the inmost life of the personages that he represents, to possess them or to be possessed by them completely, and then so to present them as to carry conviction to

the soul of the spectator. I do not mean by "conviction" to imply that the auditor will ever, except for brief instants and at long intervals, lose the sense of the player's art, or forget that that art is representative; but that the actor shall so bring his audience into touch with the spirit of his creations that they shall be spiritually discerned, received, accepted, through the imagination believed in, and so loved or hated, honored or contemned; shall be, in other words, brought into genuinely and deeply sympathetic relations with the men and women who see and hear. Lacking this power, the histrionic artist may interest, please, or charm, but, how clever soever he may be, cannot by any possibility profoundly stir the passions or touch the heart. A full sense of the difference among players in this respect is sometimes slow to develop itself, but it comes sooner or later to nearly all who study the stage intelligently. It is not difficult to divide our leading modern actors of the "serious" order into two classes, according to their possession or lack of this ability, and then to see that those of one variety appeal successfully to the eye, the taste, the critical judgment, to what may be called, in a large sense, the pictorial faculty of their spectators; the actors of the other sort, to the same faculties, but chiefly to imagination, sensibility, and sympathy. These diverse appeals are made through the same or similar dramatic characters, and often, so far as I can judge, with little or no conscious difference in the ambitions or hopes of the actors, all of whom, apparently, aim to touch the heart. Yet the results are as far apart as entertainment is from emotion. Mr. Irving and Mr. Willard may be named as players of the first kind, Salvini and Booth of the

second. Some superiority in delicacy or fulness of sympathy, some hold upon a more intuitive imagination, some higher potency or fervor of temperament, avail to give players of the larger order a more complete possession of the soul of the part which they assume, and then the gift so to share that possession as deeply to stir the "convinced" listener with the passions of the part.

One simple, excellent test may be applied to indicate or enforce the distinction which has been made, — try the performance by repeatedly witnessing it, and observing its effect upon the mind and memory. Mr. Irving's Louis XI., for instance, may be fairly regarded as a fine example of his histrionic cleverness. In effectiveness and variety of "points," in delicacy of detail as to form, color, action, and tone, in consummate mimetic skill, it can scarcely be surpassed; its picturesqueness is perfect. But scarcely even at a first sight of the performance is the spectator deeply moved either to horror, pain, or loathing; on a second view, curiosity only remains; and when, by another sight, curiosity has been satisfied, there is no further desire to witness the performance. Mr. Irving's impersonation of Charles I., to take another instance, stays, if it stays at all, within the memory of those who have beheld it as if it were an exquisitely finished portrait in oils of the unfortunate monarch; but the recollection causes no trouble of the spirit. Mr. Willard's Cyrus Blenkarn is recalled for its careful workmanship, decent reserve, and regard for the modesty of nature, which are respectfully and unperturbedly remembered. These artists, and such as these, fine and admirable as they are in many respects, show the eyes, but do not grieve

the heart ; like a procession of shadows and pictures their creations come, and so depart. Compare with this the hold which the greater performances of Salvini have upon the spirit, first in representation and afterward in remembrance. It is scarcely possible to recall his Conrade in "La Morte Civile," or his Othello, or his Samson, without a sense of tug at the heartstrings ; and repeated view of such performances scarcely dulls the spectator's pleasure, for the spirit is slow to tire of the strenuous joy of its own sympathetic travail or pain.

To Mr. Booth this great power was given, not indeed in the interpretation of all his characters, but of the chiefest of them. He entered into and uttered the inner life of his prime creations ; and one knew the completeness of his mastery by the delightful heartache, the throb in the throat, the flush of the cheek, which bespoke the "conviction" of the auditory. His Riche-lieu, as it was presented at the highest point of his career, when it had been largely divested of theatricalness, but had lost nothing of the player's force, may be selected as a good example of his power in this kind. The character itself does not afford the greatest opportunities of course ; but it is interesting at the outset to note that Mr. Booth not only filled to overflowing the conception of Bulwer, but went far beyond it, and imported into the character of the cardinal a wealth of truth and life which transcended the scheme of the text. The inconsistencies of the cardinal were reconciled or made acceptable by Mr. Booth's treatment. The personal flavor and intellectual quality of the man were shown with absolute vividness ; his wit, his humor, his cunning, his insight into character, his bodily deli-

cacy and frequent lonesomeness, his one exacting form of vanity, his diplomatic unscrupulousness, his aptness in flattery, his subtlety, speed, versatility, and fruitfulness of resource, were made portions of a living picture, and fused by the imagination of the player into a creation which took possession of the spectator's memory. A hundred even of his lighter phrases are unforgetable. The sly shrewdness — delighting in its knowledge of men, and in its own duplicity as a necessary implement of statecraft — with which, questioning Joseph concerning Huguet's fidelity, he says, —

“Think — we hanged his father!

.

Trash! favors past — that's nothing. In his hours
Of confidence with you has he named the favors
To come, he counts on?

.

Colonel and nobleman!

My bashful Huguet! that can never be!

We have him not the less — we'll promise it —

And see the king withholds; ”

the exquisite finesse and perfect ease with which, after frankly holding out the bait of a coloneley to Huguet, in the words, —

“If I live long enough — ay, mark my words —

If I live long enough, you'll be a colonel; ”

he adds, half under his breath, slowly, in a ruminating tone as if expressing a confidential afterthought, yet with a clearly edged enunciation which carries straight to the captain's ear,

“Noble — perhaps; ”

the delicately ironical flavor of the half-line with which, after his resignation, he comments upon the king's appointment of his successor, De Baradas,

“ A most sagacious choice; ”

the tenderness of his comforting promise to Julie, his stricken ward,

“ All will be well; yes, yet all well, ”

the short words dropping full and slow and sweet, as if they were laden with balm, — where could one pause in the chronicle, every line of which is a reminder and proof of the extraordinary intuition and just naturalness with which the actor penetrated the depths of the cardinal's spirit, and converted his knowledge into the very substance of imaginative life? Early in his career Mr. Booth played the character brilliantly well, but with every added year he made some gain on the lighter side of his performance, bringing to it a yet wiser discretion, a more delicate chastity of phrase, a more complete abnegation of vulgar over-emphasis, until the portraiture was etched, as it were, on the tissue of the spectator's brain with some uninjurious acid. The more intense, vehement, and lofty passions of the character were interpreted by Mr. Booth with varying degrees of histrionic skill. Often, in his younger period, his declamation of this or that famous speech of the cardinal was superfluously theatrical, or degenerated even into rant; at his point of greatest ripeness he had nearly rid himself and his style of fustian, and met the supreme test by producing powerful effects without extravagance in speech or in action. But, with all its imperfections on its head, Mr. Booth's Richelieu, at

any time within the last fifteen years of his life, demonstrated in its stronger aspects the master actor upon the lines which I am now considering. It indeed piqued and gratified the curiosity, and stimulated and fed the spectator's sense of the picturesque. But that kind of achievement was as naught in comparison with the actor's "conviction" of his hearers' hearts. Always at some point in the performance, often at many points, when the cardinal's spirit blazed in ecstasy of courage or wrath, or when, especially, all weaknesses and insincerities solved in the pure flame of a true love of France, Richelieu stood, moved, and spoke, a veritable incarnation of the spirit of patriotism, the listener's soul would be stirred, thrilled, strained almost, it sometimes seemed consumed, by a passionate sympathy. Such pain and such joy it is given only to the actor of the first order to produce. The source of the producing power lies chiefly perhaps in temperamental force, and its basis may be partly or largely physical. But, however derived, it is unmistakable, the *sine qua non* of the great tragedian; and the lack of it relegates the tragic actor to the second rank of his profession.

The tragedian who is master of the mimetic detail of his art, of a large and finished style, and of the power to compel the hearts of men by the passion of the scene, is a great actor. Edwin Booth was such a master. For my present purpose, it remains only to be said that his prime distinction among the players of our time lay in a quality for which I know no better name than ideality. The possession of that quality a century or even half a century ago could scarcely have conferred distinction upon a serious actor. Players were endowed with it in various degrees of course;

but from Garrick to Junius Brutus Booth, through all the illustrious lines of Kembles and Keans, the tragedians of the elder day assumed it as a part of their theory, so to speak. It was taken for granted by the scholarly Macready, and even the passionate and sensuous-natured Forrest confidently aspired to its possession. It is easy to see why these artists had a tradition in favor of ideality; their acting had been modelled upon the requirements of the dramas and characters which they represented; their playing was ideal, even as and because their plays were ideal. In our time a change has taken place, slowly, but with almost unremitting steadiness. We have seen the tragedies of Shakespeare less and less in evidence; and, in a day when the study of the master poet is more thorough and more general than ever before, we have witnessed the phenomenon of the gradual disappearance of his serious dramas from the theatre. Edwin Booth came down to us from a former generation, and brought with him the tradition which, transmitted to him by his father, had had its source in the rude stage upon which Burbage played. He was an actor of the ideal order, and not of that school which is now known as the realistic. Nothing but necessity would compel me to comment upon that offensive pair of adjectives, whose votaries and vassals are wearying the world with their endless battles and squabbles,—the world wherein room *must* be found, in one way or another, for Raphael and Vereschagin, for Scott and Tolstoi, for Corot and Courbet, for Hawthorne and Jane Austen, for Shakespeare's Imogen and Ibsen's Nora. Upon the stage the schools are sharply distinguished, but seldom clash, because they seldom meet. Tragedy of

the higher order is the natural home of ideal acting, even as comedy is the usual place of the realistic. Thus far, indeed, the dramatists whom the world has accepted as great are ranged with the ideals. Most of them, whether writers of tragedy or of comedy, are of the old *régime*, to be sure; for the positions of Ibsen and of the Belgian, Maetterlinck, have not been settled for English-speaking people, any more than have the places of Mr. Pinero, Mr. Herne, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Harrigan, and other playwrights of local reputation. But the drift is now steadily away from what has been received as classic; and, especially in comedy, the stage "is subdued to what it works in, like the dyer's hand."

In playing the tragedies of Shakespeare, on the other hand, sensitive actors have for the most part found themselves under a strong compulsion toward the ideal style. All good acting must of course be derived from, and keep a firm hold on, reality or nature, and must be, therefore, in its essence, realistic in the preciser sense of the word. Yet in the higher ranges of the drama, and especially in its poetic forms, there are many characters which demand both to be conceived and to be expressed ideally; that is to say, to be lifted above the commonplace of daily life into the realm of fancy; to be so represented that, though their kinship with humanity is never lost, their prime citizenship is demonstrated to be in the land of the imagination. Even when the question is not of the most exalted or poetic creations, most persons can perceive that the style of the dramatist ought in some measure to control the style of the actor; that Rosalind demands a different treatment from Lady Gay Spanker, Sir Giles Over-

reach from Martin Berry. And though an eccentric actor has occasionally done his despite upon Shylock or Gloster, an almost perfect consensus of mankind would probably assume that the great tragic characters of the higher drama should be played in a fashion accordant somehow with the loftiness of their language and scheme.

It is foreign to my purpose to discuss the peculiarities of this loftier mode of playing. The essential thing to be noted is that the artist of the ideal school reaches his results by a method which removes them from and above every-day life; deliberately departing, in his bearing and utterance, from the familiar mode of parlor, counting-room, and street, by the adoption of a style at once more distinct, more formal, and more elevated. The absurdities into which this manner may run in the gesture, walk, and declamation of incompetent performers have been the subject of ridicule almost ever since the stage and the actor came into existence. Shakespeare, even in the day when tragedy was "preferred" by gentle and simple, declared, through the mouth of Hamlet, that the extravagant action, the strut, the bellow, and the rant of the actor of the robustious sort offended him "to the soul." Even very capable players are in danger, as we all know, of achieving fustain in attempting velvet. But the grand style in its own place is none the less the true style because the attainment of it is beset by grievous dangers. Its function is not at any time nor under any temptation, whatsoever the opinion of superficial critics to the contrary may be, to defy or defeat nature. When the histrionic artist has the true feeling for his business, and a true skill in his art, his product is supremely

natural, if the nature of man, as seen by the clarifying, penetrating light of the imagination, and cleansed by the poet's power from what is transient and inessential, is to be taken as the standard. Upon the stage, poetry has a language and voice of its own, which differ from those of our working-day life mainly because the higher mood of the mind or spirit, which is here intermittently experienced, is there maintained without fall or break ; and that language it is the business and privilege of the actor of the ideal order to speak to the audience, which is his world.

Edwin Booth's art was pre-eminently idealistic. That he sometimes erred and displeased by his adherence to a stilted and conventionally theatrical style is not to be questioned. But, judged at and by his best, he attained the noble distinction of so interpreting the loftiest creations of the first of dramatists, that his impersonations were both beautifully ideal and harmonious with the essential truth of life. If the faults of his Hamlet had been twenty times greater than they were, they would not have destroyed the high value of an assumption which reproduced the essence of the poet's thought, and imaged before us the very form and soul of Shakespeare's prophetic embodiment of the anxious, speculative, superrefined, and introverted humanity of modern times. Mr. Booth's impersonation of King Lear may be instanced, I think, as the greatest expression of his powers in this noble kind. The artist's achievement in this part was the more remarkable because of his lack of the highest physical force, and the impossibility—consequent perhaps upon that deficiency—of his reaching such sublimity of effect as that of Salvini, for example, at the Italian's grandest

moments. But Mr. Booth's Lear was so wrought as to be as pure a triumph of the spiritual over the material as the warmest devotee of the idealistic could wish to see. Without extravagance of gesture, — which, indeed, Mr. Booth always used sparingly, — without violence of voice, without extreme effort of any kind, the chaotic vastness of Lear's nature, the frenzied wrath and woe of the "child-changed father," his agony of contrition over his rejection of Cordelia, the intellectual splendors which fitfully illuminate the pathos of his madness, and the sweet anguish of his restoration to a new life of the soul, were greatly displayed. The subtlety, picturesqueness, and graphic vividness of all the details of the performance, especially in the second and third acts, were remarkable, but were scarcely to be esteemed in comparison with the immediate power of the impersonation to touch the deepest springs of emotion. It might be said without extravagance that the actor's victory in the performance was like that of the dramatist in the tragedy. Who can estimate or overestimate the worth to the world of such art as this? The actor dies, and leaves no sign or memorial of his prowess, it has been often said; even Garrick and Edmund Kean, Siddons and Rachel, are but names, to which the modern ear scarcely permits a hospitable entrance. But acting such as that of Mr. Booth in Lear, which lifts the spectator for a time almost to the level of the play, and transports him beyond the ignorant present, which shows the spirit to itself by the searching illumination of the poet's genius, must have a power far transcending the effect of the moment. In his highest achievements, Edwin Booth was an actor of the spirit, to the spirit, for the spirit, —

a pure interpreter of the master dramatist ; and the echoes which he there awakened must roll, like the poet's own, we may well believe, from soul to soul, and grow forever and forever.

I have not attempted to deal, except indirectly, with Mr. Booth's faults of style ; but justice seems to demand a few words of comment upon his two chief professional limitations. He was unsuccessful in playing the lover upon the stage ; he had no gift in mirthfulness. The former proposition needs perhaps a little qualification. Mr. Booth at some moments, as in his Hamlet, Othello, and Sir Edward Mortimer, succeeded in speaking the voice of the divine passion with impressive earnestness, and with the suggestion of great depth of feeling. But his touch in this kind was always heavy, his tone portentous. The fluent love of youth, love of that intermittent, palpitating, many-hued variety which is redundantly called "sentimental," he had no skill to utter ; and his impersonation of Claude Melnotte, for example, was even more artificial than Sir Bulwer Lytton's style in "The Lady of Lyons." In comedy Mr. Booth often sparkled ; and sometimes, as in Petruchio and Don César de Bazan, he was gay and entertaining. But, like all his family, he had no power to excite laughter. His performance of Benedick may be cited as his highest achievement in the lighter drama ; it was elegant, easy, of great intellectual brilliancy and charm, but quite devoid of that capacity for creating mirth which Shakespeare makes a prime quality in his hero.

Of Mr. Booth's personal character it would be unbecoming in me to speak in this place, except for a reason which compels me to say a single word. He

presented the spectacle — the more impressive because it has not been very common — of a life which was all upon one plane. Pure, generous, high-minded, incapable of vulgar arts, either of defence or display, he lived upon the stage of the world, even as on the mimic stage, an ideal life. And the one appalling disaster and sorrow of his experience he bore with such patience and magnanimity as presently reconquered the favor of a shaken and bewildered nation. Only great men can thus greatly endure great griefs. The soul of Edwin Booth, like the art of Edwin Booth, was of the truly heroic type.

Edwin Booth was the son of Junius Brutus Booth, and was born in Maryland, Nov. 13, 1833. He accompanied his father in professional tours, and on the 10th of September, 1849, made his *début* as Tressel to the elder Booth's Richard III. at the Boston Museum. A little later the two travelled along the Pacific Coast, but met with financial disappointments. Returning East after his father's death, Edwin found success awaiting him. From that time till his decease he was the leading light of the American stage. In November, 1864, he began in New York the famous hundred night run of "Hamlet." On Feb. 3, 1869, he opened his own (Booth's) theatre in New York as Romeo to the Juliet of his future wife, Mary McVicker. Poor business management brought disaster to this enterprise in ownership, but the artistic success of Booth's productions was universally acknowledged. The fortune lost was soon regained, when after joint appearance with Salvini, Booth starred, under the management of Lawrence Barrett, at one time with Barrett, and at another time with Modjeska. He was twice married: in 1860 to Miss Mary Devlin (by whom he had one child, Edwina), in 1869 to Miss McVicker. He died in New York, June 7, 1893, having made his last appearance on the stage at Brooklyn (in "Hamlet") on the 4th of April, 1891, two weeks after the death of Mr. Barrett. Mr. Booth had visited England, and had there acted with Henry Irving, but his reception was not cordial. In Germany he was warmly greeted.



MARY ANDERSON.

MARY ANDERSON.

BY JOHN D. BARRY.

THERE were no omens to herald the coming of a brilliant acquisition to the theatre when, on Saturday night, Nov. 27, 1875, "a young lady of Louisville" made her first appearance on the stage in her own city. The wonderful girlish beauty of the novice, — she was only sixteen, — the earnestness with which she threw herself into her part, the crude power and strength of her rich voice, made her triumph more than a *succès d'estime*. Discerning critics who witnessed the performance saw in her the physical charms of an Adelaide Neilson, with the dramatic possibilities of a second Siddons. The whole audience recognized in her the possession of rare dramatic gifts, and a great career was predicted. Her name was Mary Anderson.

Those who knew Mary Anderson cannot have been surprised at her success; for, from her earliest youth, her passion for the theatre, which manifested itself in a fondness for reading plays and for mimicking those few actors whom she was permitted to see, combined with the charms of her personality, made the road to the stage an almost inevitable one for her to pursue. Her talent manifested itself spontaneously; it was not an inheritance. None of her ancestors had been associ-

ated with the theatre and stage. Her father was a native of New York; and her mother was Marie Antoinette Lugers, a Philadelphian of German parentage. Mary was born in Sacramento, Cal., in 1859. The following year the family moved to Louisville, where they lived for several years. Her father died in 1863, at the age of twenty-nine, while fighting in the Civil War on the side of the South. In 1867 her mother married Dr. Hamilton Griffin, who ever after was a devoted parent to her, and to whose untiring energy in her behalf much of her success was due.

Mary Anderson's school training was meagre. It does not follow from this fact that her education was poor. The restraints of school life were extremely irksome to the girl; and she distinguished herself during her school days chiefly by the exuberance of her spirits, which was a source of constant trouble to her teachers. That her education was not taken very seriously is evident from the fact that she left school at the age of fourteen, and never returned to it. Perhaps it would be more exact to say that her intellectual training began rather than ended at this period; for she devoted her leisure to the practice of those pursuits which were her delight, and which were almost her only preparation for the stage. She steeped herself in Shakespeare, for whom she had conceived an intense fondness. This surely was an indication of a natural literary appreciation which should be, but unhappily rarely is, one of the actor's chief attributes. She committed to memory long passages from the more celebrated of the Shakespearian dramas, and learned the parts of Hamlet, Richard III., and Wolsey, besides those of Richelieu and Schiller's Joan of Arc. At

every opportunity she attended theatrical performances, and on her return home delighted in mimicking the actors whom she had seen.

Her parents indulged her fondness for elocution by securing for her the instruction of Professor Noble Butler, a Louisville teacher of long experience and excellent repute. Her studies with him naturally fostered her desire to go on the stage. She worked hard to develop her voice, the strength of which she realized was an essential element to success, and busied herself with many private performances of scenes from famous plays in her room. When she was about fourteen, Edwin Booth played in Louisville, and she saw him for the first time. She was so moved by his performance of Richard III. that she determined to give a repetition of parts of it at home. This she did before a small audience of her friends; she appeared in the tent scene, and also added to the performance by giving the cottage scene from the "Lady of Lyons."

A short time afterwards, while she was in Cincinnati, she called on Charlotte Cushman, who was then living there, in order to obtain from the celebrated actress advice as to whether she should enter the theatrical profession. Miss Cushman heard her recite, was struck by her power and charmed with her beauty, and advised her not only to become an actress, but to begin her career as a star. Her approval removed whatever scruples Mary Anderson's mother had entertained against her public appearance; and it was decided that Mary should go at once to New York in order to take some lessons in elocution and dramatic action from the younger Vandenhoff, who was then teaching with success in that city. He gave her ten lessons,

which formed practically the only training she received before her first appearance.

In 1875 Mr. Barney Macauley, the well-known actor and manager, was conducting a theatre in Louisville, called by his name. Mary Anderson appealed to him for an opportunity to make her *début*. He decided that he might utilize the interest which her appearance would arouse in Louisville for a benefit in behalf of Milnes Levick, a stock actor well known in this country and in England, for which he was then making preparations. One Thursday she was told that she might appear the following Saturday night as Juliet. Costumes were hastily prepared for her, one rehearsal of the tragedy was held, and when the Saturday night arrived she began that career which is without a parallel in the history of the American stage.

Mary Anderson's first regular engagement was played at Macauley's. She repeated her performance of Juliet, and was seen in three new *rôles*, Bianca, in the old-fashioned tragedy of "Fazio," now rarely given; Julia, in "The Hunchback;" and Evadne, in the well-known drama of that name. All of these parts gave her opportunities to display her dramatic ability. She was wise in making her first appearances in heavy *rôles*; for it is far easier for a novice gifted as she was with tragic power, however crude, to succeed in them, than in *rôles* which demand a more subtle art for their successful delineation.

Her engagement at Macauley's caused her fame to spread throughout the West, and secured for her, a few weeks later, an opportunity to appear in St. Louis. Here she was received coldly; but in spite of the small size of her audience, she will always remember that

engagement with pleasure, for it won for her the admiration and friendship of General Sherman, which continued to the end of his life. Her next engagement was in New Orleans, where the first night she played to a handful of people. Some members of the local military college who were present, however, were so delighted, that between the acts they procured a large number of bouquets, and deluged her with them. Her success was so pronounced that the interest of the whole city was aroused; and at the end of the week the theatre was filled with enthusiastic audiences.

A second engagement in New Orleans was quickly arranged. Miss Anderson began it with her first performance of *Meg Merrilies*, a curious part, by the way, for a young girl to play, and one for which her youth and inexperience unfitted her. She is said, nevertheless, to have made up so perfectly for the character of the old hag, and to have acted with such spirit, that her audiences were impressed by her ability and versatility. At the close of her second engagement in New Orleans, she was presented by General Beauregard with an enamelled belt, studded with jewels, the badge of the Washington Artillery, and bearing the inscription, "To Mary Anderson, from Her Friends of the Battalion."

Miss Anderson's early career was not, as it is popularly supposed to have been, all roses. During her engagement in the fall of 1876, in San Francisco, where she appeared at John McCullough's theatre, supported by his stock company, she experienced a dismal failure. The audiences were cold to her, and the critics treated her with severity. Nevertheless, John McCullough and Edwin Booth, who happened to be in the city at the time, helped her with their interest

and counsel. At their suggestion she appeared during this engagement in the *rôle* of Parthenia, with which her fame was afterwards closely identified.

She returned home to suffer another disheartening trial, during her summer tour through Kentucky towns, when her audiences dwindled to such small numbers that, in spite of her ambition, she was obliged to discontinue playing. After a short season of depression, during which she almost despaired of success, she received an offer from John T. Ford, the Washington manager, to star under his direction, and supported by his company, for a salary of three hundred dollars a week. She accepted it, and began then her career of unbroken success. For three years she travelled through the West and South, winning triumph after triumph, filling her manager's coffers, and receiving the enthusiastic praises, as well as some criticisms, of the press.

On the 12th of November she made her *début* in New York, as Pauline in the "Lady of Lyons." Her engagement lasted six weeks, during which she was seen as Juliet, Evadne, Meg Merrilies, and Parthenia. Her beauty and talent won as warm recognition from the New York public as they had in the West, but she was not received with favor by several of the local critics. Her experience in Boston this season was very similar to that in New York; though the people flocked to see her, and applauded her enthusiastically, some of the Boston critics subjected her to severe treatment. The popular favor, however, which she found in both these cities assured her success in the East, and placed her in the foremost rank among living American actresses.

In the summer of 1879 Mary Anderson made her first visit to Europe. She went with her young mind already broadened by extended travel in her own country, and made sensitive to new impressions by the culture which her stage career had given her. She saw the leading actors of England, made a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon, visited Paris, where she made the acquaintance of Sarah Bernhardt, and was permitted to enter the sacred precincts behind the scenes of the Théâtre Français. She also met, during her visit there, the celebrated actress, Adelaide Ristori, who heard her recite, and gave her warm encouragement.

The next four years of Mary Anderson's life were repetitions of her first triumphs; she added to her *répertoire*, and deepened the impression she had made on the people in the United States and Canada. Her fame spread from America to England, and she received a very flattering offer from Henry E. Abbey to appear under his management in London at Henry Irving's Lyceum Theatre. After some hesitation she accepted the offer, and arrangements were completed by which she was to make her London *début* on the 1st of September, 1883.

The piece selected for the occasion was "Ingomar." This choice was generally regarded as so unfortunate, on account of the comparative antiquity and the stilted character of the play, that it was feared it might seriously interfere with her success. The young actress was so nervous that she was almost overcome; but on her appearance before the vast audience which had assembled to greet her, she was received with such a generous welcome that courage returned, and though not able to do herself perfect justice, her beauty, grace,

and the power and refinement of her acting, won an unmistakable triumph. An incident occurred a few moments after her first appearance on the scene, which was not without significance. Unable to gauge the size of the theatre, she could not make her voice heard distinctly in all parts of the house. Suddenly, piping tones from the gallery cried, "A little louder, Mary." Though she had not been warned to heed the mag-nates of the gallery, who are a great power in English theatres, she wisely obeyed the injunction, and thus gained their favor at the start.

The American girl's success in London is said to have been almost unprecedented. Her audiences were even larger than those of Henry Irving. It was, per-haps, in the character of Galatea that she was most admired; though great popularity was won in the lead-ing rôle of "Comedy and Tragedy," a short play which W. S. Gilbert had written for her. Among her audi-ences were the most prominent people of England. The Prince and Princess of Wales were so pleased that they complimented her in person. Mr. Gladstone, Lord Lytton (Owen Meredith), Tennyson, and many others of almost equal repute, became her friends. After a long engagement in London, she appeared in leading cities of England, Scotland, and Ireland, where she was received by large audiences with great en-thusiasm.

In the fall of 1887 Miss Anderson returned to America, and made a triumphal tour of this country. The distinction she had won abroad made her even more popular in her native land than she had been before. On her second professional visit to England, the following season, she repeated several of her old

performances, and then gave an elaborate production of the "Winter's Tale," playing the rôles of Hermione and Perdita, in both of which she found great favor from the public.

The next season she returned to this country, and presented this play here, with all the accessories which had won distinction for it abroad. Her season, however, was suddenly interrupted early in the spring by a serious attack of illness, which overtook her while she was playing in St. Louis, and compelled her to abandon work. Her retirement proved to be her final withdrawal from the stage.

She proceeded to England, which had become her second home, and was endeared to her by the beauty of its scenery, and by the ties of friendship she had formed there. In a few months she regained her health, and in the summer of 1890 she was married to Mr. Antonio Navarro of New York. She is now living quietly in England, and has forever abandoned the stage. In the literary field her autobiography, published in 1896, has proved an interesting work.

It would be futile at this time to attempt to assign to Mary Anderson a place in the history of dramatic art. But it is not unreasonable to say that her place will not be among the immortals, — if the fame of any actor, however great, may be said to be immortal, — with Siddons, Cushman, or Adelaide Neilson. However effective she may have been in certain parts, her acting was never absolutely convincing. What is genius in an actor except the ability to convince the spectator that his performance is an artistic reality? Mary Anderson is remembered now for the two qualities which contributed most to her popularity, — beauty and de-

clamatory power, both of which, by an apparent paradox, prevented her from winning ultimate success. Her beauty was so conspicuous that it tended rather to obscure than to intensify the impression her work made upon the public, ever more ready to pay homage to the lovely woman than the actress; and her declamation was so powerful that it attracted attention to itself, and took the performer out of the dramatic picture.

Mary Anderson possessed all the *matériel* of a great artist, except the soul. If the spirit of the French *tragédienne*, Rachel, which was too strong for the feeble body, could have been breathed into her, she would have become the greatest of modern actresses; but, lacking soul, she consequently lacked plasticity, which is an essential attribute of the truly great artist. It is true that she gained in plasticity as she developed with experience, but she never attained to a high degree that mobility of motion and expression which is so conspicuous in the art of Sarah Bernhardt.

Her deficiency in this regard was very marked in the *rôle* of Clarice, in "Comedy and Tragedy," which, though short, runs the whole gamut of human emotion. In it Mary Anderson displayed her inability to free herself from her own refined personality, and to assume the brazen manner of one who pretended to be dissolute. In the "Winter's Tale" she showed, as Hermione, how admirable she could be as an elocutionist without being admirable as an actress; and as Perdita, how delightful an actress she could become by adopting an absolute simplicity of style. In spite of her defects, however, she must be credited with having given to the modern stage one ideal performance,—that of Galatea. Her acting in this *rôle* was the perfection of

naturalness and grace. It alone ought to win for her the admiration and gratitude of all lovers of the drama. She has also left to the stage the tradition of a large number of brilliant, if not great, impersonations.

Her influence on the theatre was for its good. She gave pleasure to hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom learned through her to appreciate the beauty of Shakespeare's women. She sought in her brief career, notably during the last few years of it, to produce the best plays and in the best way. But most notable of all, for it is a noble tribute to the influence of the stage on those who pursue the profession of acting with a high purpose, her career was marked by a steady development, not merely in her art, but in her character and intellect as well. She entered the theatre an unsophisticated girl, and left it a mature woman, whose best qualities of mind and heart had been fostered by it.

LAWRENCE BARRETT.

BY B. E. WOOLF.

IN January, 1857, one Mrs. Denis MacMahon began an engagement at Burton's old Chambers Street Theatre in New York. She was a stage-struck *débutante* of a certain social distinction; but she made no very great impression, and disappeared from public view shortly after. Her opening play was "The Hunchback," and as Julia she was subjected to some exceedingly harsh criticism that was not undeserved. Not so the performer who enacted Sir Thomas Clifford. He was a young man, nineteen years of age, lean of figure, haggard of face, and not over graceful in bearing; but he at once attracted attention by the purity of his elocution, the vigor with which he threw himself into the part, and the intensity of feeling that characterized his acting generally. The critics next morning spoke of him in terms of warm praise, and pronounced him a rough diamond that would shine with the purest lustre when duly polished.

No one had heard of him in New York before, but from that moment he was never forgotten. His name was Lawrence Patrick Barrett; and he was born of Irish parents in Paterson, N.J., April 14, 1838. They were in poor circumstances, and could give him few opportu-



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nities to acquire an education ; in fact, so narrow were their circumstances financially, that he was called on when a mere boy to seek employment that he might add his quota to the scant income of his family. His parents had moved from Paterson to Detroit ; and it was there, as an errand-boy in a dry-goods store, that he earned his first salary.

Through the exertions of some friends who were interested in the leaning he manifested toward the stage, he obtained employment as call-boy at the Metropolitan Theatre in Detroit, at the not encouraging salary of \$2.50 a week. Thenceforward he devoted himself heart and soul to the theatre. He was naturally an intelligent lad, but his path was an arduous one ; for at the age of fourteen he could scarcely read, and had not mastered more than the rudiments of writing. It is a repetition of an old, old story, in which tireless study, constant labor, and self-denial under discouraging conditions, win in the battle of life. This young man became eventually a well-cultivated scholar of wide reading that he had thoroughly digested and assimilated, a master of the whole field of English literature, and an authority on all that related to the history of the stage.

While officiating as call-boy in the Detroit Theatre, he enlisted the attention of the manager, who had overheard him reciting speeches from Shakespeare for the amusement of his companions ; and he was at last intrusted with the modest part of Murad in "The French Spy." He bore himself so earnestly and creditably in it that he was from time to time cast in other small parts. He was then fifteen years of age. He remained in Detroit for another year, and then removed to Pitts-

burg, where he became a member of the Grand Opera House stock company, at the time under the management of Joseph Foster.

During this period he had risen to parts of importance, and his progress in his art was equally marked and rapid. Declining offers of a renewal of his engagement for another season, he went to New York. He had no definite plans, and his prospects were not encouraging. When his spirits were at their lowest, and his courage failing, he received the offer to support Mrs. MacMahon, and, as has been already stated, made an admirable impression as Sir Thomas Clifford in "The Hunchback." During the four weeks that this engagement lasted, Mr. Barrett appeared in a variety of parts, among them Fazio, Ingomar, Armand Duval, Claude Melnotte, and The Stranger. Two months later he was engaged by Burton for his new theatre, the Metropolitan, afterward known as the Winter Garden; and on March 2, 1857, and when scarcely nineteen years old, he appeared there as Matthew Bates in Douglas Jerrold's comedy, "Time Tries All." Three months after Barrett's advent at the Metropolitan, Edwin Booth, fresh from his triumphant engagement in California, began an engagement at this house; and the two young men, both on the threshold of their great careers, acted together for the first time.

In 1858 Mr. Barrett joined the company at the Boston Museum as its leading man. Here he met with hearty appreciation, and during the two years of his stay at this house he played a great variety of parts; but neither in New York nor in Boston had he, up to this time, aroused any enthusiasm as an actor. He was lacking in what is called personal magnetism; and

the precision of his elocution was considered pedantic, monotonous, and wanting in truth to nature. These qualities, however, continued with him to the last. He remained two seasons at the Museum, and then went to the Howard Athenæum, in the same city, where, under the management of E. L. Davenport, who had gathered about him a notably fine company, he appeared in a large range of characters. The outbreak of the war unsettled theatrical affairs; and on the first call for soldiers, Mr. Barrett enlisted, and served as captain of a company in the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts Volunteers, from October, 1861, to August, 1863. Returning home, he joined the company at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, remaining with it for three months, after which he accepted an engagement in Washington. Thence he returned to Philadelphia, this time to the Chestnut Street Theatre, where he acted again in support of Edwin Booth.

Barrett was now twenty-five years old, and burning with ambition to win fame as an interpreter of the principal *rôles* in the standard tragedies. About this time Edwin Booth made Barrett an offer to play the opposite parts to him in an important engagement at the Winter Garden. Simultaneously he received a proposition to enter into partnership with Mr. Lewis Baker in the management of the Varieties Theatre, the leading play-house of New Orleans. Mr. Barrett did not hesitate long in closing with the latter offer, as it afforded him the long-wished-for opportunity to enact the line of parts that had hitherto eluded him. He began the active management of the Varieties in the fall of 1863, and continued it for thirty weeks. In the course of this season he performed some of the

great parts that he had so deeply and continuously studied, among them Richelieu, Hamlet, and Shylock. His success though not overwhelming was, nevertheless, flattering. His great triumph of this period of his career was as Elliot Grey in Lester Wallack's "Rosedale." The season was brought to a sudden close by the destruction of the theatre by fire; and then Mr. Barrett made his first essay as a star, appearing in the fall of 1864 in "Rosedale," at Pike's Opera House, Cincinnati. With this play he had a profitable season, and it was his chief attraction in 1865-1866.

He paid a visit to England in the summer of 1866, but did not act. A year later he repeated the visit, under an engagement to play in Liverpool for one week. He had several offers to act in other cities; but as the terms and the conditions were unsatisfactory, he did not accept them, and returned home in December, 1867, under an engagement to open at Maguire's Opera House, San Francisco, Feb. 17, 1868. The character chosen by him for his *début* there was Hamlet, and his success was decided; so much so, that the engagement was extended to eleven weeks, during the whole of which term it was prosperous. His next move was to open the new California Theatre, under joint management with John McCullough. The season began Jan. 18, 1869, and continued during twenty months, with a success hitherto unprecedented in San Francisco. Barrett became an immense favorite there; but the cares of management were not favorable to his ambition to carve out an individual art career for himself; so he sold out his share in the house to Mr. McCullough, and set forth on a starring tour in the summer of 1870, opening at Niblo's Garden, New York, then under the

direction of Messrs. Jarrett and Palmer. Here was the real turning-point in his life, and from this time forward his fame steadily increased.

In the course of this engagement at Niblo's, "Julius Cæsar" was revived, with a strong cast, Mr. Barrett enacting Cassius; Mr. E. L. Davenport, Brutus; Walter Montgomery, Antony; and Mark Smith, Casca. It was in this tragedy that Mr. Barrett made the most pronounced hit of his career up to that time. In December of the same year he joined Edwin Booth at his new theatre on Twenty-third Street, and played opposite characters to him through an engagement of four months. On June 5, 1871, he played for the first time Harebell in "The Man O' Airlie," a character with which his name became brilliantly associated, and which he enacted for four weeks. In the same year he was invited to assume the management of the Varieties Theatre in New Orleans, a new building having been erected. He accepted; and in December, 1871, the house was opened with Albery's "The Coquettes," with great success. Then came an offer from Edwin Booth for Mr. Barrett to appear as Cassius in a spectacular revival of "Julius Cæsar," which he did not think it wise to decline. He returned to New York; and on Christmas night, 1871, he received a hearty welcome back to the stage, on which he had recently made so profound an impression. The play was given to immense audiences at Booth's Theatre for nearly three months; but Mr. Barrett did not remain after Feb. 17, 1872, being called to New Orleans to look after the affairs of the theatre there, which were in some confusion. He reappeared there March 4, 1872, as Hamlet. Owing to mismanagement in his absence,

he was obliged to assume the whole financial responsibility of the house, which he had on a five years' lease, and sunk \$57,000, which he was unable to pay in full for many years. He returned as a star to the California Theatre in the summer of 1873, and played there an engagement whose success was without precedent on the Pacific coast. In 1873-1874 he starred through the country in the standard tragedies. In 1875 he again enacted Cassius for nearly three months in another splendid revival of "Julius Cæsar," in Booth's Theatre, New York.

Mr. Barrett was now at the flood-tide of his professional activity, and in the third and most important period of his artistic career. To chronicle his journeyings would be merely to give a dry record of dates and cities. The leading events of his theatrical life, however, must be mentioned. On Oct. 11, 1877, he produced in Cincinnati "A Counterfeit Presentment," by William Dean Howells, and in 1878, at the Park Theatre, New York, presented "Yorick's Love," adapted from the Spanish by the same eminent novelist. He produced "Pendragon" in Chicago, Dec. 5, 1881, and Sept. 14, 1882, brought out "Francesca da Rimini" at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia; and when he acted the hunchback Lanciotto in New York next season, at the Star Theatre, it was for nine consecutive weeks.

In March, 1884, he sailed for London to begin a seven weeks' engagement, April 14, at Henry Irving's Lyceum Theatre, Mr. Irving being in the United States on his first tour. His *début* was made as Yorick, before a splendid audience; but he failed to attract large audiences, though he won much praise

and esteem from the more critical. He returned home to resume starring through the principal cities. Then came his professional union with Edwin Booth, which began at Buffalo, Sept. 12, 1887. This joining of interests by the two tragedians was received with unbounded enthusiasm, and the season was one of enormous pecuniary profit. In the following season the two artists were not together, though Mr. Booth played under Barrett's management with Madame Modjeska. In that season Mr. Barrett produced "Ganelon," in Chicago; but his tour was interrupted by bad health. In the summer of 1890 he rejoined Mr. Booth, both appearing in a round of the now familiar plays. His health again began to trouble him, but he still remained in the traces. On Monday night, March 16, 1891, the Booth-Barrett combination began the eleventh and last week of its engagement at the Broadway Theatre, New York. The play was "Richelieu." Mr. Booth was announced to appear in the title part, and Mr. Barrett as Adrian de Mauprat. Mr. Barrett could not be present, as he was suffering from what was believed to be a slight cold. His part was assumed by another artist. On Tuesday evening the play was repeated, and Mr. Barrett was promptly at his post and without any sign of illness. On Wednesday evening he again appeared as De Mauprat; but at the close of the third act he broke down, and another performer was called on to act the remaining scenes of the part. Mr. Barrett was taken home; and on Friday night, March 20, he succumbed to an attack of pneumonia, complicated by an old trouble in the glands of his throat. He was fifty-three years old at the time of his death. His remains were buried by

the side of those of his father in Cohasset Cemetery. He left behind him a wife with whom he had lived happily for thirty-two years, and three daughters, — Mary Agnes, now the Baroness von Roder; Anna Gertrude, who is the wife of Joseph Anderson, a brother of Mary Anderson; and Edith, who is now Mrs. Marshall Williams.

As an actor, Mr. Barrett had always to struggle against the disadvantages of a slight figure and a not very imposing presence. His voice was full and sonorous, but was somewhat unmanageable in regard to variety in tone and expression. His eyes were large and piercing, and responded readily to the emotions he depicted; but his powers of facial eloquence were not flexible. His enunciation was faultlessly clear and refined. He was a born elocutionist; and so much stress did he lay on precision in pronunciation and in deliberation in declamation, that the effect of sincerity in feeling was often absent from his acting, and an impression of pedantic and unemotional dryness conveyed. He was at his best in scenes of fiery passion, of suppressed anger, and of cold and biting sarcasm. His pathos was not, as the rule, convincing; though as Harebell, in "The Man O' Airlie," he reached a point of searching and impressive tenderness that found no such potent exemplification in any of his other assumptions. He was a scholarly artist in the most refined sense of the word, and the dignity of his art was always uppermost in his mind; but it is to be doubted if he was, on the whole, an actor whose methods appealed strongly to the sympathies of his audiences. They admired and applauded the intellectuality that was clearly apparent in all that he did; but their hearts

were rarely touched, especially in his performance of Shakespearian parts.

Perhaps his most perfect, as it was his most elaborate, assumption was Yorick. The growth of jealousy in the unhappy actor, from its dawning suspicions to its culmination in a frenzy of fury, was nobly depicted. Notably fine was his acting in the scene in which, by taunts and goads, contempt and cunning, Yorick at length discovers the cruel truth of which he is in search. Another brilliant effort was his Lanciotto in "Francesca da Rimini." The stormy conflict of emotions that never cease in the heart of the misshapen sufferer, the heroism, the morbidness, the tender affection, the bitter hate, the smarting under the jesting taunts of the fool, the mingling of savagery and sweetness of nature, were all portrayed with power of the first order. Neither in this part nor in Yorick was there much opportunity for set and reflective elocution; and the result was a freedom, a sweeping impulse, an effect of spontaneity in feeling and in action, in which Mr. Barrett's acting of less vehement parts was rarely prolific. He steadily ripened in style; and it may be said justly of him, that the longer he acted the more he broadened and improved, and that he was never more worthy to wear the laurels for which he struggled so hard and constantly than he was at the moment when death claimed him.

MME. MODJESKA.

BY CHARLES E. L. WINGATE.

THERE was no sign of excitement, little sign of interest, about the California Theatre on the opening night of that week in the year 1877 when an unknown Polish actress made her American *début*. Why should the public notice such an event? What if the actress was heralded as a countess? There had been other titled players upon the stage. What if she was reported to have been the leading actress in the city of Warsaw? Warsaw was a far-away place, with little of that influence for giving reputation which belongs to Paris or London. No wonder a mere sprinkling of listeners sat in the auditorium when the curtain rose upon the first act of "Adrienne Lecouvreur." No wonder the critics, as one of them has confessed, thought their duty would be adequately performed if they should stroll in for a few minutes after the play was well under way. The wonder came afterwards.

Before this unknown, unsympathetic audience, an actress was to appear, and, with such command of the English language as but a few months study could give, was so ably to act the *rôle* of Adrienne as to draw enthusiastic applause at every scene, and a final burst of admiration that left its echoes ringing till the next



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morning and the next week. There were no more cold greetings when the curtain rose in after nights, and audiences and manager alike felt the cheering effect of the presence of genius.

From that day Madame Modjeska's success upon the American stage was assured. Travelling as a star, at first with the poor company which the exigencies of the time made necessary, and afterwards with the admirable company which her own high artistic taste demanded, Madame Modjeska became recognized as a leading exponent of Shakespearian *rôles*. It would not be hard to discover reasons for placing her in the first rank of classic actresses in America. We cannot harmonize our ideals with her ultra-refined Camille and her dainty Rosalind, but at the same time we must admit that this same refinement and this same daintiness in other *rôles* have made them so winsome as fairly to command popular favor. Although the personality of Madame Modjeska is charming, with her graceful figure, her beautiful face, and her sweetly modulated voice, yet this is not the attribute to which her success is due. The auditor has been drawn by that magnetism which comes from warm, enthusiastic absorption in the character of the moment, and from the consequent natural expression of all the passions of a woman's heart. Coldly studying the *rôle* of the night, one feels that each movement and inflection has been planned with the mind of a careful student; but, even as he watches, his enforced coldness must disappear, and the subsequent warmth of sympathy conceals the conscientious actress, and reveals only the fictional woman, with all her sorrows and joys, loves and hates.

Madame Modjeska's devotion to the master dramatist

of the English stage has been life-long. The daughter of a Polish mountaineer of cultivation, she passed her early years in Cracow, surrounded by the lasting influences of artistic life. The name of Helena had been bestowed upon this youngest daughter of Michael Opido by reason of her small Greek head, suggesting the Greek name. Her mother was of a domestic nature; and although two sons had taken up the actors career, and another had become a professor of music, it was not deemed best that Helena should follow her inclination for a theatrical life until she had completed her education at a convent.

Twice only in her first fourteen years had Helena seen the inside of a play-house. Her first visit, at the age of seven, is said to have had such influence upon her imitative mind that, in view of the success of the air-cleaving nymph in the ballet, the young lady at home attempted, with the aid of heaped-up kettles and saucepans, to make the same essay into air—only to fall into a disaster necessitating the speedy presence of the mother. But more serious troubles were at hand. Fire swept away the half of Cracow; and in the flames disappeared not only the home of Opido's widow and children, but also the houses on which depended the family income. It was necessary then that all should earn their living; and, after Helena's education was finished, she was allowed to take up with the stage. She saw "Hamlet" performed, and thenceforth there was no dramatist so dear to her as Shakespeare. Goethe and Schiller, Corneille and Molière, were not neglected; but the English master claimed her chief adoration.

To the Polish actress America owes much because

of this same devotion to the Shakespearian drama. Here Madame Modjeska has acted not only such parts as Juliet, Rosalind, and Viola, but also the rarely performed *rôles* of Julia in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," Imogen in "Cymbeline," and Isabella in "Measure for Measure." She has instructed as well as entertained, displaying the beauties of the rare gems as well as pouring new light upon the familiar jewels of the actor's crown. As Juliet to the Romeo of Edwin Booth, Madame Modjeska appeared at the final performance in the ill-fated Booth's Theatre of New York; and her address on the 30th of April, 1883, was the last speech uttered upon the stage where, fourteen years before, the Romeo and Juliet of Edwin Booth and Mary McVicker had seemed to inaugurate a glorious career.

Another notable Shakespearian performance in which Madame Modjeska took leading part was the testimonial to Lester Wallack at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, May 21, 1888, when "Hamlet" was produced with Edwin Booth as Hamlet, Madame Modjeska as Ophelia, Lawrence Barrett as the Ghost; and Joseph Jefferson and W. J. Florence as the Grave-diggers. A little more than a year after this latter production, Madame Modjeska was associated with Mr. Booth in a starring tour, and was playing Portia, Beatrice, Lady Macbeth, and Ophelia.

This professional union with America's greatest actor is the more interesting from a fact but little known; it was the culmination of one of Madame Modjeska's most ardent desires when she first entered upon her American career. While farming in California, before she made her essay on the San Francisco stage, she

saw Edwin Booth act, and, delighted with his dramatic skill, sought the privilege of playing Ophelia in her own tongue to his Hamlet. An interview ensued; and the actress, whose powers, it must be remembered, were then totally unknown in this land, read so effectively scenes from various plays as to arouse the enthusiasm of every auditor in the room. Mr. Booth could not spare time for the rehearsals needed for a union performance; but he so earnestly urged the reader to study for the English-speaking stage, that she undertook the task. Eleven years later her early ambition of playing Ophelia to Booth's Hamlet was realized.

But in this chat of her American successes we have neglected the story of her early struggles in her native land. For several years her path was far from easy. Married at the age of sixteen to her guardian, who, much older than the bride, had been selected by her mother, Helena became Madame Modrzejewska (a name contracted in America to Modjeska); and a year later, in 1861, made her *début* upon the stage as one of a company of actors in Bochnia. Then at the head of a small troupe she travelled, amid most discouraging surroundings, through the towns of her native land, until finally, in 1865, she was accepted as an actress at the theatre in Cracow, and there at once secured recognition. Three years later, in September, 1868, she became the wife of Count Charles Bozenta Chlapowski, and that same autumn won at the Imperial Theatre in Warsaw a success which in another year was to lead to her engagement for life as leading lady of this foremost theatre of Poland. It was as Adrienne Lecouvreur that Madame Modjeska made her *début* at

Warsaw, as well as in America. Both occasions were turning-points in her life. In Warsaw there was much contention over the "starring" scheme introduced by the management; and had not Madame Modjeska, the new actress, proved herself a genius, she would have been overthrown by the opponents of the system, who cared little for her ambition at that time, and cared much for their cherished hobbies. She conquered active resistance at Warsaw, just as she conquered passive coldness in America nine years afterwards.

Madame Modjeska's love of fatherland was ever earnest, and her marriage to Count Bozenta united congenial patriots. He, a nephew of a leader of the Polish uprising of 1830, and a grandnephew of General Chlapowski, aide-de-camp to Napoleon, was a vigorous political writer for the periodical press until the peace of his family in Warsaw demanded that he throw aside the pen, with its magnetism towards the prison-cell, and engage in business life. She, imbued with most unselfish patriotism, refused an excellent offer from the Austrian stage at the time the Polish insurrection occurred, and struggled vigorously against the censorship of Russia over the Polish theatre. Even within a few years the Russian government felt so fearful of her influence that, in her summer tour through her native land, the officials prohibited the exhibition of her portraits in Warsaw, forbade the students from attending her performances in a body, and even closed the Polish theatre in St. Petersburg just before her opening night.

It was in 1876 that Madame Modjeska came to America. She left Warsaw because of physical exhaustion from constant work, and of mental weariness

at petty, but troublesome, attacks from envious players and writers. Although nominally on leave of absence, there was little expectation of return. Turning to free America, Modjeska and her husband, with other willing Polish exiles, sought a refuge in the far West. She would abandon the unsteady glitter of the foot-lights for the constant cheeriness of the warm sun; would throw aside the constraint of theatrical artifice for the freedom of open nature; would forget the thrilling woes of stage heroines for the peaceful happiness of real life. On a California ranch she and her friends would dream in the shady nooks of the prosperity coming with their growing grain and fattening cattle. One element in this process of growing and fattening was, however, forgotten, — that of work. But before long the poetry of this easy, careless life vanished, and the career of the bread-winner opened clearer before them. There were milking and feeding, sewing and scrubbing, to be done, even in this supposed paradise; and when at last the enthusiastic woman realized that such a life was less useful and less profitable for one of her God-given talents, she turned again to her first love, the stage, and made that memorable and auspicious *début* in San Francisco.

Since then her name has been identified with the best work of the American stage. In 1880 she visited England, and there, too, obtained favor, although, as Madame Modjeska has herself humorously narrated, her name was so little known as to lead many people to regard the single word on the posters, "Modjeska," as the title of a new tooth-wash or cosmetic thus broadly advertised!

The list of her *rôles*, aside from Shakespeare, would

include Julie de Mortimer in "Richelieu," Mary Stuart, Camille, Adrienne, Frou-Frou, Donna Diana, Odette, Andrea in "Prince Zillah," Nora in "A Doll's House," Louise Greville in "The Tragic Mask," Nadjesda, Marie de Verneuil in "Les Chouans," Countess von Lexon in "Daniela," and the title *rôle* in "Magda." The latter five she created upon the American stage. The refined temperament needful for adequate representation of poetic characters is hers by birth. Tragic force, and to a less extent nervous emotionalism, are within her essaying scope; but the memory of play-goers holds more willingly the attractive picture of her vivacious, intellectual comedy, and her sensitive, appealing pathos.

Few actors have possessed higher ideals than Madame Modjeska, and the personal as well as professional influence she has brought to bear upon the stage has ever been to its advantage. With a play even of the order of "Camille," Modjeska has endeavored, by her gentle, softening touch, to bring out a lesson of redeeming love in place of an ignoble expression of a reformed passion. Naturally this transposition of theatrical effect has been criticised as false sentimentality; and Camille, under her interpretation, has been declared an idealization of vice, and therefore morbid — perhaps even immoral — through its tempting character. But Modjeska, on her side, has held that the central idea of Camille is not the vulgar tale of a *cocotte* with a passing fancy for a handsome young fellow, but a touching expression of true reformation through love. This, she maintains, is the keynote of the character; and, basing her conception on this motive, she sought to make of the play an illustration of the text, "Her sins which are many are forgiven,

for she loved much," and an actual stage sermon in its portrayal of self-sacrifice.

But not with this sentimental play will Modjeska's future fame rest. The chief glories of her record are her careful, enterprising attempt to hold on the stage the best and rarest works of Shakespeare. It is true, she has made no one character essentially her own; no strong and unique personality has been brought to bear upon a Portia or a Lady Macbeth to make the single impersonation outshine all the interpretations of the same character by other players, even of the same generation; but all parts that Modjeska has essayed have been given with a womanly earnestness, an artistic sincerity, and an æsthetic beauty, that have made them warm, breathing characters of genuine interest and ennobling effect. Madame Modjeska's province is to charm rather than to inspire, to delight rather than to arouse enthusiasm; and her Viola, her Juliet, her Imogen, — all her amiable characters, — will remain as cameos of art in the mind, with no loud coloring, no disturbing effects. Could the endowed theatre, which she has so long championed, be established, its influence upon the future of the American stage would become great — if at its head was an artiste of the character and skill of Madame Modjeska.



DION BOUCICAULT.

DION BOUCICAULT.

BY VANCE THOMPSON.

THE drama of thirty years ago seems more remote and more unreal than that of Shakespeare's day. Very little of it holds the stage. Indeed, it may be said that, bar a few sporadic revivals, the plays of Robertson, Taylor, and Boucicault are permanently out of the bill. The reason is not far to seek. They are out of touch with the times; they are hopelessly archaic. And yet in his own day Boucicault was considered the apostle of realism on the stage!

To my mind the chief defect of the Boucicault drama lies here: there is no characterization and only the most elementary psychology. If there is in the long series of Boucicault plays one character which is at once reasonable and possible, I have yet to find it. Sometimes the characters are unnatural because they are the outcome of a false morality, sometimes because they proceed from a false art. In the Irish plays they are impossible developments of dramatic motives. But whatever the reason is, and it matters little, the truth remains that Boucicault never created a reasonable human figure. In spite of this, — or by reason of this, — he was the most popular playwright of his day. He raised playwrighting to the dignity of a sport.

It should be assumed — it should be remembered rather — that there are two kinds of art, which will no more mix than oil and water. It used to be the fashion to speak of high art and low art. The terms are not amiss. Now, the great masterpieces of high art have never been popular. A Madonna by Botticelli, a portrait by Franz Hals, has never interested the people. It does not concern itself with the mortuary sculpture of Michelangelo or the great works of literature. And of the drama this is equally true. The great play is not popular; it never has been popular. One has it on excellent authority that what pleased the audiences of the Globe Theatre was the grossness, and not the poetry, in Shakespeare's plays; the melodrama, and not the psychology. And neither Shakespeare, nor any other writer of the first class, ever created a popular type. The tenth-rate men, the devisers of "low art," to use the old terminology, have created all the popular types in the drama, in fiction, in "illustration," in balladry, and in music.

Who will sing a pæan for the tenth-rate men? They deserve statues and biographies. They have given the world almost everything it really loves.

Boucicault created the popular type of the stage Irishman. Conn the Shaughraun is a creation; Myles-na-Coppaleen is a creation. Perhaps on the day of Final Summing-Up, this may be accounted to him for a sort of righteousness. These ranting, vagrom Irishmen of his have made for the gayety of nations — and gayety is a rare and precious quality.

Of all the spurious types which have got into fiction, none is quite so unreal as that of the merry, honest, humorous, and lovable Irish peasant. Although Lever

and Lover antedated him, it was unquestionably Boucicault who gave vitality to these comic-opera peasants. The Irish themselves, who are credulous, have come to believe in the reality of these types; and as you journey through Ireland you will meet at any cross-roads pinch-beck imitations of Conn the Shaughraun, or Bourke's O'Shanahan Dhu. "Aisy in love and divarshun?"

These poor wretches, wheedling for pennies, expert in mendacity and mendicity. No, the peasant's life is hard the world over; in no land is it harder than in Ireland. Now, poverty does not breed virtue. It is the begetter of lies and cowardice, of shuffling and truckling and blarneying, of bullying and crime. And the Irish peasant has all the vices of his condition. For this reality, at once sad and dingy, Boucicault substituted the shining and salutary sham of the dare-devil, sentimental and witty Conn. This, surely, should be accounted to him for a sort of righteousness. He has not only created a popular type; he has wrought a miracle, and created a tolerable Irish peasant.

And how long will this type persist? I do not see why one should set a limit. There is vitality still in the Dibdin sailor-lad, with his "heave-ho! me hearty;" and Boucicault's Irishman bids fair to live as long.

But were I asked which of Boucicault's plays will live into the next century, I should bite my thumb in perplexity. The ultimate test of a drama is the text. When all is swept away, — the seductions of the players and the complicity of contemporaries, — there remains only the text, plain and inflexible, making for immortality or derision. It is impossible not to recognize the fact that Boucicault's plays differ from the dramatic forms which endure for generations, independent of

the modes of the hour and the assistance of the actors. A fair measure of success attended Mr. Aubrey Boucicault's recent revival of the "Colleen Bawn;" but here, again, the play was not the thing. One's interest was in the young actor, an accomplice in his father's success.

I think one may safely say that the play-goers do not care tuppence for the Boucicault drama. On the other hand, the players are loath to let it die. In other words, they are actor's plays, — media for the exercise of *virtuosité*, opportunities for technical display. You remember Lady Gay Spanker's famous "steeple-chase speech" in "London Assurance;" this is the sort of thing the actress will not willingly let die.

"London Assurance" was Boucicault's first play; and in accounting for its longevity, one finds, also, an explanation of the fact that while Robertson, Reade, and Taylor are permanently out of the bill, Boucicault is still played. I remember Miss Rose Coghlan's revival of "London Assurance" at the Star Theatre, New York, in 1894. Upon my word, though I went to the theatre in the dress usually worn by men who go abroad in the evening, I felt I should have donned a high-waisted blue coat, with brass buttons, strapped trousers, a canary waistcoat, and a threefold stock. It was produced in 1841; and Boucicault, then nineteen years of age, witnessed the triumph of his play from a stage-box of the Covent Garden Theatre. It was immensely popular in those days of immense petticoats and immense stocks. And this popularity has persisted feebly, but unbrokenly, for half a century. I do not think audiences clamor for it. It is not like that much advertised nostrum for which babies cry. Its vitality, you and I will agree, is due to the players and the

players alone ; to Mr. Charles Wyndham, who is an ideal Cool, and Miss Coghlan, the best Lady Spanker of this generation. "London Assurance" is like those twiddling, flamboyant concertos of Bruch, which violinists preserve because they afford chances for displaying *virtuosité*. You have heard that strenuous Belgian, Ysaye, play the second Bruch concerto? Then you know just what I mean. You and I, mooning in our orchestra chairs, cared not tuppence for the subject matter of that blessed piece. But Ysaye's technical execution, his mastership, the tremendously effective way in which he got over those harmonic hurdles — ah! this filled us with serene, æsthetic satisfaction. And "London Assurance"? It is the same thing. One's interest is in such technical matters as the "business" between Cool and Meddle; or Grace Harkaway's ability to carry her languishing — her Lydia Languishing — rhapsodies. For instance, you watch for such delicious absurdities as this: —

"I love to watch the first tear that glistens in the opening eye of morning, the silent song that flowers breathe, the thrilling choir of the woodland minstrels, to which the modest brook trickles applause: these, swelling out the sweetest chord of sweet creation's matins, seem to pour some soft and merry tale into the daylight's ear, as if the waking world had dreamed a happy thing, and now smiled o'er the telling of it."

These desperately foolish passages tempt the actress to-day as they tempted her long ago. The Boucicault comedy persists simply because it drools with rhetoric which pleases the players.

But the old order changeth. The nummers who were adept in artificial comedy are dying out. The new histrionic school has other aims and other ideals.

It needs no hardy prophet to foretell the time when Boucicault's plays shall have ceased to please even the players. Then they will be merely documents, to which the curious student of the drama will turn indifferently. Had it not been for the complicity of the players they would have been discarded long ago.

The public has always been easily cozened in plays. It has rarely praised the praiseworthy, if one is to believe the men of Serious Intellect. In praising Boucicault, however, I think it did well. He gave his age what it wanted, and played no inconsiderable part in the development of the modern drama. He was a dramaturgical matador. He pricked many of the elaborate stage conventions of his time. In so far as it lay in a tenth-rate man, he was original. He was quite innocent of culture; but he had imagination, and he knew the stage. He was ingenious, inventive, and industrious—amazingly, monstrously industrious. He wrote or adapted an almost incredible number of plays. His Irish melodramas have overshadowed his five-act comedies and tragic plays, and yet these too had their time of popularity. Who remembers them now? "Old Heads and Young Hearts," "The School for Scheming," "The Irish Heiress," "Love in a Maze," "The Willow Copse," "The Corsican Brothers," "Faust and Marguerite," "Used Up," "The Octoroon," "The Streets of London," "After Dark," "The Long Strike," "Flying Scud," "Night and Morning,"—they are dead as Garrick's prologues or Cibber's plays. They served their purpose; they amused the spectators, and that, as Aristotle insisted, is the true aim of the drama. The Boucicault drama is dead; any discussion of it is in the nature of an autopsy.

Its most notable quality was its gayety—its fine animal spirits. It was merry and clean. To us the gayety of “Arrah-Na-Pogue” seems rather threadbare; but even the shabbiest and most decrepit spirit of mirth should be reverently treated in these days. Gayety is infinitely more precious than all the “profundity” and “bitterness” and “modernity” of ginger-bread philosophers like Pinero and Grundy and Jones, and infinitely more rare. It is only decent that we should thank Boucicault for the laughter which arried our fathers, even though laughter be not hereditary.

There are few facts of interest in Boucicault's biography. He was born in Dublin in 1822,—Christmas day, I believe,—the youngest son of Samuel Boucicault, a merchant. He was a nephew of George Darley, the dramatist, and was named after Dr. Dionysius Lardner, the philologist and pamphleteer. A successful playwright at nineteen, he did not know failure until old age came upon him. In 1853 he married Agnes Robertson, and came to the United States. Here he turned actor, playing Irish characters with great success. He went back to London in 1860. In his most prosperous period—the seventies—he was manager and lessee of Covent Garden Theatre. Affairs did not go well with him in later years. He descended to what Epictetus called the “shameful necessity of teaching the young.” He died in New York in 1890.

There have been Irish dramatists by the score,—O'Keefe, O'Hara, Kelly, O'Brien, Kenney. Only two attained eminence. One was Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who never wrote an Irish play. The other was Dionysius Lardner Boucicault.

CLARA MORRIS.

BY WILLARD HOLCOMB.

SHALL a player merely act, or really feel his part? which is truer to art and nature? This is a question which has been disputed by critics as well as actors from the time Diderot took David Garrick to task for his "Treatise on the Art of Playing," published in 1754, replying in the famous "Paradox of Acting," down to the recent discussion between Henry Irving and Coquelin *aine*, representing the English and French schools respectively; and still it is as far from being settled as when first begun. All authorities recognize that, as William of Avon tersely put it:—

"The aim of acting is and ever shall be,
To hold, as 't were, the mirror up to Nature;"

but the method thereof must be determined by each individual player. Shall he be the thing he seems for the time being, or merely simulate so closely that the beholder believes him to be it?

The living flame, which feeds on fuel and air, and the burning-glass, which gathers and concentrates the sun's rays, achieve the same effect. But the glass is unconsumed, scarcely more than warmed, by the intense heat it transfers, whereas the living fire con-



CLARA MORRIS.
(From an early photograph.)

sumes all it touches, and, when there is nothing left to feed upon, dies out.

Such must be the fate of the player who feels too intensely the flame of passion ; self-consumed, his power must die. But the artist who, like the burning-glass, gathers from nature's inexhaustible source the vital rays, reflecting them with conscious art, and transmitting them to his audience, remains clear and perennially powerful to the end. Such players never lag superfluous.

Clara Morris is the living example of one side of Diderot's argument ; she illustrates extreme sensibility. Bernhardt is her opposite, — cold, calculating, self-conscious art. But Bernhardt stills plays Camille with all her former *finesse*, yea, even with added art, while Clara Morris only occasionally realizes her former greatness. Sometimes, as she breathes upon the ashes of the past, the old flame blazes up again in all its fierce, fascinating intensity, and for a brief scene she is Camille ; then it dies out, and she is only a mediocre actress again. It is the difference between natural talent unrestrained, and technique developed to absolute art.

It is impossible to consider Clara Morris in a coldly critical light, for her art will not withstand it. Her audience must be carried with her on the wave of emotion, or left stranded and disgusted on the beach. The man who merely looks on and listens is offended by her unconventionality, her unrestrained, almost hysterical emotion. She weeps realistic tears, and incidentally applies her pocket-handkerchief to other very proper but unpoetic uses incident to undue excitation of the lachrymal glands.

Her peculiar nasal intonation strikes jarringly on the unsympathetic ear, and her meagre gesticulation soon becomes stereotyped and tiresome. Clara Morris, through the cold, mechanical medium of the phonograph and kinetoscope, would be grotesque, almost ludicrous. In short, the actress cannot be differentiated from the character she is assuming for the time being. She is either Camille with her woes, Cora with her wrongs, Odette with her repentance, — or a mere acting automaton.

Yet this is the woman who, with her realistic interpretation of Camille, has moved to tears more Camilles of real life than ever thronged to the *matinées* of any other American actress. It may not have been art; but it contained that touch of truth which appealed to their sin-sodden souls, and brought the salt tears tumbling down their painted cheeks. Maudlin tears these may have been, and half an hour later these same Camilles probably laughed at themselves in their mirrors, as they applied more powder to efface the stains; but they were the tribute of sincerity, — the spontaneous echo of powerful emotion.

Clara Morris's career is in itself a drama. Born Morrison, a Canadian by nativity, but with the warm Celtic blood coursing through her fragile frame, she seemed fitted for almost any other walk in life than the stage. She might have been a religieuse, supplementing her slender strength with the fierce ardor of devotion and inspired imagination, until by her services for man and the Master she had won a saint's halo. She might have been merely a plain housewife, misunderstood and unappreciated by her associates, smothering her aspirations within her own heart, and slowly con-

sumed by their inward fire, until death brought long-desired relief.

She had imagination enough for a writer; but it was interpretative rather than creative, and she scorned that discipline and restraint prerequisite to the best expression of thought. Instead, she chose the stage, and with perseverance that bespoke the determined spirit within her weakly little body, fought it through for long, weary years of drudgery, physical suffering, and lack of recognition. But she felt within her that spark of genius which, when eventually given vent, blazed forth into a flame that for more than a decade made her America's most famous emotional actress.

When only seventeen she joined John Ellsler's stock company in Cleveland, Ohio, playing maid-servant and similar minor parts which fall to the lot of young actresses. She was painstaking, studious, and reliable; but no one ever recognized in her the possibilities of more than an ordinary utility player. It happened that in 1870 Augustin Daly, always on the outlook for fresh talent, required some young women at his Fifth Avenue Theatre, and wrote Mr. Ellsler. Mr. Daly did not require much, only conscientious and fairly talented girls, who knew enough to make an entrance and exit,—probably preferring to train them after his own methods. Clara Morris being the only one available in his company, Mr. Ellsler sent her to New York.

At this time Clara Morris was described as a slim, pale, quiet little creature; and, needless to say, she was almost lost in the Fifth Avenue Company, then full of talent since celebrated. Mr. Daly had in rehearsal an adaptation of Wilkie Collins's "Man and

Wife," in which Miss Morris was given a small part, and Agnes Ethel, the leading lady, was cast for Anne Sylvester, an emotional part that called for the highest powers. Just then Miss Ethel sprained her ankle, with prospects of being laid up for a month. Mr. Daly was deeply troubled; for his preparations had been extensive, and he disliked to disappoint the public.

In his company was Fanny Davenport, but she failed to show the proper spirit in the part. Kate Claxton and Linda Dietz were tried, but neither suited Mr. Daly. Then by inspiration, or in despair, he gave the part, with a few brief instructions, to little Morris, greatly to her delight, but to the undisguised disgust of the older members of the company.

But though others were openly surprised and doubtful, she felt that her opportunity had come. Hurrying home to her mother with her precious manuscript, she sat up all night studying. Next morning at rehearsal she was letter perfect, and Mr. Daly was much pleased at her industry and aptness. But the "little pale girl," as he called her, refused to act at rehearsals. With the exception of an occasional emphatic speech, he could get nothing out of her to indicate that she would do more than recite the part poll-parrot wise. Still the spirit of prophecy or pertinacity determined him to try her.

The night of the opening came, and the house was sold out. All the other players were ready, but it was whispered that little Morris was ill. John Norton, the actor and manager, an old friend of the family, who had known her in Cleveland, found her in bed, feverish with excitement, and suffering from the spinal affection which came near to ending her life later on. He cheered and

encouraged her as best he could, and volunteered to accompany her to the theatre. Miss Morris insisted on walking, to work off her nervousness; but every now and then she was obliged to sit down on some convenient doorstep to rest and cry a bit.

Mr. Daly apologized before the curtain for Miss Ethel's non-appearance, and stated that Miss Morris would play the part, plainly indicating his doubt as to the outcome. When the curtain rose all the old Daly favorites, James Lewis, D. H. Harkins, Mrs. Gilbert, Kate Claxton, Linda Dietz, etc., were warmly welcomed; but nobody in the audience seemed to know the pale little creature who remained in the background during most of the first act, until at the climax she startled everybody with a Vesuvian outburst of passion.

They were watching for her when the curtain rose again; and during the second act she developed such intensity of power, sincerity of purpose, — fury expressed in choking passion, and tenderness interpreted through streaming tears, — that half the audience wept with her. After that all were under the spell of the little pale woman, and Clara Morris was famous.

Of her later triumphs as Cora, Miss Multon, Odette, and Camille, little need be said, as they still live in the public memory. For fully a decade Miss Morris has been the Camille of the American stage; and although rivals of newer schools are crowding her from the boards, she still remains the representative of the realistic Marguerite Gautier.

MR. AND MRS. W. J. FLORENCE.

BY ALBERT ELLERY BERG.

WILLIAM JERMYN FLORENCE was born in Albany, N.Y., on July 26, 1831. He was of Irish descent, and his real name was not Florence, but Conlin. His father, who was an Irishman of the old school of patriots, died when William was fifteen years of age; and that father's death required the boy to contribute to the support of the family. He first began to make a living by working at a very small salary in a newspaper office in Albany. Then he went to New York, where he was first employed as assistant book-keeper in a large mercantile establishment, and afterwards in a type manufacturing concern.

His inborn dramatic instinct soon led him to join the James E. Murdoch Dramatic Association, which, although then in its infancy, was famous locally, and had produced many good actors. In Florence's day it had about two hundred members, most of them talented amateurs. Florence had, as a boy, acquired some note for his powers of mimicry. In the shop his associates had but to start whistling a jig, a reel, or a clog, and the first foot to patter in response was young Conlin's. He could reproduce the Irish brogue, the negro twang, and the Dutch guttural, with equal facility.



W. J. FLORENCE.

There is some difference of opinion as to the date of his first appearance on the professional stage. As early as December, 1849, he made what may be regarded as his *début*, at the old Bowery Theatre, in "Evadne." He had but one line to speak, consisting of two words, — "Hold off." According to other accounts, he made his first attempt on the professional stage at the Richmond Hill Theatre of Richmond, Va., on Dec. 6, 1849, as Peter in "The Stranger." The following year he played the part of Macduff to Booth's Macbeth, at Providence, R.I., but soon took to Irish characters at Brougham's Lyceum, and made a great hit in that line of parts.

He had previously appeared, on May 13, 1850, as Hallagon, in Brougham's piece called "Home," at Niblo's, which was then under the management of William Chippendale and John Brougham. Among his professional associates at Niblo's were Mary Taylor, Mrs. Vernon, John Sefton, Fanny Wallack, Charlotte Cushman, and William Burton. Brougham afterwards took a new theatre at Broadway and Broom Street, which he called Brougham's Lyceum. This was opened on Dec. 23, 1850; and on that night Florence appeared in the farce called "The Light Guard and Woman's Rights."

It was towards the end of this season, in the spring of 1851, that Florence made his first great hit. The piece was called, "A Row at the Lyceum," and was one of Brougham's jokes. The stage was shown without any scenery, so as to represent a rehearsal. The actors were in their every-day clothes, and they were styled on the programme simply by their own names, Florence playing the fire laddie. He was not on the

stage, but in the auditorium. He wore a white spike hat. In the middle of the performance he began to talk to the actors on the stage. Great commotion ensued in the theatre, and it was some time before the joke dawned on the audience.

The year following Florence joined Marshall's Company at the old Broadway Theatre, appearing on Aug. 30, 1852, as Lord Tinsel in "The Hunchback." During this engagement he supported the principal stars of that day in tragedy, comedy, and farce. Among them were Edwin Forrest, Mrs. Mowatt, and Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams.

On New Year's Day, 1853, Florence married Mrs. Littell, a *danseuse* whose maiden name was Malvina Pray, and who was a sister of Mrs. Barney Williams. The Pray sisters were graceful dancers, and were much liked in soubrette parts. Malvina had first married Joseph Littell, an old-time actor. Another sister of Malvina, who was also a dancer, married Mr. George F. Browne. Barney Williams and his wife were at that time in the height of their success, as Irish boy and Yankee girl delineators. Mr. and Mrs. Florence, believing that the world was wide enough for another team of that kind, decided to adopt the same line, an experiment which proved eminently successful.

In an interview in 1877, Florence told how he came to adopt this line of work. After telling all about "The Row at the Lyceum," he says, "It was during this engagement that I first met Mrs. Florence. She was then a *danseuse*; for it was customary in those days to make use of songs and the 'light fantastic' between the plays. Her name was Malvina; and she was considered the best of American dancers and sou-

brettes of the period, among whom may be enumerated Mary Gannon, Julia Turnbull, Mary Ann Lee, Annie Walters (afterwards the wife of George Jordan), and others. Wallack then took the theatre. My wife remained; but I went to play on Broadway, near the corner of Anthony (now Worth) Street. I played in almost everything. I was watching almost jealously the progress of Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams, and felt the ability to do as well. After consultation with Mrs. Florence, we determined to enter the same field. We started at the National Theatre in Chatham Street. Mrs. Florence introduced the Yankee girl; and it was an immense hit, especially in England, where we played at the Drury Lane Theatre in 1856 for a long time."

The Chatham Street engagement referred to by Mr. Florence was where he and his wife opened their starring tour on June 19, 1853. It was then known as Purdy's National Theatre. At that time Mr. Florence wrote several plays upon Irish and Yankee subjects. He also composed many songs of a popular character, one of which, called "Bobbing Around," had a large sale. These songs were sung by his wife, to the great delight of the audiences of that day. The Irish plays made considerable money for the Florences. It was only occasionally that they resorted to burlesque and melodrama. One of the most popular of these Irish dramas was "The Irish Emigrant," in which the Florences frequently appeared at the old Winter Garden. Florence also gave a very good character sketch of Handy Andy, and appeared in a long line of Hibernian characters that had been in the *répertoire* of Tyrone Power and old John Drew. Among the best burlesques of Florence's *répertoire* were "Fra Diavolo,"

“Beppo,” “Lalla Rookh,” “The Lady of Lyons,” and “The Colleen Bawn.” He was to some extent the pioneer in this class of burlesque on the American stage.

The Florences filled engagements at the outset of their starring tour in all the principal cities of the United States, and were everywhere well received. Among the early plays written by Mr. Florence for these appearances were “The Irish Princess,” “O’Neil the Great,” “The Sicilian Bride,” “Woman’s Wrong,” “Eva,” and “The Drunkard’s Doom.”

On April 2, 1856, the Florences sailed for England, and appeared in London at the Drury Lane Theatre for fifty nights to crowded houses. The performance of the Yankee girl by Mrs. Florence roused great enthusiasm; for it was a new type to English audiences, and Mrs. Florence was one of the first American *comédiennes* to appear on the English stage. After the London engagement was finished, the Florences appeared at Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin, and other cities, where they became universal favorites. Their songs were sung and whistled all over the United Kingdom at that time.

The foreign tour proved, according to Mr. Florence’s own statement, a great benefit to them on their return to the United States, where they opened their second starring tour with pronounced artistic and pecuniary success. Their first appearance on their return to this country was at Burton’s new theatre, where they played three weeks to large audiences in “The Irish Emigrant,” “The Yankee Housekeeper,” and “The Lesson for Husbands.”

On July 5, 1858, the Florences opened at Wallack’s

old theatre for the summer season, during which they produced a number of burlesques. On June 13, 1859, they began a second season at the same house; and on the 18th of that month they produced the burlesque of "Lalla Rookh," which ran successfully to the end of their term, Aug. 20. They returned to this theatre on May 25, 1860, for a run of "Lalla Rookh." Meanwhile Mr. Florence had purchased the costumes which the late W. E. Burton had worn as Timothy Toodle and Captain Cuttle. The season closed on Aug. 25. From June 10, 1862, until Sept. 6 of the same year, the Florences occupied Wallack's new theatre, corner of Thirteenth Street and Broadway, later known as the Star. Their most noticeable productions there were a farce called "Orange Blossoms," acted for the first time July 2, and a dramatization by John Brougham of "Dombey and Son" (with Florence as Captain Cuttle, and Mrs. Florence as Susan Nipper), which they brought out on July 7. In the part of Captain Cuttle, Florence made one of his most brilliant hits, and many of the critics considered it the best of all his creations. Mr. Florence himself declared that Captain Cuttle and Bob Brierly were his favorite characters. His acting of Captain Cuttle is said to have been as good as that of his predecessor, William Burton, who was very famous in the part in his day.

The burlesque, Eily O'Connor, by the late H. J. Byron, was produced by the Florences for the first time in this country, at Wallack's, on Aug. 6. It was during the summer of 1862 that the Florences paid their second visit to England, where they performed for about three months. After their return, they began an engagement at the Winter Garden Theatre, on

Nov. 2, appearing in "Handy Andy," "Mischievous Annie," and "The Returned Volunteer." On Nov. 9 they produced "Kathleen Mavourneen," which ran for two weeks. During his second visit to England, Mr. Florence had seen Henry Neville's striking personation of Bob Brierly in "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," and, deeming the character suitable for himself, purchased a few printed copies, as the piece was published. He accordingly brought out the play for the first time in America, on Nov. 30, 1863. It ran until March 26, 1864,—one hundred and twenty-five performances in all. He made a great hit as Bob Brierly, which was one of his best characters, and which he is said to have acted during his career fifteen hundred times. It was this character that re-established his reputation as an actor of serious parts. He gave a capital delineation of the trials of the simple Yorkshire lad, who fell into bad company and suffered for it. Mrs. Florence personated with humorous effect the good-hearted *dau-sense*, Emily Evrémonde.

During his third visit to England, Florence secured a copy of T. W. Robertson's "Caste," which he afterwards professed to have written down from memory. The play was produced at Wallack's in August, 1867, but had to be withdrawn on Aug. 31, on account of a star engagement the Florences had to fill elsewhere. This production led to a famous lawsuit. Lester Wallack had purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, the managers of the Prince of Wales Theatre in London, the American rights to "Caste." Mr. Florence maintained that he had seen the play many times in London, which enabled him to write down the text and stage business from memory. At that time

the Supreme Court had not established the precedent, that the American rights to a foreign play were protected by law. Consequently, as there was no international copyright, and there was no evidence that Mr. Florence had procured the play in an unlawful manner, the courts upheld him, and Mr. Wallack lost the suit. The Florences made quite a neat little sum out of "Caste," and fully deserved it from the excellence of their performance. Florence acted the part of D'Alroy; and Mrs. Florence assumed the rôle of Polly Eccles, a part for which she was highly praised by the critics. Owen Marlowe was cast for Hawtree, Mrs. Chanfrau for Esther, and Mrs. G. H. Gilbert for the Marquise St. Maur. It is questionable, however, whether it was not a breach of professional etiquette for Mr. Florence to produce the piece, considering Mr. Wallack's prior claim.

On Oct. 20, 1867, the Florences brought out at Wallack's an Irish drama entitled "Inshavogue." Mr. Florence began another engagement at this house on Sept. 28, 1868, when, as a result of his summer visit to England, he produced a translation of the French play "L'Abime," the plot of which was derived from the Christmas story called "No Thoroughfare," by Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins. The portrayal of Obenreizer was a remarkable characterization of artistic villany. It was this personation that placed Mr. Florence in the front rank of American actors.

On Feb. 1, 1869, the Florences began an engagement at Wood's Museum, which closed on March 27. They presented there another burlesque, and revivals of "The Ticket-of-Leave Man" and "The Colleen Bawn." On Oct. 2, 1871, they produced "Eileen Oge,"

an Irish drama by Edwin Falkener, at the Grand Opera House, New York. This was a piece they had secured during a summer visit abroad. It ran for six weeks, and the scenery of the production was considered quite elaborate at the time.

The greatest money success of the Florences, "The Mighty Dollar," was originally produced on Sept. 6, 1875, at the Park Theatre, New York. The play was written for them by Benjamin E. Woolf, the dramatic critic of the *Saturday Evening Gazette* of Boston. Although the piece was at first condemned by the critics, it ran for many nights, and afterward was played with great success for a dozen years throughout the country. The cast, besides Mr. and Mrs. Florence, contained Frank Weston, W. J. Ferguson, E. M. Holland, W. R. Floyd, W. J. Carroll, J. W. Shannon, W. A. Whitecar, C. E. Edwin, Ione Burke, Ethel Thornton, and Josephine Baker. Mr. Florence played the part of Hon. Bardwell Slote; while Mrs. Florence impersonated Mrs. Gilflory, the confiding widow, with a good heart and resplendent vocabulary. The Bardwell Slote of Florence, although necessarily somewhat of a caricature owing to the dramatic material provided by the author, was one of the best humorous portrayals of a certain type of American character that has ever been seen on our stage. The popularity of this piece was remarkable, and the Florences are said to have appeared in it more than two thousand five hundred times.

It is related that the play came to be written in the following manner: Mrs. Florence while abroad was constantly amused at the French phrases which wealthy but uneducated American women would use. She

thought that it would be a good idea to transfer one of these persons to the mimic stage. Mr. Florence had also in mind a character suited to himself; namely, that of a good-humored but not over-scrupulous Western lawyer. The Florences accordingly went to Ben Woolf, and had him write a play with these two characters as the prominent personages. The piece was originally called "The Almighty Dollar," and was subsequently changed to "The Mighty Dollar," in order to avoid criticism by religious people. It enjoyed a run of one hundred nights on its first production in New York, and subsequently ran there for five months in 1876. In 1880 the piece was presented at the London Gaiety Theatre, under the Hollingshead management; but the English audiences did not understand the satire or the fun embodied in the types personated by Mr. and Mrs. Florence.

In 1883 the Florences produced in Philadelphia the piece called "Facts, or His Little Hatchet," which was written for them by George H. Jessop. The title of the play was subsequently changed to that of "Our Governor." Mr. Florence appeared as Pinto Perkins, a politician who could tell amusing lies. After that Florence essayed a piece called "Our German Professor," by B. E. Woolf, in which he depicted some of the trials of an amatory Teutonic scholar. His broken English dialect in this *rôle* was very amusing.

In March, 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Florence announced their retirement from the stage as joint stars. Mrs. Florence started on a European tour, and after her return settled down in New York. Mr. Florence concluded then, what had long been talked of; to wit, a Jefferson-Florence combination; and on Oct. 15,

1889, William J. Florence and Joseph Jefferson made their joint appearance at the New York Star Theatre in "The Rivals;" Jefferson taking the part of Bob Acres, and Florence Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Mrs. John Drew was engaged for the part of Mrs. Malaprop. The organization met with an enthusiastic reception from the start, and Florence was no small factor of its success. Besides Sir Lucius O'Trigger, he won encomiums from the critics by his excellent and lifelike embodiment of Zekiel Homespun in "The Heir at Law." He was last seen in New York, at the Garden Theatre, on Oct. 24, 1891.

While filling an engagement in Philadelphia in the early part of November, Mr. Florence complained of not feeling well, but continued to perform regularly. On Saturday evening, Nov. 14, after having played the part of Zekiel Homespun at the Arch-street Theatre, he gave a supper party at the Continental Hotel to Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Soon after the close of the festivities he was taken ill, and physicians were called in. He had congestion of the lungs; and after danger from that cause had practically ceased, the patient was too weak to rally. His death, which occurred in Philadelphia on Thursday, Nov. 18, at 8.30 P.M., was attributed to heart failure. His sister-in-law Mrs. Barney Williams, his sister Mrs. Norman Ward of Washington, and Dr. Patrick Donnellan were with him when he passed away. Mrs. Florence was in England at the time; and the news of her husband's death was cabled to her, asking her desires with regard to the funeral arrangements. Florence's brother, Police Inspector Conlin, who had returned to New York the day previous, not expecting the crisis to come so soon,

returned at once to Philadelphia to take charge of the body.

In accordance with the wishes of Mrs. Florence the funeral ceremony took place in New York, at St. Agnes's Roman Catholic Church, on Monday, Nov. 23. The church was filled with the friends and admirers of the dead comedian. The pall bearers were Edwin Booth, A. M. Palmer, John G. Heckscher, William Winter, C. N. Vilas, C. P. Fearing, Clayton McMichael, and John Russell Young.

At the time of his death Mr. Florence was playing his last season with Joseph Jefferson. He had engaged a manager and laid out his plans for a starring tour during 1892-1893.

W. J. Florence was the eldest of five brothers and two sisters. He left no children. By her first husband Mrs. Florence had a daughter, the actress known as Josephine Shepherd, who made her professional *début* with Lotta in 1884. Several years ago Mrs. Florence became the wife of Howard Coveney.

Through the death of William J. Florence the American stage lost one of its foremost comedians. We have had few actors who approached him in humorous unction and inherent drollery. His characterizations were noted for their originality, raciness, and truth to nature. His geniality was not merely assumed for mimic purposes. He was one of the most lovable of men in real life, a good fellow in the full meaning of that term. Among his numerous accomplishments was the gift of telling a rattling good story; and he was fond of a practical joke — providing it was harmless. Florence and the elder Sotherrn were responsible for innumerable pranks.

One day Sothern had invited Lord Fitzroy, the son of the Duke of Beaufort, to a breakfast. While the host was out of the room, Florence persuaded Fitzroy that his health demanded that he should draw himself up and down on the door. Then Florence ran down and told Sothern that Fitzroy was insane, and imagined that Florence wanted to murder him, and that he was trying to crawl out of the transom. Whereat Sothern rushed up, and with great concern attempted to pacify the lordling.

There was no more enthusiastic angler in the country than Mr. Florence; and he had a place on the Restigouche River, which he visited each summer for the purpose of fishing. He also had some reputation as an amateur sportsman and politician.

Florence himself attributed his success as an actor to simpleness of purpose, strict attention to detail, and a sinking of his identity in whatever character he undertook to portray. As a member of a stock company he preferred juvenile *rôles*. He spoke a little French, some German, and less Italian. In social life he was a universal favorite. He wrote a book on the game of poker, which was published after his death.

His early successes were due to his spirited impersonation of Irish characters. The critics agreed that he reproduced to life a certain type of devil-may-care Irishman, with his rollicking spirit, his dry humor, his mock innocence, his pathos, and his undercurrent of poetry. Outside of Irish characters, his best part was generally considered to be that of Captain Cuttle. Charles Dickens, upon seeing Florence as Cuttle during his engagement in London, wrote him a letter complimenting him upon his excellent work. Florence's

traits were originality of type-drawing and natural drollery. His Captain Cuttle was as good as Burton's in the opinion of many fine critics. His Bardwell Slote was a distinct and lasting American characterization. His Sir Lucius O'Trigger was almost as good as that of John Brougham and William Warren, while his Zekiel Homespun has probably never been equalled on any stage.

In his obituary sketch of Florence, William Winter, the dramatic critic of *The Tribune*, said: "Few actors within the last forty years have stood upon a level with him in versatility, in power, and in charm. To his friends the loss is unspeakable. His gentleness, his simplicity, his modesty, his affectionate fidelity, his ready sympathy, his inexhaustible patience, his fine talents, — all these attributes, united with his spontaneous drollery, serve to enshrine him in tender affection."

In an editorial reference to his death in the *New York Times*, it was declared "that it might be said of the death of Florence, as Lamb said of the retirement of Munden, 'How many worthy persons perish with him!' We shall never see another Sir Lucius and Zekiel Homespun. Captain Cuttle will only be found hereafter in Dickens's story. Bardwell Slote and Pinto Perkins are dead."

FANNY DAVENPORT.

BY JAY B. BENTON.

THEATRE-GOERS of Boston whose memory extends back to performances thirty or more years ago recall with pleasure a bright, chubby little girl, who appeared upon the stage of the Howard Athenæum as a target-bearer in the performance of "Pocahontas," and who marched about at the head of a procession of Indian girls. Those who lived in Louisville, Ky., about ten years later, remember with delight the winsome soubrette, whose capital impersonations were the talk of the city, and whose work, whether in "The Black Crook," or in pieces of more dramatic merit, was marked by conscientious care. New York amusement seekers of twenty years ago have not forgotten the young actress whose development they noted in the favorite stock company of the city, and whose genius was displayed in such a manner that she was advanced until she became the leading lady of the organization. That chubby girl of Boston, that soubrette of Louisville, that promising actress of New York, was the woman with whose dramatic work all the United States has since become familiar, — Fanny Davenport.

After having played with success in Boston for several years, E. L. Davenport attracted the attention of



FANNY DAVENPORT IN "GISMONDA."

Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt by the merit of his work as the leading man of her support during a Philadelphia engagement. As a result, he was engaged to accompany her to England for the tour which opened in Manchester, Dec. 7, 1847. The American actress and actor won success wherever they appeared together, and at last they received the encouragement of a London triumph. When Mrs. Mowatt determined to return to America, her leading man, who had shared in her success in every city, found it to his advantage to remain in England; and shortly after, in 1849, he was married to Fanny Vining (Mrs. Charles Gill), who was one of the actresses in the English company which had supported Mrs. Mowatt and himself.

It was on April 10, 1850, in a little house on Great Russell Street, London, opposite the British Museum, that their first child was born, a daughter, whom they christened Fanny Lily Gipsy. With his wife and children Mr. Davenport returned to this country in 1854, and resumed the position on the American stage which he had left seven years before. He soon came back to Boston to live, and it was in the public schools of that city that Fanny Davenport received the first part of her education. However, it was not from books or school that she drew her inspirations, but from her presence at the theatres in which her parents were playing, and from her acquaintance with the distinguished actors and actresses who visited the Davenports at their house. All agreed that Fanny was a born actress as soon as they saw her imitations at home, or witnessed the performance of one of the little plays written by her, in whose production she directed her sisters, and enacted the principal characters. Soon she

had a chance to make an appearance on the regular stage, as the child in "Metamora," at the Howard Athenæum, where her father and mother were playing. From that time on she could be intrusted with children's parts; and whenever or wherever the Davenports were playing, and a child was needed, Fanny was sure to be selected.

Her first New York experience was on Feb. 23, 1857, when Mr. Davenport and Harry Watkins assumed the management of Burton's Chambers Street Theatre, and opened it under the new name of "The American Theatre." At the opening performance "The Star Spangled Banner" was sung by Mr. and Mrs. Davenport and the entire company, among whom was the child whom the bills styled "Miss Fanny." Her New York experience at this time was of short duration; for the bills of the Howard Athenæum, Boston, for July 19 of the same year, give the cast of a performance of "Pocahontas," in which Fanny Davenport was assigned to the part of Trot-er-Obend, the target-bearer; her mother playing the Indian princess; her father, Captain John Smith; and John Brougham, the author of the burlesque, Powhatan.

In 1859 Mr. Davenport became the lessee and manager of the Howard Athenæum; and among the others who were enrolled upon the list of this unusually strong stock company was the now popular child-actress, Fanny Davenport. A glance over the files of the play-bills at this house during this period shows that she played, among other parts, the Peruvian boy in "Pizarro" with Joseph Proctor, the Genius of America in a war drama entitled "The Patriot's Dream," and King Charles II. in "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady,"

on Oct. 29, 1860. It was in this last-named part that she made her real metropolitan *début* at Niblo's Garden, Feb. 14, 1862, when she played with her father as Ruy Gomez, and her mother as The Duchess of Terranueva, the same parts which they had previously acted in the Boston performance.

After acting with her parents in other cities, she made her first appearance in an adult part at the little Tremont Theatre, Boston. The play was "Still Waters Run Deep," and she was cast for the part of Mrs. Mildmay. This was with Wallack and Davenport's combination, an organization of which Rose Eytinge was the leading lady. Soon the young actress's professional position became such that she received offers to play alone; and at length she decided to accept the place of soubrette in the stock company at the Louisville Theatre, and, leaving home and friends, she went South. Her first part was Carline in "The Black Crook," and her success was pronounced from the first.

Her next important engagement was at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, where she appeared as soubrette in dramas, farces, and operas, among them "Barbe Bleue," under the management of Mrs. John Drew. It was here that she attracted the attention of Augustin Daly, who offered her a position in his stock company at the old Fifth Avenue Theatre on Twenty-fourth Street. Mr. Daly had only been manager of the house for six weeks when, on Sept. 29, 1869, Miss Davenport made her first appearance with the company as Lady Gay Spanker in "London Assurance." The cast included father and daughter, Mr. Davenport playing the part of Sir Harcourt Courtly. Her success at the very outset of her New York experience in a play

of this nature was repeated in the subsequent revival of old comedies which had been practically forgotten, but which were received with great favor. Notable among these were her impersonations of Miss Richland in Goldsmith's "The Good-Natured Man," Lady Mary in Mrs. Inchbald's "Maids as They Are and Wives as They Were," and Violetta in Colley Cibber's "She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not."

It was not in the revivals of semi-forgotten dramas that her only hits were made; for she was equally successful as Letitia Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem," and Mistress Ford in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." In the Robertsonian drama she had the opportunity of playing; and her Polly Eccles in "Caste," and Rosie Farquhere in "Play," are remembered by New Yorkers with pleasure. Among the other performances which she gave at this house were Alice Hawthorne in "Old Heads and Young Hearts," Mrs. Madison Noble in Olive Logan's "Surf," Effie Remington in Bronson Howard's "Saratoga," the Baroness and Fernande in two different productions of "Fernande," the Jackson version of Sardou's "Andréa," the Baroness de Mirac in "Article 47," and Nellie Wikoff in "Diamonds." When Mr. Daly produced "Divorce" at this theatre, Miss Davenport was cast as the sprightly Lu Ten Eyck, and later on she played the part of Fanny Ten Eyck in the same play.

When the pretty little theatre in Twenty-fourth Street was burned, and Mr. Daly transferred his stock company to the old Globe Theatre on Broadway, Miss Davenport remained in the organization until the new Fifth Avenue on Twenty-eighth Street was completed. At the opening performance, Dec. 3, 1873, James Al-

berry's "Fortune" was played; and Miss Davenport was cast as Kitty Compton, the housekeeper. A little later W. S. Gilbert's "Chārit̄y" was given; and in this she played Madge the tramp, and developed dramatic power that was unexpected by those who had seen her earlier performances. This hit was so great that it induced Mr. Daly to write "Pique," in which Miss Davenport created the part of Mabel Renfrew, and eclipsed all her earlier triumphs. The piece was produced at the Fifth Avenue, Dec. 14, 1876, and had a run of two hundred and thirty-eight consecutive performances.

During the next season, which was Mr. Daly's last as the manager of the house, Miss Davenport's chief successes were Rosalind in the production of "As You Like It," and Mary Stark in "Lemons." Then began her career as a theatrical star, in which she visited all parts of the country with success. At first her efforts were devoted to Mabel Renfrew in "Pique;" but it was not long before she began playing a varied *répertoire*, a policy which she continued until the season of 1883-1884. Her plays included tragedy and comedy, works of the modern French stage and the Shakespearian drama.

Up to the close of her playing in a *répertoire* Miss Davenport had been seen in a long list of parts. In Shakespeare's plays she had acted Rosalind in "As You Like it," Imogen in "Cymbeline," Rosaline in "Love's Labor's Lost," Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing," and Lady Macbeth, in which she was less successful than in the others. Among the other poetic or tragic parts which she played were Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," and Leah in "Leah the Forsaken." In the old comedies, including in that list the more

modern plays which common consent now places there, she has acted Lady Teazle in "The School for Scandal," Julia in "The Honeymoon," Miss Harcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer," Tilburina in "The Critic," and Peg Woffington in "Masks and Faces," in addition to the parts previously mentioned. One of the most successful of her impersonations was Nancy Sikes in a novel dramatization of "Oliver Twist;" while her Camille was particularly well acted, in fact, one of the best on the American stage, although in personal appearance she was hardly an ideal representative of Dumas's consumptive heroine. Other characters which she has given are Gilberte in "Frou Frou," Estie in "Blue Glass," Bell Van Renssler in Bronson Howard's "Moorcroft," Francine of the pearl gray in Daly's "Two Widows," Duchess de Septmonts in "The American," Daly's adaptation of Dumas's "L'Etrangère," Eugenia Cadwallader in "The Big Bonanza," Helen Gaythorne in "Weak Woman," Mary Melrose in "Our Boys," Dianthe de Marel in "What Should She Do?" and Madame Guichard in "Monsieur Alphonse." The least successful of her impersonations were Olivia in Wills's dramatization of "The Vicar of Wakefield," and Kate Vivian in Anna Dickinson's "An American Girl;" but the failure of success in the latter case was due more to the play than to the actress.

Miss Davenport had made several pleasure trips abroad, but up to 1882 she had never acted there. Then she made a professional visit to England, and played for a brief season in London and elsewhere. The principal piece in which she was seen was "Pique," which was played under the title of "Only a

Woman," but it failed to win the success there which it had made in this country.

In 1883 began a new chapter in the actress's history. Until that time her engagements had been devoted to several plays; and although their popularity had not diminished, Miss Davenport felt that she could win additional laurels in new parts. Sarah Bernhardt was at that time the talk of all Paris for her impersonation of *Fédora*, in Sardou's play of that name; but no American actress had secured the rights to the piece. Certain of success, Miss Davenport obtained the play, appeared in New York in 1883, and made the hit which she had anticipated. Her impersonation was no imitation of the French actress; it was a forcible, distinct conception of the part. As such it met with approbation from critics, and praise from audiences; and for five seasons Miss Davenport had no necessity of obtaining a new piece, although during the latter seasons she made occasional appearances in the successful pieces of her earlier career. In 1887 Madame Bernhardt's success in "*La Tosca*" abroad led Miss Davenport to think it advisable to obtain the rights for that piece for America, which she did, repeating the success of *Fédora* in her performance in Sardou's harrowing play, which she gave for the first time at the opening of the Broadway Theatre, March 3, 1888.

Sardou's "*Cleopatra*" was the third of Sarah Bernhardt's pieces for Miss Davenport to produce in this country. Having obtained the American rights to it, she made preparations for its first performance at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, at the opening of which she had played a little over seventeen years before. Elaborate preparations had been made for a spectacular produc-

tion; and on Dec. 23, 1890, the play was given for the first time in this country. Months had been spent in the preparation, and the result was a triumph for the strength of the acting, for the richness of costuming, and for the elaborateness of mounting. However, the triumph was of short duration; for, on the night of Jan. 2, 1891, the house was burned, and everything was destroyed. Miss Davenport, who, as for several seasons, was her own manager, was hardly disconcerted for a moment. She was booked to appear in Boston in three weeks, and she determined to fulfil the engagement, and she did. New scenic artists were summoned, costumers were set at work, and skilful men began preparing the music which formed so important a factor in the production. Although the achievement was almost as magical as the erection of Aladdin's palace, everything was gotten in readiness; and on Jan. 27, 1891, the piece was presented at the Hollis Street Theatre, Boston, with an equipment that was fully as elaborate as that which had been destroyed by fire only three weeks before, and which had taken months for its preparation.

Miss Davenport's fourth and last Sardou production was that of "Gismonda," which Bernhardt had produced before her in Paris. This was given for the first time in the fall of 1894 in New York, with the most elaborate scenic production that Miss Davenport had ever had, and has continued to be the leading feature of her *répertoire* since that time.

So much must suffice for the summary of the professional life of the actress. Miss Davenport has had two husbands. On July 30, 1879, she was married to Edwin H. Price, an actor who had supported her in her travelling company. He accompanied her on her tours,

acting during the first years, and performing the duties of business manager later. They were divorced on June 8, 1888; and on May 19, 1889, Miss Davenport married Melbourne MacDowell, an actor who had been a member of her company for some time, and who now appears as her leading man.

For years Miss Davenport's home, where she spent her summer vacations, was at Canton, Pa., a delightful spot, picturesquely situated among the mountains. It was the place picked out by her father for his summer home, and the daughter was so charmed with the spot that she purchased a neighboring estate for herself. It was at Canton that E. L. Davenport died, on Sept. 1, 1877; and his widow passed away at her daughter's home, July 20, 1891.

Later Miss Davenport chose Duxbury, Mass., for her summer residence; and when her season's professional work is over, she retires to her beautiful residence there, and passes the summer months in quiet. Her sister May (Mrs. William Seymour) has a home nearby, and other members of the family have summer residences at the same delightful spot.

Recent theatre-goers at the mention of Miss Davenport's name think of her *Gismonda*. It is a remarkable impersonation, full of dramatic power, and a fitting central figure for the magnificent scenic equipment which she has provided for the performance. Her *La Tosca* will be remembered even longer than her *Gismonda*: for the varying phases of Sardou's Tuscan heroine seem almost as if created expressly for her. In the soft, languorous moments, in her cooing petulance, in the rage of jealousy, in her pleading fondness, in her terrible struggles, in the carrying out of her horri-

ble revenge on Scarpia, she was always excellent, and oftentimes great. No one can forget the thrill which attended the stabbing scene, or the pathos of her discovery that her lover was dead, and not shamming as she had thought. *Fédora* was also a part which fitted her perfectly; and her acting was in some respects even superior to Madame Bernhardt's impersonation, having more blood, more humanity, more heart. It was a womanly conception, and one which carried an audience with it irresistibly.

Of the parts with which she was identified in her earlier career, her *Rosalind* was a most pleasing performance, being graceful and neat. To her *Rosalind* was a genuine young woman, sensitive and emotional, but strong with the courage of her needs and of her situation. In her hands *Leah* was treated with sympathetic intelligence, and invested with picturesque force, which at the climax of the fourth act rose to great tragic power. In "*The School for Scandal*" Miss Davenport was thoroughly charming, her impersonation being sparkling, graceful, and polished. Her conception was an honest one, and the screen scene has seldom been better acted than by her. *Beatrice* in "*Much Ado About Nothing*" was played with freshness, vigor, womanliness, and sparkle; and the lighter scenes received especially fine interpretation. From the very outset of her career Fanny Davenport has taken a conspicuous place in the theatrical world, and she has done much to continue the reputation of a name which was already distinguished.



J. LESTER WALLACK IN "ROSEDALE."

JOHN LESTER WALLACK.

BY JULIAN MAGNUS.

THE death of John Lester Wallack, at Stamford, Conn., on Sept. 6, 1888, took from the American stage the last of the great "light comedians" that there was any prospect of seeing again on its boards. It is true that James E. Murdoch was alive, but he had long ceased to act; whereas Mr. Wallack entertained a hope of recovering from the sciatic affection which had partially lamed him for about two years, and again playing some of his best-known parts. The fact that I have named Lester Wallack as a great "light comedian" must not be taken, by those who did not know his many-sided talents, to mean that it was only in this branch of his art that he was accomplished; he was an excellent actor of serious parts, and a showy and effective hero in many melodramas, but it was in light comedy that he shone pre-eminent.

Wallack was born in New York, Jan. 1, 1820. His father, James W. Wallack the elder, then acting in that city, and his mother, were both English. Lester was taken to England when very young, and educated there. For a short time he held a commission in the English army—a career to which his elder brother devoted his life. Lester was, however, evidently des-

tined for the stage; and the record of his first public appearance is at Dublin, in 1842, under the name of John W. Lester, as Don Pedro in "Much Ado About Nothing." Mr. Wallack once told me that his first appearance was made in Rochester, England, in the part of Rochester in a comedy dealing with the time of Charles II.; but I cannot get this confirmed.

It may be encouraging to many young actors and actresses to learn that, at the outset of his career, Lester Wallack was very unpromising. His contemporaries were unanimous on this point, and I have often heard him cordially confirm their report. For two seasons Lester Wallack continued to play in Dublin; from there he went to Edinburgh, where he was in the same company with John Parselle—afterwards so well liked at the Union Square Theatre, New York. Lester also played a short engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, London. On Sept. 27, 1847, still playing as John W. Lester, he made his first appearance on the American stage at the New York Broadway Theatre, in the character of Sir Charles Coldstream in Dion Boucicault's adaptation, "Used Up." Some time after he joined his father's company at the theatre formerly known as Brougham's Lyceum, and assumed the onerous positions of stage-manager and leading man.

He did not put his name as "Wallack" on the play-bills till the theatre at the corner of Thirteenth Street, now known as the Star, was built. This was opened in the fall of 1861, with a play entitled "The New President," which did not prove successful. James W. Wallack's name was retained as proprietor and manager until his death, in 1864, though he never acted on the

stage of the Thirteenth Street house, as during his latest years he was a great sufferer from rheumatic gout. Lester Wallack, with the able assistance of Theodore Moss in the business department, managed that theatre with almost constant success till the newer and last Wallack's, now Palmer's, was built at the corner of Thirtieth Street and Broadway. It was opened on Jan. 4, 1882, with "The School for Scandal;" but Lester Wallack did not play in it, as he had for several years prior given up the part of Charles Surface, for which he said he was too old and too heavy. He, however, continued to play Charles Marlowe and Charles Courtley, and all who saw those characterizations could not but regret that they were unable to see him in Sheridan's masterpiece. The removal to Thirtieth Street was not attended with the success that was hoped for; and after several seasons of varying fortunes, Mr. Wallack subleased the theatre for one season to Henry E. Abbey. The new manager was not any more successful, and after one season was glad to retire. Theodore Moss, who had become the owner of the property, after carrying on the business for some time under his own direction, made an arrangement whereby A. M. Palmer assumed the control.

No other actor that New York has known has succeeded in holding for so long a time as did Lester Wallack the first place in its affection as an actor and a manager, and none has attained the same social position and recognition. The strongest proof of the esteem in which he was held was furnished by the wonderful results of the testimonial benefit given to him at the Metropolitan Opera House on May 21, 1888, when nearly twenty-one thousand dollars was realized

and presented to Mrs. Wallack, Mr. Wallack himself declining to accept the money. The benefit was splendidly managed by A. M. Palmer, Augustin Daly, and committees of eminent actors and newspaper men. At the actual date of the performance Mr. Daly was in Europe, and the bulk of the work fell upon A. M. Palmer. The play was "Hamlet," and the cast was composed of the most famous actors and actresses in the country. Those who were not assigned parts "went on" as supernumeraries, and such an array of well-known players was never before seen on any stage in this country. Edwin Booth was Hamlet; Modjeska, Ophelia; Lawrence Barrett, the Ghost; and Jefferson and Florence, the Grave-diggers. After the second act Mr. Wallack made a speech of thanks, and said that, if God spared him and again gave him the use of his "rebellious limbs," he hoped to resume acting. But, as previously stated, it was less than four months afterwards that the final curtain fell on his brilliant career.

Few men have been more gifted by nature for success on the stage than was Lester Wallack. He possessed a singularly handsome, mobile, and expressive face, a tall, powerful, and graceful figure, and a remarkably pleasing speaking and singing voice. Above all he had that indefinable quality we have come to call "magnetism," and that confidence in his ability to hold and delight an audience which arose from long years of success. Lester Wallack was a product of the old school, which made *actors*, and not *specialists*. While he did not venture into the domain of heavy tragedy, he played many powerfully emotional parts, — one of the best being Hugh Trevor in "All for Her," — and

traversed all the range of the drama to the frailest of farce. He took the then considered inferior part of Charles Courtley in "London Assurance," and made it more important than that of Dazzle. When he played "Ours," Hugh Chalcote became the most prominent part, although originally it was played by a low comedian. In fact, with Lester Wallack it was very much the old story that "where McGregor sits there is the head of the table." Yet he was too good an artist ever to force himself or his part into undue prominence.

To say in what characters he excelled would be to give an enormously long list, and then some would be surely left out that many of his older admirers would want included. To the writer, who only knew him during the last fifteen years of his active career, he seemed to be at his best in Charles Surface, Charles Courtley, Elliot Grey, Hugh Chalcote, Charles Marlowe, and in "The Captain of the Watch," and "My Awful Dad." On looking over the records of one of the earlier seasons at the first Wallack's Theatre, I find that John Lester played nearly ninety different parts, and that in nearly half of these he appeared for the first time. What would one of our young society actors of to-day think of such a season's work added to the hard labors of stage-management? It was to this schooling, however, that Mr. Wallack attributed his own success. He was a believer in the theory that "an actor is made, not born," and his own early efforts gave foundation for the belief. He attained a brightness, a vivacity, a grace, a quickness, and a charm which have not been equalled within the memory of the present generation of theatre-goers.

Above and beyond all these qualities was the sense of vitality and earnestness in his work. He acted, as he used to say, "all over." He was not content to speak his lines; but he played with his body, his legs, his arms, his hands, and even his feet. There were meaning and emphasis in every gesture; and yet his gestures were abundant, though never redundant. He was the only actor I have ever seen trained in the "legitimate" who could be equally at home in the "tea-cup and saucer" comedy. No amount of work was too great for him at rehearsals. As a stage-manager he was infinitely the best I have ever seen or played under. He would, if necessary, act all the parts in the piece, those of the women included; and the actor who could not learn to play acceptably under his direction must have been entirely unfitted for the stage. When playing under another stage-manager or author, — such, for instance, as Dion Boucicault, — Lester Wallack was as pliable and obedient as any member of the cast.

While not a writer of especially brilliant or strong dialogue, Lester Wallack put together several extremely effective plays, the situations of which were handled with the appreciative skill of a clever actor and stage-manager, and supplied with "talk" which pleased and amused. Mr. Wallack's plays were not strikingly original in theme, and in some he had the advantage of collaboration. Among the best known are "Rosedale," which alone drew a fortune, "The Veteran," "Central Park;" dramatizations of "The Three Guardsmen," "The Four Musketeers," and "Monte Cristo;" "The Fortune of War," "Two to One," "First Impressions," and a comedy written in conjunction with W. H. Hurlburt, called, I think, "Americans in Paris." Mr.

Wallack's pen was also often effectively employed in touching up and altering plays produced on his stage.

As a manager, Lester Wallack was liberal and enterprising, although in rather narrow limits, up to within the last few years of his active life, when he seemed to lose heart and courage. He mounted and dressed his plays superbly, and was ever liberal, considerate, courteous, and encouraging to the members of his company. He was, unfortunately, the last of the resident actor-managers; and his people felt that he was a man who was in thorough sympathy with their artistic aims, who would appreciate with what pains they achieved success, and who could discern and feel grateful for the earnestness and endeavor which might not result so fortunately. His revival of "Much Ado," in which he played Benedick to the Beatrice of Rose Eytinge, has not, in point of sumptuousness, good taste, or correctness of detail, been surpassed by any subsequent setting of Shakespearian comedy.

Perhaps the most marked fault of Lester Wallack's management, and one that more than all others contributed to his later failures, was his extreme devotion to English plays and English actors. He failed to recognize the gradually growing demand for American plays and players; and though, at long intervals, he gave an American author a chance, he was not fortunate in his selections, and did not seem to be much grieved at failure.

As a man, Lester Wallack was brave, honest, and true. He had read much and thought much, and was a delightful and entertaining companion, and a firm and loyal friend to those he admitted to his intimacy, though this number was somewhat restricted. It was

my privilege to be associated with him for several years, occasionally acting with him, and at other times in the business of the theatre; and it has never been my good fortune to meet with a man more capable of inspiring general respect and genuine affection.

Lester Wallack married a sister of the English artist, John Everett Millais. They had three sons, Charles, Arthur, and Harold, and one daughter. None of the sons has acted; but Arthur was at one time associated in the management of Wallack's, and has shown some ability as a dramatist.



MRS. JOHN DREW AS MRS. MALAPROP.

MRS. JOHN DREW.

BY T. ALLSTON BROWN.

LOUISA LANE was born in England, Jan. 10, 1818. Her mother, afterwards Mrs. Eliza Kinlock, was married to Mr. Lane, an English actor and manager, who died when our heroine was in her infancy. Louisa was taken on the stage by her mother, when only nine months old, in a play called "Giovanni in London;" and all she had to do was to cry, at which she was not a success. This, I believe, is the only time in seventy and more years that this lady has failed to fulfil the requirements of the *rôle* assigned her.

Her first important speaking character was Agib in "Timour the Tartar," at the Liverpool Theatre. In company with her mother she came to America, arriving here in the summer of 1827. Her American *début* took place at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, Sept. 26, 1827, as the Duke of York to the elder Booth's Richard III. Her first appearance in New York was at the Old Bowery Theatre, March 3, 1828.

In company with her mother she visited many of the principal cities of the country. In Philadelphia, on Jan. 5, 1829, she made her first appearance at the old Chestnut Street Theatre. Miss Lane sustained five different characters in a new farce called "Twelve

Precisely," and Little Pickle in "The Spoiled Child." In the first piece she personated an Irish character, and for a child of eleven years her versatility was wonderful; her brogue and manner were excellent. Moreover, her performance of Little Pickle possessed great merit. Three days later she acted Dr. Pangloss; and that impersonation was pronounced by the critics "the best since the days of Twaits," yet, at the same time, he never produced half the effect, nor was his humor by any means as rich as was our heroine's. In the "Actress of All Work," in which she played the same night, the actress went through six characters, distinguishing and marking each with a precision that would have done credit to many of the "stars" that occasionally twinkle on our stage.

Miss Lane's first benefit took place Jan. 16, 1829, when she acted Dr. Pangloss. As she stood by the orchestra, and looking round the pit, inquired if any one there wanted the instructions of an LL.D. and A.S.S. at three hundred a year, the effect was irresistible, and the house shouted with laughter. She next appeared at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, where she played a farewell engagement prior to her departure for the South and West. She appeared in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 8, 1829, as Dr. Pangloss, then returned to Philadelphia, and opened Sept. 22, 1829, at the Arch Street Theatre for the first time. Next followed another Southern tour, opening in New Orleans in April, 1830, as Richard III.

Her stepfather, Mr. Kinlock (to whom her mother was married shortly after her arrival in America), died in Jamaica, in 1831, he having gone there with Mrs. Kinlock for his health. Mrs. Kinlock died in 1855.

After playing successfully through the South and West, Miss Lane opened at the Columbia Street Theatre, Cincinnati, Ohio, as Maria in the comic opera, "Of Age To-morrow." N. M. Ludlow acted Baron Wittinghurst. Then she reappeared at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, as Albina Mandeville in "The Will." During the season of 1833 she was a member of the Old Bowery Theatre Company.

Miss Lane was married, in 1836, to Henry B. Hunt, an Englishman who came to this country in 1828 as a tenor singer. He died in New York, Feb. 11, 1854. His wife reappeared at the Old Bowery in 1838; and on Aug. 19, 1839, she appeared at the Walnut Street Theatre as Mrs. Hunt, acting Italia in "Romanzo." There she remained for the season, her salary being twenty dollars per week. That was the highest salary paid there at that time.

When the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, opened its season, Aug. 28, 1841, she was a member of the company that included such artists as Peter Richings, principal comedian, Mr. and Mrs. Edward N. Thayer, Neafie, Miss Hildreth (afterwards the wife of General B. F. Butler), and the Vallee Sisters (one of whom afterwards married Ben De Bar). Mrs. Hunt played leading juvenile business. On July 9, 1846, she acted Constance in "The Love Chase" to the Wildrake of E. L. Davenport, at the Old Bowery Theatre, New York, for Mr. Davenport's benefit.

In 1847 once more she went Westward, and appeared in Chicago at John B. Rice's new theatre, the site of which is now occupied by the Sherman House. Next she visited St. Louis, Mo., opening for a fortnight, Sept. 13, 1847, and playing a wide range of the drama.

Her *répertoire* was Constance in "The Love Chase," and Joseph in "The Young Scamp;" Ion in the tragedy of that name; Rosalind in "As You Like It," and Widow Brady in "The Irish Widow;" The — in "The Devil in Paris," and Minnie in "Somebody Else;" Donna Olivia in "A Bold Stroke for a Husband," and other varying characters.

In 1848 she was engaged at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, under Ludlow and Smith's management, who were also lessees of the Mobile and St. Louis theatres. She then came East, and was married in 1848 to George Mossop, an Irish singer and comedian. In July, 1849, she appeared in Albany, N.Y. Mr. Mossop suddenly died there, Oct. 8, 1849.

Mrs. Mossop was married to John Drew in Albany, on the 27th of July, 1850, while both were members of the Museum company. Mr. Drew was, without doubt, one of the best all-round comedians (particularly in Irish character) seen on our stage. His wife, after a brief starring tour, returned to Philadelphia, and became a member of the company of the Chestnut Street Theatre, when the season of 1852-1853 opened. At this house she remained until Feb. 21, 1853, when she went to the Arch Street Theatre in the same city, then under the management of Thomas J. Hemphill. Mrs. Drew opened in "She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not." On Aug. 20, 1853, Mr. Drew became one of the lessees of this theatre, and so continued for two seasons. In the summer of 1855 husband and wife went on a starring tour through the South.

John Drew died in Philadelphia, May 21, 1862. On Aug. 14, 1858, William Wheatley and John S. Clarke became lessees of the Arch, and conducted a stock

company that was one of the best ever organized in America. It consisted of Mrs. Drew, Mr. and Mrs. John Gilbert, S. D. Johnson, Emma Taylor, Georgiana Kinlock, Mrs. W. C. Gladstone, John S. Clarke, William Wheatley, L. R. Shewell, John E. McCullough (utility), and John Dolman, of late years a prominent lawyer in Philadelphia. Mrs. Drew assumed the management of this theatre Aug. 31 1861, and thereafter, until her recent tours as a special attraction in star combinations, made her name identified with the house. She kept up the stock system until the opening of the season of 1877-1878, when she made the theatre a combination house, playing travelling companies.

When she took the Arch the property had depreciated greatly, and was mortgaged to the amount of twenty thousand dollars. Under her management the theatre greatly prospered, the mortgage was quickly paid off, and a surplus left for the stockholders. The stock, which had a par value of five hundred dollars a share, under her management reached a value of seven hundred and eighty dollars, and could not even then be purchased except upon the death of a stockholder.

Mrs. Drew is one of the most versatile actresses ever seen on the American stage. I know of no lady who possesses greater originality of conception, more boldness of design, or more intimate knowledge of that difficult art which assimilates acting to the workings of natural impulse. She is perfectly "at home" in tragedy and comedy. As a child and an actress she has been connected with the stage for nearly three-score years. While there are living older actors and actresses, there is not one now before the public who can equal her in years.

Mrs. Drew is one of the few instances of a prodigy in youth becoming a star in the dramatic constellation. Her greatness does not arise from that of the character, but consists in her manner of portraying it. In form, stature, mobility of countenance, and physique, she is made to give the dramatic world assurance of an actress; while a lofty intellect, a passionate devotion to her art, and a highly cultivated mind, have stamped the seal of excellence upon her brow.

Her reading is faultless; her voice clear, of great compass, and musical in tone; her enunciation so clear and distinct that you lose no word or syllable of the text in her most impassioned utterance. She does not "mouth" or "saw the air," as some of our players do, nor "tear a passion to tatters;" nor does she "o'erstep the modesty of nature."

There is a refreshing originality about her conceptions; while to a remarkable degree she possesses the talent that makes a bodiless creation of the dramatist's mind a living fact, suffused and impregnated with natural emotions and desires. It is in the higher range of dramatic acting that this lady shines. She invests her characters with a charm that had its birth in nature. She disdains the idea of playing to an audience, and appealing to its sympathies through the garb only of the character in which she appears. In energy, in earnestness of purpose, in fidelity to all those minute details of delineation which make it perfect, she is the queen of her art. She has always possessed a wonderfully quick study; and I am told by old actors, who have been members of her stock company at the "Arch," that she was never known to come to even the first rehearsal with the book of the

play. Whenever a new piece was to be produced, it was first read to the company, then the rehearsals called. She was always letter perfect.

Mrs. Drew was among the first women who undertook the labor of management, and she produced a reform in the manner of placing pieces on the stage. A great many old actors have told me that she is the best stage-director ever seen. As the principal stage carpenter of the "Arch" once said to me with pride, "Why, sir, there ain't a carpenter in the theatre whom she can't sometimes teach how to do a thing." Her glance was everywhere. Her judgment and taste were carried into every department. Her administrative powers are remarkable.

As Peg Woffington, Mrs. Drew has had no superior on the American stage. In the scene where she impersonates the character of Miss Bracegirdle, to deceive Colley Cibber and the rest of the characters, she was indeed great. Not a feature or a tone of voice betrayed the cheat. Her Mrs. Oakley, in "The Jealous Wife," was beyond doubt the best ever witnessed in this country. She grasped it with an artist's passion, an artist's soul. She threw her whole volume of power and of compass into the elements the author created, and thus she flashed and sparkled in them like the diamond amid the glare of a million of lights.

Her Hypolita, in "She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not," was a most delightful piece of acting, — fresh, natural, sparkling, and altogether charming. As Dot, in "The Cricket on the Hearth," she was very pleasing, a perfect picture of a cheerful, loving wife, full of sentiment and affection of the noblest kind. The part of Lydia Languish offers no opportunity for the display

of acting of any sort, and in the hands of the majority of actresses degenerates into a weak, foolish school miss; yet Mrs. Drew threw a spirit into the romantic nature of the girl, and gave it an individuality far more in accordance with Sheridan's design than the usual rendering of the character.

Lady Teazle and Mrs. Malaprop are the two greatest creations of this lady. She is a perfect picture of the pretty, spoiled, but honest country girl; and in those powdered head-dresses which generally so disfigure ladies on the stage, she looks many years younger than she is. She plays Mrs. Malaprop gloriously, making her ludicrous verbal blunders with the most sublime unconsciousness, and embodying the part as she alone can do it. Her playing of this part in recent years, with Joseph Jefferson and W. J. Florence as stars in the cast, and with herself as the next player in interest and importance, showed to what a remarkable degree she had retained the brilliancy of her histrionic powers.



RICHARD MANSFIELD AS KING RICHARD III.

RICHARD MANSFIELD.

BY WILLIAM HENRY FROST.

It may be supposed that a large part, if not the larger part, of the artistic achievement of the career of Richard Mansfield is still in the future. Though he has passed through all that could be called his age of promise, he has still many of the best years of life before him for fulfilment. All signs will fail if an artistic temperament, an untiring energy, and an unflagging industry do not result in a long line of worthy and memorable creations. Mr. Mansfield has gained for himself a prominent place in the public view, and he has the virility to hold it. Even those who do not commend are obliged to see and to note him. This is because all that he does is done with decision, authority, conviction, and originality. When a work of art that bears the stamp of such qualities as these is presented to the consideration of thoughtful judges, they must approve or disapprove it unhesitatingly. They cannot be indifferent. The artist commands their attention.

Mr. Mansfield's life began in Heligoland, a spot which, though small, has drawn a good deal of attention to itself from time to time. His mother was the prima donna Mme. Rudersdorf. A large part of his

boyhood and youth was spent in travel in England, Germany, Switzerland, and France. A migratory life, if one does not get too much of it, is an excellent means of education. An artistic nature will usually assert itself in some way or other under almost any circumstances; but familiarity with such scenes as those of the Alps, the Tyrol, and the Rhine can hardly fail to confirm, to develop, and to strengthen it.

The boy did not lack training of a more usual sort. He went to school in Germany, and also in England. It was at Derby that he spent the schooldays to which he now looks back as days of healthful pleasure and ennobling influence. The master of the school was the late Rev. Walter Clark. He made such an impression on young Mansfield as can never be lost, and is surely not likely to be forgotten. The last time that Mr. Mansfield visited the school was while he was in England with his company a few years ago. The school needed a racket-court; and the actor loyally gave two performances, in the afternoon and evening of the same day, to raise the necessary funds. The performances, one of "Prince Karl" and one of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," were enthusiastically received, especially by the schoolboys, and the sum was raised.

While Mansfield was at Derby a prophet visited the school. He was Dr. Selwyn, Bishop of Lichfield. It was "speech day;" and the boys acted "The Merchant of Venice," Mansfield playing Shylock. After the play was over the bishop shook the boy's hand, and said, "Heaven forbid that I should encourage you to become an actor; but should you, if I mistake not, you will be a great one."

After this Mansfield spent some time in study at

South Kensington, in deference to the desire of his mother, who wished that he should become an artist, that is, a painter. The time here was short, and at the end of it he came to America. Here a mercantile life was resolved upon; and he entered the house of Jordan & Marsh, in Boston, to learn their business. The most that he gained by this venture was the lasting friendship of Eben D. Jordan, which often after that proved helpful and sustaining. But it was not natural that a career such as was now proposed should long seem attractive to a young man whose instincts and tastes were all artistic. He found that he could sell his pictures, and he soon returned to the making of them. But he had not yet found his place, and he was not yet at ease.

He went to England again to study and to paint; and now Fortune seemed to stand squarely in his path, and to set her face against him, though it was, as it proved, only to turn him away from this mistaken path into one along which, as he walked, he might pluck the leaves for greener garlands. Just at this time he walked the streets of London. No bays were growing there; and the streets were very hard and the stones of them very cold, while the young man's shoes were not always very warm, to say nothing of his gloves. There was nothing gratifying about this experience. It has its picturesque and romantic side, when the effect is aided by distance of time or space; but while one is in the midst of it this side is not conspicuous. He knew what cold meant, and he would have been glad to get more to eat. That Mansfield was able afterwards to see the poetical side of such hardship everyone who has seen his play "Monsieur" knows. Perhaps

he may have seen it then; but it must have seemed a grim sort of poetry, especially when he finally had an engagement to sing, and was actually unable to keep it because of weakness and suffering. Educational no doubt it all was; a stern teacher is Experience.

To one in this position it may easily be imagined what an engagement at £3 a week meant. It is not a large sum; but if it comes regularly and is judiciously used, it will buy some sort of food, clothing, and shelter, as many a rich and honored merchant and statesman and scholar and artist knows. It came to Mansfield from D'Oyly Carte; and in return for it the young man travelled about with Mr. Carte's provincial opera company, and sang J. Wellington Wells, in "The Sorcerer," and other like parts. After a time, however, Mansfield and D'Oyly Carte disagreed. Mansfield thought he ought to have £3 10s.; Mr. Carte thought not, and they parted.

Engagements and engagements followed, with varying fortune, but always with gains of experience; and seven years after he had left America, Mansfield was back again, and his first appearance was in "Les Manteaux Noirs," at the Standard Theatre, New York. After he had sung in an opera or two here, he joined the company at the Union Square Theatre; and a small part in "A Parisian Romance" was assigned to him. The story of this play has often been told. Mr. Mansfield was "lent" to a company singing "Iolanthe" in Baltimore, and played the part of the Lord Chancellor for a few nights, and then, being summoned by a despatch from Mr. Palmer, returned to New York with a sprained ankle, caused by a slip in dancing. Then Mr. Stoddart refused to play the Baron Chevrial.

Mansfield took the part; it made a tremendous hit, and the actor at last was recognized.

Mansfield's Baron Chevrial was a successful performance and a marvellous performance, and it still is so at the time this sketch is written. Beyond that perhaps the less said about it the better. Mansfield went back to comic opera again, and appeared as Koko in John Stetson's "Mikado" company. While he was in Boston with this company he made an arrangement with R. M. Field to appear at the Boston Museum. He began his engagement there with "A Parisian Romance," and a week later played "Prince Karl." This was another unqualified success. Beyond the fact that Baron Chevrial and Prince Karl were both well played, they were about as different as two parts could be. The new play was a slight affair; and its attractiveness depended, as has been the case more than once with Mr. Mansfield's plays, on the performance of the principal actor. Mr. Mansfield has made other powerful creations, but he has never acted a more charming character than Prince Karl. The poor prince had many sorrows; everybody sympathized with them, and yet everybody laughed at them. The impersonation overflowed with true humor. The patience, the courage, and the cheerful self-sacrifice of the young German were pathetic; yet they were every moment so amusing that no one would have him suffer one grief or one disappointment less. The prince's modest bearing and warm-hearted affection were enough to make everybody his friend, while the grace and the repose with which the part was acted were no less than delightful.

The next marked achievement was "Dr. Jekyll and

Mr. Hyde," which was also played in Boston. A play full of horrors this was, of course; but what poetical horrors! or, rather, what poetry was interspersed with the horrors! There were storms of action; but how fine were the calms, and how mournfully tender and prophetic were the moments when the storm was gathering! Once Jekyll takes the hand of Agnes, and the two stroll away together talking about the stars above their heads. They are a picture of peaceful happiness. A few moments later the malignantly hideous face of Hyde is seen at the window. Who can see this contrast, knowing that the two men are one, and not think of the difference between his own good and evil natures, and feel a lesson that is taught without precept or platitude? The plan is reversed when Hyde leaves Mr. Utterson in the dark street to knock at the door through which he has disappeared and demand admission, till it is opened, and there stands Dr. Jekyll, erect and tranquil, holding a light above his head. A volume might be written on the ethics of this play, but it would be superfluous. The play itself still lasts, and its mission is not done.

"Prince Karl" had a long run at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, in the summer of 1886. Mr. Mansfield returned to the same theatre early the next summer, and repeated the same play. It ran for several weeks; and then Mr. Mansfield produced his own play, "Monsieur." It was a slight and unsubstantial fabric, but of delicate texture. The story was simple and touching, the acting of the leading part was graceful and finished, as usual, and the whole was distinctly pleasing. After a few weeks more "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" was played for the first time in New

York. It again met with great success, and brought the engagement to a happy close.

An invitation from Henry Irving to Mr. Mansfield to occupy his theatre in London for some months prevented a summer engagement in New York in 1888. He began his season at the Lyceum Theatre, late in the summer, with "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Later he gave "A Parisian Romance" and "Prince Karl." All of these created no small comment; and the ferocious wickedness of Mr. Hyde gained more attention than would perhaps have been the natural share, from the fact that two or three of the Whitechapel murders were committed in Mr. Mansfield's early days at the Lyceum. To make the list of plays complete, "Lesbia" should be added to it. This was a classical one-act piece, in which Miss Beatrice Cameron played the leading part, and Mansfield did not appear.

Mr. Mansfield's great production of "King Richard III." took place at the Globe Theatre, London. It is seldom that a play of Shakespeare, or any one else, is presented with such care, such elaborateness, and such cost. Libraries and picture galleries and museums were searched for authority for the accurate costumes and arms and scenes. The result was a magnificent performance of the play as a whole, rich in thrilling action and pictures, and full of the feeling and spirit of the time. The version of the play was different from any that had before been used on the stage. It retained something from the third part of "King Henry VI.," and a little from Colley Cibber, but not so much as is common. In his own part Mr. Mansfield escaped from tradition by appearing as a young man in the first scene, and older as the play went on.

This great production was the leading subject of discussion among people interested in the drama in America for months before it was seen here. Mr. Mansfield returned, and played "Richard III." in Boston late in the autumn of 1889, and gave it for the first time in New York at Palmer's Theatre, on Dec. 16. It was written about, talked about, lauded, and censured, as it had been in London; but financially it was not a success. People came to see it in good numbers; and there never was, and never could be, any lack of interest on the part of the audiences. But the production was so costly that nothing less than crowded houses could support it, and these it did not have. After something over a month, it was taken from the stage, and some of Mr. Mansfield's former successes were substituted.

The next summer Mr. Mansfield came to the Madison Square Theatre, according to his old custom, and, after a few weeks of some of his older plays, produced "Beau Brummel." He was always successful at this theatre, and now more than ever. He never had a part that fitted him better, and his acting of it was a matter of widespread fame on the very day after the first performance. For the whole summer and well into the autumn "Beau Brummel" crowded the house, and it then renewed its popularity in every city that the actor visited on his long winter tour.

The next May saw Mansfield again in New York for a summer season, this time at the Garden Theatre, where he had already played a short engagement in the middle of the winter. He soon produced "Don Juan," a play written by himself. The view which he took of his hero's character was different from the tra-

ditional one; and he represented him as a happy and thoughtless boy, misguided by his parents, with the best intentions, and falling into error through mere heedlessness of any need of keeping out of it. The play was not successful; and after a few weeks Mr. Mansfield returned to the standards of his repertory, "Prince Karl," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "Beau Brummel," and "A Parisian Romance," still continuing "Don Juan" for a few performances each week. In September, three weeks before the engagement ended, "Nero," a tragedy by T. Russell Sullivan, was acted for the first time. It was produced with all the artistic beauty and exactness that had made "Richard III." so memorable. The central character was another of Mr. Mansfield's studies of various types of wickedness. In its essential qualities it was far removed from all of them, and it was as deeply considered and truthfully interpreted as any.

"Nero" was only moderately successful as compared with the most popular of Mr. Mansfield's productions. In February, 1892, also at the Garden Theatre, he produced "Ten Thousand a Year;" and it was another failure. The following September he played a short engagement at Daly's Theatre, the important feature of which was the production of "The Scarlet Letter." Here, in the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale, he found still a new variety of sinner; and he gave his usual care and skill to the interpretation of it. With all that could be done for the play it was a gloomy affair, and nobody thought that it could possibly succeed. To the general astonishment, however, it did succeed; and it remained popular in New York and elsewhere for a long time.

In October, 1893, Mr. Mansfield made a fine revival

of "The Merchant of Venice" at Herrmann's Theatre, in New York, and in September, 1894, he opened the reconstructed Herald Square Theatre, with Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man." He closed his engagement at this house with what he called a public dress rehearsal of "Napoleon Bonaparte." This was a strange sort of entertainment, more resembling a series of Sunday-school tableaux than a play; but again, to the general surprise, Mr. Mansfield found it of use on his tour.

It happened in the spring of 1895 that Edward Harrigan, who had been suffering financial losses at his theatre in Thirty-fifth Street, New York, had a severe sickness, and felt obliged to give up his theatre altogether. Mr. Mansfield, who had long wanted a theatre in New York, took it off his hands, receiving a lease of it for ten years. He refitted, refurnished, and redecorated it thoroughly, making of it one of the most beautiful and comfortable theatres in the city, and named it the Garrick Theatre. It was his intention to use it for a permanent company, of which he was, of course, to be the head, and to spend a large part of each season in New York. He opened the house in April, with "Arms and the Man." A few weeks later he produced "The King of Peru," which was a failure.

Elaborate preparations were begun for the next season; but a short time before it was to open, Mr. Mansfield was taken dangerously sick. It was months before he was able to act again; all his plans were overturned, and he was finally obliged to give up the management of the theatre. He did appear in it for a short time, in December, the only new play in which he was seen being "The Story of Rodion, the Student." In 1896

he completed arrangements for returning once more to acting "on the road."

On Sept. 15, 1892, Mr. Mansfield married Miss Beatrice Cameron (Susan Hegeman), who had been the leading woman of his company for several years. Miss Cameron made her beginning as an actress in an amateur performance of "The Midnight Marriage," with Mrs. James Brown Potter. She afterwards played with Robert Mantell in "Called Back." The following is a complete, or nearly complete, list of the parts which she has played in Mr. Mansfield's company: Florence, in "Prince Karl;" Alice, in "Monsieur;" Agnes Carew, in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde;" Lucia, in "Don Juan;" Acte, in "Nero;" Tessy Tagrag, in "Ten Thousand a Year;" Hester Prynne, in "The Scarlet Letter;" Mariana Vincent, in "Beau Brummel;" Lady Anne, in "King Richard III.;" Lesbia, in "Lesbia;" Nora, in "A Doll's House;" Marcelle and the ballet-dancer, in "A Parisian Romance;" Portia, in "The Merchant of Venice;" Raina, in "Arms and the Man;" Marie Louise, in "Napoleon Bonaparte;" Clara Desmond, in "The King of Peru;" and Sonia, in "The Story of Rodion, the Student."

ADA REHAN.

BY EDWARD A. DITHMAR.

ADA REHAN, who for some fifteen years or more has been in the front rank of American actresses, and since 1884 has won for herself an equally prominent position on the London stage, — for she is now as well-known to the theatre-goers of the British capital as to those of New York, — was not born in the purple; and the honor she has achieved in her art came to her only after years of hard work. She did not find her path in the beginning strewn with roses; she has fairly earned all her triumphs.

Indeed, for an actress of this era, her term of apprenticeship was unusually long and arduous. Miss Rehan studied faithfully, and learned all that practice and experience could teach. Her development was not extraordinarily rapid; but when the time came she was found capable of taking a high place, and maintaining it with unswerving fidelity to artistic principle and steadily increasing power.

She was like no other actress of her time; though her portrayals of the heroines of poetic comedy and some of the old comedies of manners frequently recall to the minds of students of the stage the accounts of famous actresses of the past, written by the critics and



ADA REHAN.

poets and rhapsodists of their times. Miss Rehan is at once the Margaret Woffington and the Dora Jordan of this period ; many of the parts they played are in her repertory ; she has the buoyant grace, the archness of expression, the eloquence, the humor, and the radiant personal charm associated in the pages of theatrical history with those famous actresses. Her range is as broad as Woffington's, — who, to be sure, played in tragedy, when tragedy was in its prime, — and broader than Jordan's.

Ada Rehan was born in Limerick, Ireland, April 22, 1860. The family name was Crehan. When Ada was five years old her parents came to the United States, and made their home in Brooklyn, N.Y., where she passed most of her childhood and received her schooling. Both of her elder sisters took to the stage, adopting the name of O'Neill, an honored one in theatrical history. Kate became the wife of Oliver Doud Byron, an actor of repute, while Harriet married R. Fulton Russell. At the age of fifteen years, Ada, who had previously shown no theatrical ambition and no particular dramatic aptitude, acted a small part in the play called "Across the Continent," in which Mr. Byron was the principal performer, at Newark, N.J. This determined her career. That autumn she was briefly associated with Mr. Byron's company ; and then, for two seasons, she was engaged at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, under the management of Mrs. John Drew. Here she had valuable training, and acted a variety of small parts.

Her novitiate on the stage was continued at Macaulay's Theatre, Louisville, Ky., and thereafter as a member of John W. Albaugh's company in Albany, N.Y.,

and Baltimore, Md. In these positions she was thrown into association with the prominent star actors of that period. She appeared in tragedy, comedy, farce, opera, and melodrama; she began with minor parts, and rose to be "juvenile lead." She acquired experience, the capacity to study, self-possession, and a knowledge of elocution, if not a finished style; one thing is certain, she acquired no offensive mannerisms, as many young actors do in this sort of work. She had very little to unlearn when she started fairly upon her career. A list of the parts played by Miss Rehan in these early days is worth preserving. This list is taken from one prepared by Mr. William Winter:—

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| ADELAIDE BONDS, "Our Oddities." | DIANA CASTRO, "Two Men of Sandy Bar." |
| AGNES CONSTANT, "Across the Continent." | DIANE DE LASCOUR, "The Sea of Ice." |
| ALICIA AUDLEY, "Lady Audley's Secret." | DRUDA, "The Ice Witch." |
| ANNE LEIGH, "Enoch Arden." | ELIZABETH, "The Golden Farmer." |
| AOUUDA, "Around the World in Eighty Days." | ELOISE WOODRUFF, "Becky Mix." |
| ARMINE, "Victor of Rhé." | EMMA TORRENS, "Serious Family." |
| ARLINA, "Hero." | ESTHER ECCLES, "Caste." |
| BARBARA BENSON, "Poor and Proud." | ETHEL GRAINGER, "Married in Haste." |
| BARBARA HARE, "East Lynne." | EVA HILLINGTON, "Lone Man of the Ocean." |
| BIANCA, "The Taming of the Shrew." | FANNY ELKTON, "Zip." |
| BLANCHE DE NEVERS, "The Duke's Motto." | FIDELE LA CROSSE, "Heroine in Rags." |
| BUNKER HILL, "The Danites." | FLORIDA VAUGHAN, "Bonnie Kate." |
| CELIA, "As You Like It." | GEORGETTE, "Fernande." |
| CLARA (her first part on the stage), "Across the Continent." | GEORGIANA REED, "Jane Eyre." |
| CLARA WAKEFIELD, "Luke, the Laborer." | GERTRUDE, "Ben McCullough." |
| CORA DARLINGTON, "The False Light." | GRACE HARKAWAY, "London Assurance." |
| CORDELIA, "King Lear." | GRACE ROSEBERRY, "The New Magdalen." |
| COUNTESS, "The Stranger." | HARRIET, "The Jealous Wife." |
| DESEMONA, "Othello." | HEBE, "Pinafore." |

- ISSOPEL, "Tiote."
 JULIA LATIMER, "The Flying Scud."
 LADY ANNE, "Richard III."
 LADY JANE, "Crowd of Thorns."
 LADY FLORENCE, "Rosedale."
 LADY SARAH, "Queen Elizabeth."
 LADY VALERIA, "All that Glitters."
 LAURA DE BEAUREPAIRE, "White Lies."
 LAURA CORTLANDT, "Under the Gaslight."
 LAURA HAWKINS, "The Gilded Age."
 LAURA LIVINGSTON, "Escaped from Sing Sing."
 LITTLE EMILY, "David Copperfield."
 LOUISE, "Cartouche."
 LOUISE, "Under the Snow."
 LOUISE, "Frou-Frou."
 LOUISE GOODWIN, "Across the Continent."
 LUCRINE, "Naiad Queen."
 MADELON, "Carpenter of Rouen."
 MADELON, "Fanchon."
 MARGUERITE LAROQUE, "Romance of a Poor Young Man."
 MARIE, "Marble Heart."
 MARIE DE COMINES, "Louis XI."
 MARIE DE MANCINI, "Royal Youth."
 MARY CLARK, "Charter Oak."
 MARY NETLEY, "Ours."
 MARY WATSON, "Dick Turpin and Tom King."
 MATHILDE DE LATOUR, "Miss Mutton."
 MAUD, "Musette."
 MORGIANA, "Forty Thieves."
 MRS. CASTLEMAINE, "The Golden Calf."
 NAOMI TIGHE, "School."
 NICHETTE, "Camille."
 OLIVIA, "Twelfth Night."
 OPHELIA, "Hamlet."
 PAULINE, "Lady of Lyons."
 PEARL CORTLANDT, "Under the Gaslight."
 PHILINA, "Mignon."
 PRINCE OF WALES, "Richard III."
 PRINCESS IDA, "Lorle."
 QUEEN ELIZABETH, "Mary Stuart."
 QUEEN OF FRANCE, "Henry V."
 ROSI, "Little Barefoot."
 ROSE FALLON, "Flash of Lightning."
 STELLA, "Enchantress."
 STELLA, "Little Detective."
 SABEL HAWKER, "Brass."
 URSULA, "Much Ado."
 VIRGINIA, "Virginius."
 WINIFRED WOOD, "Jack Sheppard."

In the spring of 1879 Miss Rehan was, for a time, in the company of Fanny Davenport; and in the play called "Pique" she acted the small part of Mary Standish for a week at the Grand Opera House, New York. As a child she had appeared briefly at Wood's Museum, the site of which is now occupied by Daly's Theatre; but this was practically her first appearance in New York. Augustin Daly, who for nearly two years had been out of the field of theatrical management in New York, returned from abroad that spring and produced at the Olympic Theatre on Broadway an English version

of Zola's "L'Assommoir." In this play Miss Rehan appeared as Big Clemence, a *rôle* of small importance. So well did she play this part that she was shortly afterward advanced to the more important one of Virginie. The next autumn she was engaged for the company of Daly's Theatre; and she appeared the opening night, Sept. 17, as Nelly Beers in a little comedy called "Love's Young Dream," the first piece on the programme. The "Pinafore" craze was then uppermost in the minds of all theatrical managers. The musical play had an important place in the repertory of Daly's Theatre the first two seasons. In this Miss Rehan filled a subordinate place, but her extraordinary talent in comedy was soon manifested.

She had a chance early in the first season in the grateful and vivacious part of Lu Ten Eyck in "Divorce;" she played zealously the subordinate *rôle* of Isabelle in "Wives," an adaptation from Molière by Bronson Howard; she had a good part, though not the principal one, in Mr. Daly's own version of Von Moser's "Haroun al Raschid;" and finally, toward the close of the season, she made a positively brilliant hit as Cherry Monogram in a comedy from the German called "The Way We Live." This was, indeed, the first revelation of her uncommon ability to deftly and daintily mingle humor and sentiment while preserving the simulation of high breeding and buoyant spirits. From this time on her progress in her art and her growth in the affection and esteem of her public were rapid. In the musical pieces she bore herself gracefully and modestly as Donna Antonina ("The Royal Middy"), Psyche ("Cinderella at School"), and Muttra ("Xanina"). In a single afternoon performance of

W. S. Gilbert's "Charity," she evinced remarkable power as the forlorn Ruth Tredgett, a type of womanhood degraded, but not depraved. There was in this characterization, for the few who had the privilege of seeing it, a promise since amply fulfilled in Miss Rehan's forceful and pathetic acting in "Odette," "The Prayer," and certain scenes of "The Hunchback;" but her chief triumphs have been in pure comedy, and her range has comprehended the lightest and merriest farce as well as the highest creations of poetic comedy.

What play-goer of the eighties will ever forget that long list of joyous heroines in modern comedy from the German, beginning with Selina in "Needles and Pins," and including Phronie in "Dollars and Sense," Thisbe in "Quits," Telka in "The Passing Regiment," Tony in "Red Letter Nights," Barbee in "Our English Friend," Aphra in "The Wooden Spoon," Floss in "Seven-twenty-eight," Nisbe in "A Night Off," Nancy Brasher in "Nancy and Company," and Etna in "The Great Unknown"? In modern comedy of a higher sort, who can forget the dignity and charm of her portrayals of Annis Austin in "Love on Crutches," Val Osprey in "The Railroad of Love," Doris in "An International Match," Dina in "A Priceless Paragon," Vera in "The Last Word," and Mrs. Jassamine in "A Test Case"?

As the two radiant widows, Mrs. Osprey and the Baroness Vera, indeed, the breadth of Miss Rehan's acting, the depth of sentiment, and the variety of expression she reveals, lift those parts almost to the level of some of her best portrayals in the poetic drama. These include Cibber's Donna Hypolita, Knowles's

Julia, and in Shakespeare, Helena ("A Midsummer Night's Dream"), Katharine ("The Taming of the Shrew"), Rosalind ("As You Like It"), and Viola ("Twelfth Night"). Katharine the Shrew, Miss Rehan has made her own part; and many good judges consider her the best of all living Rosalinds. The charm of her Viola is irresistible, and her delivery of the familiar passages in "Twelfth Night" is distinguished by almost matchless skill and grace. The moods of Viola, indeed, seem to me to bring into view the best side of Miss Rehan's talent. Allied with this *rôle* in sentiment and poetic quality are the Helena of the "Dream," and Oriana in Farquhar's "Inconstant." Her Peggy Thrift in "The Country Girl" is in lighter vein, and its effect is wholly comic; but it is one of her best-known and best-liked impersonations, and is a wonderfully facile and picturesque portrayal. Letitia, in a condensed version of "The Belle's Stratagem," and Miss Hoyden, in a sketch adapted from Vanbrugh's "Relapse," are in the same merry category.

Miss Rehan's rich repertory also includes Sylvia in "The Recruiting Officer;" Lady Teazle, which she plays in the rustic manner first associated with the part of the country girl, who has just wedded a London old bachelor, by Mrs. Jordan; Xantippe in J. H. McCarthy's English version of de Banville's "Femme de Socrate;" and Tilburina in Sheridan's "Critic," a character which she carries with that perfect gravity essential to true burlesque.

After 1884, when they made their first foreign tour, Miss Rehan, as leading actress of Mr. Daly's company, acted in old and new comedy in London during several seasons, and in 1890 and 1891 on the stage of

the Lyceum Theatre (Mr. Irving's). Daly's Theatre, Leicester Square, was opened in 1893. The critics and the playgoing public of London hold her in the highest esteem; and her Katharine and Rosalind, in particular, were the themes of praise in verse and prose in the daily and weekly press, when those portrayals were first seen there. She has also appeared in Dublin, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, in the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, in Berlin and Hamburg, and in Paris. In short, her tall, graceful figure, expressive face, and melodious voice are as well known to-day in Europe as in America. Her change of position from chief actress in Mr. Daly's company to "star" under Mr. Daly's management has been simply a formal recognition of the rank her talents had won.

JOHN DREW.

BY JAMES S. METCALFE.

OTHER conditions being the same, the public at large always takes a greater interest in a woman than in a man. In stage matters this is especially true; and no one knows it better than Mr. Augustin Daly, if we may judge by the trend of his didactic efforts. Among the graduates from his dramatic teaching stand out names like those of Agnes Ethel, Clara Morris, Sara Jewett, and Fanny Davenport; but one looks almost in vain to find in his roll of honor the name of a man. This is said without disparagement to Mr. Daly's general methods. He has done so much to advance the standard of stage management and of dramatic *ensemble* in this country that every theatre-goer in America owes him a personal debt of gratitude. In the special effort, however, which looks to the education of the individual rather than the training of a company, Mr. Daly has shown emphatically his belief in the principle first stated.

Almost alone, certainly most prominently, stands out the name of John Drew among the male actors who have come under Mr. Daly's influence. From the fact that many other young men have been Mr. Daly's pupils and yet have failed to achieve prominence, it is



JOHN DREW.

fair to infer that some exceptional abilities belong to Mr. Drew. He has on his side whatever of value may lie in hereditary instinct and early association. In dramatic history there are so many instances of the effect of these causes in producing results, that we may safely consider them at least not a handicap. Ahead of him are three generations of stage people. His mother's many years' management of the Arch Street Theatre in Philadelphia brought him much into contact with the best people in the profession.

Some one has truly said that no one can become a successful dramatist without first having inflated his lungs with the atmosphere of the green-room. On the same principle it assuredly helps the prospective actor to be born and brought up in constant contact with the people and affairs of the stage ; not necessarily for the knowledge it gives him of the detail and routine of professional work, but because to the proper spirit such association must needs bring the ambition and emulousness which will lead him to excel the deeds of others.

It was here, at his mother's theatre, that Mr. Drew made his first appearance. It was in the old stock-company days, and Mrs. Drew's theatre was the leading one of its class in Philadelphia. For weeks at a time the company might be engaged in the support of some peripatetic star, with six different performances each week ; and at other times, when there happened to be no engagement of a star, the company itself supplied the performance. It was this routine which produced the "good all-round actor," now so rapidly becoming extinct. In view of the general lamentation among some old-school people at the decadence of this

system, it may not be amiss to congratulate the public that it is no longer made the supporter of and the chief sufferer from the lessons of such a school. The finished performances under the present system of stock-companies, established only in metropolitan theatres and "combinations" travelling through the country, are better than those of the days when parts were studied over night, and the performance given with one or two or three rehearsals by an over-worked company. The discipline might have been better for the young actors of those days, but it was certainly harder on their audiences.

It was on March 22, 1873, that Mr. Drew became a member of the Arch Street Company, and made his first appearance as Plumper in "Cool as a Cucumber." After leaving school he devoted his attention to music, languages, fencing, and other accomplishments incidental to the varied requirements of general stage-work. He had none of the special training which the foreign conservatories delight in, that part of his education being left to the hard school of practical work in which he had now entered. It is not recorded that at his first appearance any remarkable signs were vouchsafed to indicate the bursting on the dramatic horizon of a great actor; but he acquitted himself creditably, considering that it was actually his first appearance on any stage, amateur or otherwise.

His second appearance was as Hornblower in "The Laughing Hyena;" and to this succeeded such accomplishments as Adolf de Courtroy in "The Captain of the Watch;" Cummy, "Betsy Baker;" Captain Cross-tree, "Black-eyed Susan;" Dolly Spanker, "London Assurance;" Gaspar, "Lady of Lyons;" Modas, "The

Hunchback ;" and so on through a long range of characters which gave the young actor more experience than leisure.

After two years of this work, in which he managed to acquire local popularity and reputation, he came to New York to join Mr. Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre Company. During his first season in New York, Mr. Drew found himself going through something the same course of training only in a higher line of work. That winter Mr. Daly revived a number of Shakespearian and other standard dramas, and the company was kept thoroughly busy with rehearsals. Mr. Drew was assigned to such parts as Exton in "Richard II.;" François, "Richelieu;" Francis, "The Stranger;" Glavis, "Lady of Lyons;" and Hortensio in "The Taming of the Shrew."

From this season on, Mr. Drew's rise was a rapid one to the position of leading juvenile in the best-trained company on the American stage. Of his well-known performances those which hold the most prominent place in the public mind are Orlando in "As You Like It," Adolphus Doubledot in "The Lottery of Love," Jack Mulberry in "A Night Off," and Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew," besides the leading characters (in which he has starred) of "The Masked Ball," "The Bauble Shop," and "Christopher Jr."

Of Mr. Drew's individuality as an actor it is difficult to speak advisedly. While the artist was only one of the component parts of a company, his personal characteristics were of necessity kept largely in the background in deference to the general harmony. In the polite comedies, which formed the largest part of Mr. Daly's stock in trade, Mr. Drew strongly emphasized

the first requirement of his parts ; that is, their gentility. The actors on the American stage who can assume the part of a gentleman, and not vary from it through the ordeal of dramatic broadening, are so few that when we once find the power it is noticeable by contrast.

Next it may be said of Mr. Drew that he secures his effects largely by suggestion. He leaves just enough to the spectator's imagination to flatter his intelligence, and thus secure perfect sympathy between actor and audience. Overacting is so ordinary a fault, that the actor who lets the hearer's imagination do part of the acting for him possesses a quality which is thoroughly artistic in itself, and, from its rarity, especially valuable on our stage.

A lack of versatility is hardly to be expected from Mr. Drew's training in one way, but it is his chief fault. It should be remembered, however, that until recently he was to a certain extent in leading strings. Those who witnessed his performances of *Petruchio*, the part which gives his artistic powers their greatest opportunity, were ready to believe that, with the field open to him, with full chance to use his own ideas, Mr. Drew could show unexpected abilities.

In conclusion, Mr. Drew may be set down as being the most polished juvenile actor on our stage to-day.



JULIA MARLOWE AS IMOGEN.

JULIA MARLOWE-TABER.

BY EDWARD FULLER.

MORE than one person will recall with feelings of grateful pleasure a certain December evening in the year 1888. The scene was the Hollis Street Theatre in Boston, and the event was the first appearance in that city of a young and unknown actress. It was not a large audience which had gathered for the occasion. It takes a great amount of what is called "puffing" to excite public interest in the young and unknown; and in this case the aspirant for dramatic honors came almost unheralded. She had made her bow in a single afternoon performance in New York, and after that had been known to fame only vaguely. She had just played an engagement in Philadelphia with steadily increasing approbation. Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll had written a glowing letter in her praise. But these things stirred curiosity only faintly. Did we not all know how often stage swans turned out to be geese?

That evening settled the question, with those who saw her, of the right, by ability and inspiration, of Miss Julia Marlowe to challenge thoughtful and candid criticism. Her acting betrayed the faults of youth and inexperience; but it also showed that she possessed the genuine artistic temperament, without which study and

training are vain. Miss Marlowe conquered almost from the outset the natural and usually justifiable prejudice against those who begin at the head rather than at the foot of the ranks. Even genius itself seldom springs into life full-fledged, like Pallas Athene from the brain of Zeus. But it was obvious that if Miss Marlowe did not give the sure promise of a noble artistic future, she displayed very many gifts which encouraged one to hope for the best. Her grace, her delicacy, her refinement, her insight, seemed only to await the ripening process of time.

And as Parthenia, which was the character she chose to portray, was there not already much that was thoroughly and exquisitely winning? Her slender figure, instinct with girlish grace; her well-shaped, well-poised head; her dark eyes, shining with the mute eloquence of a clear and sensitive soul, — did not these reach one's ideal of maidenly beauty and purity? It was not an ideal Parthenia, because even ingenuousness and sensibility cannot be communicated to the mind of another by every one who possesses them. But possibly there was never a Parthenia which gave greater promise. It was honest; it was sincere; it was free from self-consciousness and mannerism. One could overlook the occasional crudeness of execution in the beauty of conception. "Ingomar" is not a good play; it is tedious, and it abounds in that vapid sentimentality characteristic of the German mind. I would rather sit through a performance of one of Mr. Hoyt's ingenious farces than see it again. For all that, it became interesting to me with Miss Marlowe as the heroine. From that evening I, for one, never doubted her ultimate success.

Biography in this case must happily be brief. Miss Marlowe's career is all before her, and I touch lightly upon the past. She was born late in the sixties in the north of England, in a little town some twenty-five miles from Carlisle. Cumberland is not the most fertile shire south of the Tweed; often for miles the eye is met only with picturesque barrenness. But in Julia Marlowe's case we cannot ask what influence surroundings such as these may have had upon her career. She was but five years old when she came to the United States. By training, therefore, she is an American. Her education was gained in our public schools; her training for the stage was domestic, not foreign. We may therefore fairly claim the undisputed possession of her genius and her glory. She is as much ours as any of the distinguished artists who adorn our dramatic annals have been. Like many of these, she saw the footlights when she was still a child. For two seasons she travelled with a juvenile opera company, playing in "Pinafore" and other popular works of the kind. A little later she was "on the road" with Miss Josephine Riley. She was then intrusted with parts so important as that of Maria in "Twelfth Night"; and she played Balthasar in "Romeo and Juliet" and Stephen in "The Hunchback." Fortunately, perhaps, for her progress in her art, she withdrew for a time from active work for the purpose of individual study and discipline. How faithful and thorough this training must have been can easily be understood. It was after six weeks of a short and inconspicuous tour in the early months of 1888 that Miss Marlowe really began her career upon the stage. That career has been throughout a peculiarly success-

ful one. Wherever Miss Marlowe has once won popularity she has retained it. The same audiences greet her year after year as she goes from city to city, and in these audiences the number of cultivated people is unusually large. The character of the plays she presents is one reason for this, for it is not often in these days that the theatre appeals to the intellectual part of man. Another reason is the character of the company which supports the leading player; from the beginning it has been of unusual merit. The accession to this company of Mr. Robert Taber, to whom Miss Marlowe was not long ago married, has greatly added to its strength. Indeed, the husband and wife, both young, both clever, both more than ordinarily earnest, both sincere in their devotion to their art, have an opportunity to establish for themselves a place on the American stage of commanding influence, of potent usefulness.

Criticism, too, must be limited in the case of one whose career, or the best part of it, is still to come. It would be impossible, under such circumstances, to sum up adequately every phase of Miss Marlowe's genius. We may say that the genius is unquestioned, that it has already revealed its weakness as well as its strength, its defects as well as its merits. We may discover in what she has achieved the epitome of her possible achievement. And yet the final estimate remains for the future to pronounce — let us hope the far distant future. In these pages it will be sufficient to glance in swift succession at some characters which Miss Marlowe has so far portrayed, and to draw from these results what deductions one may, both as to the present value of her art and the potency of its promise.

There is little similarity between the characters of

Parthenia and Galatea; yet for purposes of illustration there are several points in which an impersonation of the one may be compared with an impersonation of the other. Both are pseudo-classical; the phrase does not hit my meaning exactly, but I can think of none more definite. But whereas "Ingomar" takes pseudo-classicism seriously, and presents us our Greek subject sicklied o'er with the pale cast of German sentimentality, "Pygmalion and Galatea" uses the old myth merely as a convenient vehicle for modern satire, and grants us our humorous hypothesis at the outset. One need not pursue the argument further to discover the immense superiority, both dramatically and intellectually, of Mr. Gilbert's method. What is important to remember is the fact that, while girlish sweetness and gentle pathos go far to compose a satisfactory Parthenia, many qualities immensely more difficult of portrayal enter into the composition of Galatea. The superficial simplicity of the part is a potent trap for a young artist. Miss Marlowe's Parthenia is a charming creation; but it is almost an inevitable corollary of this statement to say that her Galatea is inadequate. The very qualities which create success in one case help to determine failure in the other. Her Galatea is, in fact, just a little too serious. It is often graceful and winning, but it lacks the salt of humor. Yes, some one will say, but Galatea herself had no sense of humor to speak of. Precisely; it takes a plentiful supply of a given quality to portray its deficiency. I do not mean by this that Miss Marlowe has no appreciation of Gilbert's exquisite satire; it is probably quite the other way. The art of acting, however, lies beyond the mere intellectual impulse. After one understands, one must feel; even Diderot's famous

Paradoxe does not fairly contradict this condition. Miss Marlowe may understand Galatea, but she never loses herself in the character. She constructs her impersonation from without, not from within.

This limitation in Miss Marlowe's emotional range is discoverable in two Shakespearian impersonations which are otherwise thoroughly charming. I refer, of course, to her Rosalind and her Viola. Both reach the ideal in many respects; and both fall short of it in other respects because of her lack of humor and the variety which humor gives. I do not wish, however, to emphasize this point, since to do so might obscure the decided merits in Miss Marlowe's work. Her conception of Rosalind is in the main true; although she often suggests, rather than realizes, that bewitching but difficult creation. She has buoyancy enough, but not quite the spirit of breezy mirth that carries Rosalind triumphantly through her mad freak. This deduction once made, praise is easy. Miss Marlowe takes the perfectly sane and intelligible view that Rosalind is exquisitely feminine, despite her assumption of "a swashing and a martial outside." Her attire is primarily her defence, rather than a license to play the hoyden. There is not a false or mawkish strain in her nature; her spirits are under no heavy cloud; she laughs her troubles off. And yet Shakespeare did not leave us without an intimate conviction of her exquisite womanliness; she loses that boyish courage, and grows faint with a sense of physical repulsion, when she sees the bloody napkin. If Miss Marlowe falls a little short of the mirth of the part, surely she portrays with a finely beautiful touch its other qualities.

Of Miss Marlowe's Viola it is a pleasure to speak

in well-nigh unqualified commendation. The humor of Viola, except in a single scene, is so closely akin to pathos that we should naturally expect Miss Marlowe to give it adequate expression. It is, as Viola herself says, a "smiling at grief." In all the lighter phases of emotion through which she passes we discern the woman's heart beating with hopeless love. Even the amusement which Olivia's sudden passion at first arouses is quickly transmuted into pain. "Poor lady, she were better love a dream." All this "frailty," as she calls it, is pitiful; it is too hard a knot for her to untie. Upon some such key-note as this Miss Marlowe pitches her impersonation; and its tender grace, its pathetic delicacy, are admirable. I am not sure that it is not to be called her most nearly perfect work. The poorest scene in it is that of the duel with Sir Andrew; which goes to sustain my point that Miss Marlowe's chiefest lack is humor. But fault-finding with anything so nearly ideal seems peculiarly ungracious. Let us rather accept gratefully a sweet and maidenly and essentially poetical rendering of one of Shakespeare's most sympathetic characters.

I might have added a third Shakespearian impersonation as showing in a more striking fashion than either of those I have mentioned the limitations of Miss Marlowe in the direction of humor. This is her Prince Hal in "Henry IV., first shown to us in 1895-1896." It was a serious mistake on her part, I think, to try to play a *rôle* like this — one where her strength could not be shown, but where her weakness would be always in evidence. The Prince is exuberantly masculine; and no woman can represent this quality properly, least of all a dainty and refined woman

like Miss Marlowe. But it is ungracious to dwell upon a flat failure, and I hope that Miss Marlowe will not hereafter attempt the impossible. The sprightly but conspicuously feminine Miss Hardcastle is more nearly within her range, and this impersonation justly pleases by its arch grace and tender gayety. But there is one thing lacking; and this neither Miss Marlowe nor any other young actor, I think, is likely to acquire. It is what must be called, for want of a better phrase, the grand comedy manner. We find it in the few remaining actors of the "old school," but it must soon become a tradition. To explain just what I mean by the grand comedy manner, or to point out its necessary connection with the school of comedy which gave rise to it, is an impossibility here. Old theatre-goers will know what I mean without any explanation. Of some other impersonations by Miss Marlowe, it is not necessary to speak. In Chatterton, in Pauline, and in various experimental essays in acting, she has done nothing that presents her art in a new aspect.

In the portrayal of passion, too, Miss Marlowe still leaves something to be desired; and so her Julia in "The Hunchback," which requires both humor and passion, is on the whole the least satisfactory of her impersonations. This leads us by a natural sequence of thought to the consideration of her Juliet, distinctly a character of passion. Before we undertake to analyze either, however, it will be convenient to say a word about her Imogen, a character more closely allied with Viola, but not to my mind half so interesting. It must be said at the outset that to portray Imogen effectively requires a greater maturity of method than Miss Marlowe can yet be expected to pos-

sess. Imogen is a study in wifely devotion. She is one upon whom the cares and griefs of life have left their indelible mark. "There cannot be a pinch in death more sharp" than the sufferings which she has to bear. Her love is strong as death, but the jealousy of Posthumus is cruel as the grave. The shameful charge preferred against her is a blow under which her whole nature reels. In the phrase of Pisanio, "the paper hath cut her throat already;" no other misery is possible to a proud and faithful woman thus outraged in all her deepest sensibilities. Perhaps the character is one not capable of the most effective handling upon the stage. Be that as it may, no actress in this part has ever moved me as I feel I ought to be moved. There is much that is pretty, much that is pathetic, in Miss Marlowe's work; and one sees the chance of further spiritual growth. But for the present it remains a sketch rather than a completed portrait.

I come now to speak of the most difficult character which Miss Marlowe has essayed, that of Juliet.

"Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night;
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens.'"

In these words of Juliet's, spoken to Romeo in the moonlit mystery of the balcony in Capulet's orchard, lies the key-note of the imperishable tragedy of Shakespeare's youth. It is the history of a swift, mad passion, blighting two lives, entangled through no fault of their own in the inextricable meshes of Fate; and it is fitting that in the first melody of love there should be

an undertone of profound sadness. "Romeo and Juliet" is, as Professor Dowden says, "a young man's tragedy, in which Youth and Love are brought face to face with Hatred and Death." In this, it seems to me, is to be found the chief difficulty in playing either Romeo or Juliet. To reach the eye the actors must be young; to reach the imagination, they must, almost of necessity, be no longer young. "Ich habe gelebt und geliebet" is a confession which savors of the bitterness worse than death; and the Theklas who can sing it cannot say it. The well-worn maxim that no actress can impersonate Juliet until she is too old to look the part has a melancholy degree of truth.

But Miss Marlowe brings to this difficult task many gifts, both of nature and of training. If she be lacking in passion, she has, nevertheless, almost every other qualification in an ideal measure. In the lighter phases of the character she is admirable. The delicacy, grace, and tenderness of her first meeting with Romeo; the virginal sweetness and beauty of her confession of love for him, as she leans from the balcony beneath the glimpses of the moon; the indomitable faithfulness by virtue of which she clings to him in the face of harsh reproof and of the promptings of the vulgar soul at her elbow; the awful forebodings of that dismal scene which she needs must act alone, — these and other phases of that inexpressibly sad and touching history are exquisitely portrayed. And it is all delightfully spontaneous and untheatrical. But force — the burning force of passion — is wanting. There is power to conceive; the lack is felt in the execution, especially in the ardent scenes with Romeo, and in the final tragedy in the tomb of the Capulets. It would

be surprising, indeed, if Miss Marlowe could yet realize so imminently vital a character as Juliet. But she goes so far in the right direction that I, for one, am hopeful of seeing her yet the foremost Juliet of her time. The doubt lies in her capacity for the expression of passion. Of her genius for the poetic drama there can be no denial.

I will not pretend, in this brief sketch, to sum up Miss Marlowe's abilities as an artist, or to say what turn — for the better or worse — her still nascent genius may take. It is an inevitable condition in writing of one whose career is still before her that much must be left unsaid. That she shows greater promise than any artist who has come among us since Adelaide Neilson died is to my mind unquestionable. That she is still open to the influences of study and experience is also happily true. Miss Marlowe unites modesty with ambition, and openness of mind with perseverance. There is apparently little danger that her nature will cease to expand, and that she will become in consequence mannered and merely technical. Furthermore, she adds to striking attractiveness of person the charm of a cultivated and musical voice. With her the poetic drama is still poetry. If to such sensibility, such earnestness, such appreciation of the beautiful, is added the crown of further artistic perfection, what triumphs may we not anticipate for her in the future?

JOHN GILBERT.

BY STEPHEN FISKE.

JOHN GILBERT is usually spoken of as "an actor of the old school." But, in fact, no methods could be more modern than his were; and certainly no *fin de siècle* star ever sprang more suddenly, at a single bound, from the counter to the stage, from dry goods to the green-room.

Born at Boston, Feb. 27, 1810, John Gilbert made his theatrical *début* in his nineteenth year, as Jaffier in "Venice Preserved," to the Belvidera of that great but forgotten actress, Mary Duff, at the Tremont Theatre. His next characters were Sir Edward Mortimer in "The Iron Chest," and Shylock in the "Merchant of Venice." Could the most ambitious aspirant of the new school have begun any younger and any nearer the top of the ladder?

Next door to the Atkins house in Richmond Street, Boston, where Gilbert was born, lived Charlotte Cushman; and the future actress and actor were playmates. Gilbert lost his father in early boyhood, and was educated at the public schools, and then taken as a clerk in a dry-goods store by his uncle. At school he had been praised for his declamation, and this inspired him with the desire for the stage. He joined the Tre-



JOHN GILBERT AS SIR PETER TEAZLE.

mont Company clandestinely, and was almost broken down, on his first night, at the sight of his uncle glaring at him from a private box. The next day his mother besought him to return to the dry-goods business, and even followed him into the green-room of the theatre to forbid his reappearance. But he already felt his vocation, and insisted upon fulfilling his engagement.

Having begun at the top of the ladder, John Gilbert had the extraordinary common sense to begin again at the bottom, and climb up step by step. After the season of 1828 at the Tremont, he went to the Camp-street Theatre, New Orleans, under Manager Caldwell, and served an apprenticeship for five years, playing all sorts of parts. At nineteen he was cast for old men; and, though he at first revolted, he gradually became convinced that this line was his true specialty, and he seldom deserted it after his majority.

Here was a change from Jaffier and Mortimer! But during his provincial studies he experienced a more important change,—from tragedy to comedy. Like most other comedians, he fancied himself a tragedian; and he often said that, like Burton, he was cured of this delusion by accident. During his engagement in the South he was indignant when cast for comedy characters; but his success in them determined his career.

Returning from New Orleans to Boston, in 1834, he made his *r'entré* as Old Dornton in "The Road to Ruin," for the benefit of George Barrett, a local favorite, and was at once engaged by Manager Barry for the rebuilt Tremont Theatre. For two seasons he played almost everything, from Master Walter to Isaac

of York, from Macduff to Squeers, from Polonius to Tom Noddy. Then he became the stage-manager; then appeared at the old Bowery, New York, as Peter Bradley, the sexton, in "Rookwood;" then accepted brief engagements at the National and Federal Street Theatres, Boston, and in April, 1846, took a pleasure trip to Europe.

In London the real school of John Gilbert was found,—the English school. Old Farren was then the leader of the London stage, "the only cock salmon in the market," as he used to express it, and upon him John Gilbert modelled his style. American players seldom go abroad to act, but they always take their stage wardrobes with them. Gilbert went to Europe for a vacation; but he was asked to appear at the Princess's Theatre as Sir Robert Bramble in "The Poor Gentleman," and was so applauded by the public and the critics that he remained for a whole season, including an engagement with Macready. During his visits to Paris he managed to see Rachel, Lafont, Fechter, and the grand Frédéric Lemaître; and he learned the French art of expressing emotion by repressing it.

Now thirty-eight years old, a finished actor, graduated in London and Paris, with no rivals on either side of the Atlantic, except William Warren and Rufus Blake, as first old man, John Gilbert came home to appear at the famous Park Theatre, New York, as Sir Anthony Absolute. As Admiral Kingston in "Naval Engagements" he spoke the last words ever uttered on the stage of the old Park, which was destroyed by fire Dec. 16, 1848. He was then engaged by Manager Tom Hamblin for the Bowery Theatre; and in the

same company were Lester Wallack, Mary Taylor, and J. W. Wallack, Jun.

Until 1854 Gilbert divided his seasons between the stock companies of the Bowery, the Howard Athenæum, Boston, and the Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. At the opening of the Boston Theatre he delivered the poetical address written by T. W. Parsons, and stayed for four seasons with his old manager, Thomas Barry. A service of silver was presented to him by public subscription at one of his annual benefits. Bottom and Caliban increased his reputation as an actor of exquisite humor. He left the Boston Theatre, in 1858, for the Arch Street, Philadelphia, where he remained until, in 1862, the elder Wallack summoned him to New York to play Sir Peter Teazle at the new Wallack's Theatre (later the Star) on the corner of Thirteenth Street and Broadway.

This was John Gilbert's true *début* in New York. Old things had passed away. His previous performances at the Bowery and the Park had been forgotten. A new generation had arisen who knew not the great actors of the past. The Civil War, just beginning, was to become a deep gulf between theatrical as well as national epochs. It was Gilbert's opportunity, and he seized it. Surrounded by the best comedians in the country, — Blake, Holland, Wallack, Sefton, Sloane, Mrs. Vernon, Mrs. Hoey, Mary Gannon, — he proved himself worthy to rank with them. From 1861 to 1888, when Wallack's Theatre ceased to exist, he continued to be a leading member of the stock company; and for him the special position of acting-manager — distinct from Treasurer Moss and Stage-manager Floyd — was created, as an excuse for giving him an extra salary.

In 1878 Gilbert's fiftieth year on the stage was celebrated by a banquet at the Lotos Club, Nov. 30, and a benefit *matinée* performance at Wallack's Theatre, Dec. 5. Hon. Whitelaw Reid presided at the banquet; and among the professionals present were John Brougham, John McCullough, William Davidge, Harry Beckett, W. R. Floyd, Junius Booth, and Lester Wallack, — all long since dead. For his benefit appeared Maude Granger, Eben Plympton, Charles Leclercq, Rose Osborne, Harry Eytinge, and Ben Maginley in "Almost a Life;" Dion Boucicault, Agnes Booth, Charles Stevenson, and Stella Boniface in "Kerry;" Lester Wallack and Ada Dyas in "A Morning Call;" Rose Coghlan, Charles Coghlan, and Charles Barron in the screen scene from "The School for Scandal;" Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Williamson in "The Chinese Question;" Birch and Backus in "Society Actors;" George Knight recited; Tom Baker and Henry Tissington led the orchestra. Gilbert's address on this golden wedding anniversary of his union with the stage was a masterpiece of eloquence. When he said, "During these fifty years I have seen moving two great processions of friends, — one coming upon the stage to play their brief parts, the other passing silently away," there were audible signs of emotion among the professional audience.

No doubt John Gilbert's life was shortened by the failure of Wallack's up-town theatre (now Palmer's). His heart was in it, and he died within a month after its final performance. He said of it (May 29, 1889): "Last night closed thirty-five years of Wallack's Theatre. The end is sad. I fear to say it was inglorious. He was the last actor-manager. What

are we to look to in the future?" For him there was no future. On his way from New York to his summer home at Manchester-by-the-Sea, he was taken ill with pneumonia, stopped at Boston for treatment, and died there, on his native soil, June 17, 1889. His last appearance on any stage was at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, Nov. 10, 1888, as Sir Anthony Absolute, in Joseph Jefferson's mangled version of "The Rivals." His funeral was at the Church of the Unity, Boston. The Rev. M. J. Savage officiated. The pallbearers were Colonel Hatch, Colonel W. W. Clapp, Colonel Henry Lee, G. S. Winston, Curtis Guild, and Joseph Proctor the veteran tragedian. The burial was at Forest Hills Cemetery.

Gilbert was twice married; in 1836 to Miss Campbell of Philadelphia, who became a farce actress, and appeared in farces at Boston, New York, and London; in 1867 to Sarah H. Gavett of Boston, who survived him. Both marriages were fortunate and happy.

The place of John Gilbert as an actor has been already indicated. He was the best of first old men among American professionals, and second only to the elder Farren and to Blake upon the English-speaking stage. In appearance he was tall, handsome, distinguished. His manner was courtly, elegant, dignified. His elocution was clear, musical, and impressive. His only fault—which in some characters seemed a merit—was a certain stiffness and hardness, which took the sweetness from his sentiment and the point from his pathos. During his career he played eleven hundred and fifty different parts in tragedy and comedy, acting them all well, and most of them perfectly. Beginning when salaries were small, and scenery and properties

were neglected, he won his way by industry, sobriety, and talent to the head of his profession; held his own against three generations of actors, and improved his acting to harmonize with all the modern improvements of the stage. Yet at no time was he individually powerful enough to make a success as a star. He believed in the stock-company system, and died when that system was generally abandoned.

Off the stage John Gilbert seemed to be inspired with the characteristics of the parts he had acted so long and well. He was genial and choleric, amiable and obstinate, stately and petulant, agreeable and positive. At the Lamb's Club he would sing rollicking old songs for the amusement of the youngsters; but touch him upon any point of professional etiquette, and he bristled like the fretful porcupine. At home he was hearty and hospitable. His tone was cordial, but his temper quick. He never flattered anybody except Lester Wallack, whom he loved as his artistic son. He understood himself and the technicalities of his profession thoroughly, and submitted to no tuition or domination after he had graduated with Macready.

"Acting," John Gilbert said, "is not a matter of taste, but a matter of fact — as exact as any other science." He despised and detested what he called "the baby, goody-goody drama of the Madison Square," and society plays, which he described as "nine gentlemen, all dressed alike, from the waiter up to the hero," and the star system, which he denounced as "born of the desire to save expense, and nourished by those who have no true taste or interest in the drama." But underneath the prim precision of his life and of his

acting he had a warm and gentle heart. Often he said of himself — and none knew himself better — that he could declare with Adam in “As You Like It,” —

“ In my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood,
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
Frosty, but kindly ! ”

This frequent and favorite quotation, with its significantly omitted lines, ought to form part of his epitaph when a monument is erected to his memory.

WILLIAM WARREN.

BY EVELYN GREENLEAF SUTHERLAND ("DOROTHY LUNDT").

To the Boston theatre-goer whose traditions date back into the yesterdays, no spell is more potent to summon up rich and bright memories than the name of William Warren. It is a name inseparably connected with all that is highest, most noteworthy, most permanent, in the dramatic life of earlier Boston; indeed, one may almost, with justice, omit the adjective "dramatic," since the distinguished, thoroughly individual personality of William Warren was scarcely less the pride of his adopted city, than were his inimitable impersonations the pride of its famous play-house. "Earlier Boston" is a phrase which writes itself involuntarily in connection with Mr. Warren.

It is true that it is but a comparatively few years since the curtain of the Boston Museum fell for the last time on his incomparable work, who, for upwards of five and thirty years, had lent such dignity and such brilliancy to its stage as it can hardly hope, for generations to come, again to boast. It is true that it is even less time since that honored presence passed from the streets of the city which for upwards of forty years was his chosen home. None the less it is with earlier Boston we feel William Warren to be most closely

identified, both in his personality and in his art. Long before he left the stage, he was distinguished as one of its lingering few exponents of the older, the more classic, dramatic art; the art to whose making went conscience, culture, unselfishness, high ideals, arduous effort; the art whose supreme and diametric difference from that which bears its name to-day, is that its aim was to subordinate the artist's personality to his art, instead of fostering and blazoning it to the cost of his art.

There was, too, about the personality of William Warren, about his very form and carriage as he moved along the city's streets, a something that belonged to, and recalled, an earlier, statelier time, and this in spite of his scrupulous avoidance of anything like the eccentric or the conspicuous in manner or attire. Possibly it was in the very faultlessness of these, their never-failing simplicity, dignity, appropriateness, that the suggested distinction lay. Nothing gave Mr. Warren keener annoyance than any hint of making the actor's profession an excuse for ill-breeding or disorderliness. It is related of him that once, when a fellow-actor, who was somewhat notorious for lapses in personal neatness, appeared at rehearsal in stained corduroys and crumpled collar, unshorn, and odorous of bad tobacco, Mr. Warren was heard to murmur under his breath, and quite unconscious of being audible, "Ah! such sights make one blush to be classed as an actor!" "His manner was the most unaffectedly elegant and distinguished that Boston has known since the day of Edward Everett," said Mr. Henry A. Clapp, in the delightfully sympathetic study of the great comedian which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*

shortly after his death. Mr. Warren's personality and art carried with them an atmosphere as of old vintage, full of rich, clear, definite color, of mellowness, of body, of ripe sweetness.

Boston loves to claim William Warren as distinctively her own; and must be proud to remember that he was so entirely by his own choice, and by no means through any limitation of necessity. He won conspicuous favor in other cities, before Boston called him to herself; his exquisite art met with warm and wide appreciation during the single season, that of 1864-1865, that he left the Museum stage for a starring tour. But his tastes, habits, and ideals alike made the rushing, knock-about life of the travelling player, with its thousand personal inconveniences and its absolute want of leisure for thought and study, thoroughly repugnant to him; and when, after a year's wandering, he returned to the Boston Museum stage, it was for the rest of his professional life. Referring to his distaste for travel, he said, with that whimsical humor so characteristic of him, "I go out to Chicago nearly every summer to visit relations; not a serious journey — but then, the inconvenience! Two baths won't make a man clean after it!"

For thirty-five seasons the art of William Warren was identified with the stage of the Boston Museum; his first appearance there being made on the 23d of August, 1847, and his last on May 12, 1883; and his service there being continuous, with the exception of the one season referred to, that of 1864-1865. This is not the place to hazard a guess as to the wisdom, so far as an actor's lasting fame goes, of identification for life with a single city and a single theatre. "Pos-

sibly," said the *Boston Transcript*, in its affectionate and appreciative tribute paid to the great actor after his death, "we had had so much of Mr. Warren that we had lost the capacity fully to appreciate his exquisite art. It needed an occasional comparison of his masterly Sir Peter Teazle, or even of another Peter, whose surname is Pillicoddy, with the bogus comedy-work or athletic farce characters of the plays which have pushed Sheridan and Madison Morton from the stage, — there was required some such comparison to discover how the comedian's art was dying out, how buffoonery was taking the place of wit, and obstreperous, senseless horse-play that of clever humor."

If, however, familiarity sometimes dulled the edge of artistic appreciation, it never did that of personal affection. No man lay nearer to the heart of Boston than did William Warren. That he himself had no regret for his choice, spoke touchingly and convincingly in his brief and beautiful speech on that never-to-be-forgotten night of his "Golden Jubilee," Oct. 28, 1882. "To have lived," he said, "in this city of Boston, happily, for more than five and thirty years, engaged in so good and successful a theatre as this, cheered always by your favor, and then to have that residence crowned by such an assemblage as I see before me, is glory enough for one poor player. My humble efforts have never gained for me any of the great prizes of my profession until now; but, failing to reach the summit of Parnassus, it is something to have found so snug a nook in the mountain-side."

Even accepting, without protest, this characteristically modest self-estimate, we must recognize that to his "nook in the mountain-side of Parnassus" no successor

has ever climbed ; it has stood empty to the stars since the day that Boston's greatest actor passed to —

“ where there is sunshine every day,
Over the mountain high.”

Like so many who have attained eminence in his craft, William Warren came of player race. Many of his name or his kin have been famous in histrionic annals ; chief among them well-beloved Joseph Jefferson, his cousin in the second degree, his warm friend always, and his fellow player in the days when both were young. Mr. Warren's aunt on the maternal side, Euphemia Jefferson, *née* Fortune, was the grandmother of the famous “ Rip Van Winkle.” Others of his kinsfolk to attain theatric fame were his four sisters : Hester, wife of Joseph Proctor, of “ Nick o' the Woods ” fame, and herself well known as an exponent of old English comedy, who died in Boston in 1841 ; Anna, the wife of the well-known Yankee comedian, Danforth or “ Dan ” Marble, who played, with much success, light and spirited comedy *rôles*, and who died in Cincinnati in 1872 ; Emma, wife of J. B. Price, and afterward of David Hanchett, long a favorite actress in many cities of the West, and at one time a member of E. L. Davenport's company, at the Boston Howard Athenæum, who died in New York in 1879 ; Mary Ann, wife of John B. Rice, who won much favorable notice as an interpreter of Shakespearian and other *rôles*, and for many years lived in retirement from professional life at Chicago, where her famous brother was wont to pay her annual summer visits.

More celebrated than either of Mr. Warren's sisters, was their father and his, William Warren the elder.

If, as science makes a not improbable guess, what is experience with the father may be transmitted as intuition to the son, we have in the varied career of the elder Warren, with its vicissitudes, triumphs, and failures, some explanation of his son's marvellously sympathetic power to apprehend and reproduce situations and emotions to which his own personality and life could have given him little clew. William Warren senior was born in Bath, England, in 1767, and at the age of seventeen quitted the trade to which he had been apprenticed, to follow the life of a strolling player. His were all the odd experiences which attended such a career a century ago, — now the smiling fortune of applause and shillings, a warm lodging, a comfortable pint and chop; now the frowning fortune of pennilessness and supperlessness and arrest for vagabondage. Who may guess what instincts and comprehensions inherited from that far time and quickened by childhood tales of it, stirred in our great comedian, to the perfecting of some of his inimitable reproductions of vagabondage, — the Cheap John of "Flower of the Forest," — the Micawber of "Little Em'ly," the Eccles of "Caste"? The older Warren was induced, in 1796, to try his fortunes in America; where the ups and downs of luck still pursued him, and his standing shifted from that of a highly successful actor and manager to that of a poverty-stricken innkeeper; from which last sad estate death, a welcome friend, released him. He died in Baltimore in the year 1832. He was three times married, his third wife, Esther Fortune, being the mother of his famous son. A rare engraving, made by Edwin, from a painting by Thomas Sully (probably about 1811), shows —

“ a face
 Filled with a fine old-fashioned grace ;
 Fresh-colored, frank, ”

in which it is possible to trace some look of the face so long familiar to us, especially in the broad brow and the humorous, kindly eyes.

William Warren the younger — “ Boston’s William Warren,” as he was well content to be known — was born in Philadelphia, Nov. 17, 1812. He was destined for a commercial career, and was educated — an admirable education, in which was laid the foundations of the cultivated literary tastes and broad, unostentatious learning of his later years — in the common schools of Philadelphia, and later at the Franklin Institute and the Episcopal Seminary of that city. When he was twenty years old, his father’s death, leaving the family in the utmost straits of poverty, made it imperative that some immediately lucrative occupation should be entered upon by the son, who was now its chief support. Circumstances and inherited aptitude pointed to a dramatic career. His first appearance was made Oct. 27, 1832, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, at a benefit given to the family by his father’s former friends and associates. The character assumed was Young Norval, in John Home’s tragedy of “ Douglas,” by a coincidence exceedingly odd, even if intentional, the character in which his father had made his *début*, in England, nearly half a century before.

His success was indisputable, his progress in his chosen profession thenceforward steady and assured. For nearly nine years he led the life of a strolling player, appearing in many cities of Pennsylvania and the West, the excellence of his work earning an ever

more marked and general recognition. His peculiar adaptation to comic rôles was early manifested, and even then clearly indicated the paths in which he was to gather such enduring laurels. The life was far from an easy one; the long journeys, the imperfect methods of travel, the anxieties and uncertainties; the never-ending, arduous labor of playing a great variety of characters—often three or four in a single evening, “doubling” being an inescapable consequence of small companies and classic dramas—and playing them after the dictates of a sensitive artistic conscience that knew no least nor greatest,—material hardship and mental strain were the lot of the strolling player of those days, when he happened to be a William Warren. But—

“ Dans un grenier on est bien,
À vingt ans — à vingt ans ! ”

His associates were gifted and congenial, his managers just and friendly, youth was strong within him, and his work was his delight. Moreover, in these, his “wander-years,” he was gaining as he could never elsewhere have done, that versatility and quickness, that ease and plasticity, which were so perfectly to meet the strenuous demands of his maturer artist-life. In 1841 he made his first appearance in New York, as Grizzle, in “My Young Wife and Old Umbrella.” For the four following years he played, in Buffalo and other New York cities, the leading comedy parts in a company of which his brother-in-law, J. B. Rice, was the head. In 1845 he took a brief pleasure-trip to England, and while there made a single professional appearance, as Con Gormley, in “The Vermont Wool Dealer,” the occasion being the benefit of Mrs. Cole-

man Pope, and the place the Strand Theatre, London.

Soon after his return to America, in 1846, he made his first appearance in Boston, at the Howard Athenæum. The play was "The Rivals;" the date, Oct. 5, 1846. Mr. Warren played Sir Lucius O'Trigger; and, before the curtain had fallen on that red-letter night of Boston dramatic history, there was established between himself and a Boston audience that cordial good understanding which was to last, unchilled, for six and thirty years. His season at the Howard Athenæum covered some twenty weeks, during which he appeared in a great variety of parts, including Dogberry, Dandie Dinmont, Jacques Strop in "Robert Macaire," and many purely farcical rôles, in each new essay strengthening his hold on the admiration and affection of his audience.

It was during this engagement that he made the daring innovation of ridding the first gravedigger in "Hamlet," of the foolish and catch-grin "business" which tradition had long fastened upon him, of removing a dozen or so waistcoats before settling to his work. It was very characteristic of the great comedian to let neither the authority of stage tradition, nor the risk of unpopularity with the galleries, balked of their expected laugh, sway him a feather's weight from his conscientious carrying out of the intent of the author whom he was set to interpret. That little incident struck with sure, if unconscious hand, the key-note of his artistic career. Though caring heartily for applause, — as what right-hearted worker does not? — he

" never stooped
To pick it up, in all his days.

His artistic conscience was quick and inexorable throughout his long and splendid career. To have called the attention of the audience to himself, when the character he impersonated was naturally in the background, would have seemed to him to turn traitor to the art of his vowed allegiance. To steal the situation, the smile, the "point," which belonged to a fellow-player, would have been as impossible to him as to steal a fellow-player's purse. So should it be with every actor who would sign himself artist and gentleman. So is it, in this our day, with, alas! how few.

On the 27th of February, 1847, Mr. Warren made his last appearance at the Howard Athenæum. On the 23d of the following August, he made his *début* at the Boston Museum, then in its fifth season. The plays were "Sweethearts and Wives" and "My Young Wife and Old Umbrella;" the characters assumed, Billy Lackaday and Gregory Grizzle. The recognition, by press and public, of his fitness to succeed that admirable player, Mr. Charles W. Hunt, for several seasons leading comedian at the Museum, was cordial and unqualified. Thenceforward, for five and thirty years, — barring the single starring season to which allusion has several times been made, — his name was identified with that of Boston's favorite and famous play-house. His work there has set the brightest jewel in the crown of Boston dramatic tradition. His work there established a "terrible standard of enjoyment," for those whose unspeakable good fortune it was to watch him realize for them the ideals of, not one, but scores, of their friends of old romance. His work there made the Museum one of the theatrical Meccas of America, drawing thither, from far and near, lovers of all that

is subtlest, highest, truest, and finest in the noble art of the player. In the years of his work there, he made thirteen thousand three hundred and forty-five appearances, and assumed the phenomenal number of five hundred and seventy-seven parts.

In our day, — whose dawn was all too clear before Mr. Warren bade farewell to the stage! — few actors accept a “part;” they strive to be the whole; they no longer assume characters created by a dramatist; they call upon the dramatist to build around the character with which nature has personally gifted themselves. William Warren belonged to and magnificently exemplified that school of art which counted as failure the inability of an actor to lose his individuality in the character assumed. How he lost himself, how he gave to us, flawless, living, rounded, and complete, the realization of a youth-time of ideals, let a hundred thronging memories bear witness. The unceasing work, the untiring patience, the sensitive sympathy, the keen intelligence, that combined to accomplish such a result, few standards or achievements of to-day can help us to realize. He gave us, finished to the finger-tips, to the last intonation, to the last detail of costume, to the last queer turn of dialect, not only an infinite variety of types, but an infinite variety in those types.

How many Scotchmen have decently restrained their delight over the sober truth of his Baillie Nichol Jarvie, his Caleb Balderstone, his David Deans! How many Irishmen have vociferously shouted their delight over the unctuous perfection of his Denis O'Rourke, or paid more eloquent tribute of tear-dimmed silence to the exquisite tenderness and lofty dignity of his Father Doolan! How many Frenchmen have watched, with

keen and thorough appreciation, the Gallic finish and fineness of his Baron de Cambri, his Papa Perrichon, the searching pathos of his Jacques Fauvel and Monsieur Tourbillon! While Yankeedom endures, where will the typical Yankee see the mirror so held up to nature as in Warren's Enos Crumlett, his Jefferson Scattering Batkins, his Salem Scudder, and his Silas Jorgan! The riches of old English comedy are poor, lacking his interpretations — of atmosphere how rich and stately, how mellow and how human! — of Sir Peter Teazle, of Dr. Primrose, of Bob Acres and Dr. Pangloss, and Sir Harcourt Courtly and Jesse Rural — “that model for the thousand commonplace ministers of actual life!” daringly and truly wrote George Woods nearly a quarter of a century ago. Old English farce died with him; that stalwart, red-blooded, old-time sort of fun-making, Rabelaisian a bit sometimes perhaps, but, at its worst, guilty of virile coarsenesses which are cleanness itself compared to the simian indecencies of suggestion in much that has taken its place. Shakespearian students of our day will hardly hope to see again such impersonations as his Dogberry, his Touchstone, his Earl of Kent (in “Lear”), his Polonius, his Lord Mayor (in “Richard III.”). Dickens-lovers cherish as possessions beyond price their memories of his Captain Cuttle and his Micawber, his Boffin, his Joe Gargery and John Browdie, his Beadle Bumble and Josiah Bounderby. And who will forget, or remember with unmisted eyes, the unmatched quaintness, the inexhaustible humor, the infinite sweetness and tenderness and loveliness, of his Dominic Sampson!

So one might go on for pages without end, recalling, with a wonder and appreciation which grow with

every day that parts us from the days when all these things were so simply and easily done that we could not realize what genius went to their doing, what things these were to do. "Always knowing and preferring the best," says Mr. Clapp, in the fine essay already referred to, "from the beginning to the end of his career he embodied the spirit of the true histrionic artist, whose concern for himself and his audience is habitually subordinated to a reverent concern for his art."

In such achievement the long years sped away, and brought him at last to the golden day of his semi-centennial jubilee, Oct. 28, 1882. His picture, painted by Vinton, and so true to the original,—the massive, stately figure, the thoughtful eyes, a little grave and weary, the mouth with its virile strength, and its whimsical humorous sweetness,—stood in the Museum lobby, all garlanded with flowers and laurel-leaves. Twice that day the theatre was crowded to its utmost capacity; and what manner of greeting was given him by that throng when, once as Dr. Pangloss and once as Sir Peter Teazle, he stood before them, the heart grows big and the throat grows thick, merely to recall. Gifts of flowers and gifts of laurel, gifts of silver and of gold, gifts of loving words from the wide world over, and gifts of earnest and noble verse from a poet, the glowing words of whose song were as sweet as flowers and rang like silver,—these things, and many another, crowned his gentle life's jubilee-day.

It was like him, when that jubilee-day was over, to take up again the practice of his profession, with all the old earnestness of effort, the old modesty and simplicity and faithfulness. It was like him that when, at

the end of the season, the Boston Museum curtain fell, May 12, 1885, on his last performance on any stage, few knew it to be such. It would have been pleasant to think that it fell upon him as Sir Peter Teazle, glad in the new-born reverence and affection of his young wife ; or as Dominic Sampson, folded in the sheltering love of friends and pupils. But his last performance was that of Old Eccles, in "Caste." Perhaps it was fitter so ; he left the stage, as he had graced it, in the simple and thorough doing of the duty set him to do.

Mr. Warren never married. If the memory of those who knew his youth recalls one single, gentle, sorrowful romance, the sacredness with which he guarded that heart-secret is its safeguard still. For forty years his home was in a quaint, old-fashioned house in a quaint, old-fashioned thoroughfare — or rather no-thoroughfare — of the West End, on Bulfinch Place. He was the first boarder to whom its hospitable, and later so famous, door was ever opened. His hostess and lifelong, honored friend was Miss Amelia Fisher, herself once connected with the profession he adorned. In this tranquil home, surrounded with old friends and loved books, taking daily his long accustomed walks through the familiar streets where every face he met was the face of a friend, he passed the five years between his leaving the stage and his peaceful death, Sept. 21, 1888. His funeral services were held at Trinity Church. As on his jubilee-day, all Boston came to do him honor, with flowers and laurels ; but the songs were mute, and the cheers were changed to tears.

The life of the artist and of the man was one ; those

who honored the artist met nothing in the man to excuse or to forget. Unselfish, sweetly courteous, unflinching in his consideration for others, modest, unostentatious in his large learning and brilliant wit, he, his gentle life through,

“ bore, without reproach,
The grand old name of gentleman.”

To a few privileged souls, the name of William Warren is inseparably connected with the *noctes ambrosianæ* in that quaint old kitchen in Bulfinch Place, with its low ceiling, and its dresser laden with polished tin and gayly-flowered china, where, after the theatre was over, the wide table was spread with a right English supper-weight of good cheer, and at the head of the table sat the great actor. What a wealth of wise opinion, of merry tales, of brilliant epigram, of unflagging, sunny humor, those favored guests enjoyed, let some of them bear witness: Joseph Jefferson, whose mellow laugh made music in the tobacco-misted air; Henry Irving, passing out of the hospitable door to find the dawn-light waxing strong, and protesting, with a smile and a shiver, “And yet they say we players are never out of bed early!”

Tout passe; tout casse.

His face no more, even in presentment of canvas or of marble, looks benignly down upon the throngs passing into the old theatre, where no such work as his shall gladden them for generations to come. In the chimney-corner of the old Bulfinch Place kitchen, his arm-chair stands untenanted; and on the shelf, untouched since his last use of them, are his bright-flow-

ered cup and porridge-bowl. To some griefs there is no yesterday and no to-morrow; and such a grief solemnizes the atmosphere of the old house so long his home.

“ A life-part, staidly sweet and simply strong,
As any the dead player showed the throng,
Hath found its close.”

MRS. VINCENT.

BY GEORGE P. BAKER.

MRS. VINCENT. What memories that name summons for the Bostonian! Many a man in middle life to-day associates with it his first glimpse into the fairy-land of the theatre. For days he had dreamed of the wonders in the cases that used to line the corridors of the Boston Museum. How clearly he recalls his excitement all the morning before the *matinée*. That afternoon the stuffed animals, the wax figures, the statuary, Gulliver and his Lilliputian tormentors carved in wood, — all the fancies of his dreams became realities. Longing to linger, yet fearing that he should but lose something better in the next case, he hurried to and fro. The sight-seeing over, there was the waiting in the theatre, with its heated, palpitating air, its expectation. It was hard to keep still while the music played! Did the curtain move? Yes, yes, it did; and there was Mrs. Vincent, with her cheery face, and funny little movements of the head. How the child laughed! Never had any one been so funny as was Mrs. Vincent in "Poor Pillicoddy."

Many a Bostonian beginning with a memory like this, looks back to-day on afternoon after afternoon, evening after evening, when William Warren and Mrs. Vincent



MRS. VINCENT.

moved him to tears or laughter. A lad, he remembers them; a jaded business man, seeking an hour or two of relief from care, he recalls their acting; he has watched his own children, now, laugh at "The dear old lady," declaring that there can be no one like her. For over thirty years Mrs. Vincent acted at the Boston Museum; during nearly all that time, as actress and as woman, she was dear to Bostonians.

The story of her life is simple. Mary Ann Farlin was born at Portsmouth, England, Sept. 18, 1818. Her father, an Irishman, held a good position in the navy department of England. The father and the mother of the girl died young, leaving her, with a brother, to the care of a relative. The girl had a natural fondness for the stage, and at sixteen she made her first appearance as an actress. She played Lucy in "The Review," at Cowes, Isle of Wight, making a success.

In the fall of 1835 she married Mr. J. R. Vincent. For the next three years the husband and the wife acted in Ireland and throughout England. During this time Mrs. Vincent, as one of her biographers has said, "played every line of business known to the profession." For two years more Mr. and Mrs. Vincent travelled through England, giving an entertainment that had been arranged for them. Later they acted in Ireland, and then for two years in Liverpool.

In 1846 they accepted an offer from William Pelby, manager of the old National Theatre, Boston, to play stock parts in that city. On Wednesday, Nov. 11, 1846, they made their first appearance in America in a comedietta, following the main play of the evening. It was Buckstone's "Popping the Question." Here is the cast:—

MR. PRIMROSE	<i>Mr. J. R. Vincent.</i>
MISS BIFFIN	<i>Mrs. J. R. Vincent.</i>
HENRY THORNTON	<i>Mr. Keach.</i>
MRS. WINTERBLOSSOM	<i>Mrs. Kinlock.</i>
ELLEN MURRAY	<i>Mrs. Altemus.</i>
BOBBIN	<i>Miss Mestayer.</i>

Probably few who that night listened to the bickerings of Miss Biffin and Mrs. Winterblossom dreamed that the young woman of twenty-seven who played the first old maid would be for thirty years the favorite of Boston theatre-goers.

From 1846 until the burning of the theatre, April 22, 1852, Mrs. Vincent, with the exception of a short period for mourning after her husband's death in 1850, acted steadily at this theatre.

After the destruction of the theatre, the company played for a short time at the old Federal Street Theatre. On May 10, 1852, however, Mrs. Vincent appeared again at the Museum as Mrs. Pontifex in "Naval Engagements." From this date until her death, in the fall of 1887, she was absent from the Museum but one year. In 1861-1862 she was at the Holliday Street Theatre, Baltimore, and the Washington Theatre. All these years were full of labor in presenting the almost innumerable parts of the old stock companies. Still Mrs. Vincent found time for other duties. For some years she was a costumer as well as an actress.

In 1853 she married Mr. John Wilson, afterwards a member of the Museum company. The marriage was not happy. Mr. Wilson died in 1881.

Certainly this was an uneventful life in the sense of dramatic episodes. If, however, acting almost innumerable rôles, creating many parts that live in her

conceptions of them, producing among Bostonians the feeling that she was not only a clever actress, but a lovable, large-hearted woman, — if these mean anything, the years held much. When one hears that during her life Mrs. Vincent acted in several hundred different parts, one realizes that an actress of the old school of stock companies is before one. Adaptability to the needs of the moment characterized the old actors, — the Farrens, Buckstone, Gilbert, and Warren. It is distinctly to this school that Mrs. Vincent belonged. Trained in the farces and the comedies of fifty years ago, she had the quietly humorous methods that we associate with Gilbert and with Jefferson, not the uproariousness of the athletic comedians of to-day. She knew nothing of the cheap methods that to-day make the touch of some of the younger actors in our old comedy seem almost sacrilege. These old actors were all the more irresistible, because they never took the audience into their work, never played over the footlights. The absence of stage tricks, the absorption in their parts of these men and women, made their humor finer, richer, than that of most of our actors. This does not mean that Mrs. Vincent could not romp if the part demanded it. Whoever saw her as Sarah in "Poor Pillicoddy," or, even in her last days, in "The Private Secretary," knows that she understood farce thoroughly. Her fun, however, was never physical. It came from the brain, from her keen appreciation of the part and of the situations. The round, jolly figure, the cheery face, the tripping walk, the odd, gasping little voice, were instinct with fun. The moment she appeared, the audience smiled; when she spoke, they shouted.

How irresistible was her look of helpless bewilderment, the doubt that means tears if it is not at once cleared away! How wonderful were her coiffures and her dresses! When one remembers them, one is not surprised to hear that she spent hours in devising them, was never happier than when planning them. Often on Saturdays she stayed in her dressing-room between the *matinée* and the evening performance, studying before her mirror the remarkable coiffures that helped her merry entrance in some farce; or added to the amusing stateliness of her Mrs. Malaprop or Mrs. Candour. Who that has seen these costumes, with their strings of pearls, their furbelows, their absurd combinations of color, can forget them?

As a theatre-goer looks back at the three kinds of work with which Mrs. Vincent was closely associated, he feels that a keen sense of fun and naturalness were her chief characteristics. If a reader has seen her in any of the Madison Morton farces, he knows how thoroughly she entered into the spirit of these impossible, delightful creatures. She was so irresistibly funny that she made one forget that these people could not have lived.

Who that has seen her play Mrs. Candour can forget the gossip scene, does not see again the lazily, affectedly moving fan, and hear the gaspingly unctuous, "And they do say," with its attendant bit of scandal. Remembering how irresistible was her Mrs. Malaprop, one does not wonder that Mr. Howells once wrote her that it was a pity Sheridan could not have lived to see her in the part.

In a third set of characters, too, the lover of the stage likes to remember Mrs. Vincent, — in Bouci-

cault's plays. Dialect she had mastered. She never lapsed into her own speech; she never made one feel the actor behind the words. Her early training in England made Yorkshire and the burring dialects easy for her; her Irish was delightful. Dion Boucicault liked her, and when the two played together at the Museum it was a treat. The unctuous humor of Conn was just the spur for Mrs. Vincent; there seemed to be new slyness in her own fun; if possible she was more than usually ridiculous. Did ever more amusing old souls exist, with their flattery and their soft burr, than the mothers of Eily O'Connor and Conn. The writer can see now the plump little figure of Mrs. Vincent, as Mrs. O'Connor, when, wild with excitement, she first trips upon the stage from her cottage. A tiny checked shawl flutters about the neck, the round face is struggling with a half-dozen expressions, and in the excitement the hot water from the kettle goes right and left over the stage. Now that both Boucicault and Mrs. Vincent are dead, the theatre-goer looks back and sighs: "Ah, those days! When shall we have again that same delightful, quiet humor, free from all coarseness, all uproariousness, all horse-play?"

What a hearer felt, above all, in Mrs. Vincent's acting was her intelligence. She caught a writer's ideas very quickly, she developed her ideas readily. Her judgment of the acting qualities of a play was excellent. She was, too, careful in her methods, constantly adding to and making over her parts. If an inspiration gave her a new reading, some successful gesture, it at once became a part of her work. Her memory for these details was very remarkable; it took her but a short time to recall her old lines; and at a rehearsal

of an old play Mrs. Vincent was very helpful. Now she gave a needed cue; now she suggested, in a kindly, helpful way, some bit of stage business to a person newer to the stage.

This kindness was her chief characteristic as a woman, and it is impossible for any Bostonian to separate the actress from the woman. When one knows of her countless deeds of charity to the poor of her city, of her assistance to actors in need, her sensitive care for all dumb animals, her constant cheerfulness and readiness to help, one sees why it is that to Bostonians she is "The dear old lady."

Pets she had constantly about her in her little home on Charles Street, and in her final illness her last words were about their care. Her friends tell how Mrs. Vincent once kept the stage waiting for some time because on her way to the theatre, she stopped to expostulate with a brutal teamster. Agitated, breathless, but triumphant, she at last appeared among the anxious actors.

She had always, too, a little fund upon which she drew for actors in need. This she named for Sothern, who once gave her some money for this purpose. She always kept the fund at the amount given her, and held it ready for all actors in need. But it was above all to the poor of the city that Mrs. Vincent did good. How many have to thank her for care and tenderness!

Many actors had other causes than charity for thinking tenderly of her. To Miss Annie Clarke she was always "Your loving godmother." To hear the younger actress speak of the older is to feel the warmth of their friendship. Many *débutantes* had cause to love her. They were her special care. The writer remem-

bers well her kindness to Miss Nina Boucicault when, some years ago, she made her *début* in Boston. She had to sing, as Eily O'Connor, "The Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow;" and, as she sang, her timidity almost overcame her. The audience saw the difficulty, were kind, and called loudly for an *encore*. Miss Boucicault evidently was too proud to take the *encore* that she felt was largely called for in pure kindness. Half-shrinking from the growing applause, she stood shyly at the back of the stage. The situation was growing embarrassing; for all eyes were upon the *débutante*, who scarcely seemed to know what to do. Suddenly Mrs. Vincent, still half in the character of Danny Mann's mother, swept down the stage with a half-petulant gesture, and with one arm about the girl drew her to the footlights. Then she nodded with approval to the loudly applauding audience, spoke an encouraging word to the girl, and stood aside. Miss Boucicault took courage, sang her song finely, and received a burst of applause that was genuine enough. With a motherly pat of approval for the girl, and a half-mocking courtesy to the audience, Mrs. Vincent went back into her part, and the play went on. A threatened failure had been turned into a success.

Her influence, from all these characteristics, was very great. She was modest about all her doings, but her kindness and cheeriness could not conceal themselves. For these the people loved her. When she was in Baltimore in 1861-1862, the soldier-boys from New England, the Harvard lads who had known her when she had dressed them for Pudding and Dickey theatricals, the older men to whom she brought thoughts of afternoons with their delighted children, gave her an ova-

tion as they passed through the city. Nor was she idle, for she labored hard for the sick soldiers.

Old and young cared for her in her adopted city. When the little figure entered a horse-car, there were pleasant nods and words from all sides. Her humor and firmness in her opinions, too, won her friends. She was once in a Tremont Street car, when a gentleman gave up his seat to a rather flashily dressed woman, who failed to thank him. For a moment conflicting expressions played on Mrs. Vincent's face as she gazed at the woman; then, leaning forward, she said half apologetically, in the familiar, gasping voice, "Sir, I thank you in behalf of my sex."

It is not surprising that all this widespread respect and affection made Mrs. Vincent's fiftieth anniversary as an actress, April 25, 1885, a day to be remembered by theatre-goers. The programme in the afternoon was "She Stoops to Conquer," Mrs. Vincent playing Mrs. Harcastle. In the evening the play was "The Rivals," with Mrs. Vincent as Mrs. Malaprop. On this day all Mrs. Vincent's friends, inside and outside the theatre, joined to do her honor. At the end of the evening performance she received an ovation. She was much moved by the kindness, but, stepping forward simply, she told in a few well-chosen words her deep pleasure.

The day was in a sense the culmination of her career; yet the idol of the theatre-goers, honored by the people of her city, the kindly soul lived on until the fall of 1887. She began the season in "The Dominie's Daughter." She was taken ill at the theatre on Wednesday, seemed better next day, but died on Sunday morning, Sept. 4, 1887.

Often it is the lot of an actor to be admired in life, and at once forgotten in death; but such was not this woman's fate. It was touching to see the poor people about the doors of St. Paul's watching for a sight of the bier. It was significant to note the famous men and women who followed her coffin from the door. Nor did the respect cease here. During later years the people of St. Paul's, her church, and of Trinity, gathered money by fairs and by subscriptions for a memorial to the actress; and to-day the Vincent Hospital on Chambers Street gives daily help to the poor of that district. It is a memorial to a woman whose cheeriness in trouble, universal kindness, and loving service for the public for fifty years, made her respected and loved as few are.

It is hard even now to realize that she is gone. To many of us, Mrs. Hardcastle, Mrs. Malaprop, a dozen parts, live in her voice and in her gestures. Pen cannot paint them. It is powerless to make a reader feel her humor, her charm of manner and of method. Perhaps it can make a reader see the woman. If so, that is best, for after all it was the woman whom we loved.

CHARLES FISHER.

BY LAURENCE HUTTON.

ONE of the most charming bits of character-acting our stage has seen, certainly in many generations, was the Triplet of Charles Fisher in "Masks and Faces." Of all the many good things Mr. Fisher had done here, Triplet, perhaps, was the most thoroughly well done, which is saying a great deal for it; and it is the part, no doubt, upon which much of his fame will now rest. It ranked with Blake's Jesse Rural, with Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle, with Forrest's King Lear, and with the Shylock of the elder Wallack. It seemed to fit him as perfectly as if it had been written for him, and he played it with an apparently unconscious and simple naturalness that was eminently artistic and beyond all praise.

Triplet, as he was realized upon the stage by Fisher, — Triplet, the actor, the scene-painter, and the writer of sanguinary plays, in which everything that ought not to be is (to wit, small talk, big talk, fops, ruffians, ghosts), and in which everything that ought to be (to wit, truth, situation, and dialogue) is not, — is familiar in all walks of professional life; while even in non-professional and practical circles, as a chronic borrower is he sometimes known. The Triplet of real life, how-



CHARLES FISHER

ever, is not always a theatrical Triplet: he is sometimes a singer of bad songs, or a maker of bad music; often a writer of unpoetic verse, occasionally a painter of unsalable pictures; in some instances the inventor of some impossible machine to fly with, to shoot with, or with which to infuse blood; and not unfrequently he is the preacher of poor sermons, that most melancholy of all failures, — “a stickit minister.” He has always inspiration, genius, and “soul;” but he stops always just short of intellect and of success. Nevertheless, Triplet, no matter in what paths of Bohemianism his ways lie, is a good fellow, amiable, amusing, enthusiastic, and decidedly social. He is a dreamer of dreams; he feels that he has never been fully appreciated or properly understood; his luck has been always against him; but he is careless and happy withal, and too often his own worst enemy. He is long in his hair, untidy in his dress; and never, under any circumstances, is he without a large family as dependent, as impecunious, and as helpless as himself. Mr. Reade, in his dedication to this familiar story, claimed his main object to be the setting right of the memory of Margaret Woffington, falsely summed up until he came to her defence in novel and in play; but he and his co-worker succeeded better, with the noble assistance of Charles Fisher, in immortalizing Triplet, the imaginary character, who is more real than the character of history, and in giving to the genus Triplet represents a local habitation and a name.

The comedy, “Masks and Faces,” is not, as is generally supposed, the author’s adaptation of the novel “Peg Woffington;” on the contrary, the story was not published in book form until almost a year after the

play was presented. Mr. Benjamin Webster was the original Triplet at the London Haymarket Theatre in 1852, and Mrs. Sterling the original Peg. Mr. Webster was the accepted Triplet of the London stage, as Mr. Fisher was of our own. He played it at the Adelphi there the next season, with Madame Celeste as Peg Woffington, Mr. and Mrs. Leigh Murray as Sir Charles Pomander and Mrs. Triplet, and George Honey as Colley Cibber. "Masks and Faces" was played for the first time in New York at Burton's Theatre, Chambers Street, on the night of Dec. 29, 1853; Mr. Fisher taking the part of Ernest Vane, and the entire cast being as follows:—

SIR CHARLES POMANDER	<i>Mr. George Jordan.</i>
MR. ERNEST VANE	<i>Mr. Charles Fisher.</i>
COLLEY CIBBER	<i>Mr. George H. Barrett.</i>
JAMES QUIN	<i>Mr. G. H. Andrews.</i>
JAMES TRIPLET	<i>Mr. William F. Burton.</i>
LYSIMACHIUS TRIPLET	<i>Master Chas. T. Parsloe, Jr.</i>
MR. SOAPER	<i>Mr. William H. Norton.</i>
MR. SNARL	<i>Mr. Tom Johnston.</i>
MRS. VANE	<i>Mrs. Buckland.</i>
	(Miss Kate Horn.)
PEG WOFFINGTON	<i>Miss Charlotte Mitchell.</i>
	(Her first appearance in America.)
KITTY CLIVE	<i>Mrs. George Holman.</i>
	(Harriet Phillips.)
MRS. TRIPLET	<i>Mrs. Hough.</i>

The comedy at the time of this original production was said to have been written by Mr. Boucicault; but it is believed to have been the version of Charles Reade and Tom Taylor, as published by Samuel French some time later, and now universally accepted as the only acting edition. Old play-goers remember Mr. Burton's Triplet as a strongly marked and excellent performance, not equal, however, to the Triplet of Mr. Fisher,

to whom he soon relinquished it; George Holman playing Ernest Vane in the subsequent performance of the play at Burton's during the season of 1853-1854.

Peg Woffington, as Charles Reade has summed her up and idealized her, has been a favorite character with our leading ladies and dramatic aspirants ever since Miss Charlotte Mitchell first presented her to our stage more than forty years ago. There are few more difficult or trying parts even to experienced actresses than this; it requires a certain sparkling dash and abandon, a proficiency in stage arts, and a management of stage business quite beyond the average *débutante*, and sometimes out of the reach even of the high-salaried, accepted, and gifted stars of the profession.

Among the Peg Woffingtons most familiar to the New York stage in Fisher's time were Miss Jean Margaret Davenport (Mrs. Lander), Miss Laura Keene, Miss Lizzie Weston (later Mrs. Dolly Davenport and Mrs. Charles Mathews), Mrs. Hoey, Miss Madeline Henriquez, Miss Carlotta Leclercq, Mrs. John Wood, Miss Fanny Davenport, and Miss Kate Field. Of these, perhaps Mrs. Lander and Mrs. Hoey were the most artistic, the most refined, and the most successful. Miss Laura Keene, if not great as the Woffington, was pleasing and satisfactory in the part, as she was in every part she undertook in her earlier years; while Mrs. John Wood, who possessed in a marked degree the merry nature, exuberance of spirit, and dark, sparkling Irish beauty of the original, was personally the most charming, winning Peg we have ever known.

Miss Kate Field, by the way, made her theatrical *début* at Booth's Theatre, Nov. 14, 1874, in "Masks and Faces." With a degree of courage that was remark-

able, she selected Peg Woffington as her opening *rôle*. Her audience was one of the most intelligent and intellectual ever collected under one roof in New York on any similar occasion; and the manner in which she acquitted herself in face of the enormous difficulties with which, as a novice, she had to contend, gave proof of the talent for the stage which undoubtedly she possesses, and encouraged her to persevere for some little time in her intention to adopt the dramatic profession. Miss Field this evening was ably supported by Miss Kitty Blanchard (Mrs. McKee Rankin) as Mabel Vane, Miss Emma Grattan as Mrs. Triplet, Charles Rockwell as Ernest Vane, Eben Plympton as Pomander, and Charles Wheatleigh as Triplet, — a Triplet so good that it would have been considered almost perfection if the Triplet of Charles Fisher had not been so long and so well known to the town. Between these Triplets the play-goer of New York that season was able to form his own comparisons, for Mr. Fisher played the part at the Fifth Avenue Theatre a few evenings immediately preceding and following the production of the comedy at Booth's for Miss Field's *début*. Mr. Fisher's Woffington on these occasions was Miss Fanny Davenport. That Mr. Fisher has never been excelled in the part was the verdict of the critics of gallery and parquet. He seemed to have found new beauties, and to have developed fresh traits of tender and pathetic characterization in every representation during the quarter of a century in which he had played it here.

Mr. Fisher came to this country from England in 1852. He made his first appearance in America at Burton's Theatre in Chambers Street on the 30th of

August of that year as Ferment in the "School of Reform," Mr. Lysander Thompson making his American *début* that evening as Tyke in the same play. Associated with Mr. Fisher that first season or two in Mr. Burton's company, besides Mr. Thompson and, of course, Mr. Burton himself, were William H. Norton, also new to this country then, Cornelius A. Logan, the father of Eliza, Celia, and Olive Logan, Tom Johnston, Henry Placide, John Dyott, George Skerrett, James W. Wallack, Jr., Barney Williams, George Barrett, George Holland, George Jordan, Mrs. Hughes, Miss Jane Hill (Mrs. Burton), and other artists all well known and well liked in their time and in their lines, every one of whom now has left the stage and the world.

Mr. Fisher on his first appearance, it is recorded, made decidedly a favorable impression; and ever after he maintained it, playing nothing badly or carelessly, showing clear comprehension of all his parts, even such as were beyond his powers perfectly to portray, and always impressing his audience as a student, as a man of much more than the ordinary intelligence and refinement, a man and an artist to be highly esteemed and cordially liked. In the Chambers Street house, which long ago passed away forever with so many of the bright lights of the profession who shone upon its boards, he created many new parts, and filled to everybody's satisfaction many an old one. As has been shown, he was the original Ernest Vane here, and the greatest Triplet; he was also the original Black Jack in "Janet Pride," Richard Haughty in "The Fox Hunt," Dymond in Douglas Jerrold's "Heart of Gold," Jacob Kindly in the very popular "Upper Ten and Lower Twenty;" and in a wide range of characters in the old tragedies, comedies, and

farces, he played night after night for three seasons. He was Prospero in "The Tempest," Theseus in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream," Page in "The Merry Wives," Malvolio in "Twelfth Night," Dick Dowlas in "The Heir at Law," Joseph and Charles in "The School for Scandal," Captain Absolute in "The Rivals," Charles Torrens in "The Serious Family," Carker in "Dombey and Son," Scipio in a forgotten drama called "Woman's Life," Old Adam in a piece of that name, William Tell in Sheridan Knowles's tragedy, Webster Livingstone in "Wall Street," a local play by the author of "Upper Ten and Lower Twenty," Charles Sparkle in a laughable novelty called "Rules of the House," and Sir Valentine May in "St. Cupid," one of his earliest and most decided hits; the bill on that account, and as rather a curiosity itself in the way of bills, being perhaps worthy of reproduction here in full:—

THIS MONDAY EVENING, FEB. 14, 1853,

First time in America the new comedy in three acts by
DOUGLAS JERROLD *of*

ST. CUPID, OR DOROTHY'S FORTUNE.

SIR WILLIAM ZERO, under Secretary of State . . . *Henry Russell.*
SIR VALENTINE MAY, his nephew and secretary . . . *Chas. Fisher.*

In which character he will dance the *Minuet de la Cour* and *Gavotte* with Mrs. Skerrett, execute several *Airs* on the Violin, and go thro' an *Assault d'Armes* with Mr. Holman.

DR. BUDD, a country schoolmaster *Tom Johnston.*
ENSIGN BELLEFLEUR, a Jacobite *George Holman.*
CHECKER, a spy employed by Zero *Wm. H. Norton.*
HAWKE, an official *Moses W. Fisk.*
TRUNDLE, Zero's servant *Mr. Gourlay.*
DOROTHY BUDD *Mrs. Skerrett.*
JUNO, her domestic, a country girl *Miss Jane Hill.*
QUEEN BEE, a Gypsy woman *Mr. Burton.*

To conclude with the favorite drama in three acts of
LONDON AND PARIS, *etc.*

Although this certainly was "the first night in America" of the comedy, it was not its only representation in America; for it was produced the same evening at the Broadway Theatre under the management of Mr. Ethelbert A. Marshall; Thomas Duff playing Zero; Frederick B. Conway, Sir Valentine May; David Whiting, Dr. Budd; William Davidge, the Queen Bee; Mrs. John Sefton, Juno; and Miss Emma Fitzpatrick, Dorothy Budd. The play in both houses was for one week, a very fair success for those days; but it was more popular in the Chambers Street house than on Broadway. It was allegorical in character, full of satire and bright dialogue, and bordering on the burlesque. Mr. Burton's rendering of a Queen Bee was, as may be imagined, exceedingly rich; but the great honors were carried away by Fisher as St. Cupid, in white tights, a tunic, gauze wings, a flowing wig, and a simper. His appearance was the signal of great applause from the pit and the gods, increased by his pirouetting with Mrs. Skerrett and his "set to" with Holman, and made perfectly tumultuous when, taking the violin from the leader of the orchestra, John Cooke, he executed the several airs set down for him in the bill. His fiddling, not the least of his accomplishments, was a great and a very pleasant surprise to the audience, and no Ole Bull or Paganini was ever more enthusiastically received or *encored*; six or eight times he returned the instrument to the amused conductor, only to have it handed back to him at the mandates of the dictators in front, until "St. Cupid" seemed likely to become nothing more than a violin concert with Mr. Fisher as sole performer. It was so uncommon to find a stock actor able to make the music

himself when the "business" of the play demanded it, and not have to go through the motions while the music too perceptibly came from the man in the orchestra who pretended he was only keeping time, and it was so agreeable, when the stock actor was a favorite, to find that his music was better than any of the musicians could have made it, that the *habitués* of Burton's could not express too strongly their appreciation of Mr. Fisher's musical talent, nor seem to have enough of it. A year later when "Masks and Faces" was produced, his fiddling as Triplet, his love for his old violin, and the comfort he derived from it, were among the most realistic and touching features in his performance; and the action of young Lysimachus, who hands him the instrument in the garret when there is nothing to eat, and little prospect of better times, with the request, "Play us a tune on the fiddle, father?" was perhaps the most popular thing in the play, and was always received with more hearty applause than any line of the text or point in the situation demanded.

Mr. Fisher remained on the Chambers Street boards until the summer of 1855. During the season of 1855-1856 he was at the Broadway, then an establishment already given to stars, where he supported Edwin Forrest, Julia Dean Hayne, Edward L. Davenport, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams, and James W. Wallack, Jr., playing Rochford to the Leon de Bourbon of Mr. Wallack on the occasion of the first production here of "The Iron Mask," in which Wallack had such magnificent success. Mr. Ireland preserves this bill, dated Jan. 28, 1856, with Augustus W. Fenno as St. Mars, Joseph Grosvenor as Jarnac, Miss Josephine Manners as Cécile, and Madame Ponisi as Hortense.

During the two seasons following this, 1856-1857 and 1857-1858, Mr. Fisher, again under Burton's management, was at Burton's new theatre, on Broadway opposite Bond Street, originally the Metropolitan, and later Winter Garden. In this company were Mr. and Mrs. Boucicault (Miss Agnes Robertson), Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Davenport, Mr. and Mrs. William J. Florence, Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Barrow (Julia Bennett), Mrs. Ada Plunkett, Mr. W. H. Smith, Miss Fanny Brown, Miss Charlotte Cushman, Miss Ada Clifton, Miss Jane Coombs, Miss Polly Marshall, Miss Sara Stevens, Miss Susan Denin, Miss Sallie St. Clair, "Dan" Setchell, J. H. Hackett, Mark Smith, Lawrence Barrett, Edwin Booth, John Brougham, Charles Mathews, and Charles Walcot, as stock and star. Here he played, among many other parts, Jesse Rural in "Old Heads and Young Hearts," Ford in "The Merry Wives," and Jaques in "As You Like It," continuing in public favor, and always better liked as he was better known.

His name is found on the old bills of Niblo's in the seasons of 1858-1859 and 1860-1861. In the intermediate season of 1859-1860 he was a member of Laura Keene's Company in the theatre then called by her name, and afterwards known as the Olympic, where he played David Deans in the well-remembered "Heart of Midlothian," with Agnes Robertson as Jeanie, Laura Keene as Effie, Mark Smith as Argyle, and Boucicault and Charles Wheatleigh as the counsels for the defence and for the Crown. Here also he was the original Kyrle Daly in the "Colleen Bawn," first played March 29, 1860, Boucicault being the original Myles; Daniel Leeson, Father Tom; Wheatleigh, Danny Mann; Madame Ponisi, Mrs. Cregan; Laura Keene,

Annie Chute ; and Miss Robertson, the Colleen Bawn. These two pieces ran each for many weeks, and almost filled the entire season. Mr. Thomas Baker was conductor of the orchestra, and fairly revelled in melodies of Scotch and Irish airs.

Mr. Fisher made his first appearance as a member of Wallack's Company, Sept. 25, 1861, on the occasion of the opening of the new Wallack's Theatre, Broadway corner of Thirteenth Street, and later known as "The Star." The play by Tom Taylor was not one of that gentleman's best productions, and was entitled "The New President;" Mr. Fisher, as a Grand Duke of Kleinstadt, playing a comparatively unimportant part. His next part there, Hadji Stavros in Tom Taylor's "King of the Mountains," was better. The comedy was popular, and suited all of the persons cast in it, — Lester Wallack, A. W. Young, William R. Blake, Mrs. Hoey, Mrs. Vernon, and Miss Henriquez; and it quickly established Mr. Fisher as a prime favorite with the Wallack audiences, a favor he never lost during the ten years of his connection with that house.

Any detailed account of Mr. Fisher's career at Wallack's, so honorable to the actor and so agreeable to all theatre-going New York, is not possible here. With Mr. Lester Wallack and Mr. Gilbert, he was one of a trio of artists unequalled as a trio on any stage in America, or in the world to-day; and the first mistake of his professional life unquestionably was made when he left this his long and pleasant professional home. In all of the standard and old comedy revivals so famous on Wallack's stage, and played there as they have not been played in this generation elsewhere on the American continent, Mr. Fisher was always promi-

nently cast, and always equal to the character he assumed, while as the original of very many new characters he will not soon be forgotten. He was the first George D'Alroy in Robertson's "Caste" at Wallack's, to the Esther of Rose Eytinge, May 3, 1869; the original Beau Farintosh in "School" during the same season, the original Arthur Mompesson in "Progress," the original Prince Perovsky in "Ours," and the original Tom Styles in "Society." He created Gilbert Featherstone in "Lost in London," Rawlings in "Lost at Sea," Dr. Bland in "Bosom Friends," Father Malone in "Shamus O'Brien," Tom Robinson in "Never Too Late To Mend," Tom Sutherland in "The Favorite of Fortune," Mr. Davis in "Flying Scud," Matthew Leigh in "Rosedale," Digby Grant in "The Two Roses," Bowles in "Coquette," Lawyer Goodwin in "Minnie's Luck," Brackenbury in "Pure Gold," Didier in "The Fast Family," Rawdon Scudamore in "Hunted Down," Dick Hartley in "How She Loves Him," The Major in "Henry Dunbar," Colonel Epee in "The Lancers," Robert Redburn in "The Lancashire Lass," and Randall in "Randall's Thumb," playing all styles of parts, in all kinds of plays, by all sorts of people, — now a good priest, now the traditional stage Jew, now a charitable doctor, now a wicked lawyer, now a brave soldier in the English service, now a Russian grandee fighting against the British, now a sinner, now a saint, now a gentleman, now a clod, — and good in everything.

Mr. Fisher's last appearance as a member of Mr. Wallack's company was made on the 1st of June, 1872, the last night of the regular season, and farewell benefit to Mr. Charles Mathews, the bill consisting of "Not Such a Fool as He Looks" and "The Captain of the

Watch." During the summer season, however, he played a short engagement there under the management of Mr. Theodore Moss, appearing as Mr. Tibbetts in Watts Phillips's "On the Jury," as Vicomte de Noirmont in Palgrave Simpson's "Lost Trump Card;" and he quietly made his last bow on these boards, July 20, 1872, as Noah Learoyd in "The Long Strike." He became a member of Mr. Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre Company the next season.

In the early part of his career at that house, something like justice was done him in the selection of plays and in the distribution of characters; and it was hoped by the better educated portions of Mr. Daly's audiences, that under his roof the standard and legitimate had at last found a home, with standard actors, like Miss Morant, Mrs. Gilbert, Davidge, Whiting, and Fisher, to represent them. The legitimate, however, was gradually withdrawn and shelved, the fault no doubt being with the public, who did not appreciate; and Mrs. Gilbert after a while became the absurd mother-in-law in "Life," Davidge the child-stealer in "Pique," and Fisher the circus postura and merry-andrew of modern farce-comedies.

Mr. Fisher's first appearance under Mr. Daly's management was made at the original Fifth Avenue Theatre, Twenty-fourth Street, in "The Road to Ruin," Oct. 28, 1872. The chief parts of the comedy, strongly if not remarkably well played, are here given:—

OLD DORNTON	<i>Mr. Charles Fisher.</i>
YOUNG DORNTON	<i>Mr. Henry Crisp.</i>
GOLDFINCH	<i>Mr. George Clarke.</i>
SULKY	<i>Mr. D. Whiting.</i>
WIDOW WARREN	<i>Mrs. G. H. Gilbert.</i>
SOPHIA	<i>Miss Linda Dietz.</i>

This was Mr. Fisher's first essay of the part of Old Dornton; it was watched by the critics and the knowing ones with much interest, and was considered far above the average, although not equal to the Dornton of Blake or John Gilbert. "The Belle's Stratagem" followed; and "The Merry Wives of Windsor," with Fisher as Falstaff for the first time, was produced on the 19th of November of the same year.

The cast of the comedy on this occasion is well worth preserving.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF	<i>Charles Fisher.</i>
FENTON	<i>B. T. Ringgold.</i>
SHALLOW	<i>D. Whiting.</i>
SLENDER	<i>James Lewis.</i>
FORD	<i>George Clarke.</i>
PAGE	<i>Louis James.</i>
WILLIAM PAGE	<i>Miss Jennie Yeamans.</i>
SIR HUGH EVANS	<i>Wm. Davidge.</i>
HOST OF THE GARTER INN	<i>Owen Fawcett.</i>
DR. CAIUS	<i>W. J. Le Moyne.</i>
BARDOLPH	<i>J. A. Mackey.</i>
PISTOL	<i>George de Vere.</i>
NYM	<i>J. H. Burnett.</i>
ROBIN	<i>Miss Gerty Norwood.</i>
SIMPLE	<i>Wm. Beckman.</i>
MISTRESS FORD	<i>Miss Fanny Davenport.</i>
MISTRESS PAGE	<i>Miss Fanny Morant.</i>
MISTRESS ANNE PAGE	<i>Miss Sara Jewett.</i>
MISTRESS QUICKLY	<i>Mrs. G. H. Gilbert.</i>

SERVANTS to PAGE and FORD, FAIRIES, *etc.*

Mr. Fisher's assumption of the part of the fat knight was looked upon as a very important event in all dramatic circles, particularly as it followed so quickly upon the death of Mr. J. H. Hackett (Dec. 28, 1871), the greatest American Falstaff of modern times; and it attracted to the Twenty-fourth Street Theatre, not only the habitual crowds of the day, but

theatre-goers of a past generation, who were rarely seen before the curtain, — those dreamers of the past, who only talk and think of “other and palmy days.”

This revival of “The Merry Wives” was one of the most creditable to the management of Mr. Daly that has taken place in any of his several Fifth Avenue Theatres during his long career. In all of the lesser parts it was well played, particularly by Mr. Lewis as Slender, Mr. Whiting as Shallow, Miss Davenport as Mistress Ford, and that then precociously clever child, Jennie Yeamans, as young William Page.

It was not to be expected of course that any actor, no matter how careful his study and intelligent his conception, should after a few rehearsals, or even after one or two seasons' performances, have been immense as Falstaff. It is not a part to which any man is born, but which every man who attempts it must make himself by hard and conscientious work. Mr. Fisher had the proper intellectual conception of the knight's character; he made him the sensual rogue, the bully, the braggart, the cowardly, witty, worldly old reprobate, whom everybody laughs at and with, whom nobody respects, and still whom everybody is forced to like. Mr. Fisher, however, by nature refined and delicate in his sensibilities, was prone to refine his Falstaff too much, and to keep too much in the background of his picture the predominant coarseness and brutal instincts of the character he painted; still, his Falstaff, when it became mellow with age and bettered by practice, was a notable performance. It is only to be regretted that he had few opportunities to profit by experience in the part. After a successful run of three weeks, the comedy was withdrawn.

During the next few years Mr. Fisher was occasionally cast in characters worthy of his abilities, — Triplet, Sir Peter Teazle, Don Armado in "Love's Labor's Lost," Jaques in "As You Like It," Graves in "Money," Kent, Gaunt, and Polonius — first time Oct. 25, 1875; but too frequently his name was not on the bills at all, or else he was seen in society plays of the French and modern schools, sensational, emotional, and improbable, in which the chief merit seems to be beautiful toilets, and the great attraction wonderful upholstery.

If Mr. Fisher was not placed in a position to accomplish great things himself, he did at all events, in his own careful and creditable way, assist at the accomplishment of great things by other people. When Miss Bijou Heron made her very clever *début*, April 14, 1874, in "Monsieur Alphonse," a play from the French of the younger Dumas, Fisher was very pleasant to hear and to look upon as the bluff, blunt, honest old sailor, who was the only person of principle and with moral sentiment in the piece. He was an excellent Fagan when Miss Davenport surprised even her friends by her admirable impersonation of Nancy Sikes, with Louis James for William and Bijou Heron as Oliver Twist (first produced there May 19, 1874); and when Louis James made his first hit as Yorick in a tragedy of that name taken from the Spanish, and played on Dec. 5, 1874, a bit of acting so good that it was beyond the comprehension of the average play-goer, and not properly appreciated even by many of the professional critics themselves, Fisher as Shakespeare, manager of the Blackfriars Theatre, created at least a sensation. Made up carefully after the Stratford bust,

with forehead preternaturally high and bumpy, in suit of sober brown, looking wise beyond human conception, he walked the boards, and uttered proverbial philosophy in well-turned and true-piled lines, as the Immortal (in the original Spanish) is supposed to have carried himself, but as the delight and wonder of our stage before he dreamed of his immortality certainly never did. The fault, however, was in the play, not in the acting of it; and Fisher, in return for all that Shakespeare had done for him, did, and conscientiously, all he could for Shakespeare. He was one of the very few men in America in this generation in whom the mere assumption of such a part would not seem irreverent or profane, always a well-graced actor, good in everything.

During the latter years of Mr. Fisher's life he was rarely seen upon the stage, and when he did appear his physical weakness and his advancing years were painfully evident to those who had known and loved him in his prime. He was cast by Mr. Daly for Sir Peter Teazle, for the Parson in Pinero's "Squire," and for Jaques and Adam in "As You Like It." His last appearance was made in this last part, Adam, at the London Lyceum in the summer of 1890, when he quietly retired forever from the profession which he had so long adorned. He died in the city of New York on the 11th of June, 1891, and in his seventy-fifth year.



CHARLES R. THORNE, JR.

CHARLES R. THORNE, JR.

BY A. M. PALMER.

THE career of Charles R. Thorne, Jr., in the full development of his powers, and exercising the best natural methods of dramatic expression, began and ended with the Union Square Theatre; and the full identity of the actor with the house under my management for pretty much the whole period has left with me an abiding and tender recollection of him. His genius involved a good deal of brusqueness, and, it is not unfair to say, moments of perversity; and his individuality was strong enough to leave behind him a store of anecdotes. I am quite sure that no leading actor of a stock company in New York was more impressive in his time, or is better remembered in the records of the stage.

Charles Thorne came of a theatrical family; and, imbued with the traditions and training of the old school, he continued to act under their influence up to the time he manifested himself in a new power and under other conditions at the Union Square Theatre. He was born in New York City, March 10, 1840. When quite young he was apprenticed or engaged to a Mr. Boyce to learn the trade of the silversmith, and served for about six months. The desire to become an actor getting strong in him, his father took him to San Fran-

cisco, where he had assumed the management of the American Theatre.

Thorne's education had been obtained, with others of the young members of the family, at the Cathedral School in Montreal, and for a while at St. John's College in New York. His schooling, therefore was not very extensive, yet he showed no lack in after years of that information and accuracy that belong to the adequately trained man. In point of fact, he was fond of discussing questions of moment in literature, history, the drama, and the like. Being a man of independence, he naturally had views of his own, views that were marked at least with vigor. He loved to gather about him, at his home and his table, men of thought, and in this way formed intimacies with Robert Ingersoll and others. It is worth while noting that he was so strong in his likes and dislikes that there was no concealment of either with him. He was absolute and peremptory in this respect, and had no compromise with people that did not please him. It may be a trifling detail to record, but it was one of the curious points in his character that he was easily bored; and yet, like the severe Edwin Forrest in his intimacy with the minstrel Christy, he would find diversion at times with ordinary but volatile people.

Thorne had certain good qualities in his relation as an actor with the public. He was not a poser. He was domestic. He cared little for criticism, and was never aroused but once, when the critic of the *Herald* became personal, whereupon he administered a very severe physical rebuke to the offender. So little theatric was he that it was not always that he could be got to rehearse in detail. He was not conventional in his

habits of study, did not resort to the looking-glass as an aid. He was not in the habit of talking at home of his parts, and in every way preserved an individuality and domesticity apart from the boards. This had its bearing on his naturalness and on the strength of his reserve power. It is proper to say that with all his brusqueness — owing in large measure in his latter days to the encroach of his subtle disease and the approaching and really unexpected collapse — he was a generous man. It is told of him in his family that he more than once brought unfortunate fellow-actors to his house; and when his shabby guest would emerge, he would be transformed in raiment belonging to the more fortunate actor, and with some money in his pockets in keeping with his new state. Such are a few details that may help to show the value in a player of genuine qualities and a strong individuality as possessed by Charles Thorne.

In the volumes of manuscript, photographic and other valuable and minute material that I have preserved in the Record of the Union Square Theatre, may be found many interesting anecdotes of Thorne. These volumes, ten or twelve in number, contain autobiographies in the manuscript of all those concerned under my management of the theatre, the whole inlaid after the best method in vogue, and constituting as minute and unique a history as it has been the fortune of any period of dramatic history to have. After leaving my possession they will serve in some public institution — The Actors' Fund perhaps — to preserve the memory of the old Union Square Theatre.

Thorne's first appearance is established as Master George Shelby in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in 1854. In

a letter written to me concerning him, his father says that he displayed but small ability at first, and relates an anecdote of his confusion in delivering a simple message in the "Hunchback," a case of ordinary stage-fright. Indeed, Charles Thorne's earlier efforts furnished a good deal of good-humored chaffing in the family.

A little later his name appeared in the bills of Purdy's National Theatre in New York; and in 1858 he travelled with George Pauncefort's Company, a well-known organization, through the New England States. In 1860 he was at Niblo's Garden in the stock, and in the next year ventured to the West Indies in the company of J. W. Lanergraff. Two years were then spent under Maguire in San Francisco, during which time, in 1864, he took a company of his own to China and Japan for a short tour. It was only in 1866, at Maguire's, that he established himself as leading man; and from 1866 to 1869 he maintained himself in that capacity at the Boston Theatre, going from there to Selwyn's, from which theatre he was brought to play Tom Broughton in "Formosa" in New York. In 1870-1871 he was the leading man with Mrs. Scott-Siddons, playing Courtenay in "Twixt Axe and Crown," Orlando, Romeo, and Claude Melnotte. For a while he was at the Varieties in New Orleans, and from 1871 to 1873 at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. As an instance of his sturdy independence, it may be mentioned that in 1872, in a play at Niblo's entitled "Black Friday," he threw up his part after one performance, upon hearing that his character was aimed at Edward S. Stokes, then fresh in his notoriety in New York.

Such is a brief *résumé* of the work of Charles Thorne before he came under my management. He was known up to that time as a good, reliable, conventional, vigorous actor. I began to consider him first when I saw him in a crude piece called "The Chicago Fire," that was played at Hart's Theatre Comique. I saw in him strength and adaptable qualities. I knew that it would be a task to tame him down in his methods, but it so happened that the necessities of the play, aided by the urging of Dion Boucicault and myself, commended themselves to his reason; and as Count Rudolf Chandoce in "Led Astray" his transformation was a surprise to those who best knew him, and his adherence thereafter to restrained expression remained permanent.

In what I may call the formative process of the old Union Square Theatre, when I was looking about me for plays and for men, and was seeking to give a definite direction to the undertaking, it was necessary to obtain material upon which I could rely. Strength in the leading man was one thing, naturalness was another. I had judged of Thorne's capacities correctly. His native qualities of mind were obviously of a kind to admit of turning him to advantage. I saw that the emotion that he expressed in his acting was something more than merely theatric, and that it was a mere question of expression and method that was lacking. In the end, Charles Thorne became the most convincing of actors in all passages of genuine feeling. His roughness was converted into manly sincerity, and to it was added a tenderness that gave full value to the characters to which I assigned him. His utterance was distinct, his inflections were perfect. There was

no mistaking his meaning. Charles Thorne's open, manly bearing had much to do with his universal acceptance. He was fortunate in having a consistent and perfect career.

Charles Thorne's first appearance in the company was in "The Geneva Cross," a play that I had had written for the theatre by George Fawcett Rowe, on a theme that he had outlined to me some months before. As Raoul Dubourg he had a somewhat stormy part, one not calculated to lead him to that finer style afterwards adopted by him; but shortly afterward in "Led Astray" he struck the right path. For a season or two I saw proper to send Thorne with the travelling company of the theatre; but he was identified with the chief successes of the house, and to enumerate his *rôles* would be in large measure to recall many of its seasons. It is not always that a manager can get such a just proportion among the capacities in his company that the leading figure in it does not dwarf his fellow-players; but where disproportion does exist, the company, instead of being strong, is weak. Any inequality on the individual affects the whole body. While Thorne was a high standard and a good inspiring figure at the head of my organization, that organization was strong and independent of its leading man, who was not indispensable. The leading man of a stock company is very apt to make a mistake in this particular. The truth is, however excellent he may be, it would be utterly impossible for him in plays of the modern school, plays of interest properly apportioned, to monopolize the whole attention of the audience, or to carry off all the praise. He is not the whole play; and his efforts alone, however brilliant, have only a

really comparatively small share in the general effect. The part of the manager is not a small one in providing the conditions that give full effect to the doings of each and all of the actors in a play; while the smallest detail, the least bit of good acting in a small way, has its bearing on the general result, and the very points for which the pampered actor may appropriate the entire applause.

In one play, "The False Friend," Thorne's emotional power had the singular effect of over-reaching the part; that is to say, playing the false heir to a noble estate and incidentally gaining the heart of an innocent and proud girl, he touched the sympathies of the audience to such an extent that the repulsion that should have been experienced toward him did not exist at all. The rascality of the claimant was forgotten for the moment; and one was fain to wish Lucien Gleyne, the lover, prosperity in his suit. Edgar Fawcett had written the play at my encouragement, and had taken the Tichborne case as his suggestion. It was an excellent play in many respects.

But it was at the Union Square that the fortunate combination of circumstances was to give him characters that were admittedly perfect; for he had parts in his career at the house where not only he, but his associates and the play itself, were as nicely balanced in perfect art as we may hope to see. It is not always that a company in its best strength can be supplied with a fitting play; but the Union Square Theatre saw this conjunction. "The Two Orphans" represents a point where the company was instinct with vitality, flushed with success, and pliable from the training together. I began to look on them as my veterans,

prompt, eager, obedient, and loyal in the performance of their work. The spirit in the company was admirable. In "The Two Orphans" Thorne had the important part of the Chevalier de Vaudrey, but it was eminently a part that illustrated the value of a leading man of the best qualities. There was not much to do; but the noble spirit of the chevalier, his dashing character, his fine breeding, and all those points so needful to the atmosphere of the piece, were finely brought out by Thorne. The play is of one of the historic successes of the American stage; and I need not recall the Madame Frochard of Marie Wilkins, the Louise of Kate Claxton, the Henrietta of Kitty Blanchard, the Pierre of Mackey, and the Jacques of McKee Rankin; and yet these are the characters that would be best remembered in an ordinary performance of the great play.

With Thorne as the chevalier, you carried away with you a distinct memory, a restful reminiscence in a tearful and stormy play; for there was something individual and real in the impression left by Thorne. Many of his characters you remembered as men you had known. I would put his Daniel Rochat in this class. In its intellectual processes "Daniel Rochat" is one of the greatest plays ever written by Sardou. It is not a piece for an ordinary company. In Miss Sara Jewett there was an ideal. In character, feeling, and conviction, she represented the character in Sardou's drama to perfection; and the whole performance left an impression upon such distinguished preachers as Dr. Bellows and Dr. Collier, who communicated to me letters expressing their appreciation of the value of such thoughtful, instructive, and powerful plays. Osip in "The Danicheffs" was a part, somewhat picturesque

in various ways, that was played by Thorne with fine effect. There was a happy co-operation of forces, too, in some of the plays in which he appeared with Clara Morris.

John Strebellow in "The Banker's Daughter," the play that established its author, Bronson Howard, in his career, was one of those fine, dashing, earnest, convincing performances of this excellent actor. Thorne was seen among other pieces in "Mother and Son," "Felicia," "The Wicked World," "The Hunchback," "Ferrol," "Conscience," "Lost Children," "The Creole," etc. His Harold Armitage in "The Lights o' London" was the last piece of brilliant work that he did at the Union Square Theatre, though it was to be seen by the closely observant at that time that his forces were abating.

In the early part of the winter of 1882 Thorne showed a disposition to accept some of the very large offers that were made for his services; and, although he was under contract with me, I concluded to let him venture forth. Devotion to art and fidelity to the management are essentials in a stock company that is to be thoroughly efficient. Thorne had been liberally compensated for these desirable qualities, but with discontent once set in his usefulness was impaired. He accepted the tempting offer made by Manager Stetson, and on Jan. 8, 1883, at Booth's Theatre, appeared in an elaborate revival of "The Corsican Brothers," the dual character of Louis and Fabian di Franchi, requiring considerable exertion.

The effort proved too much for his physical resources. After the second performance he was unable to leave his bed, and the theatre was closed. His

career was ended. He died on March 10, 1883, within one day of completing his forty-third year, leaving behind a more than common personal feeling of regret in the profession; and was borne to his last resting-place with a few words uttered over him by his old comrade, Stuart Robson, and with this message from Robert Ingersoll:—

“A few tears, a few words, a few flowers, are all that the living can give to the dead.”



AGNES BOOTH.

AGNES BOOTH.

BY LEWIS C. STRANG.

AGNES BOOTH, in private life Mrs. John B. Schoeffel, has an indisputable claim on the title, "America's leading lady." I know of no appellation that would bestow on her greater honor, that would imply the possession and practice of a more honest or a wholesomer art, or that would better indicate the affection in which the public that knows her holds her. "Leading lady," taken in its old stock-company sense, signifies that crown-jewel in the player's casket, versatility, the ability to play well many parts; it signifies temperament, personality, individuality; it signifies dramatic technique and brains; it signifies the capacity adequately to comprehend and logically to delineate a character, to diffuse it with sympathy, to make it live by a thousand touches that appeal to common humanity; it signifies the annihilation of mannerisms.

Is this over-praise of an actor whose name is by no means the best known on the theatrical roll-call, and whose power to create and to interpret has been felt by but a small part of the whole number of theatre-lovers? The narrowness of knowledge regarding Mrs. Schoeffel's art is easily explained. She has never been thoroughly inoculated with the starring germ — not-

withstanding that she did try the experiment once about twenty years ago. But, having escaped this rut-begetter, she now stands — unconsciously, let us hope — a representative of the very best that the American stage, at the present time, can show, — “the perfect artist,” that marvellous exponent of histrionic artifice, Coquelin, called her.

Marian Agnes Land Rookes was born in Sydney, Australia, Oct. 4, 1843. Although a native of the island continent and of English parentage, — her father was a captain in the British army, — her dramatic training was distinctly American. Her first appearance on any stage was made in her native city as a dancer, she being the Columbine at the Victoria Theatre. She was then only fourteen years old. On Feb. 9, 1858, she appeared for the first time in America, in San Francisco, under the management of Mrs. John Wood. This engagement was a short one; but she continued in San Francisco as a member of the stock company at Maguire’s Opera House, then the most important Western theatre, until June 17, 1865. Her reputation was firmly established when she was only seventeen years old by a performance of *Hermione* in “*A Winter’s Tale*.” On the eleventh of February, 1861, she married Harry Perry, a popular actor, who died in less than a year. From the time of this marriage, and until she became the wife of Junius Brutus Booth, in 1867, she was billed as Mrs. Agnes Perry. J. B. Booth was a brother of the great tragedian, Edwin Booth; but he was not thoroughly imbued with the family dramatic instinct. He himself vowed that he would rather plough all day than act at night; and Edwin, who heard the remark, sighed, and retorted,

“Yes, every one knows you are a better farmer than you are an actor.”

In the fall of 1865 Mrs. Perry came East ; and after a preliminary engagement at the Winter Garden, New York, then under the management of John S. Clarke, she made her official metropolitan *début* at Niblo's, in support of Edwin Booth. The following January she became a member of the Boston Theatre Company, then one of the great dramatic organizations of the country. There she remained eight years, playing side by side with Frank Mayo and Louis Aldrich, and supporting every star of any prominence in the country. In 1874 Mrs. Booth began a two years' starring engagement, a venture which added much to her reputation. At the end of this time she became identified with the New York theatres, playing special engagements at Booth's Theatre, Niblo's, and the Union Square, until Henry E. Abbey organized, in 1878, his Park Theatre Company, of which Mrs. Booth was the leading lady. Three years later began her connection with A. M. Palmer's Madison Square Theatre Company, a connection which lasted, with the exception of special engagements in Boston and Philadelphia during the season of 1885-1886, until the company was reorganized in 1891, when she left Mr. Palmer's management, and retired for a time from the stage. Junius Brutus Booth died on Sept. 17, 1883 ; and in 1885 Mrs. Booth was married to John B. Schoeffel, the well-known manager.

During her retirement Mrs. Schoeffel went abroad, and studied with considerable thoroughness the theatre in London and Paris. The season of 1895-1896 saw her back in the harness in the leading *rôle* of an out-and-out sensational melodrama, “The Sporting Duchess.”

From this brief sketch of Mrs. Schoeffel's career, an idea of the remarkable completeness of her dramatic experience can be gleaned. To enumerate all the characters which she has played would be almost a never-ending task. Indeed, it is doubtful if the list could be made complete, even by Mrs. Schoeffel herself. Eight years of changing bills in the Californian theatre, eight years of the same thing at the Boston Theatre, and some fifteen years of similar experience in the New York theatres! Think of it! With Edwin Booth in New York in the sixties she made her first appearance as Julie in "Richelieu." Then came Desdemona, Virginia in "Virginius," Ophelia, Marianne in "Jack Cade," Cordelia in "King Lear," Colenthe in "Damon and Pythias," and Julia in "The Gladiator." Writing of these performances, a critic says: "She is one of the finest actresses at present on the American stage. Her features are expressive, and her face full of animation. She is a mistress of stage business, and never misses the points, though she takes them quietly and without apparent intention. She has a great deal of dash, plenty of spirit, a ringing stage laugh, and a voice of singular richness and distinctness." And the same words might equally well be applied to her to-day, only with greater emphasis.

Her engagement at the Boston Theatre began with the making of a great hit as Marco in "The Marble Heart," which character she assumed Jan. 8, 1866, at a benefit to Frank Mayo. Her continued good work, in parts ranging from tragedy to farce, made this first impression a lasting one. After returning to New York, she appeared in Belot's "La Femme de Fey" and "Elaine," following these with a remarkable im-

personation of Constance in "King John." When in August, 1876, Jarrett and Palmer produced at Booth's Theatre the great spectacle founded on Lord Byron's "Sardanapalus," Mrs. Booth as Myrrah was its chief charm. It was a notable production for those days, replete with Oriental splendor and suggestiveness. Then followed another great success for Mrs. Booth in Shakespeare's "Cleopatra," in which she played the Serpent of the Nile.

With the Union Square Theatre Company Mrs. Booth is best remembered as Lady Maggie Wagstaff in "Pink Dominoes," and also for her excellence in "The Celebrated Case." When "Old Love Letters" was produced by the Park Theatre Company, Bronson Howard, the author of the play, was so pleased with her characterization of the widow that he forthwith presented her with the drama. Then followed a capital bit of character acting as Bellinda in Gilbert's "Engaged;" and later, when Bartley Campbell's "Fairfax" was produced, she carried to success a poor play. After the organization of the Madison Square Theatre Company, Mrs. Booth created the parts of Nora in "Esmeralda," Oct. 9, 1881, and of Mrs. Dick in Bronson Howard's "Young Mrs. Winthrop."

It is, however, as Mrs. Ralston in Sir Charles Young's "Jim, the Penman," first played by the Madison Square Theatre Company on Nov. 1, 1886, that the theatre-goers of to-day are wont to connect the name of Agnes Booth. Her powerful acting in this *rôle* did much to reveal the dramatic possibilities in the middle-aged heroine, the woman who knew what it meant to live and to suffer. Previously it had been the young girl around whom the playwright had been

accustomed to centre his appeals to an audience's sympathies. Mrs. Ralston thrust the young girl to that lower plane on which she properly belonged, and not yet has the poor thing had the courage again to climb into the full light of the calcium. In "Jim, the Penman," Mrs. Schoeffel's portrayal of mental suffering, of grief, of misery, and of despair, seemed wonderfully real. It was the height of emotional, not hysterical, acting. To afford a striking example of versatility, one has but to notice the contrast — not contrast, either, complete dissimilarity — between Mrs. Ralston and the character in "The Sporting Duchess," with which Mrs. Schoeffel remade her reputation on her return to the stage. The Duchess of Milford dwelt on that vague line betwixt comedy and burlesque; and Mrs. Schoeffel realized a paradox — she presented a sporting woman who was womanly, a "hail fellow, well met" among men, a frequenter of stables and race-tracks, a female plunger who was not coarse, who never shocked, who was altogether delightful, and who, moreover, was life-like and not a puppet.

Time effaces nothing more quickly or more absolutely than it does the recollection of plays and of acting. If one, in whom theatre-going has been a long practised habit, strives to recall performances which at the time pleased him mightily, he is likely to find that they have faded away. Yet some scenes — hardly scenes, merely moments unusually vivid in impression — have a curious way of sticking. Firmly fixed in my memory is that bit of pantomime with which Agnes Booth brought down the curtain on the little play by Augustus Thomas, "Afterthoughts."

This curtain-raiser, I strongly suspicion, was of little

value in itself ; but in the keeping of Mrs. Booth and Mr. Edward Bell it became wonderfully heart-stirring. It was full of Thomas sentiment, then fresh and new, and not washed out. It told the story of a widow, who loved a man younger than herself, over whom she exerted a great influence. Straight from a quarrel with his sweetheart he came to her, and she had but to tempt him ever so little to win him. She nobly resisted ; and concealing with a smiling face the aching within, she sent him away to that other one whom she knew he loved, and in whom she realized he would find the greater happiness. After the door has closed behind him, and as she listens to the decreasing noise made by his departing carriage, the never-to-be-absent loneliness steals over her with the silence. The smile leaves her lips, and her face is wan and drawn. She shivers ; for the blood, the warm blood of life and joy, seems no longer to flow through her veins, and her heart is as dead. She reaches for her cloak, and wraps its warmth-reviving folds around her. The lighted lamp with its brightness mocks her ; and quickly, almost angrily, she turns it down till it shows but the faintest sparkle. Aimlessly, carelessly, she goes here, there. Her stumbling steps bring her to that favorite chair by the fireside, where she has so often given her thoughts to him ; and, weary, she sinks into its depths. In the flickering firelight her loss of hope is revealed in all its pitifulness. Her despair, at first too overwhelming for tears, at last finds this most merciful outlet. Her sobs, long drawn out, agonizing, one might well believe come from her very soul.

Such is the great art of Agnes Booth.

JAMES H. STODDART.

BY EDWIN FRANCIS EDGETT.

LEFT almost alone among the actors of to-day as the representative of that school of Anglo-American players who for the best part of this century have added to the celebrity of our national stage, James Henry Stoddart stands forth distinctly and eminently as an actor of superior training, of comprehensive artistic intellect, and of sterling renown. His Scotch birth gives him the sturdy, strong foundation for the actor's life; his theatrical ancestry ingrains in him the taste and inclination for the stage, and makes him a veritable man of the theatre; his own inborn and acquired understanding of the dramatic art provides him with the ability to grasp many phases of character, and to interpret them with ideal truth and lifelikeness. Now that Frederic Robinson has returned to his native country, Mr. Stoddart is left with us as the only old-time British actor of note whose adopted home is the American theatre. Davidge, Fisher, Wheatleigh, among his contemporaries, are all gone; but fortunately a new generation is coming to the fore to take their places.

Mr. Stoddart was born at Barnsley, in Yorkshire, on Oct. 13, 1827, his father being a well-known actor of the same name, and for twenty years a distinguished



J. H. STODDART.

member of the stock company of the Theatre Royal in Glasgow. Brought up in the theatrical atmosphere, young Stoddart was educated at Glasgow, and is said to have made his first appearance on the stage in his sixth year. But he did not adopt the stage for good and all until he was seventeen, when he obtained an engagement in Aberdeen with a stock company. Remaining there for four years, he became a member of the Liverpool Theatre Company for the subsequent five years, and then, following in the footsteps of many another player, came to this country in search of wider fame and adequate remuneration. His career here begins in 1852, at Wallack's Theatre in New York, and is carried down to the present day through a series of engagements under the management of Laura Keane, Dion Boucicault, Mrs. John Wood, with A. M. Palmer's companies successively at the Union Square, the Madison Square, and Palmer's Theatres, and, last of all, with Charles Frohman's various theatrical enterprises. As Mr. Palmer's company made annual tours through the larger cities of the United States, Mr. Stoddart became widely known as an accomplished and versatile actor.

During his more than forty years on the American stage, Mr. Stoddart has seen, and has himself been a part of, the vast change in the current of our drama. Not excepting a brief starring tour in 1873, his energies have always been devoted to the perfection of the details of a play produced and acted according to the stock-company methods; and he has never sought to make himself of any more prominence, nor considered his part of any greater value, than its relation to the entire play warranted. In the midst of the growth of the star system, he has remained pre-eminently a stock-

company actor. He has grown artistically, but at the same time has remained unchanged in his retiring temperament from the day when he first trod the American stage in a small character in the once familiar farce of "A Phenomenon in a Smock Frock," till the season of 1895-1896, when his creation of the old trainer in "The Sporting Duchess" was the one oasis in an extraordinarily meretricious play. His early triumphs were the triumphs of those old comedies and farces whose only present function, with a few exceptions like "The Rivals," "The School for Scandal," "She Stoops to Conquer," "The Heir at Law," and "Wild Oats," is to cumber the shelves of our libraries, and give the dramatic student a rest from the hurly-burly of our modern drama. He took part in the successful Boucicault melodramas, not the least of his achievements being his acting of Moneypenny in "The Long Strike," and was a leading figure in those rapidly dying, if not already dead, adaptations of "Rose Michel," "The Danicheffs," "Daniel Rochat," and a dozen and more English versions of the reigning Paris sensations.

In later years he has found a prominent place in the modern drama of both English and American growth. His Jacob Fletcher, in Henry Arthur Jones's "Saints and Sinners," will always be remembered for its downright humanity, its sturdy integrity, and its homely and beautiful pathos, dignifying a conventional drama of seduction into something approaching dramatic worth. His Colonel Preston in Augustus Thomas's "Alabama," helped the deserved success of that idyl of the South; and he has contributed more than he himself appreciates to the popularity of the modern plays presented during his service with Palmer's company.



MAURICE BARRYMORE.

MAURICE BARRYMORE.

BY EDWARD FALES COWARD.

MAGNETISM is as essential a quality in the make-up of a successful actor as the possession of genuine talent. Without that indefinable quality that establishes a bond of interest between player and auditor, the most carefully prepared effort fails in its effect; and what should stir and intrall only gives satisfaction to those who peer beneath the result and study the methods.

The history of the stage shows that the great actors were and are sympathetic ones. The shining lights of the past were those who moved by the warmth of their personalities; and the actors of the present day who stand at the top of their profession are players whose individualities attract and please. There have been many scholarly actors, whose intelligence and application have won them much favorable criticism and approval; but in lacking that interest-compelling attribute, they have failed to reach that place in the public regard which is usually the reward of superior excellence.

The sympathetic actor is one who plays from the heart and soul. It is he who moves the great public, while the man playing from the head can only hope

to excite the appreciation of those who study the drama for its intellectual significance. The measured, studied school yields more and more each year to the realistic demands of the nineteenth century, and those who would be public favorites must conform strictly to the requirements of the times.

Few actors on the American stage of to-day have a larger personal following than Maurice Barrymore. The subject of this sketch was born in Cline, England. His father was a clergyman, and he himself was for a time at Cambridge; but a leaning toward the stage soon drew him hence, and he became an actor. Few women like to have their ages known, and it would seem almost only fair that leading men should be exempt from a too absolute record of days and years. Mr. Barrymore is of an interesting age, not too old to have lost the enthusiasm of youth, and not too young not to thoroughly understand all the emotions he is called on to express.

He made his American *début* at the Boston Theatre on Jan. 23, 1875, as Captain Molyneux in "The Shaughraun," a part well fitted to his gallant bearing and manly force. On Dec. 31, 1876, he became related to one of the most distinguished American theatrical families, when he married Georgiana Drew, daughter of Mrs. John Drew of Philadelphia. Mr. Barrymore was a member of Mr. Augustin Daly's company at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Twenty-eighth Street during the long and memorable run of "Pique." In 1879 he travelled with a carefully selected company in "Diplomacy," when at Marshall, Texas, one of its members, Benjamin Porter, was shot and killed at the railroad station by James Curry, a noted Texan desperado. Barrymore himself was severely wounded.

He played Captain Absolute with Joseph Jefferson when that actor first brought out his reconstructed version of "The Rivals," and later acted all the leading rôles in Madame Modjeska's varied and comprehensive *répertoire*.

On Feb. 8, 1884, an original play by him, entitled "Nadjesda," was produced by Modjeska in Baltimore, and three days later it was heard for the first time in New York. It was subsequently produced in London, where Barrymore remained for two years at the Haymarket, and where he won golden opinions for his work as Louis Percival in "Jim the Penman," and Count Orloff in "Diplomacy." On Sept. 19, 1887, he became leading man with Mrs. Langtry, appearing as Jack Fortinbras in "As in a Looking Glass," and Captain Bradford in "A Wife's Peril." A misunderstanding soon followed between him and the star, and the engagement was broken. For a season he played Lagardere in "The Duke's Motto," and then again appeared as leading man with Modjeska. Bill Lewis, in Augustus Thomas's play, "The Burglar," and Colonel Prescott, in "Held by the Enemy," were parts he was subsequently seen in. His next move was to join A. M. Palmer's company; and under that management he acted the title rôle in "Captain Swift," Captain Bradley in Thomas's "Man of the World," Mark Denzil in "Sunlight and Shadow," Lord Helmore in "The Pharisee," and Captain Davenport in "Alabama." In the fall of 1890 a starring tour was projected. "Reckless Temple," the play in which he appeared, proved a failure; and for lack of a suitable drama Mr. Barrymore once more resumed his relations with Mr. Palmer's organization, playing Fitzpatrick in "Colonel Carter,"

a dramatization of F. Hopkinson Smith's story; Lord Darlington in "Lady Windermere's Fan," by Oscar Wilde; and the dashing Captain Laboissiere in Thomas Bailey Aldrich's poetic tragedy, "Mercedes."

During the season of 1893 and 1894 Mr. Barrymore played leading *rôles* with Mrs. Bernard Beere during her short American engagement; acted Jefferson Stockton in a road tour of "Aristocracy;" created in America the *rôle* of Lord Illingworth in Rose Coghlan's production of "A Woman of No Importance," by Oscar Wilde; supported Katherine Clemmons in her two ill-starred productions of "A Lady of Venice" and "Mrs. Dascot;" and later created one of the principal *rôles* in Augustus Thomas's American play, "New Blood."

In the fall of 1894 Mr. Barrymore became associated with Olga Nethersole, supporting that talented actress in "The Transgressor," "Camille," "Frou-Frou," and "Romeo and Juliet," until the close of her first American tour, when he went to Philadelphia to create the leading *rôle* in William Gillette's comedy drama of the Civil War, "Secret Service." A still later part assumed by him was Captain Alan Kendrick in David Belasco's stirring war drama, "The Heart of Maryland."

Of the parts which he acted with Modjeska, the better-known ones are: Mortimer, "Mary Stuart;" Armand Duval, "Camille;" Maurice de Saxe, "Adrienne Lecouvreur;" Orsino, "Twelfth Night;" Orlando, "As You Like It;" Romeo, "Romeo and Juliet;" and the leading heroic *rôle* in "The Chouans."

Mr. Barrymore is a very popular actor. His admirers are legion; but, like all men with a wide following,

he faces those who do not share the opinion of the multitude. To judge him by much of his past work, his dearest friend must admit that he often fails to do what might naturally be expected of a man of his talents and intelligence. Probably there is no actor on the stage to-day who is so variable in his work as he is. He has moments of great power, when he conclusively proves that he has it in him, — the power to achieve wonderful results; but the next moment a carelessness and indifference will creep in that mar utterly the recollection of his previous achievements.

Mr. Barrymore has been signally favored by nature. He has a superb physique, an expressive eye, a well-modulated voice, and a face of great classical beauty. In addition, he possesses charm, intelligence, poetical sensibility, a virile force, and magnetism. And yet with all these inherent qualities of such great importance, it cannot be denied that he disappoints at times. It is not that he has been carried away by too much praise; for, in spite of all the adulation he has received, he is extremely modest. The apparent want of sincerity which occasionally asserts itself is not lack of soul, but seems rather a want of constant ambition, a lack of applied artistic purpose, which, after all, are essential requirements in a great player.

True art is an exacting mistress, and cannot be slighted. She demands the best that is in a man, and insists that he shall always put forth his greatest endeavors; but he must himself provide the spur, and when he fails to live up to her requirements, when he shows a lack of interest in his work, the loss of effect is at once seen in the result. With Mr. Barrymore's talents and physical advantages, he has no one to blame

but himself if he does not always stand in the front rank of leading men. He has demonstrated time and again his ability to perform certain *rôles* in a way that leaves little to be desired; and when he is in the humor few actors can hope to equal him in his particular line of theatrical work.

The parts best associated with his reputation are Orlando and Captain Swift. These two impersonations are performances of great strength and beauty; and, had he done nothing else, they would still entitle him to a high place in histrionic ranks.

Few actors known to modern theatre-goers better realize the hero of Shakespeare's delightful comedy than does Mr. Barrymore. His muscular figure, manly force, and romantic bearing make his Orlando an ideal one from a physical standpoint; while his poetical temperament and hearty warmth of manner easily account for the love he inspired in Rosalind at first sight.

He awakens interest at the very start. His impassioned recital of the wrongs to which he has been subjected by his brother wins instant sympathy. His gentle treatment of the faithful old servitor, Adam, displays tenderness which one sees at once is spontaneous; and in the scene with the wrestler, Charles, his manly but modest bearing stamps his impersonation with a masculinity delightful to witness. His raillery of the melancholy Jaques shows a keen appreciation of humor, which is most happily borne out when he agrees to Rosalind's proposition, and becomes her pupil in the art of love. His kindly treatment of his youthful preceptor is most touchingly expressed, while the words showing the depth of his passion for the fair Rosalind are spoken with an earnestness and feeling that come

directly from the heart. There is nothing mawkish in his sentiment ; it is honest and manly, and therein lies the secret of his success in this attractive part.

As Captain Swift, in the title *rôle* of Haddon Chambers's powerful and realistic play, he finds a splendid medium for the display of his emotional powers. Had the part been written for him it could not have fitted him better, and no *rôle* he has of late been called upon to play has so thoroughly brought out the sterling qualities of his art. Although Swift in Australia was nothing more nor less than a highwayman, who robbed, probably, because it was easier to do that than to work, Mr. Barrymore invested the part with a romanticism that caused one to overlook the real weakness of the man. One pardoned his rascalities because one felt that they were the natural outcome of an impulsive nature. Then, too, one felt assured that, no matter how mean the act might have been, it was surely accomplished with a courteousness and grace that made it rather an honor to be singled out by such a dashing knight of the road.

All this Mr. Barrymore suggested by his looks, manner, and bearing. It showed an ability to represent character by the subtlest methods of an actor's art. Swift's honorable ambition to break away from his criminal past was nobly expressed ; and one watched with breathless interest his gallant, but futile, struggle to win anew a place in society. His scene with the revengeful butler showed the fiery spirit that dwelt within the calm exterior ; and when at length, despite all his praiseworthy efforts to reform, prison-walls stared him in the face, one felt that fate had robbed the world of a noble but misguided soul, as the sound of the pistol-shot told his tragic end.

Of course due praise must be given to Mr. Chambers for the masterly way in which he sketched the *rôle* of Swift; but it was the genius of a true artist that made it real and human, and that Mr. Barrymore most certainly did. It was throughout a most evenly balanced delineation of character, strong in color, perfect in poise, and sustained in its power and beauty.

These two parts well display the breadth of his powers. Of his other *rôles* it need only be said that his Count Orloff, in "Diplomacy," was highly praised in London for its reserved strength; that his Lagardere, in "The Duke's Motto," is a fine study of the romantic school; that his Jack Fortinbras, in "As in a Looking-Glass," is a splended realization of that happy-go-lucky but contemptible blackguard; and that his Romeo is spirited, picturesque, and Shakespearian.

Mr. Barrymore's first wife, that talented comedienne, Georgie Drew Barrymore, died in California of consumption, in the summer of 1893. His present wife is Marie Floyd, daughter of the late W. R. Floyd, for years a member of the old Wallack stock company.

Besides being an actor, Mr. Barrymore is also an author. "Nadjesda," a Russian emotional play, was accepted by the critics as a well-constructed drama of strong, moving interest. "The Don," which was acted in Chicago, though not altogether a success, was praised for the excellent writing it contained. But it is as an actor that Mr. Barrymore shines, and as such he has given unbounded pleasure to thousands. With his splendid talents and noble presence, it is only a question of time when he will attain even greater eminence.



ROSE COGLAN.

ROSE COGHLAN.

BY FREDERIC EDWARD MCKAY.

THE first time I heard Rose Coghlan's voice, it seemed to me the Æolian harp had been vivified. Ever since, when tired by the din of the town, I have let my ears be soothed by her mellifluous vocalism.

I can think of no player upon our stage that can delineate with more power and finesse than can she the subtle feminine emotions, whether good or evil. I should call her the most effective stage exponent, at the present time, of "The Woman at Bay."

However lingering in our memory are her Peg Woffington and her Lady Teazle, their effervescing coquetry subcharged with tenderness and pathos, it is her Stephanie and her Countess Zicka that stand out as commanding officers, so to speak, of her battalion of parts.

Stephanie and Zicka, I take it, are the most trenchantly conceived and vitally swayed of any of the so-called Adventuresses of the standard drama. It is by Miss Coghlan's innumerable suggestive intimations that there are gentle impulses imprisoned within the hardened crusts contact with the world has forced around the characters of these unfortunate women; it is by the at first defiant and finally pleading duel of

words between Stephanie and Horace Welby, and Zicka and Julian Beauclerc; it is by the wail of anguish that escapes from the actress immersed in these rôles, — that Miss Coghlan commands her unique and high position in the uneven field of action of the theatre. Nor should I neglect to mention, in this connection, her superb performance of Esther Eccles in "Caste," in which, when last I saw her play it, the capital heightening of effect that may be given to a rôle by the sympathetic performance of a companion character was nicely indicated by Florence Gerard's (Mrs. Henry E. Abbey's) delightfully buoyant and adroit rendering of Polly.

It is the fashion here, in considering the stage, to forget an old for a new favorite at the drop of the hat. Note the elevation of Duse, whom we have known three years, above Bernhardt, who for sixteen years has held us in the hollow of her art. It is therefore especially pleasant to chronicle that, in the case of Miss Coghlan, this fashion has not obtained. Excepting Adelaide Neilson, no actress from across the Atlantic has crept farther into our hearts or remained there longer than has she. The United States has never loved another English actor as it loved Harry Montague, nor another English actress as it has Rose Coghlan, the wide-eyed, velvet-voiced, caressing, fascinating, divinely smiling. Eight or nine seasons ago, at what is now Palmer's Theatre, when she was thirty odd years of age, and appeared in "Moths," you marvelled, I presume, that she looked not fifteen minutes older than eighteen. When she presented herself as Zicka in "Diplomacy," you wondered why such a creature had escaped the morganatic fancy of a king. You

saw her on the first night, perhaps, of "Forget-Me-Not," at Wallack's old Thirteenth Street Theatre, and months afterwards you wondered why the play was not written for her instead of for Genevieve Ward.

Tilly Price at the Court Theatre, London, when she was a snip of a girl, in 1870, in a dramatization of "Nicholas Nickleby," was Miss Coghlan's first performance that got within the favor of the public. She was then seventeen, having been born in 1853, in Peterboro, England. She took to the stage most naturally. Her father, the late Francis Coghlan, Esquire, was a journalist and a litterateur of ability enough to be within the circle composed of John Delaine, Frederick Greenwood, Bulwer Lytton, Charles Reade, John Forester, and Charles Dickens. He was the founder of "Coghlan's Continental Dispatch," and of "Coghlan's Continental Guides;" but I think we are indebted to him for Rose and for her brilliant brother Charles more than for those publications. And let me add here a word about Charles Coghlan; for he is far and away the best actor of rôles calling for *savoir faire*, aplomb, and nonchalance, that has stepped upon the stage since Lester Wallack. It was in 1875, I believe, that Augustin Daly imported Charles from the Strand to Broadway to stem the tide that flowed every night and every matinee toward Wallack's, where Rose Coghlan and Harry Montague were playing opposite to each other.

We must thank Charles for the Rose we know. Or, to be precise, let us say that it was Charles Coghlan's first wife who was responsible for Rose's becoming an actress, since that lady was on the stage when Charles, then a lawyer, married her; and inasmuch as Mrs. Coghlan had shown him the way through the stage-

door, I presume he thought turn about fair play, and beckoned his sister in the same direction. At any rate, it is proper to say here that Miss Coghlan's decision to turn actress was the cause of much terror to her deeply religious mother, who had intended Rose for a nunnery.

(In strict parenthesis, I should like to ask what proportion, if any, of our players was not intended originally for either the priesthood or the convent? If you will point out to me a child intended by its parents for one of these destinations, I will point out to you at the same time the future Thespian.)

After a brief season of performances upon the amateur stage, through which she seems to have passed without injury, Miss Coghlan made her professional *début* at Greenwich, Scotland. She was one of the witches in "Macbeth." That is not a character of much opportunity, but in this case it made an excellent springboard, for two years afterward we find that she had leaped into the *rôle* of Lady Macbeth herself; and we are told that, young as she was, she invested the character of the bloody-handed wife of the bloody-souled Scot with a very considerable amount of dastardly significance.

In those days Miss Coghlan revelled in boys' parts. She could play Nicholas Nickleby or Smike as well as she could Tilly Price. In those days, too, she could sing like John Keats's Nightingale. After her hit as Tilly, she supported in turn Adelaide Neilson and John L. Toole. She was with Toole a year; and it was while she was playing with him that E. A. Sothern saw her, liked her, and brought her to the United States. Let it be quite clear, therefore, that we owe

Sothorn a double debt of gratitude; for if it had not been for him, we might possibly never have seen Rose Coghlan in this hemisphere, and would certainly never have seen E. H. Sothorn.

Miss Coghlan's first appearance in this country was in the dramatization of Wilkie Collins's "The Woman in White." The date was 1871. The piece was not a success, and then Rose joined the Lydia Thompson Burlesque Company. Her statuesque photographs as a boy in "Ixion" I have chanced upon in the photograph collections of Everett Wendell. Bored by burlesque, however, Miss Coghlan accepted from Mr. Wallack the then royal salary of seventy-five dollars a week, and made a pronounced success in Thayre Smith's one-act comedy, "A Happy Pair." She played several other light-comedy parts at Wallack's before returning in 1873 to England. In London she was especially engaged to support Charles Mathews in Foote's "The Liar." After pleasing Londoners in the *rôle* of Miss Grantham in that comedy, she was engaged for a series of rather pretentious Shakespearian revivals at the Princess's Theatre, Manchester. There she played Viola in "Twelfth Night" more than two hundred consecutive times. That in itself speaks eloquently for her rare development, even then, in her art. Barry Sullivan was the star. She finally left Mr. Barry Sullivan, — feeling intuitively maybe that the future held in store for her Mr. John T. Sullivan, whom she married while he was professionally associated with her as "leading man," — and returned again to London.

If you had dropped into the St. James Theatre during the next four hundred nights, you would have seen her as Lady Manden, one of her most noteworthy imper-

sonations, in "All For Her." During this long run she had a capital opportunity to study, whereas with Barry Sullivan she had to play in one season sixteen leading parts. While at the St. James she read the works of every dramatist, from Marlowe, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, Racine, Molière, Congreve, Wycherly, Otway, Sheridan, Foote, Goldsmith, to Boucicault, Tom Taylor, Tom Robertson, and H. J. Byron. Study was her delight then, as it is to-day; and Rose Coghlan at this stage of her career thinks that her life would have been happier in a country house surrounded by those she cares for than in the incessant glare and glitter of the play-house.

Her hit in "All for Her" was as gratifying as her hit the season before in "East Lynne." "All for Her," by the way, was written by Herman Merivale, the author subsequently of "Forget-Me-Not," the play that did more than any other in which she has been seen to put her in the front rank. News of her performance in "All for Her" reached Lester Wallack, and he cabled her to come over to his theatre again. At that time her brother Charles was leading man at Wallack's. It was then, too, that she made her part of Clarisse Harlowe, in the play of that name by Boucicault, the uniquely successful feature of a piece that was about as dull and objectionable as Richardson's novel of the same title.

After a short, sharp, and decisive engagement at Wallack's, Miss Coghlan went to San Francisco. The Californians took to her at once; and she has been ever since a great favorite west of the Rockies, in spite of the fact that others indorsed in the East have not shared a similar fortune.

Upon her return to New York she appeared at Booth's Theatre, in another doleful drama by Boucicault, called "The Rescue." It was during that engagement, by the way, that Boucicault appeared as Louis XI. with a ripe and rich Dublin accent. From Booth's and Boucicault was but a step back to Wallack's. She took it, and it was one of the happiest of her life. The first part she played there was Stephanie in "Forget-Me-Not," with Osmond Tearle as Horace Welby. That was the hit of her career. If ever a house was electrified, it was on that first night of that fine play of cross-purposes and flashing sallies. The next day Rose Coghlan was the talk of two towns, New York and London. In the latter city Genevieve Ward overheard the talk; and as the play was her property, she got out an injunction restraining Mr. Wallack from presenting it. Then she came over and staged it at the theatre in New York then called the Fifth Avenue. The public, however, was indifferent to Miss Ward's conscientious work. It wanted Rose Coghlan; and as it could not have her in that particular play, it carefully stayed away from Miss Ward.

After "Forget-Me-Not," Rose Coghlan appeared at Wallack's in "La Belle Russe," a palpable imitation of "Forget-Me-Not," in which she had nothing to do but originate the principal part. Then followed a long line of successes, notably in "The World," "A Scrap of Paper," "Youth," "The Silver King," "The Lyons Mail," "Moths," and "Lady Clare," as well as impersonations which took fast hold upon New York theatre-goers in many of the old comedy revivals at Wallack's in those golden days of art in theatrical New York — days which came to a close when the final curtain was

dropped on the Wallack Theatre Stock Company, which during its last two seasons was under the direction of Henry E. Abbey. The last play performed by that famous organization at Wallack's (May 5, 1888) was "The School for Scandal," in which Miss Coghlan, of course, appeared as Lady Teazle.

Shortly after Mr. Abbey assumed the management of the company Miss Coghlan left it to star under the direction of Augustus Pitou; but as Charles Coghlan's play, "Jocelyn," was not finished for her on scheduled time, she returned to Wallack's for a short engagement. On April 7, 1885, "Our Joan," written by Merivale and Dale, was produced at Wallack's. Rose Coghlan appeared in the title *rôle*, and the piece was quite a success. Then she went starring in "Jocelyn," "Lady Barter," "Princess Olga," and "The Idol of the Hour." During her engagement at the Union Square Theatre in 1887 she appeared as Lady Gay Spanker, Peg Woffington and Rosalind, Zicka in "Diplomacy," and Stephanie in "Forget-Me-Not."

I should not neglect to mention here that she was cast for the *rôle* of the Player Queen in the all-star production of "Hamlet" at the Metropolitan Opera House, on May 21, 1888, in honor of the retirement from the stage of Lester Wallack. Suzanne in "A Scrap of Paper" seems to be her favorite part; but the public, I surmise, would rather see her Lady Teazle or her Peg Woffington, and I think it would go farthest of all, as I have intimated, to witness her Zicka or her Stephanie.

Consider her marvellous range! From Tilly Price to Stephanie! From Smike to Lady Macbeth!

After this Miss Coghlan deviated unfortunately into

the realm of flippant and frippery farcial comedy. I need merely mention "Dorothy's Dilemma." She was actuated by the belief that the public wanted only that kind of piece. She was fortunately mistaken, and found out that fact. The next play worth mentioning in which she appeared was Oscar Wilde's "A Woman of No Importance." It would have been a success if good acting by a splendid company could have made it so, for the star never sought to shine by contrast. But "A Woman of No Importance" was not an acting play; it was a magazine article; and even the patching and tinkering of the intellectual and ingenious Charles Coghlan, who was co-starring with his sister at that time, could not dramatize it.

"Nemesis" was not a success; nor could Duse, Bernhardt, Ristori, Rachel, and Rose Coghlan rolled into one have made it so. In Charles Coghlan's "Madame," which Miss Coghlan has produced at Palmer's Theatre, we see her impersonating a *rôle* that is a half-sister, as it were, of Stephanie and Zicka, — a woman loving a man that loves a younger and less worldly woman, and who compels a thoroughly unselfish interest in the hero's welfare to dominate her.

To sum up, as I have heard it said: —

Rose Coghlan's successes have not been accidents. She has climbed from the lowest to the highest round of the histrionic ladder, not in one night, but in twenty-six long years of the hardest work. I have yet to see her in a part she has not impregnated with throbbing humanity. Her simulated passion seems unforced. With unusual skill she gives to premeditated speech and action the semblance of spontaneity. Her voice is music, her use of the English language is impeccable,

her figure is symmetrical, her movements have a grace that is almost leonine, and her face is of that rare kind that is as charming when convulsed with grief as when radiant with joy.

Rose Coghlan portrays love as if her heart were on her lips ; grief, as if she had just lost her dearest friend ; anxiety, as if life or death hung upon the next moment ; and jealousy, as if she were the reincarnation of Othello's foster-sister.

When she drops from among the stars, the theatrical firmament will indeed be in mourning ; and innumerable opera-glasses, levelled for a long time by the amateur, as well as the professional, astrologer in the stalls, will be put back indefinitely in their cases.

For after the beam of a Venus, one is not content with a shimmer of the Milky-Way.



W. J. LE MOYNE.

WILLIAM J. LE MOYNE.

BY WILLIAM F. GILCHREST.

THERE are certain *rôles* in theatrical representations that are comparatively easy to play. Such characters as Romeo, Charles Surface, Don Cæsar de Bazan, and the like, while they require a certain amount of dramatic ability, even genius, are nevertheless greatly aided by the surroundings and the situation, enlisting as they do the sympathy of an audience at once.

There is a gradual ascent from these to the more difficult characters, these that require a vast amount of genius to be properly presented, and which are opposed in sentiment to the good graces of mankind.

But to my mind the most difficult line in the entire list is that of the character actor. Here the man, if he is true to his art, and if he desires to properly present his part with the unities preserved, must forget self, must sink his identity in the character he portrays, and, if it be necessary, he must make himself actually repulsive to his audience.

This is not a pleasant thing to do. While in a *rôle* that requires only good looks and a handsome costume many an actor may win success, it is quite another thing to appear in a part that can only be portrayed in a style that is the very reverse of the former. Hence

we find few actors of character parts; they prefer to appear in a *rôle* that wins sympathy and applause.

Now, an actor who really loves his art is apt to prefer the "character" rather than the romantic part. He sees that in his chosen line there is abundant opportunity to display his talent as an actor, and his ability in the line of "making up."

In the list of Americans who fret their fitful hour upon the stage, William J. Le Moyne has few equals, and I feel certain he has no superior, as a character actor. Those people who know him well as an actor find much to admire in the various personations of this artist, who hides his identity completely by his admirable method of "making up."

Mr. Le Moyne is a devoted student in his chosen profession, and at the present time he is at the height of his dramatic career. No easy task has it been. Born in a period when there were giants of the profession on the stage,—Forrest, Burton, Wallack senior, the Placides, and William Warren,—he found no opportunity to thrust himself into a prominent position, as many an actor of a later day has done. He was content, perforce, to begin on the traditional "first round" of the theatrical ladder. His first appearance was not made in the presence of a house well filled with admiring friends, nor was he overwhelmed with floral tributes. The newspapers of that period did not contain, on the morning after his *début*, lavish praise on his performance, written by callow youths whose judgment of an actor's capabilities was circumscribed by an experience with society plays. As a matter of fact, the newspapers did not contain one word relative to his rendition of one of the officers in "The Lady of Lyons."

There was a long and weary road before the young and ambitious actor. But he was not dismayed. He was in good company, and with an unusual amount of good sense he was content to learn something of the dramatic art from his superiors.

William J. Le Moyne was born in the city of Boston sixty odd years ago; and he made his first professional appearance in 1852, in "The Lady of Lyons," as I have already stated. His *début* was at Portland, Me. He had previously been known in the amateur ranks.

When the great Civil War broke out, he went to the front with the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts Volunteers, as first lieutenant in a company of which Lawrence Barrett was the captain. Mr. Barrett soon resigned, and Mr. Le Moyne was advanced to the vacant position. He was as good a soldier as he had been an actor. At the battle of South Mountain he was severely wounded, and the war closed before he fully recovered.

After a successful career in his native city, he came to that Mecca of all professional men, New York; and during two seasons, 1871-1872 and 1872-1873, he was in Daly's company. His finished portrayal of every character he appeared in attracted attention, as the newspapers of those years attest. Five years later, in 1877, he was a member of that talented band of actors that made the Union Square Theatre famous throughout the United States. He held a prominent position, and was known to New York people so well that they were not content, when he left that theatre, until he was once more settled in the metropolis, at the Lyceum Theatre.

Mr. Le Moyne has, in his time, "played many

parts," from grave to gay. He is equally at home in characters of "the old school" and in modern drama. Nothing could be farther apart, from a dramatic standpoint, than Sir Peter Teazle and Wormwood in "The Lottery Ticket;" yet the stately Sir Peter and the cranky old Wormwood were each rendered in a manner to commend themselves to the public. In many plays Mr. Le Moyne has also played many parts, for he rose by degrees. For instance, in "The School for Scandal," he has played, at different times, Snake, Careless, Rowley, Moses, Crabtree, Sir Oliver, and Sir Peter. What could be more diverse? Yet each part evoked favorable criticism. So, in like manner, he has played through the casts of nearly all the standard plays.

One of Mr. Le Moyne's characteristics is fidelity. This does not refer merely to his acting, it applies to his make-up. He sinks self; and the bluff, nervous Major Putnam, in "The Wife," is as distinct from, for instance, his Sleek, in "The Serious Family," as though the parts were played by different men.

And all his acting is marked by conscientious work and faithful detail. In stage "business" he is unsurpassed, a fact that has been commented upon time and again. In old comedy, Mr. Le Moyne is, perhaps, at his best; his early schooling in stage work has fitted him for this. He has all the old-time grace of a day that has long since departed, but his keen insight has prevented him from becoming a "Jeremiah" to mourn over "old times" and old-time methods. He has advanced with the times, kept pace, as it were; and on the methods that once prevailed he has grafted the methods of the modern days, and so nicely has it been done that it forms one harmonious whole. This, after

all, is one of the principal reasons why he can play in modern comedy with all the grace and subtlety of a past generation. He is one of the few remaining artists of a school of acting that never again will be, when its present exponents have made their final exit.

Among the hits that Mr. Le Moyne has made are : Sir Harcourt Courtley in "London Assurance;" Captain Cuttle in "Dombey and Son;" Uriah Heep in "Little Em'ly," one of the best pieces of character acting on the boards, equal to Mr. Le Moyne's Squeers in "Nicholas Nickleby;" Moustu in "Broken Hearts;" Sir Anthony in "The Rivals," a character in which he stands without a peer; Silky in "The Road to Ruin;" Solon Shingle in "The People's Lawyer;" Paul Pry; Jesse Rural in "Old Heads and Young Hearts," a lovable personation; Quilp in "The Old Curiosity Shop;" Fagin in "Oliver Twist;" The Baron in "Jim the Penman;" Mr. Symperson in "Engaged;" Bonham Sheviot in "The Highest Bidder;" Haggard in "Saints and Sinners;" Dominic Sampson in "Guy Mannerling;" and Gaffer Kingsley in "Squire Kate." This *rôle* of the old miser, Gaffer Kingsley, is one that gives Mr. Le Moyne an opportunity to develop his special characteristics; and he has done so to the delight of his auditors and to the satisfaction of the critics, who were unanimous in praise of his work.

Past threescore years of age, this actor belies old time, for he has all the appearance of a man of fifty. Genial and generous, he has a host of friends; and he stands as a living example to the younger generation of actors of the advantage of not being a man-about-town. His mode of life and his methods of

acting alike commend themselves to younger professionals, who may study both to their great advantage.

When I asked Mr. Le Moyne which of the many characters that he had appeared in he liked best, he admitted frankly that he could not tell. He said that he preferred a part in which comedy and pathos were mingled.

It has been said by a writer that there was only one true method of judging a man, and that was by his home life. Taking that as a standard, I believe that this actor is as excellent in his home as he is on the stage. Of the old school, he is not one of that class that constantly prates of the superiority of the past, and he has none of the severe ways of the old time. He combines the actor and the gentleman in his person, and his pleasant and beautiful home is filled with everything that betokens a man of culture.

In the midst of a busy career he has found time to indulge in a desire for painting in water colors, and many of his pictures that grace the walls of his cosy home are worthy of high praise. While not a book-worm, Mr. Le Moyne has a passion for old books, and on his library shelves are volumes that would command high prices, picked up here and there in old book-stores.

In fact, everything about his home shows the artistic taste of its owner. There are pictures of Chinese actors, rare plaques, pipes of all sizes from many lands, a whale's tooth from Nantucket and an idol from a Chinese temple, shoes that were worn by dainty feet a century ago and sabots made by the Swedes of the northwest, statuettes from Mexico and ornaments from Japan, beautiful examples of noted American

painters, an autograph letter from that prig of literary men, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, and last, but not least as regards numbers, horseshoes in infinite variety, one of which Mr. Le Moyne considers almost a "mascot." He found it on a Friday, on Thirteenth Street, with seven nails intact.

One of the most pleasant features of the Le Moyne home is the lady who presides over it, Mrs. Sarah Cowell Le Moyne, the well-known reader, who serves to adorn the pleasant rooms with her cheerful presence.

EDMUND MILTON HOLLAND.

BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

THE evolution of a perfected comedian's talent is always matter of interesting study and useful record. When its result appears before us, — living, breathing, full of charm, and potent with illusion, — how many of us even think of going back to the origin and growth of the individual performer's skill? How few appreciate the infinite pains, the acute observation, the steady patience and loyal service, that have formed the groundwork of that success? One of the chief values in the memoirs of actors is the lesson quietly enforced by them that genuine and enduring quality in histrionic art is based on small beginnings, and matures by unobtrusive effort long applied. The best actor in any kind does not burst upon our vision as a star just created, complete. He has been there a long time, shining modestly in the theatrical firmament, only we did not at first perceive him. Perhaps the fault was with our eyes; or perhaps his ray was slowly gathering power, and had not yet reached us.

In the "Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson," which is itself an illustration of a great actor's gradual growth, occurs a short account of a pathetic, yet beautiful, episode now famous in the story of American theatri-



E. M. HOLLAND

cal experience ; that is, the funeral of George Holland. "Upon the announcement of the death of George Holland," writes Mr. Jefferson, "I called at the house of his family and found them in great grief. The sister of Mr. Holland informed me that they desired the funeral to take place from the church. . . . I at once started in quest of the minister, taking one of the sons of Mr. Holland with me. . . . Something gave me the impression that I had best mention that Mr. Holland was an actor. I did so in a few words, and concluded by presuming that probably this fact would make no difference. I saw, however, by the restrained manner of the minister that it would make, at least to him, a great deal of difference. After some hesitation, he said that, if Mr. Holland had been an actor, he would be compelled to decline holding the service at the church. While his refusal would have shocked under ordinary circumstances, the fact that it was made in the presence of the dead man's son was more painful than I can describe. I turned to look at the youth, and saw that his eyes were filled with tears. He stood as one dazed with a blow just realized."

Mr. Jefferson then asked the minister whether he could suggest some church where the ceremony might be performed. "He replied that 'there was a little church around the corner' where I might get it done. 'Then, if that be so, God bless the little church around the corner,' said I. The minister had unwittingly performed an important christening; and his baptismal name, 'The Little Church around the Corner,' clings to it to this day."

It is the second son of this George Holland who is the subject of the present sketch. His name — pleas-

antly combining a suggestion of Edmund Spenser and the great Puritan poet of England—is Edmund Milton Holland. He was born in the city of New York, Sept. 7, 1848. Educated in the public schools there, he passed, when only fifteen years old, from the formal training of the pupils' bench in recitation-rooms to that other school of the *coulisses*, that world "behind the scenes," which is the college most needful to the bright lad who means to be an actor. It is, however, a college where the difference between the regular curriculum and "elective" studies is not very precisely defined. Whether young Mr. Holland took an "elective" or not, I am unable to say. Certain it is that he began his stage career at fifteen, as "call-boy" in Mrs. John Wood's Olympic Theatre, on Broadway, just above Bleeker Street, in 1863. This was formerly Laura Keene's Theatre (where, in the season of 1858-1859, the present writer had the pleasure of seeing, when a boy, "Our American Cousin," played by Jefferson as Asa Trenchard and Sothern as Lord Dundreary, during the first production of that play). But, although he made his practical beginning here, he had been familiar with the stage from his earliest years; and, when only a child, he had made his appearance behind the foot-lights as one of the boys in "A Day After the Fair," a farce in which his father had won deserved renown.

Young Holland remained at Mrs. John Wood's Theatre for three years, in the capacity of call-boy. In those days the position was very arduous. More work fell to the share of the call-boy than to that of any one else in the theatre. He had to labor early and late. But this experience of Mr. Holland, no doubt, gave him the opportunity to learn in detail the require-

ments of the stage and the mechanical duties of the actors. His fourth season of the theatre found him on duty in Barnum's Museum, which then (1866) displayed itself in the curious old Chinese Building, at the corner of Broadway and Spring Street. To many people in our day it is probably unknown that Barnum's "greatest show on earth" was then not a peripatetic, but a fixed, exhibition. His museum, menagerie, waxwork, and curiosity collection had a well-organized theatrical attachment, wherein plays were presented on a thoroughly appointed stage, with due scenic effect and capable companies. From this place, however, Holland soon took a step forward by joining Joseph Jefferson, with whose company he played in the original production of the Boucicault version of "Rip Van Winkle." In 1867 he made another and a greater stride ahead, when he became a regular member of the famous stock company at the old Wallack's Theatre, at the corner of Broadway and Thirteenth Street.

In this wonderful old company — the memory of which is still luminous in the minds of all theatre-going New Yorkers who can look back to the scenic joys of a quarter of a century ago — Mr. Holland held his place, and earned a constantly increasing reputation, for thirteen years. More than a few of my readers will recall from their own observation, and others are aware through printed records, that Edmund Holland's father, George Holland, was an eminent member of the Wallack forces, from the opening of the theatre in 1852 up to 1868.

It was a happy coincidence that thus enabled the son, near the close of the senior Holland's term there, to attach himself to his father's traditions, in the very

spot where the name of Holland had gained so much lustre. To the Wallack connection, and the training he received in that excellent school, Mr. E. M. Holland himself attributes much of his own success. His father had been his first teacher in the elements of the art of acting, and had also instructed him in the use of the foils. But the precepts, the technical advice and discipline, received from Lester Wallack, together with the practical knowledge gained while under his stage direction, were the main factors in enabling young Holland to develop his talents, and earn a congenial position in his profession.

He entered upon that profession now, formally, but with due modesty, not even venturing to let his true name appear upon the bills. For some time after his entrance into theatrical life, he was known to the public simply as Mr. E. Milton; and it was not until he had satisfactorily proved his own artistic worth that he was allowed openly to avow himself a Holland.

Gradually it became plain to all observers that he was thoroughly competent to sustain the reputation belonging to that distinguished name. His first work at Wallack's was done with E. L. Davenport in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts." Afterwards he played a large number of parts there; and steadily progressing in favor, both with Mr. Wallack and with the public, he came at last, though by slow degrees, to be intrusted with the most important comedy and character business in the varied repertory of that day and theatre. He showed, among other things, a particular faculty for impersonating Plowman; and, when very little over thirty years old, achieved a great success as Silky in "The Road to Ruin." Further distinction was won by

him in the revivals of Robertson's comedies, when he played successfully Beau Farintosh in "School," and Samuel Gerridge in "Caste." During the Wallack period, as may well be understood, he was associated with many celebrated men and women of the stage; among the number being John Gilbert, John Brougham, E. L. Davenport, J. W. Wallack, Charles Fisher, E. A. Sothern, Charles Mathews, J. H. Stoddart, Charles Coghlan, Charles Wyndham, Dion Boucicault, Madame Ponisi, Miss Ada Dyas, John Burk, Mrs. Sefton, Mrs. Hoey. These associations had a distinct educational value in respect of art, which tended always in the right direction.

After leaving Wallack's, in 1880, Mr. Holland played a short engagement under A. M. Palmer, then of the Union Square Theatre, as Riffidini in "French Flats." On the 3d of April, the same year, he sailed for England with McKee Rankin, and opened with him, April 26, at Sadler's Wells Theatre, in "The Danites," taking the part of The Judge with pronounced success, and with a "make-up" of delightful yet wisely subdued grotesqueness. In this character he made the tour of the provinces which followed, appearing in all the chief cities of the United Kingdom, and finished the season with Mr. Rankin on their return to America. Mr. Holland then joined Henry E. Abbey's Company, and created the *rôle* of Major McTurtle in "Mother-in-Law," which was produced in 1881 at the Park Theatre, corner of Broadway and Twenty-second Street. The next play given there was "After the Opera," wherein Mr. Holland impersonated The Deacon; a performance which led to his securing an excellent engagement at the Madison Square Theatre, at that time managed by

Daniel H. Frohman. For two years he continued here under Mr. Frohman's management, acting all the character and comedy parts in the repertory; and when Mr. A. M. Palmer took control of the Madison Square, Mr. Holland went on with him, becoming a member of the brilliant, strong, and celebrated company which made "Madison Square" a name that will preserve in our stage-history a classic place.

Under Mr. Palmer's management he appeared first as Lot Bowman in "Saints and Sinners." Subsequently he made a great hit as Captain Redwood in "Jim the Penman," acting the part with superb calm, suppressed force, and delicately satirical humor. The other impersonations which added to his reputation during this period were Corporal Pichot in "The Martyr" (1887-1888), Mr. Gardiner in "Captain Swift," Mr. Belair in "Partners" (1888-1889), the intensely dryly amusing, solemn solicitor, Mr. Berkley Brue, in "Aunt Jack" (1889-1890), Uncle Gregory in "A Pair of Spectacles," and Major Moberly in "Alabama" (1891 and 1891-1892); this last being a creation of distinct originality and delicate power. To these I ought to add his Gawain, in my stage version of "Elaine," a small part, which Mr. Holland rendered with a dainty elegance and lightness worthy of remembrance. Mr. Holland passed from the Madison Square to Palmer's Theatre, still in association with Mr. Palmer's stock company. Then he engaged in a starring tour with his brother, and won still more favor by his impersonation of the loyal but rascally valet in "A Social Highwayman."

It is now more than a quarter of a century since Mr. Holland began methodically his career upon the stage;

and it may truthfully be said that in all that time his progress has been steady, without a single failure or setback ; that he has gained continually in range, power, self-control, accuracy, and subtlety in his effects. He is an adroit master in the art of making up. A fine student of character, he also has at command a noticeable fund of richly humorous drollery. If past performances and present indications are any guide, we may count upon Mr. E. M. Holland as a comedian who in the years to come will continue the example, and with increasing facility take the place, in some respects, of such great character actors as William Warren and John Gilbert.

GEORGIA CAYVAN.

BY RALPH EDMUNDS.

IT has been said that the highest triumph of the player is to realize the true aspirations of poetic genius, and to give adequate expression to the various emotions of the soul. An actor may be very dignified and declamatory; but unless he endeavors to lay bare the springs of the character he represents, his work is of little value. Unfortunately the stage is governed by traditions compared with which the laws of the Medes and Persians were very elastic; and Nym Crinkle never made a truer remark than when he observed that the average actor, as a rule, was "generally swathed, mummy-like, in the thousand-year-old wrapper of his business."

But even in these degenerate days, when we weigh art in balances and genius in scales, it is possible for originality, naturalness, and intensity to conquer old prejudices. There is something irresistible about a graceful, honest, simple, passionate personality. It is delightful to see an actor lost in a character, to see a beautiful woman the instrumentality of a thought, to see her a living, breathing ideal. This enviable distinction has been attained by few; but it is most grati-



GEORGIA CAYVAN.

fyng to know that among the honored ones, the name of Georgia Cayvan is unmistakably enrolled.

Even in the early days of her career it was prophesied that Miss Cayvan would be the American Madge Robertson, and it must be admitted that there is still a great similarity in the styles of both actresses. But this resemblance, however, exists only in outline, and not in detail; for although Miss Cayvan possesses the best attributes of Mrs. Kendal, yet she has often attained heights which are far beyond the reach of her English prototype. The most striking feature of Mrs. Kendal's acting has always been the careful deliberateness with which she leads up to every point, and the thoroughness with which she extracts from every situation every possible bit of effect. She seems to suggest nothing, but to do everything. It is quite evident that she has schooled herself during her long career to leave nothing to the imagination of the spectator. On the other hand, the groundwork of Miss Cayvan's art — like that of all the other arts — seems to be suggestiveness; and the secret of the success of this element upon which she depends, in a measure, is not difficult to fathom. The artists who appeal directly to the grosser senses of an audience, and do not leave anything to be considered in the outer realms of imagination, must of necessity achieve less — the senses which are susceptible of immediate impression being of definite limits. Miss Cayvan is herself a most imaginative actress, and the reason that her success is in proportion to the intelligence of her audience is simply because the poetry of her fancy is most fully appreciated by those who are endowed most liberally with a similar gift.

It must not be imagined that there is any hesitation or vagueness about the acting of Miss Cayvan. From her first entrance upon the scene she is completely mistress of the situation, and carries with her, not only the unswerving sympathies, but also the convictions, of her audience. In fact, she stamps the shape and strikes the key-note of the character at once; and all the subsequent development of the part is but the logical outcome of the opening scene. Few actresses give an audience so much to think about as does Miss Cayvan; and at the same time few artists approach her in the power of expressing the individuality of a character,—the trifling details which cause a character to be recognized.

Perhaps a slight review of the principal incidents of Georgia Cayvan's professional life is not amiss in a sketch of this kind, and it will serve to indicate the position occupied by that clever young woman on the American stage. It was at a small church festival held in her native town of Bath, Me., that Miss Cayvan first displayed a *penchant* for theatricals. The entertainment consisted of a number of tableaux; and as the hall in which it was given could not boast of such a luxury as a curtain, the committee in charge were much puzzled as to the manner of concluding the performance. It was finally agreed that the smallest child in the village should be sent on the stage, attired in a long nightgown, and with a candle in her hand, to say "goodnight" to the audience, thus giving them their cue for retiring. Miss Cayvan, then only three years of age, was chosen to deliver this brief and unconventional epilogue. It is a matter of record that she acquitted herself most creditably, and spoke her

line with a due appreciation of its import ; but this done, she positively refused to retire from the centre of the stage, and had to be removed bodily. This fact may be accepted either as an indication of Miss Cayvan's early love for her present profession, or a keen appreciation of the position on the stage usually occupied by the leading personage. However, it is a pleasure to learn that she did not follow her successful *début* by joining the ranks of what are known as "juvenile wonders." For it is not the least cogent of the argument against the employment of children on the stage that the promise held forth by their performances is but seldom realized. They are very much like a tree in a forcing-house, — the blossom or fruit is prized because it comes before its time, but the principle of fruitification is soon destroyed. That many actors have risen superior to the ill effects of strained precocity is beyond dispute, but the training they are necessarily subjected to in a theatre imparts to their style a staginess which they afterwards find it very difficult to discard.

Soon after Miss Cayvan's memorable *début* in Bath, her family removed to Boston ; and it was while attending school in that centre of culture that she developed unusual powers as a reader. Nowadays she laughingly declares that it was a strong predilection for unlimited quantities of soup and celery that prompted her to earn her own living ; but, however that may be, it is certain that Miss Cayvan's services were eagerly sought for on all sides soon after her first appearance on the platform. In the beginning, her repertory consisted principally of humorous selections and "bird pieces," in which she gave imitations of various members of the

feathered tribe. Emboldened by her success, she added scenes from "Henry V." and "Henry VIII.;" and her fame spread even to New York, where she was invited to come on one occasion, and give her readings before the Y. M. C. A. This was a great event in the life of Miss Cayvan; and the attendant preparations and excitement of her first visit to Gotham, to say nothing of the congratulations of her schoolmates, — for she was then still a pupil of the Boston High School, — are yet fresh in her memory.

On her return to Boston, Miss Cayvan entered the School of Oratory directed by Professor Lewis B. Monroc, where she laid a substantial foundation for her future work as an actress. Professor Monroc was much impressed by the talent of his new scholar, and did everything in his power to further her advancement. He readily foresaw that her proper sphere was the drama, and not the platform, while he repeatedly asserted that when the proper time came she would easily assume a leading place in the theatrical profession. Miss Cayvan did not share Professor Monroc's opinion; but while spending the summer at his home in Dublin, N. H., something happened which subsequently caused her to alter her decision of never forsaking the platform for the stage. She had the good fortune to meet that erratic genius and apostle of *Del-sarte*, Steele Mackaye, who was then getting ready to open the Madison Square Theatre, and who was also on a still hunt for desirable talent. Mr. Mackaye immediately perceived that Miss Cayvan had the making of a successful actress, and entreated her to begin her career on the stage under his management. "If you will come to New York I will make you a leading

woman in a year," he often said to her ; but, as the young reader had an unusual number of profitable contracts on hand, she begged for time to consider his offer. However, Mr. Mackaye was persistent ; and when he returned to New York he kept urging her not to throw away such a splendid opportunity.

"I am sorry to hear that you are in any way prevented from taking advantage of the extraordinary opening there is for your abilities in this city," wrote Mr. Mackaye, on one occasion, to Miss Cayvan. "Even now I cannot refrain from hoping that you may be able to free yourself in some honorable way from your present engagements. . . . I hold it in my power now to afford you the opportunity to grasp within one year a leading position in this profession. You may never again be able to command under such favorable, and I may say delightful, conditions, such a wonderful chance of advancement. Under the circumstances, is it not worth your while to make an effort to secure this opening? Can you not buy yourself off from your present contracts? We stand ready to assist you in this. You may marvel why I am so anxious that you should do this. It is not alone for your own sake, as you may well imagine ; but it is also because we are convinced from what we know of you that, if you are identified with the Madison Square Theatre from its inception, your own sterling talents will ultimately make you a very valuable member of our company. I am sure that, under my thorough system of stage management, you can become in a short time one of the best actresses this country has ever produced ; and it is this conviction that induces me to advise you to set yourself free and join us if you possibly can."

The faith of Mr. Mackaye in Miss Cayvan must have been nothing short of remarkable, but subsequent events proved that his judgment was not at fault. After months of hesitation, Miss Cayvan accepted Mr. Mackaye's terms, and joined the stock company of the Madison Square Theatre. But, in the meantime, she had tried her wings by a performance of Hebe in the original production of "Pinafore," given by the Boston Ideals, in one of William Gillette's early plays, and in a benefit to a Boston actor. Her first professional appearance as an actress was made at the Madison Square Theatre on June 7, 1880, when she appeared as Dolly Dutton in "Hazel Kirke." She was promoted to the leading *rôle* a few months later; and when "The Professor" was given its first presentation, the part of Daisy Brown was intrusted to Miss Cayvan.

While playing an arduous season on the road in "Hazel Kirke" during the ensuing year, she received an invitation to associate herself with George Riddle in a performance of the "Ædipus Tyrannus" of Sophocles. Miss Cayvan easily saw that her connection with such an enterprise would be the means of advancing herself professionally, and, with the courage of inexperience, coolly gave up a season's engagement for the pleasure of playing the *rôle* of Jocasta during two weeks. The outcome, however, exceeded her most sanguine expectations. The people who flocked to see the Greek tragedy at the Globe Theatre in Boston, and at Booth's Theatre in New York, included many who seldom visited the play-house under ordinary circumstances; and Miss Cayvan's majestic and impressive interpretation of Ædipus' Queen, not only won for her new friends, who have since followed her career with

pride, but also placed a premium on her services, which would otherwise have required years of successful acting. For the first time in her life she tasted the sweets of a great triumph, while she also understood the amount of inspiration which lies in the atmosphere of a noble tragedy.

Old John Gilbert was so carried away by her performance that he rushed back on the stage, asking, "Where is that Miss Cayvan?" On being introduced to the young actress, he immediately wanted to know where she hailed from, and with whom she had acted before. When he was informed that she had been playing for over a year at the Madison Square Theatre, he was somewhat taken aback, but calmly asserted, with his usual gruffness, that he had never heard of her previously. However, Mr. Gilbert made it his business afterwards to keep track of her whereabouts; and on one occasion, while showing her a picture of Charlotte Cushman, he predicted that the mantle of the great American *tragédienne* would some day fall on Miss Cayvan's dimpled shoulders.

The appearance of Miss Cayvan in "Œdipus Tyrannus" marked a pleasant epoch in her life, and since then her rise has been almost phenomenal. Even now she likes to look back to that performance, which she pronounces as one of her happiest recollections. Perhaps, like the French poet, she realizes that —

"Un souvenir heureux est, peut-être, sur terre
Plus vrai que le bonheur."

When she doffed her Greek robes, she went back to the rustic comedy of "Hazel Kirke," for the fortnight's indulgence had been an expensive luxury in

many ways. But she soon found a happy medium in the melodramas of Bartley Campbell, with some of which Miss Cayvan's name will always be associated. The success of "The White Slave" at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, New York, was largely due to her impassioned yet delicate impersonation of Lisa, which she followed in rapid succession with such characterizations as Sara in "Siberia," Little Hetty in "Old Shipmates," and Lura in "Romany Rye." Miss Cayvan's powers were singularly well suited to this style of acting, and she afterward showed that she had not forgotten her early training when she appeared in "Squire Kate." Her vigorous and at the same time natural and artistic portrayal of the woman of the moors raised her audience to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that on one occasion she won as many as five recalls. This is startling when you consider that it happened in the Lyceum Theatre, where it is deemed ill-bred to applaud or display any emotion. There is only one other instance on record in the history of the house. It happened during the run of "Lord Chumley," and it so surprised Mr. Sothern that he actually fainted.

After the termination of her engagement at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, Miss Cayvan spent four months in San Francisco, occupying the position of leading woman in Haverly's Company at the California Theatre. Upon her return to New York, A. M. Palmer engaged her to replace Sara Jewett at the Union Square Theatre, where she played the parts of Marcelle in "A Parisian Romance," and Jane Learoyd in "The Long Strike." Her stay at that theatre was made anything but agreeable by internal dissensions; and the following season she was glad to follow Mr.

Palmer to the Madison Square Theatre, appearing in that house in "Alpine Roses," "Young Mrs. Winthrop," and "May Blossom." When the company went touring, "May Blossom" was supplemented by "Divorce," "Impulse," and "La Belle Russe." It was in St. Louis that Miss Cayvan played a starring engagement in the latter play much against her will, but with great results. When she remonstrated with Mr. Belasco for asking her to play a *rôle* which had tasked the powers of an actress like Rose Coghlan, he quietly replied that she could do full justice to it, adding that after her first performance she would rather act in "La Belle Russe" than eat. Miss Cayvan held her audiences from first to last, and now she is willing to acknowledge the correctness of Mr. Belasco's peculiar assertion. The following season found her in New York for a short time, and then she cast her fortunes with Dion Boucicault on the road. The subsequent formation of the Lyceum Theatre, and her engagement by Daniel Frohman, as well as the success she has won in such plays as "The Wife," "Sweet Lavender," "The Marquise," "The Charity Ball," "Nerves," "The Idler," "Old Heads and Young Hearts," "Lady Bountiful," "Squire Kate," "The Gray Mare," "Americans Abroad," "The Amazons," "Our Country Cousins," and "A Woman's Silence," are matters of too recent occurrence to require extended comment.

By dint of hard study, intelligent comprehension, a genuine love for her art, and a determination to elevate it to its proper place, as a means not only of recreation but of artistic enjoyment and æsthetic education, Miss Cayvan has attained an enviable place in her profession. In fact, it can be safely said of her, that she

is a great dramatic artist in an age when greatness in any branch of art is extremely rare. Her powers are not limited to the portrayal of love-lorn and tearful heroines, with which she has largely been identified of late years; for with her acting is not only the mimetic performance of a model, but the absorption and reproduction of nature. With Miss Cayvan an idea becomes a sentiment, and the sentiment soon kindles into a passion. No rational person who has seen her *Lady Teazle* or her *Jocasta*—the latter a performance of ineffable beauty, as exquisite as it was powerful—can honestly doubt her ability to give expression to exalted ideals. However, she thoroughly realizes the fact that the truly artistic part of her career will only begin when Time compels her to discard her present superficial characterization for the more legitimate side of the drama.

The boundless language of attitudes has in every one a fresh interpreter, and acting is so personal and physical a matter that mannerism seems almost inevitable to it; but it must be conceded that Miss Cayvan is singularly free from those little tricks of expression and gesture which are usually the part and parcel of every successful player. The actor is generally involved in the character he sustains, and he is likely to invest it with his own peculiarities of aspect and conduct. Now and then an artist may succeed for a time in laying aside, as it were, his own individuality, and in so changing himself as to escape identification. It was said of the elder Mathews that he possessed "the art of extracting his personal nature from his assumptions." Mimetic power of this kind is, of course, of very rare occurrence, but it has often been displayed

by Miss Cayvan. She is well aware that there is no mechanism, no matter how perfect, that can take the place of graceful, unconscious spontaneity; and with her the gesture is always the outward expression of inward feeling. But no matter in what play Miss Cayvan appears, the light of her glorious talent glows through it all; and every pose and change of feature seems to be the immediate reproduction of the moment's thought and feeling. She projects herself into the character she interprets, and the semblances are lost in the one individuality. In fact, there is always the intellectual assimilation and the emotional merging. It is the impulse of her whole nature, the force of her whole soul, and not the straining at portrayal or the production of effect, which elevates her acting from imitation to the representation of life and its passions. Like Bernhardt, Miss Cayvan can well say of her beloved art: "I hold the mirror in which all things are reflected, but in which no truth abides. I help you endure what is wearisome in life, so that my task is not an unworthy one. To teach the truth of truths, we have ministers; to console us for death, we have God."

EDWARD H. SOTHERN.

BY EDWARD M. ALFRIEND.

THE elder Sothorn was playing in New Orleans when his son Edward was born; and the announcement, or first record, of the birth is entirely consistent with the sense of humor that characterized Mr. Sothorn's father. Sothorn the elder was at that period of his life far from being rich, and he kept a daily memorandum of his expenses in a small account-book. In this memorandum of each day's expenditures, amid amounts paid to grocer, butcher, washerwoman, etc., is to be found the entry, "boy born," and a statement of the cost of his making his first appearance at or on any stage.

So in New Orleans, La., on Dec. 6, 1859, Edward H. Sothorn first saw the light, and began a life which has added so much of honor to the American stage. His early intellectual manifestations were such that his parents thought that he would be a great painter, and with a view to the development of this talent placed him in the art school of the Royal Academy of London; but young Sothorn utterly failed to disclose as a painter the talents anticipated by his parents. While his parents were cherishing the aspiration



E. H. SOTHERN IN "THE PRISONER OF ZENDA."

of his development as a painter, the son was secretly fostering his ambition to be an actor.

His father, the elder Sothern, was then at the zenith of his reputation as an actor; and young Edward urged him to let him become a member of his company. Distrusting his son's capacity for the stage, he reluctantly consented; and young Sothern accompanied his father from England to America, and made his first appearance on the stage at Abbey's old Park Theatre, at the age of nineteen.

At this, his first performance, he had only one line to say; and when his cue came he could not speak a word. In describing this experience, Mr. Sothern states, "My father was on the stage when I made my entrance on that, to me, memorable occasion, and I walked toward him. I didn't say my sentence, I couldn't utter a word; and I shall never forget my sensations when I heard my father exclaim, in an undertone, 'Why don't you say something; can't you speak?' It had never occurred to me before that people could talk to each other on the stage, and not be overheard. I supposed, of course, that the entire audience was aware of what my father said to me. My chagrin was intolerable, and I got off the stage as quickly as I could. This performance confirmed my father's opinion that I would never make an actor. Still I appeared with him the next night, and after much drilling succeeded in getting off my sentence."

Young Sothern played with his father in this country about a year, and then accompanied him back to England.

A year later he joined John McCullough's company, and for a year wandered over America, playing

“Romans and ruffians.” Sothern was very proud of this engagement, for it was the first one in which he had a written contract. It was signed by McCullough, and it gave the young actor a salary of twenty dollars per week.

After a time Sothern was without an engagement, and for a long period he could not get work. He was quite poor; but being very proud, and a gentleman by instinct, he deported himself with dignity, manliness, and self-respect. Finally he obtained work, and played at different localities in the country, at one time under the management of Charles Frohman, and another under John P. Smith.

His career was seemingly without promise, and he was well-nigh surrendering to despair, when he met Mr. John Rickerby, Miss Helen Dauvray's manager. Mr. Rickerby said to him, “Why, Sothern, you are the very man I want. Will you play a small part with Miss Dauvray in ‘Mona’ at the Star Theatre?”

Mr. Sothern did not accept the proffered engagement, but told Mr. Rickerby he would think the matter over, and inform him of his decision. The young player wanted time for reflection, and also to go home and consult with his friend, Mr. Joseph Haworth, the well-known actor.

With the unctuous humor that characterizes Mr. Sothern, he relates, “In spite of my varied experiences and misfortunes, now that I was back in New York, and particularly since I really had the offer of an engagement, that I could accept or refuse as I chose, I felt my pride mounting; and I actually said to Joe Haworth in a very self-satisfied manner, that I did not think that I ought to lower myself by taking such a

small part in New York, and that I had perhaps better consider the matter a little more seriously than I would consider accepting a leading part. Joe turned to me, and in a half-contemptuous manner asked, '*Who are you, anyway?*' "

Mr. Haworth's sarcasm brought young Sothorn to an appreciation of his position as it actually existed, and was decisive of his action. So he accepted the engagement in Miss Dauvray's company, appeared in "Mona," and when it was withdrawn, appeared with that lady in "One of our Girls," at the Lyceum Theatre, in 1885, making his first hit.

When Mr. Daniel Frohman assumed charge of the Lyceum Theatre, he was so impressed with Sothorn's talents and promise that he opened a negotiation with him; and the result was his appearance at that theatre in "The Highest Bidder," May 3, 1887. As Mr. Daniel Frohman describes it in speaking of it, "It was a purely tentative production; but it proved to be an enormous success, and Sothorn came out with a distinct triumph." Mr. Frohman sent the play out on the road, as follows (being careful, as he says, "not to overweight the young star"), "'The Highest Bidder,' with E. H. Sothorn;" but the following year he was amply justified in saying "E. H. Sothorn *in* 'The Highest Bidder.' "

In September, 1887, Mr. Sothorn originated an eccentric part in "The Great Pink Pearl." Subsequent to this, Mr. Daniel Frohman made an engagement with him as a star for three years. And from this period his professional advancement has been steady and unbroken.

In August, 1888, Mr. Sothorn made another great

hit as Lord Chumley in the play bearing that name, written for him by Messrs. Belasco and De Mille. Mr. Sothern played his successes in "The Highest Bidder" and in "Lord Chumley" in all the great cities of America, commanding the warmest approval of the press everywhere, and drawing packed houses.

On Aug. 26, 1890, he originated the *rôle* of Allen Rollick in "The Maister of Woodbarrow," by Jerome K. Jerome, in which he made a brilliant hit, eclipsing his previous great successes in "The Highest Bidder" and "Lord Chumley." Jack Hammerton, in "The Highest Bidder," and Lord Chumley were great characterizations, but somewhat similar as types, whereas Allen Rollick was absolutely a new line of acting for Mr. Sothern; and it was with consummate skill, power, and finesse that he portrayed the crude, true-hearted, manly youth, Allen Rollick, in marked contrast to the more conventional *rôles* as shown in the parts of Jack Hammerton and Lord Chumley.

On Aug. 31, 1891, he appeared at the Lyceum Theatre as the Duke of Guisebury in "The Dancing Girl," by Henry Arthur Jones. This play occupied the stage during his season at the Lyceum. In the part of the Duke, Mr. Sothern made the best performance he had ever presented to the public. It was entirely different in its artistic demands on Mr. Sothern from any character that he had previously acted. In the early performances of the part he was seemingly overweighted. But it was a seeming overweight only, caused by the nervousness of first performances of a new *rôle*, a full appreciation of the strength of the part, and a fear of overacting. As the performances progressed, Mr. Sothern was incessantly studying the

part, analyzing its every phase and detail, testing a bit of coloring here and a bit there in his rendition, at one point deepening a shadow, and at another lightening it, until his impersonation of the Duke of Guisebury became, in breadth, strength, power, subtlety, nicety of delicate shading and coloring, one of the finest performances ever seen on the New York stage.

His Captain Latterblair attracted attention, as also did his hero in "The Way to Win a Woman;" but his greatest popular success has been the triple character of the drunken king, the adventurous Englishman, and the historic ancestor of the two, in "The Prisoner of Zenda."

Mr. Sothorn's success has been achieved by an earnest, persistent pursuit of his profession, to whose exacting demands he is and ever has been loyal. He is at all times a hard student and a faithful worker, and no outside influence diverts him from his duties.

To his intimates he is known as the most genial, delightful of companions, with the bright, happy, ingenuous nature of sunny boyhood. He has a great deal of the humor that characterized his father, and has the keenest possible sense of the ludicrous, tells a good joke, and enjoys one with infinite relish.

He is a loyal friend, and above all instinctively a gentleman, *sans peur, sans reproche*. He is sensitive and retiring, qualities always characteristic of an artistic nature; and these traits in him have often induced those who knew him slightly to think him cold. The very reverse is true of him. For he is best loved by those whose knowledge of him is most thorough; and this is the truest test of character.

ALEXANDER SALVINI.

BY JAMES ALBERT WALDRON.

ALL men may be born free and equal, but all are not equipped alike. Paternal or maternal endowment, or both, count for something in this world of mental and physical battle. Blood and brain and brawn in the begetters all tell. Genius may be an accident, but under proper conditions it may produce something quite akin to itself; and a filial passion for emulation, which is frequent in families of fine fibre and artistic temperament, when spurred by noble example and favored by a sympathetic atmosphere, is almost always a leader to artistic accomplishment. Sometimes it does not stop below the triumphs of genius, though its type is never like that which inspired it.

The world has echoed plaudits of Tomasso Salvini. Because he was a majestic figure of the theatre it did not follow of course that his son should ornament it. But was there any reason why that son should not follow his ambition to the stage?

Alexander Salvini was, and is, no doubt, as earnestly and honorably desirous of carving out his future in the theatre as was his illustrious father. He has elected to be known as an American actor. He has, in a comparatively short time, won rapid way to the popular



ALEXANDER SALVINI

heart. If we cavil at his nationality, and frown upon his assumption of adoption, we at once confess unreason or short memory. There is little of striking note in this country, except tobacco and the Indian, remotely native; and we must not forget that even the Puritans were immigrants.

Alexander was the third son of Tomasso Salvini, and was born in Rome, Italy, Dec. 21, 1861. His younger days were spent in Florence, his father's home; and here and in Switzerland he was educated for the profession of a civil engineer. "But," says a friend of Alexander, "nature had no sympathy with this intention. In his father's home he had inhaled always the atmosphere of art, the inherited instinct was in his blood, and the seeming accident which finally determined his career was only necessity in disguise."

In Florence, where Salvini was almost the apotheosis of dramatic art, it was to be expected that his children should be looked upon as natural perpetuators of his genius. To enlist them in amateur theatricals was regarded as a great achievement, and no doubt also as a most fit thing. The father, whose dramatic ideals were so high that he did not wish to have any of his name after him fall below them so far as to take from the lustre of his life-work, and probably believing that he had not transmitted the vital spark, discouraged these endeavors; and while he was at home such efforts were frowned down. But during his first tour of America, Alexander was asked to appear in a benefit performance, and most willingly consented. The play was "The Son of Titian," a passionate, romantic creation of Alfred de Musset. The audience was in his favor. All the surroundings were sympathetic. The

boy fairly trembling with eagerness, and filled with the hot blood of his sire, artless, yet vigorous and emotional, won plaudits that might have turned an older head. On the father's return he was besought to consent to his son's adoption of the theatre. He did not seem to yield. He sent Alexander to America. Did he think that in the distractions of travel and a strange land the boy would forget his passion, perhaps meet rebuffs, and return to prosily pursue an engineer's calling? or did he then have an inkling of the truth, that the boy would credit him in his own great profession?

Adventitious circumstances assisted Alexander in his American venture. The American manager of theatres is no less enterprising for novelty, and no less skilful in detecting symptoms from the public pulse, than was that distinguished circus caterer and philosopher who disengaged himself from mortality at Bridgeport.

The Salvini had left our shores showered with wondering praise and with money in his purse. Here was his son, — a mere youth it is true, — and he wanted an engagement. A want quickly filled. The patronymic was enough. Curiosity would supply all else.

The elder Salvini knew no English, but his art was all interpretative. The son knew too well that *his* art was not all interpretative. The elder Salvini had struggled to accustom his tongue to our strange and difficult speech. It was impossible — as hopeless as would be the effort of a mighty tree to uproot itself and seek foundation in an alien soil. The son was a sapling, and quickly took new root.

The work of foreign actresses — most notable, Modjeska — in the acquisition of English has been mar-

velled at. It is safe to say, however, that no man or woman of foreign birth, and without knowledge of English, has in the time spent by Alexander Salvini so mastered this language. To-day his speech, in his quieter artistic moments, is a delight to the native ear. It is almost free from even a trace of unfamiliar accent, and his knowledge and enunciation of its subtler values are remarkable. He has the natural and nervously energetic intelligence expected of any son of his father. But his triumph over the difficulties that beset the Italian who seeks to accomplish English is due mainly to astounding application to the task. His accomplishment has been gained by work that would tire even a genius, and appall and dishearten almost any son of a genius.

There are stories of this young man's earlier habits in this country that account for what his parentage might not explain. They are of an almost ascetic bachelorhood, amused by the companionship of favorite dogs, a fencing-master, and a tutor in English. Exercise to at least conserve the splendid physique which that almost physically matchless father bequeathed; persistent, unremitting mental application and vocal practice to master a strange speech. Work. The hardest kind of work. What will it not fulfil?

Alexander Salvini made his first appearance in New York, at the Union Square Theatre, Feb. 23, 1882, in the leading male *rôle* of Georges Duhamel in "Article 47," with Clara Morris. He had then studied English three months. It is not strange that he did not then speak it. He tried to. And he put such young vigor and earnestness into his acting that he made friends. Those in the audience who could discriminate saw fire

in him. It was not the light of a star whose place had been fixed with relation to surrounding constellations ; but it was a light, and a new one. It might be meteoric. There were those who were quick to discredit, as well as those who could encourage and expect. The son of an eminent father had made an experiment. Experiments fail, and experiments do not fail. Those that have not failed have given the earth progress. Young Salvini's experiment was not a failure ; it was the prologue to a story of success.

As soon as the elder Salvini was convinced that his son was fatally ardent for the theatre, and that with encouragement he might succeed, he consented to the young man's choice. Thenceforward Alexander had the best engagements to choose from. For two years he appeared with Margaret Mather in a round of legitimate romantic parts, and subsequently for three years was a magnetic and picturesque figure in A. M. Palmer's notable Madison Square Company. He played other and touring engagements, and for two seasons supported his famed father in this country before he ventured upon his own footing as a star.

There is no suggestion, of course, that Alexander Salvini reached the success he now enjoys at a bound ; or that he can to-day be called as great as some of his friends believe him to be ; or that he has not yet much to master, and as much to define and refine. As he stands, however, he is one of the most interesting masculine figures on the American stage.

In fourteen years he mastered more than thirty characters. When one realizes that to master all of the lines and intricacies of a single drama so as to describe its leading character even acceptably is a labor almost

as great as the actual production of a literary work of moment, — a story or a play, if you please, — Alexander Salvini's remarkable industry and admirable achievements may be appreciated in part. When we remember the lingual difficulties of the tasks, the results become nothing less than wonderful. Some of these many characters of course, and notably the earlier ones, he has not touched distinguishedly in the sense of artistic consummation ; others he has raised to new eminences : to all he has given an attention and an emphasis all his own, and in them developed conceptive details that index future possibilities and probabilities rather than illustrate any self-consciousness of present perfection ; and in none has he utterly failed. Where is there a record like it on the contemporary stage ?

In those vivid, warm-blooded, spontaneous, and romantic *rôles* which will outlive all attempted instatements of the realistically commonplace upon the stage, young Salvini revels naturally. In some of them he stands peerless to-day. Perhaps no character better than that of D'Artagnan in "The Three Guardsmen" illustrates his peculiar stage utility at this time. He lives, he looks, he is the brave, ingenuous, daring, gallant, loyal, and impulsive youth — an intensified type it is true, yet vitally human and ever admirable — created by Dumas. The most fatigued play-goer may witness Salvini in this *rôle*, and quaff from him a rejuvenating draught of life. The character fits young Salvini's personality as perfectly as that of Samson sympathizes with the ripe, antediluvian suggestion of primitive man's massivity which the elder Salvini presents. The feats of Samson, again, were of course far removed from the exploits of a D'Artagnan.

No one who has studied young Salvini can deny that he has genius. When that is wedded to rare industry, as it is in him, much may be hoped for. He has faults, but they are those of an enthusiasm and a vigor that hand in hand sometimes sweep all bounds. Intrinsically they are not faults, they are but blemishes.

Alexander Salvini, too, is versatile. The comprehending circle of his versatility, it is true, displays no such arcs as does that of his father, with whom he nevertheless has something in common. The father, perfect in pose and repose, finished in poise and equipoise, stands a stately figure in his native land, whose atmosphere is filled with the traditions of ages of great achievement in all the fields of art. All other lands and atmospheres are foreign. He is as natural there as are the monuments which pilgrims study. The son, dominated by a legacy of paternal genius, and moved perhaps by the maternal strain in his blood, adventures. The artistic holies of the land that gave him birth are no doubt holy to him; but his temperament is not his father's temperament. He enters and assimilates with a new world. In a younger atmosphere he inhales ambition, and works to ascend.



JAMES O'NEIL IN "MONTE CRISTO."

JAMES O'NEILL.

BY HARRISON GREY FISKE.

THE Emerald Isle has contributed her full quota of genius to the stage. The fiery, volatile, persuasive Irish temperament, when it is united with the dramatic instinct, produces players whose versatility, grace, and eloquence compare favorably with the finest histrionic representatives of the French, — the nation that the Irish race resembles most nearly. Many of the illustrious names that are written on the pages of English dramatic history are unmistakably Hibernian. England's *enfant terrible* has never learned to govern herself; but she has seized and swayed the sceptre, time and again, in the realms of poetry, oratory, and the drama. Erin sent Macklin, Doggett, O'Neill, and Woffington, in ye olden tyme, to wear, with memorable effect, the masque of Comus; while we moderns are indebted to her for such characteristic sons as Dion Boucicault and Barry Sullivan, the one bringing us the smile of her green southern slopes, and the other the frown of her beetling northern crags.

The best example of Irish dramatic genius, in its refined and picturesque aspects, possessed by the American stage at this time, is James O'Neill. Mention of Kilkenny ought to call to our mind that handsome,

brilliant player, instead of the inevitable feline combatants ; for it was in Kilkenny that he first saw the light. Beneath the shadows of its gray cathedral, and its immemorial round tower, and among its monastic ruins, his careless childhood was spent. He played in the mossy moat of Strongbow's ancient castle ; and he saw the gowned collegians enter the portals of the institution of learning where Swift, Congreve, Farquhar, and Bishop Berkeley drank their youthful fill of scholastic knowledge. It was in this quiet haven of Catholicism that he imbibed the deep religious feeling that has remained with him throughout his career, — a simple, trusting faith that has withstood the shock of all the complex and contending interests of this work-a-day world and this land of materialistic influences.

The boy was but seven years of age when he came to this country with his father. While yet a lad the father died, and he was left to battle for existence alone. His first employment came from a clothier. He stuck to it a couple of years, meanwhile chafing at his lot, and resolving to make a bid for something more to his taste at the first opportunity. As with many another ambitious young fellow, the stage seemed to offer a more promising field than anything else. He saw some of the good actors of the day, and felt emulous. And so O'Neill became an actor in the twilight of the palmy days.

When he made his first appearance at the old National Theatre in Cincinnati, just before the war, — or, to be exact, in 1860, — the theatrical revolution that afterward transmogrified the American stage had not yet begun. The youth was one of the last to receive the benefits of the rigorous schooling that novices

were then able to obtain. Before his talents reached their zenith, the change had come; but adjusting himself to it with true Irish facility, he preserved many of the excellences, and eschewed the faults, of that fast receding period. Although it is the fashion now to discredit the methods then in vogue, to sneer at the crude and hasty performances beside which the sumptuous productions of to-day appear vastly superior, the fact remains that that was the day of pure histrionism, as this is the day of artistic detail. The men that achieved eminence then had only histrionic ability to back them. And so it is that, although the traditions of that time have become a misty memory, and although the plays, the actors, and the public taste of ante-bellum days are viewed with little veneration from the coign of vantage occupied by play-goers of the last decade of the greatest of all the centuries, still it must be confessed that the actors now in their prime, that passed their young apprenticeship in the heart of the ceaseless activity of the old time, learning all that old time had to teach, have held in trust and perpetuated for their successors at least a remnant of a rich dramatic heritage.

The first line O'Neill spoke in public was uttered in the modest character of a guest at "Lucy Ashton's" wedding. After a few months at the National, the young Thespian joined a small travelling company. Travelling engagements were by no means then the comparatively luxurious berths that they are to-day. O'Neill's experience was decidedly unpleasant. He had the usual mishaps that befell barn-stormers in the sparsely populated territory of the West, not the least of which (in his then condition) was the loss of several

trunks at divers and sundry times to satisfy the demands of cruel landlords. Salary days were not in the manager's calendar; and when the company finally collapsed in an obscure town of Illinois, O'Neill had no other earthly possessions than the clothes he stood in. It was, perhaps, as a delicate tribute to these roving experiences that he was soon after engaged to play "walking gentleman" at the St. Louis Varieties, now known as the Grand Opera House. The season following he was located in Cincinnati, under Robert Miles's management. There he remained until 1869, supporting the principal stars, and acquiring the useful expedients associated with the business of playing many and various parts, every week in the protracted season meaning an unbroken succession of rehearsals and performances, and, of course, no lack of hard work. The following season he obtained an engagement at the Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore, under John T. Ford. "Leading juvenile" was his line of business, and he became a favorite with the Baltimoreans and with play-goers generally in the Southern cities visited by Mr. Ford's company. He went afterward to Cleveland to play in the excellent company at the Academy of Music, managed by John Ellsler. Here, for the first time, he was promoted to the honors and the emoluments of a leading man.

Soon after the great fire, O'Neill became the leader of the strong company at McVicker's Theatre, in Chicago. During the two years that he remained with that organization he lent excellent support to Charlotte Cushman, Adelaide Neilson, Edwin Booth, and many other famous actors. It was then that he laid the foundation of the remarkable popularity he has enjoyed

uninterruptedly among the Chicagoans, who cherish the amiable fiction that he is a "Chicago actor," and refuse absolutely to believe that his start in the profession was made elsewhere. At the conclusion of his contract with Mr. McVicker, O'Neill transferred his allegiance to Hooley's Theatre—then, as now, a prosperous rival of the older house. In this stock company he played many parts, and played them so successfully that Mr. Hooley, on going to San Francisco, took O'Neil with him for a special engagement of three months. The three months lengthened into a year; and the Californians, won by his charm and delighted by his acting, were beginning to think that they had weaned him from the East for good and all, when A. M. Palmer, hearing of his success, coveted O'Neill's presence in his stock company at the Union Square Theatre, New York, beyond question the strongest corps of actors, viewed in its entirety, that the metropolis of the New World has possessed. O'Neill shared the leading parts with Charles R. Thorne, Jr., for two seasons.

When we recall the cripple Pierre in "The Two Orphans," we think of James O'Neill; and when "The Danicheffs" is mentioned, it is to couple with that fine production his Prince. Two actors never afforded a sharper contrast than was afforded by the conjunction of Thorne and O'Neill. — Thorne muscular, stalwart, dignified, strong in the consciousness of that matchless reserve power which lifted him to the pedestal of popular admiration; O'Neill slender, sinuous, picturesque, mellow-voiced, passionate-eyed. Each in his own way filled the public eye, each won his own triumphs. Restive as he had always been, O'Neill cherished a long-

ing to return to the city of the Golden Gate. When an offer came, — as it did come before long, — he brushed the dust of Manhattan from his buskin, and again located in San Francisco, where his friends welcomed him back with open arms. Here he remained nearly three years, toward the end of which period there came into his experience a singular thing. Many an actor has played the devil, both figuratively and literally ; but no actor, outside of the reverent band of peasant devotees at Oberammergau, except James O'Neill, has been called upon to play the Messiah. Maguire, his manager, had been induced by an erratic Jew named Salmi Morse to announce for production a Passion Play that Morse had written some time previously.

Maguire was a speculator, shrewd, alert, enterprising ; and he saw a sensation in the scheme. O'Neill was asked by Maguire to play the Christ. At first the actor refused, although, according to the terms of his contract, he had no choice but to play the parts for which he was cast by the management. The idea of representing the Saviour on the stage of a theatre was repugnant to his strongly developed religious feelings. When he learned, however, that Morse's play had been revised and approved by a priest of the Catholic Church, he withdrew his objections, and consented to originate the character. He approached the impersonation in a fervid and reverent spirit ; to him it was not acting, it was devotion. His make-up was remarkable : his face suggested the beauty, the purity, and the divine compassion that we find in the immortal canvases of the Italian masters. The interpretation made a deep impression ; but public opinion frowned upon the production, and after running a few weeks, during which the

theatre was packed nightly, it had to be withdrawn in obedience to the mandate of the authorities.

In spite of this warning, Henry E. Abbey determined to present Morse's play at Booth's Theatre, New York, which was then under his direction. He offered O'Neill five hundred dollars a week to play his original part, and O'Neill accepted. Mr. Abbey at once began to make elaborate preparations for the production. A large company of well-known actors was engaged, rehearsals began, and the theatre was rechristened "Booth's Tabernacle." Although it was announced with much emphasis that the affair would be conducted with the decorum and the zeal that marked the Oberammergau exhibitions, public opinion was against the Passion Play from the start. The pulpit, irrespective of creed and denomination, thundered against the proposed desecration of the Christian religion; the leading members of the dramatic profession protested vehemently against the proposed desecration of the American theatre. The press poured murderous broadsides into the enterprise; petitions were signed by thousands of representative citizens requesting the Board of Aldermen to enact an ordinance prohibiting the performance; dead-letter laws against blasphemy were brought to light; and the manager, author, actors, and every one concerned in the obnoxious venture, were threatened with arrest. As the date of the first representation drew near, the storm burst anew with redoubled fury. There were rumors of a riotous demonstration. It was too much for Mr. Abbey. He realized that he had made a mistake, and that to persist in his intention would be hazardous, not to say ruinous. A few days before the night set for the

production, he published a card in the newspapers, wherein he protested the honesty of his intentions, but yielded to the popular sentiment, and abandoned his plans. That was practically the death of the Passion Play in New York. Salmi Morse, enraged by the success of the popular opposition, took a church on the site of the present Twenty-third Street Theatre, and with capital supplied by Western speculators transformed it into a theatre, engaged a number of amateurs, and announced the performance. The police interfered, and prevented the sale of tickets. Then Morse sent out invitations to a private performance. The representation was a farce; the play was found to be poor stuff, viewed from either a literary or an artistic standpoint. Morse lost the money of his backers and his reason simultaneously, and not long afterward his lifeless body was found in the Hudson.

Soon after the Passion Play incident, O'Neill appeared in an ephemeral play called "Deacon Crankett." He then made his first essay as a star "on the road" in a play by Charles Dazey, entitled "An American King." This venture was not crowned with pecuniary rewards. Not long afterward John Stetson engaged him to play Edmond Dantès in "Monte Cristo," at Booth's Theatre, in New York. The extent of his personal success in this fine production of Fechter's dramatic version of Dumas's great story emboldened O'Neill to buy the play and its entire outfit outright from Stetson, and to take it on tour under his own management. From that time through the successive seasons, O'Neill has starred as Edmond Dantès throughout the United States, achieving remarkable popularity with all classes of theatre-goers, and accumu-

lating a snug fortune. During a portion of the season of 1890-1891 he appeared in an elaborate production of "The Dead Heart," a gloomy old melodrama to which attention had been recalled by Henry Irving's sumptuous revival at the London Lyceum Theatre. The public clamored for "Monte Cristo," and O'Neill found it expedient to respond to this demand. He made an effort to return to the drama of modern life with "The Envoy," which he presented in the spring of 1891; but the play was bad, and the result of the experiment was discouraging. The public preferred O'Neill in the old favorite with which he had been identified during the major portion of his starring career, and he yielded to its choice. Latterly he has appeared occasionally as Virginius, Richelieu, and Hamlet; but in the future O'Neill undoubtedly will devote himself almost exclusively to the romantic drama.

And this is as it should be, for among romantic actors O'Neill stands *facile princeps*. He has not the trained intellectual virility of Fechter, whose successor he may well be called; but he possesses even in a greater degree Fechter's poetic charm and Fechter's enkindling power. His face is beautiful,—beautiful in its cameo-like profile, and beautiful in its mobile expressiveness. His eyes are large, dark, and lustrous, dreamy in repose, flashing in action. His mouth is sensitive, yet firm, the shade of sadness blending with its smile giving a strange interest to the whole countenance. His movements are grace itself; his attitudes are superbly picturesque. His voice is rich, mellow, and musical; and it is susceptible of a wide range of expression. His speech is just tinged with a bit of the brogue that adds to, rather than detracts from, his

many singular graces. In the *rôle* of Dantès he demonstrates his mastery of the technique of stage art, and exhibits the versatility of his talents. Whether as the rollicking, nimble sailor of the prologue, or the emaciated convict making his bold stroke for liberty, or the gentle-voiced, sad-eyed priest, or the opulent Count of Monte Cristo, he is equally effective. Each phase of this complex character is perfectly shown; and the rapid alternation of the primal passions — love, hate, revenge — is powerfully exhibited. His “by-play” — that severest test of an actor’s resources — is appropriate, fertile, characteristic. He rises to the full height of “situations” on pinions that seem equal to any ascent. He scores his “points,” — for “points” are inseparable from the *rôles* of romantic stage heroes, — not only with invariable precision, but with electrical effect. He seems made to move among the lords and the ladies, the velvets and laces and rapiers, of the romantic drama; and wherever he walks there is the centre of attraction. He has the graces, the art, the distinction of bearing, the magnetic quality, that are necessary to put the vital spark into those artificial dramas that depict a life that never existed, and whose characters miraculously control events instead of being naturally controlled by events. No scene is unreal or improbable in which O’Neill appears; he shuts the door on reason, turns the key in the lock, and we sit entranced beneath the wondrous spell of the actor who can conjure us away from the actual, clothe dreams with flesh and blood, create a new world which we take on faith without a question, and charm us with its heroes and their marvellous exploits.



James H. Kelly
Maggie Mitchell

MAGGIE MITCHELL.

MAGGIE MITCHELL.

BY LUTHER L. HOLDEN.

THE mere mention of the name gracing the head of this page brings before the mental vision of the elder generation of play-goers a petite and elfish creature, with a wealth of sunny, golden hair, whose nervous energy and sprightliness, no less than an exquisite form and face, gave picturesque presence to the line of child heroines she made peculiarly her own. As long as she chose to remain upon the stage, her public was of the class that is drawn to the theatre only by the best and purest in art.

While Margaret Jane Mitchell's early career was devoid of exciting or thrilling incidents, it nevertheless becomes interesting to trace her upward steps upon the stage towards fame and fortune. Like all truly successful artists, she began at the foot of the ladder, although her first appearance, as a mere chit of a girl, was in a speaking part. This event took place in her native city of New York, and at a much later date than is generally supposed; for the fact is that the subject of the present sketch has frequently been confounded with other actresses of the same name, who were upon the stage at the time, or else with older members of her own family, — half-sisters. Her father was Scotch,

and her mother English. The latter, at least, regarded the theatre with horror; and it was greatly to her dismay that she discovered, on her return from a visit to her old English home, that the child was actually "stage struck."

Little Maggie had been placed out to board during her mother's absence, and continued attending school. An inmate of the household was Mary Provost, the daughter of a clergyman, who graduated from the position of a school-teacher to that of an actress, and who, at the time referred to, was being coached in some tragic characters by Mr. Wyzeman Marshall. The child was mystified as to the import of the stilted speeches she heard from an adjoining apartment, but soon took to imitating both teacher and pupil. About this time she was taken to a theatre—the first she had ever entered—to see the late Barney Williams play. This little glimpse of stageland fairly fascinated her. Books, children's sports, and all else were cast aside. Finding this state of things existing on her return, her mother determined to send the child out of the city, beyond such evil influences as the theatre. Overhearing a discussion of this project, the daughter became downright rebellious.

It had so happened, that on her voyage back to America Mrs. Mitchell had met, among the passengers, Mr. John Moore, the old English actor, and his family, and found them very agreeable people. She told Mr. Moore about her daughter; and, as the acquaintance was kept up after reaching New York, he came soon to know that the child had fallen in love with the foot-lights. Mr. Moore was connected with the stage direction of Burton's Theatre in Chambers Street; and when,

on the occasion of a benefit to Mrs. Skerrett, a member of Mr. Burton's company, a child was required to play the part of Julia in Cherry's comedy, "The Soldier's Daughter," he bethought himself of little Miss Maggie. It required some effort to win the mother's consent for her appearance, but it was finally gained; and as no time was to be lost, Mr. Moore devoted Sunday to teaching his youthful *protégée* the part she was to play the succeeding night. The following morning she was taken by her mother to the theatre for rehearsal. Both then saw the mysterious region, "behind the scenes," for the first time; and it was the second time Maggie had been within the walls of a play-house. The youthful aspirant for stage honors was letter perfect, both at rehearsal and at the evening performance; and it is related of her that assurance gave her a degree of vehemence of delivery that fairly startled her hearers, Manager Burton included. Thus Miss Mitchell's first appearance on the stage was made on the 2d of June, 1851. That fine old comedian, William Rufus Blake, was The Governor Heartall; the beneficiary, Mrs. Skerrett, played the Widow Cheerly; and Miss Lizzie Western (afterwards Mrs. A. H. Davenport) and Lester Wallack, who had gone upon the stage as Mr. Lester, were also in the cast.

This event transpired at the end of the season, and there remained nothing else for Miss Maggie to do at Burton's. The ice was broken, however, and the stage had more allurements for her than ever. The ensuing season (1851-1852) found Mr. Moore occupying the position of prompter with Manager Thomas S. Hamblin at the Bowery Theatre; and here Miss Mitchell was given a permanent engagement as a member of

the company at the munificent salary of four dollars a week, while her mother furnished her stage dresses. Here she played a round of boys' characters, and danced between the acts with Gertrude Dawes. In the early part of the season she made a Shakespearian *début* with an amusing result. Edwin Eddy was playing an engagement; and, in "Richard III.," Miss Maggie was cast for the part of Edward, the young Prince of Wales. The curtain rose on the third act to a fanfare of trumpets, and the prince was discovered awaiting the homage of the Lord Mayor of London. The fearful outburst of brazen music was too much for royal dignity. It had been omitted at rehearsal, and now struck terror to the heart of the youthful player, who had never before heard such dire sounds. With a frightened exclamation that she wanted to "go home," the thoroughly demoralized little actress bolted for the wings. It required the united force and persuasion of the Duke of Gloucester, the Lord Mayor, and the whole corporation, to bring the recalcitrant prince back again; but the audience was already in roars of laughter, and the curtain was rung down amid confusion.

This little *contretemps* failed to dampen the young actress's ardor; and not long after, during Mr. Eddy's same engagement, she received her first recall before the curtain, after playing in "The Lost Child." This incident, and another which occurred later in the season while she was playing *Oliver Twist*, doubtless marked the proudest moments of her life. Manager Hamblin, after witnessing the latter performance from his box, announced to Mrs. Mitchell that her daughter's salary should henceforth be increased to six dollars a week. It is doubtful if in after years, when Miss Mitchell's

efforts won for her more than a thousand times as many dollars weekly, she experienced a tithe of the satisfaction and happiness this first modest increase of salary afforded. Some slight on the part of the management led Mrs. Mitchell to withdraw her daughter from Mr. Hamblin's Company; and the now popular *comédienne* played in Baltimore, under Manager Arnold, and elsewhere. About this time Mr. Moore took a company over to Newark for a night or two; and we find Miss Mitchell playing Claude Melnotte, Richard, and Young Norval, in an act each of "The Lady of Lyons," "Richard III.," and "Douglas." In 1853 she joined Mr. James Hall Robinson's Company when that gentleman opened a theatre on the Bowery, and enacted Evelyn Wilson in the drama of the same name, which had a run of several weeks. Although Miss Mitchell's impersonation created a strong impression, Mr. Robinson's enterprise in the end turned out badly; and the company was taken to Boston, where, on Sept. 5, 1853, at Robinson's Eagle Theatre, as the rejuvenated American Theatre in Sudbury Street was called, Miss Mitchell appeared in the same play.

Cleveland was next favored with Miss Mitchell's presence, and as the soubrette of Manager Nichols's Company she played in a round of comediettas and protean pieces with great success. There was, indeed, a Maggie Mitchell craze; and the young men of the town took to wearing "Maggie Mitchell scarfs," hats, and the like. Here it was, too, that she met the venerable English actor, John G. Cartlitch, then a white-haired old man and Manager Nichols's stage-director. Some years later the generous-hearted actress found the old man in Philadelphia reduced to the lowest depths of

poverty, and henceforth supported him. When the grateful recipient of her bounty died he left her his most precious possessions, — some little souvenirs of his dead wife and of his early triumphs on the English boards. The letters of sympathy Miss Mitchell had written to him were by his direction placed with him in the grave.

Miss Mitchell's first starring engagement followed her Cleveland season, and this was played at Pittsburg under James Foster's management. Her repertory at this time included such parts as Harry Halcyon in "A Middy Ashore," Margery in "A Rough Diamond," Gertrude in "The Loan of a Lover," Paul in Buckstone's "Pet of the Petticoats," Bob Nettles in "To Parents and Guardians," The Countess in James Pilgrim's "Wild Irish Girl," and Katty O'Sheal in Pilgrim's farce of the same name. The protean piece entitled "The Four Sisters," "An Object of Interest," "A Husband at Sight," "The Daughter of the Regiment," "Satan in Paris," and a farce written for her by Pilgrim and called "Our Maggie," were also on the list. For several years she continued to star through the country in pieces of this character with increasing success; and it was not until 1861 that "Fanchon the Cricket," the play with which her name became so inseparably connected, was produced. Its first representation was given at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, then under the management of Ben De Bar; and the original cast included Charles Pope as Landry Barbeaud, Alvin Read as Didier, R. F. McClannin as Father Barbeaud, and Mrs. Hind as Old Fadet.

The piece is a dramatization of George Sand's story "La Petite Fadette;" but strangely enough it reached

the American stage in a roundabout way, having been translated by Mr. August Waldauer, Mr. De Bar's orchestral leader, from a play already very popular on the German stage. So little faith had both the management and Miss Mitchell in "Fanchon," that two other pieces — "The Maid of the Milking-Pail" and "The Bonnie Fishwife" — were put up for the same night. The new play was, however, a success from the start, on account of the childlike freshness and vivacity of Miss Mitchell's acting. Many changes were made from the original, and many new features were introduced. The weird, elfish shadow dance, for example, was wholly Miss Mitchell's creation, although something similar had been seen in Meyerbeer's opera of "Dinorah." The pretty maypole dance was another interpolation. From New Orleans Miss Mitchell took the play to Montgomery, where she was already a favorite; but the breaking out of the war caused her to abandon a further Southern tour, and she returned North. On the 3d of June, 1861, she began an engagement at the Boston Museum; and a week later (June 10) "Fanchon" was produced with one of the most remarkable casts it ever had, — W. H. Whalley playing Landry; William Warren, Father Barbeaud; John Wilson, Didier; Mrs. Vincent, Mother Barbeaud; Miss Mitchell's elder sister Mary (now Mrs. Albaugh), Old Fadet; and Miss Jennie Anderson, Madelon. It was later, however, at the Howard Athenæum, that the play made its great Boston hit; and later still, at the Boston Theatre, it filled the great auditorium to overflowing in a succession of annual engagements. In New York Mrs. Mitchell hired the New Olympic, formerly Laura Keane's Theatre, for her daughter's

first appearance as Fanchon in that city ; and with the aid of a strong company, which included James W. Collier, "Dolly" (A. H.) Davenport, and J. H. Stoddard, the play had a brilliant run of six weeks.

While "Fanchon" was being played at the Boston Theatre in one of Miss Mitchell's annual engagements at that house, it was witnessed by the distinguished German tragedian, Bogumil-Dawison, who, although unfamiliar with the English tongue, was enabled to follow the action closely through his knowledge of the German original. So greatly delighted was he with Miss Mitchell's impersonation, that he made his way to the stage after the performance, and offered to take the actress and the entire company to Germany for a protracted engagement. Charlotte Cushman, too, earnestly advised the actress to play Fanchon abroad, but the counsel was never heeded. The German actress who had played Fanchon so successfully in Europe contemplated an American tour ; but Dawison persuaded her to give it up, and she afterward wrote a graceful tribute to the American actress who had distinguished herself in the part.

The very marked success of "Fanchon" led authors and adapters to send scores of pieces to Miss Mitchell for acceptance, but unfortunately most of the writers sought to create another Cricket. A further result of her well-earned triumph was that the stage soon saw hosts of imitators, a stolen copy of a prompt-book opening the way for reproductions of the play. While several really talented *comédiennes* essayed the rôle, none ever made an impression on the public which in the slightest degree tended to dim the lustre of the American original.

In later years Miss Mitchell played other characters, winning a series of brilliant stage triumphs; but none of them came fully up to the standard of "Fanchon," which remained as great a favorite as ever. Among her other pieces have been "The Pearl of Savoy" and "Little Barefoot," both of which were first played by her in Boston. The latter was a translation by Mr. Waldauer from the German. "Lorle," also from the German, was first translated by Mr. J. Rosewald, another orchestral leader, and afterwards rewritten by Mr. Fred Maeder. "Mignon" was an adaptation by Mr. George B. Runnion of Chicago.

"Jane Eyre," which may perhaps be accounted Miss Mitchell's next most successful essay after "Fanchon," was first brought out by her at McVicker's Theatre, Chicago. A play under a different title, and claimed to be original, had been submitted to her by the late Clifton W. Tayleure. The demands of a busy season with much travelling from city to city had prevented her from giving the manuscript more than a cursory examination, and she reached Chicago without having fully informed herself regarding its merits. Mr. McVicker had promised the public that the star should appear in a new part in the course of her engagement, and the difficulty was to find something to fill the bill. An untried piece of some sort which had been sent to the actress was talked of; but upon examination Mr. McVicker declared it to be unsuited to her, and it was laid aside. With many misgivings Mr. Tayleure's manuscript was fished out, and it was not long before the veteran actor and manager discovered the plot and incidents to be those of "Jane Eyre." An adaptation of Charlotte Brontë's story had already found

favor in New York ; and Miss Mitchell had made overtures towards securing a copy, not dreaming even that she had at the same time a version of the piece in her possession. No sooner had Mr. McVicker decided to produce Mr. Tayleure's dramatization, than Miss Mitchell set about studying the character in the most practical way, not merely by conning her lines from the manuscript, but by reading the novel itself, and thus gaining a fuller insight into the author's creation. The play was a signal success under its proper title, and for many seasons "Jane Eyre" remained a prime favorite with the public of all the great cities from Boston to San Francisco. In the former city, the poet Longfellow, who was a great admirer of Miss Mitchell's acting, witnessed the impersonation, and earnestly advised the actress to take the play to England. In later years, when the Brontë memorial was established, English friends of the gifted writer wrote to Miss Mitchell in token of acknowledgment of her powerful portrayal of Jane Eyre.

One of the many plays written for Miss Mitchell was entitled "Marie," and its author was the Hon. John D. Long. While the piece showed the polished diction of the scholarly writer, it had not the elements calculated to win popularity. Its first and only representations were given at the Boston Theatre, where also a new fifth act of "Fanchon," from the pen of the gifted clergyman, the late Rev. John Weiss, was produced with no better results. The reverend gentleman sought to make the moral of the play all the more impressive by bringing the little heroine to her grandmother's grave ; but while the scene was made touching, it gave the play an ending that was much too sombre.

While one of the ex-governors of Massachusetts, as already mentioned, sought to contribute to Miss Mitchell's stage popularity, another honored chief executive of the Old Bay State, the Hon. Frederic T. Greenhalge, was able to claim near relationship to the favorite actress, being a cousin. Among the happy incidents of Miss Mitchell's career, well remembered by many theatre-goers, were her essays of Parthenia in "Ingomar," and Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," on benefit occasions.

Since her withdrawal from the stage, Miss Mitchell, or Mrs. Abbott as she is known in domestic life, has resided at her beautiful summer home in Elberon, N.J., or at her elegant New York abode, in the enjoyment of the abundant fruits of her successful professional career. Her husband, formerly a well-known actor and manager, is engaged in mercantile pursuits. An accomplished young daughter resides with her, and a son is a rising young merchant in Boston. These are children by a former marriage.

If we examine Miss Mitchell's stage art to discover the secret of her really wonderful success, we readily find that naturalness and a seeming absence of art are its essential qualities. Favored by nature with a youthful presence, which aided her, even in her latest appearances before the public, in rendering her child heroines peculiarly attractive, she added to such native attributes the full measure of youthful spirits and animation. Her portrayals were unique, and yet nothing more than the holding of the mirror before nature's self. She had the rare faculty of painting the picture of maidenly purity and nobility of soul most deftly; and her audience laughed when she laughed, and wept

when she wept. Not infrequently the smiles shone through tears, so closely and truthfully were the varying moods of Fanchon's nature contrasted. Her vivid portrayal of childhood's sorrows and joys, of its bitter trials and noble triumphs, was the very perfection of dramatic art, and yet something beyond the mere achievements of the clever actress. It was the art which made a pure and ennobling stage creation all the more impressive by reason of the soul behind it all. Alas! the characters and the plays which served to make Maggie Mitchell so great a favorite with fathers and mothers, and so much beloved by every child, are no longer in fashion. Such things are too tame for the present day, since the rising generation of playgoers crave more highly seasoned food. Good actors there are, and always will be; but there can never be one who will exert a purer and better influence upon the American stage than the genial and winsome *comédienne* whose genius these few pages seek to commemorate.



LOTTA CRABTREE.

LOTTA CRABTREE.

BY DESHLER WELCH.

JOHN BROUGHAM'S well-known expression that Lotta was a dramatic cocktail smacked of the language of a *bon vivant* more than it did of a man whose brains, on this occasion, should have been somewhat separable from the workings of his stomach. It sounded bright, but it was as insidious as the drink itself.

In all my recollections of the stage, my fondest hold up Lotta. She filled my boyish thoughts with a healthy delight and most extraordinary sentiment. I could not imagine, for instance, that Lotta, as she appeared in "The Firefly" or "Little Nell," could eat a buckwheat cake in a commonplace way. Angel food, or bonbons and rose leaves, would have been all right. I worshipped her at the footlight shrine just as many other young fellows did; and it was an admiration very different from that declared nowadays by pasty men who wait at stage entrances in the hopes of a flirtation with some young farce-comedy woman, whose vulgar antics are as far removed from the childish romps of Lotta as the cabbage-flower differs from the violet. She was a remarkable picture then of mischievous femininity. She simply seemed to be having a grand good time, without the least suggestion of those incar-

nate foibles which the modern-day stage has produced, with so much alluring effect, in its exhibition of deplorable impudence.

It is not very many years ago that a plain poster with the simple announcement, "Lotta," was electrical in its effect on the theatre-going public in any play-house throughout the country. These people did not discuss her performances critically, from the histrionic point of view, any more than a mother would expect her child in frocks to have all the accomplishments of a cotillion dancer, or a man would expect to compare the funny joyousness of an affectionate St. Bernard pup to the grace of the grown greyhound. Lotta's naturalness got into your heart somehow, and she seemed as gentle and sweet and innocent as the bounding pink-eyed bunny in the fragrant caress of a clover-bed.

The criticaster said, however, that she could not *act*; that it was n't art, that she simply was herself. Well, that was just what we wanted. If she had been Sarah Bernhardt or Parepa Rosa, she would have been different. Yet there is an opinion lurking somewhere among intelligent men that there is considerable art in being natural on the stage, particularly when that naturalness is kept up to the bubbling point, such as Lotta's. Her Marchioness and Nitouche were each accentuated by different degrees of art. Had she dropped into a New York theatre as a Parisian actress, her Nitouche would have captured the town. But Théó had previously performed it here; and the little American woman did not have the pull with that superficial public that talked about graceful French *chic*, and got it mixed up with the suggestive contortion of a *café chan-*

tant. Of the two impersonations, Lotta's Nitouche seemed to me to be the more consistent and natural, and certainly more magnetic in its touch upon the strings of the heart. It had its production at the Grand Opera House, New York, March 29, 1886.

Lotta's stage career has been a remarkable one. She began it when she was a very little girl. She was born in New York City in 1847, and when she was ten years old played the part of Gertrude in a performance of "Loan of a Lover," in San Francisco. She instantly attracted attention, and was regarded as a wonderful child. In 1860 she returned East, and made a hit in New York in a farce written for her by Charles Gaylor, called "Four to One." This was followed by a long engagement at Wallack's Theatre at Thirteenth Street and Broadway, in John Brougham's dramatization of "The Old Curiosity Shop," and called "Little Nell and the Marchioness." Her acting in both parts delighted many people. Subsequently she established herself as a great favorite throughout the country in such plays as "The Little Detective," "The Firefly," "Heartsease," "Zip," and "Musette," all of which were either written or adapted to suit her original ways. The last two plays were by Frederick Marsden, and she was chiefly successful in them.

"The Little Detective" always remained in Lotta's *répertoire*, and was an excellent medium to display her versatility. She acted half a dozen different characters in this with fascinating and charming grace. Nothing could have been funnier than her apparent discomfiture when as a hoyden she was put into long skirts and taught to assume the airs and affectations of a lady. Most of her plays were written to show transition from

low to high life ; and generally the first comedian was the lover who stuck to the heroine, as she stuck to him, through thick and thin. The leading man was always the villain of the piece. But this accomplished the purpose of the author, by allowing Lotta to introduce her "specialties," her songs and dances. In these she was unexcelled. Then "skirt dancers" were unknown as a distinct attraction in art. Lotta could kick as high as her head, and play the banjo ; and she did these things as she did everything else, with a most charming *naïveté*. She seemed to act with the same spirit of enjoyment that her audiences manifested, and she would tire out her little body by answers to *encore* after *encore*.

I remember on one occasion, in the old Buffalo Academy of Music, when the late Benjamin G. Rogers was the leading comedian, that, in answer to thunderous acclamations of pleasure, she repeated the postilion's song from the opera of "Le Postillon" no less than eight times. Finally, panting for breath, she said very audibly : "What do you say, Ben ; shall we sing it again ?" It was during another engagement later on, in Buffalo, in playing a melodrama called "Hearts-ease," that Lotta met with a severe fall through a trap-door, from which, I have understood, she never fully recovered.

On another occasion, at Wallack's Theatre, while playing the banjo, a cat darted across the stage. With almost childish wonderment, Lotta cried out : "Why, look at that big cat !" and then, as if suddenly remembering where she was, went on strumming, to the vociferous delight of the audience, which indication seemed to amaze her all the more. It was in such glee and pleasure that Lotta won her way. Her petite-

ness and her daintiness, the sweetness of her face, and her curly red ringlets, were never successfully put in photograph or on canvas. To have caught the dimples, or the expression of her upper lip, — why, it would have been just as easy to have stopped the sunbeam darting aslant the lilac trembling in the summer's breeze!

Lotta was always a great favorite behind the scenes in all theatres, treating the supporting company with much consideration and friendliness; and it was in the halcyon period of her success that we had those good days for dramatic art, when nearly every city had its stock company. In my records I find that some notable casts were obtained for her pieces. At the Boston Theatre, in September, 1868, in the performance of "Little Nell and the Marchioness," James Lewis played Dick Swiveller. In October of the same year, in "Firefly," Charles R. Thorne, Jr., played Harold Cecil; James Lewis, Rakes; and H. A. Weaver, Colonel Chatumvay. In May, 1870, at the same theatre, in "The Little Detective," H. L. Murdoch played Phabus Rockaway, and Dan Maguinnis played Stuyvesant. The following October, in "Little Nell," C. Leslie Allen played Old Trent; Murdoch played Dick; Weaver, Quilp; and Mrs. Charles Poole played Mrs. Parley.

In November of that year, Lotta produced "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," acting the part of Sam Willoughby. Neil Warner was Bob Brierly, Louis Aldrich was Hawkshaw, Weaver was James Dalton, Allen was Melton Moss, Mrs. Poole was Mrs. Willoughby, and Rachel Noah was May.

With the change of the stock-company system by

the encroaching "combinations," Lotta was compelled to travel with her own company. She has had, in their turn, as supporting comedian, E. A. Locke, who played with her for several seasons, Fred R. Wren, John Howson, and C. H. Bradshaw.

Lotta's last season was in 1891. She introduced two new plays, — "Pawn Ticket 210," and "Ina." In speaking of her appearance at that time it was written: "This rare genius has lost no whit of her magnetic power to please, nor does she hang out on the outer walls any banner proclaiming the flight of years. She looks as young, acts as vivaciously, and cuts up as cutely as she did twenty years ago. This is Lotta's tribute to good sense and wise living — in freshness, personal charm, and eternal youth, Lotta is the eighth wonder of the world!"

It has been rightly said of Lotta that she was the creator and sole representative of a school that was as well defined and as well understood as was the school of the Kembles in their day; as the school of Garrick and Kean (who punctured inflated Kempleism), when they set up nature as the goddess of their idolatry. The charm of Lotta's acting penetrated every heart; she defied convention; she was not measurable by rule or line. The secret of her charm was as hidden as the scent of the rose; it was there — somewhere; those iconoclasts who sought to find it were like the Persian poet in his hunt for the hereafter — "they evermore came out by the door wherein they went." Lotta was incomparable and inimitable. As for her imitators they have, alas, been legion, but they were only the sickly hue of the waxen image.

Lotta maintained her youthful appearance and vigor

to a wonderful extent up to the time of her retirement. She has remained apparently very happy in celibacy, under the chaperonage of a devoted mother, who has been her constant companion and business manager. They have made good investments, and to-day Lotta is considered the wealthiest woman on the stage. She owns a great deal of property in the West, several buildings in Boston, including the Park Theatre, and has a most charming home on the shores of Lake Hopatcong, where she lives most of the time. There is n't a bird more free than she is, none that sings with more gladness than she does; and the acorn that falls in her path, or the first woodland flower that she sees, are simply little bits of the ever-recurring changes of nature that are just as fresh to her now as at any time in her busy life.

MINNIE MADDERN-FISKE.

BY MILDRED ALDRICH.

WHenever the very most has been made, for theatrical purposes, of a woman's character, temperament, intellect, it has in the most cases been accomplished by the discreet manipulation, the enthusiastic encouragement, the practical impetus, of a second person, — one who can stand apart and see a woman as she cannot see herself; one who has the head to recognize her possibilities, and the artistic instinct to make the most of them. Ability being granted, the first step toward a great career is a start in the right direction.

It is notorious that women do not know themselves, and that charge against the sex has had innumerable proofs in the history of women on the stage. To that undoubted truth must be traced the fact that Minnie Maddern has not even yet achieved the success to which her unquestioned gifts seem to entitle her, and which many a woman with no part of her endowments has won. There is a strange and inexplicable inconsistency between the claims which many an actor, manager, and reliable critical authority make for her dramatic equipment in the way of temperament and magnetism, and the actual result of a career which reached from her babyhood to her marriage at the age



MINNIE MADDERN FISKE

of twenty-five, and after six years of retirement was taken up again at the age of thirty-one. The result of that career is to be traced directly to a false start, and that in its turn to the fact that she was left to her own mistaken guidance; and gifted as she is, she knows absolutely nothing of her own nature and its great possibilities.

Born almost on the stage; familiar with its routine from the time that she learned to toddle; used to the footlights, to the sound of her own voice in the play-house, to the excitement of endeavor, to the exhilaration of applause, when but three years old; a pet with the actors of the days when the drama had more force if less polish than it has to-day; playing the entire round of juvenile rôles, from soubrettes and boys to young heroines, from leaders of marches to victims of local melodramas, from Shakespeare's lads to fairy gods, in the days before long runs were known, or the one-part actor thought of, when the way of the actor was one of work, and was neither strewn with rose-leaves nor walled with adulation; starred at sixteen, and retired at twenty-five, having run the entire gamut of stage experiences — such up to 1890 was the history of Minnie Maddern. Then marriage and a brief retirement made a sharp break in her career.

She was a veritable *enfant de la ballé*.

Her maternal grandmother was an English girl of fine family, who thought the world well lost for love, and married a music-master, who bore the name which the actress kept for a stage name. For a time the young couple are said to have lived happily under the offended noses of the wife's nice-feeling relatives; but when the disinheriting father died, and realistically cut

them off with the traditional shilling, they came to America to seek their fortune.

They were a prolific race; and ultimately, with their seven children, all of whom were musically gifted, they organized an orchestra, and made tours. The family traditions treasure the fact that when just in her teens Lizzie Maddern, one of the most gifted of the children, and the mother of Minnie, could score an entire opera for the orchestra.

Lizzie Maddern was afterwards a well-known actress in the South and West. She became the wife of Thomas Davey, the pioneer manager of the Western circuit, of whom his daughter laughingly remarks, "He had the microscopic eye of the manager, for I am sure he discovered towns in the West the very existence of which had never been suspected by any one else." He was a small, wiry man, whose red hair his daughter inherited, and much of whose erratic disposition she also adds to the histrionic gifts her mother gave her. Stories of "Tom" Davey still crop up in the West. Eastern actors find the chronicles of the stage out there rich with them; for his wit equalled his temper, and his waywardness and eccentricity were enormous.

Minnie Maddern was born in New Orleans in one of the late war years. Her first recollections are of the theatre, where night after night, when but two years old, she slept in her mother's dressing-room, being stowed out of the way in a huge dress trunk, the cover to which was raised between the light and the sleeping child. The nervous little girl would not remain with her nurse at the hotel. Naturally the inheritor of dramatic gifts did not stay long in this

retirement. She sought her place as naturally and as persistently as water seeks its level. From poking about and mussing up the dressing-room, from going on voyages of discovery on the dressing-table, and disorganizing the make-up box, — all in her baby attempts at order, — she was graduated to the stage, as being easier to care for there. From her improvised crib she had furtively watched her pretty mamma making quick changes; she had eyed curiously the spangled skirts, the blond wig, the blackened eyebrows. She had breathed the fatal odor of the theatre. To return her to domestic life was impossible. She had drawn deep into her lungs that ether which seems poisonous to those not born to it, that compound of dust, gas, paint, unventilated, musty space, out of which those successfully inoculated never seem to be quite alive. So the realm behind the footlights became her world, its painted canvas her nature, its “props” her playthings, — they were the real things of life to her. She felt its painted trees more real to her than forests. She loved it as her native land; and though she has voyaged wearily out of it in search of change, she came back to it again.

If it were possible for her to write the history of her early days, it would be an admirable epitome of the rise of the American stage, though not of the American actor. Though they did not play in inn yards as they did in the days of Queen Bess, their theatre was frequently the dining-room of a poor inn; their stage the tables lashed together. Those were the days of long *répertoires*, before scenery was more than a detail, and when costumes were few and cheap. Such was the state of the West when Minnie Maddern, after much

clamoring, was, during one of her father's tours, allowed a real hearing. All that she now remembers of the occasion is that she wore a Scotch kilt made by her mother, and sang between the tragedy and comedy, as was the custom, a piece about Jamie coming over the meadow, after which she danced the Highland Fling.

Her first legitimate appearance was made at Little Rock, Ark.; but of that even the actress's memory has no record save the fact and the part. To quote her own words, "I cannot even remember who played Richard to my Duke of York." A little later, however, she repeated that performance in New Orleans, when she was in the company supporting the Irish tragedian Barry Sullivan. I am told that the poor, erratic, irascible Sullivan had a hard time with her. Though little more than a baby, she seemed to have been born with the actor's bravado, which, no matter how badly things may go at the last rehearsal, is always certain that "it will be all right at night." It was nearly impossible to get her to learn her lines. She liked acting, but had an actor's contempt for the author. One evening she was cast for the apparition which bears the tree in the caldron scene in "Macbeth," and which, bidding the bold Scot "be lion-mettled," assures him that

"until

Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him,"

he shall never be vanquished. A funny little slip of a ghost she must have been in her white nightgown, with her bristling red top. The audience certainly found her so. Up to that point the play had gone

well. The solemn entrance of the curious little apparition, who paused gravely to recover her breath and her balance, was greeted by the hitherto breathless audience with a shout of laughter. Nothing disconcerted she began to sputter, "Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no heed where perspirers are." A shout went up, and through his teeth the tragedian hissed, "Take her down;" and the little ghost shot out of sight, much to her own disgust.

Only infinite coaxing and well-kept promises of "lollipops" enabled Sullivan to pull her through that season; but he did it. From that time her career was an active one. She played the entire round of juvenile parts with Sullivan,—Willie Lee in Laura Keene's production of "Hunted Down;" all the juvenile rôles during Lucille Western's last Southern tour; Little Fritz in Emmet's original production of "Fritz," at Wallack's Theatre and Niblo's, New York; Paul in the great production of "The Octoroon," Philadelphia; Franko in "Guy Mannering," with Mrs. Waller; Sibyl in "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing," with Carlotta Leclereq; Mary Morgan in "Ten Nights in a Barroom," with Yankee Locke, in Boston; the child in Oliver Doud Byron's scenic production of "Across the Continent;" Damon's son in "Damon and Pythias," with E. L. Davenport; both Heinrich and Minna in "Rip Van Winkle;" Prince Arthur in "King John," at Booth's Theatre, New York, with John McCullough, Junius Booth, and Agnes Booth in the cast; Adrienne in "Monsieur Alphonse;" the boy's part in "Bosom Friends;" Alfred in the first road production of "Divorcee;" Georgie in "Frou-Frou," with Mrs. Scott-Siddons during her first American tour; the child in

"The Chicago Fire," produced at the Olympic, New York; Hilda in Emmet's "Karl and Hilda;" François in "Richelieu." When but ten years old she played the Sun God in the great spectacle, "The Ice Witch," which David Bidwell produced in New Orleans; and had appeared prominently in "Aladdin," "The White Faun," and other scenic pieces. She was but twelve years old, when, owing to an unexpected vacancy in the company with which she was travelling, she played Louise in "The Two Orphans," and Lucy Fairweather in "The Streets of New York." She often "doubled" the gamin and Peachblossom in "Under the Gaslight." Before she was fourteen she had played Marjorie in "The Rough Diamond," and in "The Little Rebel," led many marches, of which, by the way, she is almost as proud as she is of having played old women's parts with success at the age of fifteen.

At odd times she went to school in Montreal, New Orleans, and Louisville, attended the Ursuline Convent at St. Louis, and a French school in Cincinnati, and wherever the company stayed any length of time she went to a private school. Her mother, however, was her constant teacher. Her last part before she started out as a star was the soubrette part in "The Messenger from Jarvis Centre Section," in support of Macauley. In May, 1882, she made her *début* as a star, opening at the Park Theatre, New York (since burned), as Chip in a deplorably bad play, written by Charles Callahan, entitled "Fogg's Ferry." It is from the winter of that year that my knowledge of Miss Maddern dates. It was the week before Christmas, notoriously the very worst theatrical week in the season, that Minnie Maddern was billed to appear at the

Park Theatre in Boston. A few persistent theatre-goers might have remembered the child-actress who had a few years before appeared in "Ten Nights in a Barroom," but evidently they did not, for no mention was made of the fact; so it was quite as a stranger that the actress was heralded here. No mention was made of her professional career; but great stress was laid on the fact that she was the ward of the New Orleans Continental Guard, and by that body she was commended to the tender mercies of the Boston militia.

I had been asked by a member of the local body to assist him in keeping his word to a brother officer in New Orleans, and to call on the young actress; and, as so often happens, I set about what proved to be a delightful experience in a most indifferent frame of mind. She was absolutely unknown to me, and nothing that had been done to advertise her had attracted my attention.

It was twilight on a very cold day when I knocked at her room at Hotel Vendome. A clear voice bade me enter, and in a moment I had forgotten my cold drive. It was a voice which I can never forget, and which even as I write of it comes back to my ear with a strange, delicious insistence. As the door closed behind me, there rose from the depths of a large chair, and stood between me and the dim light from the window, a slender, childish figure, in a close-fitting dark gown. The fading light, the dark dress, threw into greater relief the pale face with its small features and deep eyes, above and around which, like a halo, was a wealth of curling red hair. I had been told that she was young; but I was not prepared for any such unique personality as hers, and I still remember the

sensation of the surprise she was to me as a most delightful experience. This was not the conventional young actress to whom I had been accustomed, this slight, undeveloped figure, in its straight, girlish gown only reaching to the slender ankles. There was a pretty assumption of dignity, there was a constant cropping out in bearing, in speech, in humor, and in gestures of delicious, inimitable, unconcealable youth, which was most fetching, and which had something so infinitely touching in it.

I have never encountered a face more variable. At one moment I would think her beautiful. The next instant a quick turn of the head would give me a different view of the face, and I would say to myself, "She is plain;" then she would speak, and that beautiful musical mezzo, so uncommon to American ears,—and from which a Boston man once emotionally declared "feeling could be positively wrung, so over saturated was it,"—would touch my heart, and all else would be forgotten. Such was Minnie Maddern when I first met her on her eighteenth birthday; and I cannot see that the years have changed her much, though they have a little rounded the still willowy figure.

I felt even then her emotional possibilities, and shall never forget my disappointment when later in the week I witnessed her performance in "Fogg's Ferry." It was a play in which Lotta or Annie Pixley might have appeared, and bad enough for even them to fail in. Miss Maddern had no qualification save the most thorough training to make a play of that sort "go." Her natural instincts were too true to allow her to abandon herself to the staginess necessary to make such a play a success, and her delicacy and charm were valueless in the part.

It is impossible to understand how the fatal error of supposing her adapted to such plays was made, unless she was blinded by the thought of Lotta's hundreds of thousands, and Maggie Mitchell's blocks of real estate—the results in their cases of that very recognition of personality and limitations which was lacking in Miss Maddern's, and which condemned a girl who should have developed the power to play such a Camille as the American stage has not contributed yet, to doing soubrette work in a third-rate play.

At that time, young as she was, she had been three years a wife, having married at the age of fifteen Legrand White, a clever xylophone soloist in the orchestra of a Western theatre. The cause and result of this deplorable marriage have no place here, where the fact is simply set down as history.

In 1884 she presented at the new Park Theatre, New York, "Caprice," which had been written for her by Howard P. Taylor. Though by no means a strong play, it gave her an opportunity to show much of her natural equipment. The rare endowment of individual femininity was its most notable characteristic. The humor of her smile was delicious. The pathos of her voice heart-catching. The oddity of her appearance amounted to originality. She had a peculiar gift of emotion, uniting tears and smiles in the same breath, which was more pathetic than undiluted grief, and more diverting than undiluted laughter. It was the very rainbow of emotion, promising joy while it spoke of sadness, and flaunting sorrow in the face of happiness. It constantly had one at a disadvantage in its surprises.

In September, 1885, Steele Mackaye's adaptation of "Andrea," which Sardou wrote for Agnes Ethel, and

in which she made her great success, was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, New York, with Miss Maddern in the leading part. It bore the unmelodious, prejudicially cheap title "In Spite of All." She was supported by a strong company, including Richard Mansfield, and the play ran for nearly a season. While confessing all the crudities which severe critics found in her delineation of this part, the third act was a great performance. It is a scene in which a young wife, having seen with her own eyes her husband in the dressing-room of a popular actress, having with her own ears heard him plan a sort of elopement, has returned to her home to await his arrival preparatory to quitting her and the country for a woman who cares only for his admiration. The wife is young, but she is brave; and she determines to make a *tour de force* for the sake of keeping beside her the man whom she adores, in spite of his infidelity, the man without whom she cannot live, and whom she is determined to save from himself until she can rouse his moral sense. I know no actress — and sweeping as the statement is I do not wish to qualify it — who could have given to this scene the charm which Miss Maddern gave it. Its grief, its courage, its womanliness, were so human that many an old stager who thought his day for tears had passed paid it an involuntary tribute. In that one scene in a play full, I confess, of mistaken bits, was felt at that time the divine instincts which gave to the French stage the Sarah Bernhardt of the Comédie Française, and to the London stage an Ellen Terry; and widely as the careers differ, these three women were in my thoughts of the stage temperamentally bracketed, until the rise of Duse, whom Maddern is still more like. •

For a few years after the withdrawal of this play, Miss Minnie was on the road, and once more living over her early career in the West. In May, 1890, she reappeared in New York in the title rôle of "Feather-brain," an English comedy presented at the Madison Square Theatre, and in which Miss Maddern's quaint humor made quite an impression. She did not care for the part herself, and opinions differ widely in regard to her performance. I cannot speak personally of it, as I did not visit New York while it was running.

Her last appearance, before her retirement, was made in February, 1890, the 18th, I think, at Toronto, in "In Spite of All;" and March 19, 1890, she was married at Larchmont, N.Y., to Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske, the editor of the New York *Dramatic Mirror*.

From her marriage to the winter of 1893, Minnie Maddern-Fiske lived quietly in New York, and for two years of that time she showed little sign of returning to the stage. She was active with her pen, writing a play with her husband for James O'Neil, "Fontenelle," and with Paul Kesker for Madame Modjeska, "The Countess Rodine," and doing several little curtain raisers which were acted and printed. Several times she appeared for charity in New York, and whenever she did actors were wildly enthusiastic about her.

Nov. 20, 1893, at the Tremont Theatre in Boston she reappeared in the title rôle of "Hester Crewe," a play by her husband, and a strangely bad play, suggesting at points George Eliot's story of "Adam Bede." This play was a disastrous failure, although it proved that the actress was still possessed of magnetic repose, and that her odd personality had not sunk into commonplaceness in retirement. For

two years more she was in retirement, and then in the early fall she started out again touring West and South; and reaching New York March 21, 1896, where at the Garden Theatre she again bid for favor. As usual the critics dubbed her great of temperament, wonderful in her power of repose, her unconventionality, her truth, and her uniqueness of personal expression. The play she produced was "Marie Deloche," a version of Alphonse Daudet and Leon Hennique's "La Menteuse," which was first produced at the Gymnase, Paris, Feb. 4, 1892, a subtle study most admirably portrayed. Mrs. Fiske has played also Dumas's "La Femme de Claude," never before given in English; Nora in Ibsen's "Doll's House" — which she first gave at a charity benefit, two years before; a little realistic tragedy of her own, "A Light from St. Agnes;" and "Frou-Frou."

Yet one is with all this unable to feel that Minnie Maddern-Fiske has yet arrived. She has a remarkable temperament, and is one of the most intellectual women on the stage. She is as an actress devoid of conventionality, absolutely free from any cheap theatrical faults, and more apt to under play than over play; yet she lacks the element of popularity, and is often unconvincing, unfinished, incomplete, suggesting far more than she realizes, showing an intelligent comprehension of more than she executes. But even to-day she is not at the zenith of her possibility; and while her Marie Deloche is a step in front of her earlier work, it is not yet time to judge her finally.



W. H. CRANE.

WILLIAM H. CRANE.

BY JOSEPH HOWARD, JR.

IT is nonsense to say that men cannot be properly estimated, their worth fairly weighed, until the clod has fallen upon their caskets.

A pound is a pound to-day, just as much as it was a hundred years ago, just as absolutely as it will be a hundred years hence. "A man's a man for a' that," whether he be looked at eye to eye, or through the telescope of history. In fact, it would seem as though the old maxim, "Speak nothing but good of the dead," made a just estimate of a man's value, after his labors are ended, an impossibility. What do we know, as matter of fact, beyond gossip and distorted stories, concerning any of the great or the lesser names of the past?

The proper time to estimate William H. Crane as an artist, a financier, an encourager of native authorship, as an individual, is now, when we can look him squarely in the face, listen to his voice, observe closely his habits of speech, of gesture, nay, follow the very currents of his thought.

For purely perfunctory purposes it may be well to say that Crane is not only an American, but an American of the Americans, having been born in Leicester,

Mass., April 30, 1845. While a lad in school he had a bass voice of phenomenal range for one of his age; and later, when fifteen or sixteen years old he was clerking in a dry-goods store, he and others formed a company known as the Young Campbell Minstrels, and gave concerts greatly to the delight of the people of the village, Crane's favorite song being "The Jolly Raftsman." In 1863, when the celebrated Holman Company visited Boston, having made the acquaintance of some of the children, he was offered a small position by Mr. Holman, who agreed to pay all his expenses for a year, and give him a little extra for spending money. It seems odd to us, who see Crane to-day, in all the dignity of mature experience, at the head of a well-equipped organization, one of the wealthiest stars in the land, to think of him as singing for seven years with a band of youthful associates in the "Child of the Regiment," "Fra Diavolo," "Sonnambula," and a *répertoire* of farcical one-act pieces. But that is what he did.

And there is where he received training severe, and discipline necessary, leading up to an engagement with the Oates Opera Company, with which he remained four consecutive seasons, travelling from one end of the country to the other, as the singing comedian in an operatic menu ranging from the legitimate through comic *bouffe*.

Crane is a born comedian.

He was not a comedian simply because cast for comic parts. He is one of the men in whose eye can be detected that much written of "twinkle," betraying quick perception, even quicker intuition, and an all-around apprehension of the fun, not alone of phrase, but of

situations. When "Evangeline" was produced by the Oates Company in Niblo's Garden in 1873, Crane created the part of LeBlanc, achieving at a bound a success so marked, so pronounced, as to still be far in the lead of efforts made with intelligent industry by a host of imitators, no one of whom has approached the hither verge of Crane's unquestionable triumph.

Crane is ambitious.

Ambition is an inspiring factor. Without it the dead level of the world would be stupid enough,—monotonous, profitless, with no trace of enthusiasm, no sentiment, indeed, no fire, no push. There are ambitions along different lines; and although it is undoubtedly true that Crane is ambitious for money, ambitious for repute, ambitious for a good name, his chief ambition is to be known as an encourager of native authorship, and to have a first place among the interpreters of native thought. It would be folly to say that when he was comedian in a comic opera troupe these ideas were formulated into a fixed purpose, and that the young man, then doubtless more or less intoxicated by popular applause, and by a recognition always extended to him from the first by the most conservative presses, deliberately planned what he is now so admirably out-working. It is, however, an undeniable fact that, so long ago as 1874, regarding himself with judicial eye, and forecasting probabilities with almost prophetic intuition, he determined to kick from him the ladder on which he had mounted, and to start forward upon the plane attained with loftier purpose, and a genuine regard for honest work, and that fruitage which is almost a certain harvest in the field of his peculiar toil.

So he gave up singing.

And having given that up, recognizing that his ability as a comedian and his natural trend toward laughter provocation had so far been a large factor in the problem of success, he determined to continue as a comedian, though as a speaker rather than a singer. But his friends, and especially his employers, took a precisely opposite view, and argued, accompanying argument with inducement, that it would be wiser for him to remain where success was certain, than to attempt what was an unknown field to him.

Yet he was firm.

And firmness, along a line once determined upon, was then, as it is to-day, a pronounced feature of his composition. No man ever yet succeeded in business who was destitute of the ability to say "yes" and mean it, to say "no" and to stick to it. It is doubtful if any star upon the American boards is more generous with his associates, more considerate of his subordinates, more ready to listen to argument and suggestion from his manager, than Crane; yet associates, subordinates, and manager will agree in the assertion that, after argument is ended and decision reached, he is as immovable as the Rock of Gibraltar. Having deemed it best to leave comic opera and enter upon the dramatic field, he accepted a position in Hooley's Chicago Theatre, where he at once earned recognition and won substantial reputation. In "Married Life" and "The Rough Diamond," as Hector Placide in "Led Astray," Meddle in "London Assurance," Templeton Jitt in "Divorcee," Mr. Crux in "School," Aminadab Sleek in "The Serious Family," and Tom Tack in "Time Tries All," he achieved successes equal to those he made in General Boum, and LeBlanc.

He was on the threshold of new triumphs.

And from that day on, steered by ambitious determination to do everything he attempted a little better than he did its predecessor, and not only to make but to leave an indelible mark wherever he went, it is but fair to say he abundantly justified what his friends and old-time employers were pleased to term his "stubbornness," in refusing to reconsider his deliberate choice of a new phase, a new branch, a new line, of the profession he had adopted. The following season he was stage-manager in Hooley's Theatre, in which position he developed a new characteristic,—that of a disciplinarian, combining promptness with decision, and the two with never failing good nature, thereby enabling him to get from the company an amount of labor which justified them in being the associates of one who had already developed genius of a most interesting and promising nature. With the Hooley Company, Crane went to California, where they did an enormous business, which largely hinged upon the peculiarities and versatilities of the stage-manager, who had already taken the lead, and seemed bound to keep it. An interesting feature of this trip was the *début* of Miss Ella Kraighne in the always effective *rôle* of the nun, Sister Genevieve, in "The Two Orphans." Miss Kraighne, who made a most favorable impression in that, as also in Glib in "Ultimo," about that time illustrated a new reading of the old proverb which says, "Change the name and not the letter is a change for the worse and not for the better;" and when Miss Kraighne became Mrs. Crane, she took not only the most important, but the most charming step in her life—a step which brought to the side of the rising

star a helpmate in the best and truest sense of that significant term, to whom he in his hour of gloom was indebted for cheer and encouragement, and in his hours of prosperity for a careful, prudent, and sagacious partner. At this time John McCullough was the proprietor of the California Theatre, Barton Hill, manager; and in the company were T. W. Keene, W. A. Mestayer, Robert Pateman, Miss Bella Pateman, Miss Ellie Wilton, Mrs. Judah, Miss Alice Harrison, Miss Marion Singer, Nelson Decker, and William H. Crane.

Crane was on the road to fortune.

An idea of his popularity may be gained from the fact that, in January, 1876, the governor, State officers, and members of the California Legislature, desiring to give him substantial evidence of their regard and high appreciation of his dramatic ability, tendered him a benefit in the Metropolitan Theatre in Sacramento, of which Thomas J. McGuire was manager. At this benefit, according to contemporaneous record, a brilliant audience, which packed the house, was present; and every evidence of common-sense recognition, of favor possible to conceive, was extended to the beneficiary. Crane then came to New York, and, in the Park Theatre, took a step forward, playing, under the management of Henry E. Abbey, Dick Swiveller to Lotta's Little Nell; for which part he was specially engaged, and for which he received the unanimous recognition of the papers, a fact that impressed upon his own mind the desirability of immediately securing further and better opportunity for himself as an individual in the profession.

This he then and there obtained.

Mr. Abbey, in the latter part of January, 1877, pro-

duced in the Park Theatre a play by Leonard Grover entitled "Our Boarding House," in which Crane as Colonel M. T. Elevator, and Stuart Robson as Professor Gillipod, paralyzed the public by an association of artistic grotesquery and clean-cut comicality never before seen upon the local stage. It may be said that at this point Mr. Crane's phenomenal fortune began, continuing with ever-increasing brilliancy down to the present time. It is not too much to say, in fact, it is but obvious justice to say, that the hit of the evening was made by Crane, who was extremely odd, eccentric, "funny," as the phrase goes, as Colonel Elevator. His denunciation, in the absence of Gillipod, and threats of vengeance, when contrasted with his lamblike conduct when brought face to face with the professor, was the very acme of farce comedy, the farce permeating the comedy, and the comedy refining the farce. The success of the season was made emphatic by the wide horized popularity of the play and the players, resulting in offers numerous and flattering. This brought about a partnership between the two comedians, Robson and Crane, who determined together to put into effect Crane's gradually maturing programme of securing American plays from American authors, their first effort being in a piece, written by Mr. Bradford, called "Our Bachelors." Prior to this, however, Robson and Crane appeared in Boucicault's "Forbidden Fruit," Crane as Buster and Robson as Cato Dove, with such great and immediate success, that John McCullough took them on a Californian tour, from which they returned with more money each than they had together owned in all their past careers. "Our Bachelors," although an adaptation from the German,

was a notable comedy success from the American point of view. This was followed as years rolled away by "Sharps and Flats," a notable revival of "The Comedy of Errors," an excellent presentation of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and other plays, modern and ancient, which brought them down to the fall of 1887.

Their second decade now began.

All this time Crane had grown. He had settled into the calm existence of a domestician; he had learned the value of money; he had found in his wife a careful, prudent, and thoughtful pecuniary manager. He saw himself a recognized attraction, potent on all the circuits East and West, North and South; and with brains enough to appreciate the fact that an actor who was equally welcome in Toby Belch, Dullstone Flat, Jowler, Dromio, Falstaff, and LeBlanc, and could draw packed houses at every appearance, ought to be worth a little something to himself. Crane and Robson had now been together ten years, each supplementing the other perfectly. They had tried everything of the olden time in which there was a possibility of both being properly cast, but they naturally longed for special opportunities for individual as well as combined success. Such an opportunity was found in "The Henrietta," written by Bronson Howard, and brought out by Robson and Crane in the Union Square Theatre in the fall of 1887.

"The Henrietta" was a bold effort in pure comedy, which has well been styled the most difficult field of dramatic composition. Its success was immediate, pronounced, thorough, honest, and deserved. Each actor was well fitted; and the satirical picture of contemporaneous life and manners in New York, with special

reference to the smartness, hollowness, and the fatuity which attend operations in Wall Street, took the town through the eyes and ears, by the very heart, and insured not alone a continuity of financial prosperity, but the possibility of steady growth along the line of artistic merit. Something besides good acting on the stage and physical rest during the hours of leisure were now needed, — good judgment in choosing plays for the future, careful selection in composing the casts, liberal taste in mounting. The fact that it was an entrance into a field already well occupied, where magnificent productions were the rule, and enterprising managers the rivals, were matters for grave consideration, all stimulants to growth, and to growth in right directions. The two men worked together harmoniously, pleasing the public, coining money ; Crane, as Nicholas Vanalstyne, at all times mobile, emotional, unctuous, fluent, forceful, a pusher, a driver, as honest in his excessive generosity here as he was earnest in clean-cut robbery of his best business friend there.

He had become a lion.

He was recognized universally by the critics, by the best thinkers among the public, and by audiences in general, as strong in the development of high-class comedy, with the ability to appreciate and portray types of character universally recognized and understood, but nevertheless most difficult to paint upon the popular canvas. At this time, when asked what he preferred to play, American or Shakesperian comedy, Crane said, "I confess to liking the American better. It gives me greater opportunities. Now I present a mixture of humor, pathos, and sentiment. It is higher work than I have done before ; and as the public is

pleased to like me, I, of course, enjoy the means of gratifying them and my own aspirations at the same time."

His own aspirations!

That is precisely the point made earlier in this sketch. Having found himself endowed by nature with certain capacities, with unmistakable faculties for better work and higher work and nobler work than he was then engaged in, at what appeared to his friends and advisors a pecuniary and professional sacrifice, he deliberately turned his back upon the past, and faced with unflinching and characteristic courage a future which must be fought for ere it could be won, but in which he believed he saw golden opportunities for fame, for recognition from those whose regard he respected, and for a right ultimately to stand among the few at the head.

In 1888 Crane and Robson parted; and on the stage of the Chicago Opera House, in reference to certain ill-natured remarks that had been passed concerning the feeling between the twelve-year partners, Robson said, "It will ever be with a sentiment of mingled satisfaction and pride that I shall recall the times when it was my good fortune to share honors with one whom I esteem as an honorable man, a generous friend, and a matchless actor." And Crane in response said, "While we think that the change we are about to make is for the best, and we are separating willingly, we cannot part without regret. For twelve years we have worked loyally and hard together. We have tried to serve our art as well as ourselves, while we have endeavored to amuse and entertain our friends. With the heartiest Godspeed, the kindest interest in each

other's welfare, the warmest personal feeling toward one another, we set off next season, each on his separate way."

Then came "The Senator."

American through and through in scene, incident, language, and movement, with a remarkable realism which makes it as phenomenal a favorite in the national capital as in any city in the United States, the individual work of Crane in this comedy is simply tremendous. In the last act he is on the stage the entire time. Were it not for his superabundant vitality, his Senator Rivers would be a physical impossibility. The actor's head is as full of business as the genuine Senator found himself overburdened with. The hinge on which plot and counterplot turn, the Senator, is occupied from start to finish, as the engineer, the mechanic, the diplomatist, the bluffer, the man of the world, the thoughtful employer, everybody's friend, and the doubting lover. In all these phases, these types of character, Crane has found study profitable. It may be doubted if a more artistic picture has been presented upon the modern stage, so faithful to recognizable life, so absolute a photograph of thoroughly appreciated situations, as the Senator in the hands of Mr. Crane.

With characteristic generosity the now capitalistic actor finds pleasure as well as profit in the encouragement of native authorship. To his repertory he has added "The Governor of Kentucky," by Franklin Fyles, and "His Wife's Father," by Martha Morton, and with the two has increased his prosperity. He now stands where his early ambitions hoped he might.

STUART ROBSON.

BY CHARLES M. SKINNER.

STUART ROBSON is a grown-up cherub. The statement is made with a wince of misgiving, not from doubt of the truth of it, but from certainty thereof ; for the phrase is one that seems likely to have been used, and so made trite. Yet I hazard an insistence on the definition as the completest that suggests itself.

The first time that I saw this comedian was in Boston, as Captain Crosstree in a burlesque of "Black-Eyed Susan ;" and his appearance was a cause of mirth. A body artificially inflated to the dimension of a Lambert, and cased in a naval uniform of white, was topped with a smooth, round head that had a birdlike way of turning, and was peaked away into one of the largest and most ferocious noses that ever illuminated human countenance ; the eyes were clear and innocent ; the hands dangled at the waist, or wreathed themselves in meek, complying attitudes ; the gestures were what Delsarte would prescribe as *not* appropriate to the emotions they presumably illustrated ; the legs had a twinkling activity out of keeping with the presumptive bulk that they propelled ; and the voice was almost a treble, with a lisp and an upward slide to the sentences like that of an infant uncertain of its words. The whole



STUART ROBSON IN "THE HENRIETTA."



apparition was so full of incongruity, and conduct so belied appearance, that the audience had the shock of something like a new experience before the extravagant humor of the thing brought laughter out. Nose, paunch, uniform, and trappings denoted recklessness, command, and passion, but eyes, hands, legs, and bearing were those of an Arcadian shepherd; the text was full of threat and bluster, while the voice that uttered it was as the cooing of a dove.

The juvenile innocence and freshness of this man are what give greatest distinction to his work; to sundry of his characters, like Crosstree, they add the humor of anomaly; in others, as in "The Henrietta," they emphasize character. In the last-named play — the clever work of Bronson Howard — he appears as the son of an industrious and reckless money-getter, — one of those typical rich men's sons that parade Fifth Avenue in clothes and manners and dialect bought and borrowed from London, and that occupy their minds with clubs, clothes, and chorus girls; young fellows of singular uselessness. Mr. Robson's Bertie in this comedy has been gleefully hailed wherever Anglomaniaes have developed; for the empty stare, the affectation of the monocle, and certain pretensions of attitude and speech, are recognized, and the audience is glad of the chance to vent its opinion of the class in laughter. Yet, in spite of perky gestures and high and lisping voice, the character wins us; for it develops frankness and heart as the play goes on, the dramatist having skilfully written around Mr. Robson's limitations, making the part integral in many situations that are foreign to its nature, just as a single note in music makes part in half a dozen chords.

It is a fact worth mention that Mr. Robson's *début* was made in the company of several boys who were destined to fame in later years; namely, Edwin Booth, John Wilkes Booth, S. Barry, John Sleeper Clarke, W. Talbott and G. H. Stout. A stable was the portal through which these aspirants entered the world of art. They had built a stage in the loft, and had decorated its outer walls with written posters declaring these rates of admission: "Boys, 3 cents; little boys, 2 cents. Come early, and bring your fathers and mothers." The comedian was born in Annapolis, Md., on March 4, 1836; and he received a liberal education from his father, who was a prosperous lawyer of that town. Seeing the various strolling troupes that made a "one-night stand" in the place, he imbibed a love for the stage that was fostered by the ampler opportunities and more enlivening performances given in Baltimore, to which city he removed at the age of twelve.

Here he resolved to be an actor, and when he made his first professional appearance it was with the expectation that he would be a tragedian. A tragedian with those eyes and that voice! Well, he is not the only one who has thus misjudged his quality and calling, or has failed to adapt his impulses to his means of execution. The world is full of round pegs in square holes. Edwin Booth used to sing negro melodies and strum the banjo; and as to comedians who wanted to play Hamlet, you can name half of all those who are on the stage. And some of them remain comedians when they play Hamlet.

John E. Owens, an admirable comedian himself, and a candidate for tragedy likewise, if memory serves me, gave Robson his first opportunity after that young

hopeful had worried him for a long time ; and on Jan. 5, 1852, S. Robson, as he was styled on the bill, emerged into view of an audience at the Baltimore Museum, quaking and stammering with stage fright. He was cast for Horace Courtney in "Uncle Tom's Cabin As It Is," a work by Professor Hewett, written as an offset to Mrs. Stowe's tale of the horrors of slavery. Professor Hewett is forgotten, and so is his play ; but Uncle Tom still stumps about the provinces. Master Robson's part was serious and sentimental, but he was not ; at least the audience did not think so, for it laughed at his appearance, at his fright, at his hesitancy, and the more gloomy he became, the merrier grew the populace. At the end of the play the prompter congratulated the lad, and told him he had succeeded — in being funny. The beginner replied in these words : "I am aware, sir, that I made myself sufficiently ridiculous, without your reminding me of it ; but, as they laughed so much at my tragedy, I will give them an opportunity to honor my comedy, for I intend to become a comedian."

After that night he studied in new earnest ; and for the next two or three years he played such comedy parts as were given to him, securing an engagement at Iron Hall, Washington, in 1855. In the fall of that year he became second low comedian in Wayne Olywyne's little museum in Troy, N. Y., where he soon became a favorite ; next year he went over the Western circuit as leading comedian in John G. Cartlitch's Company ; and in the fall of 1857 he reappeared in the Baltimore Museum, this time evoking laughter that was "a tribute, not a satire." John T. Ford engaged him for the Holliday Street Theatre, where he remained

for three years, becoming there "the greatest favorite since the days of Joseph Jefferson the older."

For two or three seasons after this the comedian played in Richmond, St. Louis, Washington, Cincinnati, and other cities. In September, 1862, he began a season's engagement at Laura Keene's Theatre, New York, as Bob in "Old Heads and Young Hearts;" thence he went to the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, remaining there for three years, and after that to Selwyn's Theatre, Boston. He was associated with Mrs. John Wood, Rose Hersee, and Robert Craig in the cast of "King Carrott," when that work was brought out in New York at the Grand Opera House; and he had an experience as a star, brief and hardly brilliant, in the character of John Beat, a policeman, in "Law in New York." Metropolitan play-goers have a pleasant recollection of his work in the Union Square Theatre, where he played in a variety of parts. During one of his summer vacations at this theatre, he and Mr. Thorne ran over to London and brought out Boucicault's "Led Astray," the quietly funny part of Hector in this drama — the man who could not be taken seriously because he had a boy's voice and the face of a comic singer — fitting him admirably. At the Union Square, Mr. Robson became as marked a favorite as Charles Thorne, John Parselle, J. H. Stoddart, Sara Jewett, Fanny Morant, Rose Eytinge, and other members of the admirable company at that house. In 1876 Robson appeared in Bret Harte's "Two Men of Sandy Bar;" but the public did not take kindly to the piece, and in fourteen weeks the comedian succeeded in losing six thousand dollars, the savings of ten years.

Luck came in his way next season; for at the Park

Theatre, New York, he was cast as Professor Gillipod, and William H. Crane as Colonel M. T. Elevator, in Leonard Grover's comedy, "Our Boarding House." These two characters were played in such a racy fashion, they had so many traits that an American audience was quick and glad to recognize, that they became the leading characters in the piece, throwing the usual villain and lovers into the background. This chance meeting and joint success resulted in a partnership that endured for twelve years, and that furnished a suggestion to other players that has been followed with happy results, notably in the partnership of Booth and Barrett in tragedy, and of Jefferson and Florence in comedy. Robson and Crane played modern pieces together, revived "Twelfth Night," "Merry Wives of Windsor," and "Comedy of Errors," and in 1888 produced "The Henrietta," Mr. Crane appearing as the energetic Wall Street venturer, and Robson as his son Bertie, "the lamb." This play Mr. Robson bought for his own use the next year, for the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars — an indication of what good native plays are worth. Mr. Crane found an equally successful comedy in "The Senator." Mr. Robson has likewise added to his repertory a work of somewhat whimsical character, yet of good purpose, named "Is Marriage a Failure?" that contains one scene in which he has to be impressive; and his effort in this direction is successful enough to prove that he was not wholly wrong in his first intent to do serious acting.

Mr. Robson's appearance on the stage is usually provocative of mirth, and his entrance is greeted with smiles and laughter. He has a sleek and youthful contour and countenance; his eyes are large and inno-

cent ; he is in a state of constant astonishment at the world he so recently came into ; he has the solemnity of an infant ; he walks with a deliberate teeter, and on facing his audience absently sways from side to side, sometimes with hands depending loosely from his wrists ; his mouth is mobile and good-natured, and has a way of dropping slightly open whenever he intensifies surprise ; all his movements, though quick, have ease and softness, for there are few who put less muscle into their acting — indeed, some of his most characteristic points are made by relaxation instead of effort. Sometimes he makes an assumption of mechanism in gesture and look, and often delivers a speech as if repeating it after a prompter, pumping the words out, and emphasizing each, a method that in sentences of stern purport has a laughable effect of antiphrasis. These things are as personal to his stage self as the color of his hair ; they are difficult of imitation ; they are amusing and engaging if temperamental, and original if inventive. They persist, however, in all that he does, and to that degree confine his range.

What is most individual in his acting is his voice. There is no other like it on the stage, and you recognize it with your eyes shut. It has been called a squeak, but it is not that : it is a tenor that rises almost into soprano in excitement ; it has sing-song without monotony, for the cadence is remarkable ; it puts accents just where you do not expect to hear them ; it ends words with a slow trill or quaver ; it dwells on vowels ; it is interrupted with little, dry, staccato laughs ; it is a voice that is full of surprises. Take, for example, the bad word said by the comedian when, in "The Henrietta," he returns from his initiation in

the stock exchange with smashed hat and severed garments. Most actors would pronounce the words in a strenuous fashion, with a vigorous explosion of the first word, and a diminuendo and tonal descent thereafter. Mr. Robson pipes it forth in juvenile rage and injured innocence like this:—



One of the most successful appearances that the actor made was in "The Comedy of Errors," he and Mr. Crane appearing as the two Dromios. This imposed more of a burden on Mr. Crane than on Mr. Robson; for though the latter made the type, the former duplicated his mannerisms, and they became more funny by copying than ever. Intellectual vacuity was expressed in a bland stare, a rocking gait, fingers sucked or tapped and pressed together, and irresolute swaying, while voices raised in whimpering protest or bleating in appeal called answering laughter from the audience. The likeness between the two, effected by dress and make-up, was remarkable, and was the more confusing when, on receiving a call at the end of an act, the comedians quickly changed place on the stage. Since his separation from this partner, Mr. Robson has been acting much in the old comedies, especially in "She Stoops to Conquer."

Though neither art nor nature has made of Mr. Robson a great creative actor, they have made him a comedian, and as such he is unique. It is his personality as much as his acting that touches his audience, but

who shall deny the place of personality in theatric art? We admire it in Jefferson, we liked it in Wallack, we love it in women when it takes a form of grace and beauty. Mr. Robson as Claude Melnotte would probably be a failure; as Mr. Robson he is a success.

The subject of this sketch married the daughter of a Baltimore clergyman in 1856, and lived happily with her until her death in 1890. His daughter Alecia was at one time in his company, but retired from the stage to assume domestic and social duties after her marriage in Boston. Recently he took to wife Miss May Waldron, the leading lady of his company. In summer the comedian makes his home at Cohasset, Mass., his picturesque villa having a more than local renown as a place of hospitalities. He has a hobby for the collection of books, pictures, autographs, and stage relics; among his treasures being the sword with which Quin accidentally killed Bowan in 1719; a letter from Macready to Elliston, saying, "I love a lord, and hate a player;" a prompt copy of "Merry Wives of Windsor," date 1623; a letter from President Buchanan declaring Cooper to be a better actor than Edmund Kean; and a diatribe by John Calvin on the sin of theatres, in which he says, "Hell is neither deep enough nor hot enough for players, and the man who would enter a play-house will be burned in fires everlasting" — a declaration that has no effect on Mr. Robson's geniality or usefulness in his chosen field. He has lightened care, diffused mirth, stirred wholesome emotions, and thereby has added to general happiness.



JOHN T. RAYMOND.

JOHN T. RAYMOND.

BY FRANKLIN FYLES.

VERSATILITY is a hindrance to popular success on the stage. Unvaried individuality is a help. The actor who disguises himself effectually in his assumed characters, and whose impersonations are actual creations of mimetic art, gets appreciation and praise from the few considerate observers; but to the great majority he has to introduce himself anew with every *rôle*, and is not remembered from one such achievement to another.

Make out a list of those whom you deem the twenty best rewarded players alive — those who have gained fame and money most plentifully. You are likely to name Joseph Jefferson first; and in him you have a comedian whose quietude of humor, quaintness of elocution, and gentle efficacy of fun, are never changed. The Dutch accent of Rip Van Winkle does not alter them, nor does the trepidation of Bob Acres affect them, and they all belong to Mr. Jefferson in private life. They constitute an individuality which has triumphed on the stage, and he could not divest himself of them if he would. William H. Crane is to-day, next to Mr. Jefferson, the American actor most recompensed in fame and wealth; but are not these results

due quite as much to his agreeable personality as to his undoubted abilities? Go on to the end of your selection of twenty examples of great prosperity in acting, and the real mimics will be outnumbered by the invariables ten to one. You will find admirable versatility in some member of nearly every dramatic company; but the public does not make his personal acquaintance, and he never gets beyond transitory recognition. The easily remembered actor is the one who is his own unchangeable self, no matter what kind of a man he may paint, wig, and garb himself to look like. And it is the easily-remembered actor, who, if his singularities are interesting and amusing, mounts to the top of the ladder, while his versatile competitor keeps climbing from the ground to the first rung, over and over and over.

Let me put the late John T. Raymond in evidence. He died as popular as any American comedian of his time, and he would have died rich if he had not fooled away his income. Still, if to be an actor is to be a mimic, he was not an actor at all. He was devoid of the smallest degree of versatility. Once, in a Saratoga hotel, the voice of Colonel Mulberry Sellers was raised behind me. Not only were the tones and inflections of the hopeful, enthusiastic speculator vocalized, precisely as I had heard them in theatres, but the words, too, were in kind. Sellers had been to the races that afternoon, so he was informing somebody, and he had bet on beaten horses only; but he could make good his loss next day, sure pop, on a tip given to him by — and the name was whispered confidentially. Meanwhile, he dared his companion to match silver dollars ten times. The challenge was accepted. Sellers lost

eight times in the ten, and remained blithesome. It is said that Mark Twain's father was the prototype of Sellers. Few who have seen the character in the play have been at a loss to find in him the likeness of an acquaintance. But of all the counterparts of Twain's hero, none can have been more perfect than Raymond; and it was he who talked and matched dollars in the Saratoga hotel.

"See here," he exclaimed; "tell you what I'll do. Bet you ten dollars you can't guess within ten how many times I use the phrase, 'There's millions in it,' in one performance of my play."

"I'll go you," was the reply; and, after a minute's thought, the man added, "my money goes on fifteen."

"Close call," the comedian cried. "Thirteen would have won. I say, 'There's millions in it,' just three times in the whole piece. Most folks — non-professionals — guess twenty or over;" and he pocketed the ten dollars as joyously as ever Sellers imagined a million.

Although the suitability of Raymond as an illustrator of Colonel Sellers rewarded him prodigiously, that was not the first acceptance of him by the public as an entertainer. He had already employed his marked idiosyncrasies as Asa Trenchard in "Our American Cousin," accompanying E. A. Sothorn in America and abroad for years. Asa Trenchard, as acted by Raymond, differed from Sellers in no particular of manner, still the actor was resentful of the slightest intimation that he was not versatile. He would answer the aspersions by pointing to the fact that he had served long and arduously as a low comedian in stock companies, playing all sorts of comic characters. That is true. It is

also true that his impersonations were never anything else than John T. Raymond, — cheery, volatile, and likable.

He was born O'Brien in Buffalo in 1836; and he died in Evansville in 1887, after thirty-four years on the stage. He began in a stock company in Rochester; but within a year he was at Niblo's Garden in New York, as low comedian to Anna Cora Mowatt. From that time until 1873 he shifted from one company to another, playing his final season as a subordinate under Lawrence Barrett and John McCullough when those actors managed a theatre in San Francisco. A change of play was made once a week as a rule, and Raymond took the various *rôles* naturally falling to the first low comedian.

The case of John T. Raymond is one in point against the common fallacy as to better entertainment having been yielded in the former days of located companies than are afforded under the present system of special casts. Nor is it true that the old-fashioned stock companies, with their rapid succession of casts, trained up better actors than are produced by the new order of things on the stage. Then the actor had barely time to memorize the words of a part, with none left to bestow on other preparation. The result generally was that he played everything alike, developing no versatility, falling into bad habits, and acquiring only a monotonous kind of facility.

Out of such conditions came a wonderfully entertaining actor in Raymond; but it was only when a character fitted him that his value was realized. His own outlines were fixed, and he could not vary them. So he was brilliant sometimes, and dull at other times.

John T. Raymond won with Colonel Sellers. His prize consisted of a fame that made him known to and liked by the theatrical audiences of the land, and a fortune that with prudence of investment should have constituted him a millionaire. It was while Raymond was employed by Barrett and McCullough in San Francisco in 1873, that George B. Dinsmore, a journalist, discovered in Mark Twain's novel, "The Gilded Age," a personage which the actor could realize to the uttermost without acting at all. Without the slightest artificiality of face, without the faintest counterfeit of voice, and without more than a slight exaggeration of natural manner, he could become the typical American schemer of the book. The impediment was not in art, but in business. A few trial performances of Dinsmore's dramatization were given, and then came a reasonable objection by Twain to the unauthorized use of his property. Actors are fond of assuming that they "create" a character, when all they do is to place an author's creation on the stage. The law of copyright, however, protects the father in the disposition of his pictorial children. The author, in this instance, fixed on one hundred dollars as the price to be paid to him every time Colonel Sellers stepped out of the book into the play.

The comedy was a wretchedly poor one; and the audience ridiculed it when it was acted in New York City for the first time, at that particular Park Theatre which stood in Broadway just below Twenty-second Street. It was a fiasco in everything save Colonel Mulberry John T. Sellers Raymond, a type of Americanism so true, racy, and congenial, that the audience took him into their best regard at once. Mark Twain

had already overhauled the Dinsmore play, and playwrights afterward improved it ; but it remained a travesty, instead of affording the natural, reasonable, homely surroundings which Colonel Sellers deserved. He was a dramatic prototype, and he will not soon disappear from our stage. "The Gilded Age " may not be acted again ; but its principal has been duplicated substantially in other dramas, and will be used essentially in many a drama to come.

If the power of imitation must be denied to Raymond, and his success ascribed to his exploitation of his own personality, compensation may be made to his memory by a record of the fact that he was a model for the imitators. Tribute was paid to him by the avowed mimics. From variety show to burlesque, and from amateur theatricals to the lyceum platform, no mimic omitted Raymond's Sellers from his set of portrayals. Further and deeper than that, however, is the influence of his success discernible in the best American comedians of the day. Sellers has become variform on the stage. Your ears take note of him in the utterance of popular comedians when they portray Western character, or have anything grandiloquent to say. Your eyes descry him in the pose of the enthusiast, with one arm akimbo, the other uplifted to its whole length, and the head thrown back defiantly. That figure is constantly recurrent in our native comedies and farces. It is as firmly set before us, too, as though it were a graven image on a pedestal in every public square, not so much comic as emblematic of our speculative and hopeful tendencies.

The last time I saw Raymond in Colonel Sellers's familiarly graphic attitude was at Long Branch. He

was spending the summer at a costly hotel. His vacation was longer than his purse. He had expended in personal luxuries and unfortunate speculations the great profits of "The Gilded Age." His last wager in Wall Street had used up the money with which he might have paid an overdue board-bill. He hadn't dollars enough left to pursue his favorite pastime of odd-or-even. He was as completely stranded as any penniless stroller at a cross-roads tavern, with the important difference that his landlord, a personal friend and admirer, was willing to be his host in the non-mercenary sense of the term. But Raymond was badly off, even when relieved of responsibility for board and lodging; for the time was near when he was to venture forth for a new season. Certain preliminary expenses were to be paid.

"Give a 'benefit' performance," the host suggested. "You may have the casino rent free."

The entertainment was given, and the house was crowded. The profit amounted to a thousand dollars.

"Now, John," said the host, as he handed the receipted board-bill to the actor, "if you haven't enough money left to start the new play with, we'll let this account wait."

During the prior week or two the joviality of Raymond had been a little forced and unreal, but with money in his pocket he was restored to spontaneous buoyancy. Instinctively placing one hand on his hip, and holding the bill aloft, he proclaimed a return to affluence.

"My dear fellow," he cried, "my new play's the thing 'with millions in it!'"

But it wasn't.

SOL SMITH RUSSELL.

BY WILLIAM T. ADAMS ("OLIVER OPTIC").

SOL SMITH RUSSELL was born at Brunswick, Mo., June 15, 1848. His father had learned a trade in early life; and, removing to St. Louis while Sol was still a small boy, he opened a store for the manufacture and sale of tinware. The son did not inherit any taste for the mechanical arts, and his only attempt to make tin cups was a sad failure. His father was not content to make a lifelong pursuit of his trade, and ultimately developed an ambition for professional life, not in the same direction as his gifted son, for he became successively a physician and a preacher. He was an elder in the church, between which and the stage the line was even more arbitrarily drawn than at the present day. The father had been to a circus once, but in old age he entered a theatre for the first time to see his son act at Daly's in New York. Sol played the part of a tramp, and made his entrance through a window. The moment he had put his foot on the scene, "That's Sol's leg!" exclaimed the venerable gentleman. It was very evident that the son inherited none of his dramatic talent from the paternal side of the house.

Sol's mother was a daughter of Edwin Mathews, a teacher of music in Cincinnati. Sol Smith, the vete-



SOL SMITH RUSSELL

ran manager and comedian, prominently identified with the early theatre in St. Louis and the South, married another daughter of Mr. Mathews ; and his name was given to the future actor, who has done more to make it familiar all over the country than his uncle did. Like her husband, Sol's mother was religiously inclined, and became a "mother in Israel." She was a pillar of the church, as well as a leading spirit in all charitable and reformatory enterprises. Not from her either did the son inherit his artistic taste.

The first dozen years of Sol's life were passed in St. Louis, where he obtained his early education ; and upon this slender basis he has been a diligent student, applying himself earnestly to books, even carrying his studies along into the collegiate course while travelling. He was a boy among boys ; and very early he developed a decided fondness for the theatre, which he gratified by stealth. He was known about the theatre as a nephew of Sol Smith ; and this fact often enabled him to see a play, either before or behind the curtain. He was deprived of this privilege by the removal of his father, in 1860, to Jacksonville, Ill. But his theatrical taste remained with him ; and when hardly more than a dozen years old, he organized a company of young fellows, and walked from town to town, giving performances in barns and cellars. He had learned to sing, and his comic impersonations even at this early age were the main features of the show. In this manner he was fitting himself for the brilliant successes of later years, and worked diligently to improve himself in the profession he had adopted. Nautically speaking, he did not crawl in at the cabin window, but worked his way aft from the hawse-hole. His present position as an

actor he has faithfully earned by diligent study and hard work for more than thirty years.

At the beginning of the War of the Rebellion, Illinois was ablaze with patriotic excitement ; and at the age of thirteen Sol went away from his home with the army, as a drummer-boy. He tried several times to enlist as a musician, but he was unable to obtain the written consent of his parents. He was a very bright and talented youngster, popular with the officers and soldiers ; and he marched and drummed with a regiment for several months. At Paducah, Ky., he was taken very sick. The surgeon looked him over, and hinted that he was likely to die. The sufferer did not take kindly to this idea, and crawled to a steamboat, by which he was conveyed to St. Louis. By various expedients he contrived to drag himself to his home, where the faithful nursing of his mother soon restored him to health.

The convalescent was not inclined to remain at the home he had reached in such dire distress. His affections seemed to be divided between the army and the theatre, perhaps because some sort of a theatre was attached to every army corps. He wandered through the various camps near the Ohio, amusing the men, and sharing their rations. Failing to become regularly attached to any command, he was compelled to make his way as best he could. Of course he was often "dead broke;" but his tact and invention enabled him to override all the difficulties of the situation. To fill his exchequer he obtained on credit a small stock of goods in demand in camps. His commercial operations were so successful that he replenished his wardrobe, and still had money in his pocket. It did not last long, and the

wandering little minstrel reached Cairo with an empty purse.

He was open to an offer, and joined the company playing in that place at the Defiance Theatre at a salary of six dollars a week. It was his first regular engagement; and it was dignified to have a stated salary, even if not princely in amount. He was certainly an actor of very general utility; for he not only played his part in the thrilling drama, but he sang comic songs between the plays, and drummed in the orchestra. As he had to pay three dollars and a half a week for his table board, his wardrobe and other expenses exhausted the rest of his stipend, and he had to sleep in the theatre for the want of a room. At this time he was so slender and delicate of figure that he was often put into petticoats, and danced as a fair maiden around a maypole or in a contra dance.

His next engagement was at John Bates's National Theatre in Cincinnati, where he sang comic songs between the plays. His next discipline for a future career was with "Bob Carter's Dog Show," on a small canal-boat with a cabin. He sang his songs; and if he was not called on to bark with the canines, he was required to do a mule's duty in dragging the boat. In 1863 he sang at the "Red, White, and Blue" concert saloon in St. Louis. Attention was thus attracted to him; and it procured him an engagement at Deagle's Theatre, where he was a stock actor, and sang in the intermissions. In the same capacity he played in Milwaukee, and then joined the Peak Family as a singer, and followed the army into Arkansas and Tennessee.

During these eventful years Sol was a hard-working youth, continually studying plays and reading solid

books. He was quiet in his manners, very observing, and never forgot what was worth remembering. This diligence was rewarded by a slow but regular advancement in his profession; and in the season of 1864-1865, at the age of sixteen, he was the second comedian of the old theatre at Nashville, and there acted with such stars as Frank Drew in Irish comedy, Maggie Mitchell, Laura Keene, John Albaugh, and others. The next season he was engaged in the same capacity at Ben De Bar's theatre in St. Louis, where he played in the star season of his cousin Mark Smith in the old English comedies, with Charles Dillon and Lawrence Barrett (then the "rising young tragedian"). In 1866, at the age of eighteen, Sol was engaged as first low comedian at Leavenworth, and filled the place of stage-manager at St. Joseph.

Mr. Russell first made himself known in the East in connection with the Peak and Berger families. He was the comic singer and delineator of eccentric characters. In these engagements he made himself famous by his impersonations of the ancient maiden ladies, Dorcas Pennyroyal and the Boarding Mistress, by his imitations of John B. Gough, and in dialect pieces. With the Bergers he journeyed all over the East, West, and South, winning unmeasured applause with what are known as his "specialties," which he has now outgrown and laid aside. Even at the early age of fourteen he attempted to entertain an audience alone; and at twenty he wrote a lecture, into which he dovetailed his specialties, making a monologue entertainment that afforded satisfaction to his audience. As an elocutionist he made a decided impression with serious pieces, especially those of a tender and pathetic character.

In 1867 Mr. Russell joined the stock company of the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, then under the management of William E. Sinn, and acted there with James E. Murdoch. The next three years he travelled in New England and elsewhere, giving his monologue entertainment. In 1871 he made his first appearance in New York, at Lina Edwin's Theatre. It was not till 1874 that he made his first pronounced hit in New York, at the Olympic Theatre, where he introduced his specialties, played *The Toodles*, *Jem Baggs*, in "*The Wandering Minstrel*," and acted in various burlesques. The same year he joined Augustin Daly's Company in New York, playing there twenty-six weeks, and nineteen weeks in Boston. Then he toured the country again with the Bergers, half the evening being given to his performance. Financially it was a desirable connection for him, but it did not satisfy his ambition as an actor; and in 1876 he re-joined Daly's company, becoming permanently associated with America's best actors.

In 1880 Mr. Russell reached a turning-point in his career, and since that time he has devoted himself exclusively to legitimate acting as a dramatic star. For several years he had ambitiously looked forward to this idea as the proper field for his talents, schooled by twenty years of experience before the public. He fully realized that he was capable of higher and better work. Continued years of success as a star have amply demonstrated that he and his friends did not overestimate his abilities. The principal obstacle in his path to stellar distinction was the difficulty of obtaining a suitable play, for his peculiar talents required a peculiar piece. He had been copied and imitated to a greater

extent than almost any other artist ; and it was believed to be absolutely necessary to supply him with his own special material, though it may be added that his genius had not yet developed his true sphere in acting.

Mr. J. E. Brown of Boston, who had furnished him with many of the sketches in his specialties, was engaged to produce a play. His work was well done, and the name of "Edgewood Folks" was given to it. With this piece Mr. Russell starred the country for the next three years, and was decidedly successful in the new field. The piece contained the usual elements of a drama ; but the star was written into it, trailing through it nearly all the specialties which had made him famous. No one then believed that a play could be made for him in any other manner.

In 1884, on the retirement of William Warren, Mr. Russell was engaged as the stock star of the Boston Museum, and played many of the veteran's parts at his home and elsewhere. In 1886 Mr. Brown achieved another play for the star, "Felix McKusick," which kept the stage during the season. The piece was hilariously funny, though the specialties were less prominent than in "Edgewood Folks." The following season Mr. Russell presented "Pa," by Cal Walters ; and in this play the specialties were still farther kept in the shade. "Bewitched," by E. E. Kidder, was the bill for the season of 1888-1889. The piece was wildly funny, and was decidedly successful ; but the star realized that he had not yet attained his proper sphere, for the right play had not yet been secured.

By this time Mr. Russell had obtained a clear idea of the distinctive field for which his taste and talent fitted him. His plays so far had been too trivial and

undignified to enable him to realize his later ambition. They embodied only the comic element. Mr. Kidder had proved to be his most promising dramatist. His lines were humorous, and sparkled with wit. Mr. Russell suggested to him the intermingling of a genuine pathos with the comic element, and indicated the manner in which it could be accomplished. The result of the dramatist's effort in this direction was "A Poor Relation." Though not a great play as measured by the critics, it was an emphatic success from the beginning. It realized more nearly than any of his earlier plays the actor's ideal of the field in which his successes were thereafter to be won. The piece was elaborately staged, and produced at the opening of Daly's Theatre in New York in 1889.

Mr. Russell's next venture in the search for his ideal play was in the employment of Dion Boucicault. The actor abandoned his pleasant home in Minneapolis, went to New York with his family, spending the entire summer there, and using all his time in conference with the veteran dramatist. The new piece was called, "The Tale of a Coat," "written expressly to fit, by Dion Boucicault." It was elaborately mounted, with new scenery, machinery, and effects, and was first brought out on trial in Philadelphia, where it appeared to be a success. The play was then produced at Daly's in New York, where the critics mercilessly condemned it; and it proved to be a lamentable failure with the public, to the intense disappointment of the star. It was acted for nearly six weeks, and was then laid on the shelf forever.

In 1890 Mr. Kidder was again interviewed; and upon Mr. Russell's suggestions as to what he wanted,

"Peaceful Valley" came forth from his ready pen. It suited the star better than anything he had before obtained. During a week he passed with Mr. Joseph Jefferson at his summer home, with Mr. W. J. Florence, the piece was read, and heartily approved by these distinguished artists. New scenery was painted, and the play was very handsomely staged. After playing it a few nights at Duluth and Superior, it was presented at the Grand Opera House in Minneapolis. The largest audiences ever in that house were present. The performance was witnessed by the *élite* of the city where the actor resides, but the result was equally flattering in other cities of the North-West. Perhaps "Peaceful Valley" is not "a great play," as critics use the expression; but it places the star for whom it was written in the sphere where his ideal exists. He has always been entirely original in his conception of his characters, scorning to be a mere imitator of other actors.

Off the stage there is nothing peculiar in Mr. Russell, unless it be his quiet dignity; and he is oftener taken for a clergyman than for an actor. The quaint personality with which he invests his delineations is pure acting; for he is nothing of that kind at home or in society, though he can "rise to an occasion" in genial company. He is quiet but earnest in his manner, has a big, open heart, and is always and above all perfectly sincere. Behind the actor is the man; and what makes him honest, square, faithful, and lovable as a citizen, is the substantial foundation of his acting. One less delicately organized as a Christian gentleman would be incapable of bringing comedy and pathos into intimate association as Mr. Russell does in his latest and most successful plays.



NAT. C. GOODWIN.

NAT C. GOODWIN.

BY FRANK E. CHASE.

MR. NAT C. GOODWIN, whom all foreign critics of the American stage recognize as the first and most representative of American comedians, has risen to this eminence in spite of the paradoxical circumstance that his fellow-countrymen have always regarded him as one of the "funniest" of living actors. Some such barbaric perversity as blinded many of the most devoted admirers and enthusiastic patrons of the late William Warren to the very best and highest gifts of that really great actor, long threatened to keep Mr. Goodwin in the artistically menial position of mere jester to its majesty the public, and to deny him the opportunity of making any serious appeal.

It was in burlesque that he first won applause and reputation; and to burlesque he was practically confined for many years by a delighted public, which indicated its unintelligent preference by the simple but forcible device of turning its back upon all experiments in other directions. Just as Mr. Warren was well-accustomed to display his rare powers of pathos to peals of puzzled but resolute laughter from the lips of enthusiastic admirers who had come from distant and benighted suburbs to enjoy their favorite comedian, so the younger

actor's serious efforts long encountered similar misunderstanding, when they did not meet with neglect; and his higher aims were again and again abandoned for the agreeable clowning that makes a fat box-office. But in the long battle between Mr. Goodwin's self-appreciative ambition and the stupid conservatism of his admirers, the actor's persistent endeavor finally prevailed; and he stands to-day, beyond all question, the first of American comedians.

He has fortunately arrived at this distinction while still a young man. It was on July 25, 1857, in a little house on Temple Street, in the West End of Boston, that Nathaniel Carl Goodwin first exercised in infant outcry the voice that has since become more pleasantly familiar to the public. His parents were of good New England stock, with no closer or more permanent relations to the stage than those of patrons and admirers; so that neither in his birth nor early associations is to be found any original destination for the theatre. The paternal dream, indeed, so far as it took definite form at all, looked toward the law rather than the stage.

The youthful Goodwin's education was begun at the Mayhew Grammar School, in Boston, whence he was removed, after a short time, to the famous Little Blue Academy, at Farmington, Me. To this institution he imported a taste for amateur theatricals, which he propagated among his fellow-students with a zeal and assiduity not altogether to the taste of his instructors, who found their consolation, and the chief pleasure his connection with the school afforded them, in the talent he evinced for elocutionary studies, and the credit that its well-applauded exercise on public days reflected upon the academy.

Upon graduation he was given, with the usual perversity of parental hopes, a start in commercial life in the counting-room of Wellington Bros. & Co.'s dry-goods store, on Chauncy Street, in Boston, as entry-clerk. Dry goods proved unusually arid to him, however; for in his elocutionary triumphs at school he had found his true bent, and all of his leisure time, as well as much that probably was somewhat differently regarded by his employers, was devoted to the study of play-books, and the assiduous cultivation of such theatrical acquaintances as he was able to make. In the memory of his fellow-clerks, and among the traditions of many places of public resort in the Hub, yet linger stories of his early successes, chiefly as an imitator of popular actors.

At the stage door of the Boston Museum he is still recalled as one of the most persistent applicants for the responsible position of "super" that ever besieged that portal. Indeed, the greater portion of his time coming to be given to theatrical pursuits, Messrs. Wellington Bros. & Co. finally concluded to give him entire liberty to pursue his dramatic ambitions, an event which afforded him considerably more pleasure than it did his parents. The usual struggle with paternal authority ensued, and finally culminated in his obtaining permission to prosecute his theatrical studies in a formal and systematic manner. He was accordingly placed, for a time, under the instruction of Madame Michell, better known in private life as Mrs. Terrell, an actress once favorably known in New York, who gave him his first regular instruction in dramatic art.

At this period it was Goodwin's settled conviction

that he was peculiarly adapted for tragic rôles, an erroneous idea from which he has from time to time ever since given evidence of not having entirely emancipated his mind. Governed by this notion he shortly left Madame Michell, and placed himself under the tuition of Mr. Wyzeman Marshall, an old-school actor of great reputation, who undertook Goodwin's training in the direction which he had himself followed with distinguished success. The arduous curriculum of this master, however hopeless of final honors for this particular pupil, was still an admirable school of discipline; and if Goodwin never actually made his *début* as Macbeth, a part which he studied and rehearsed with this intention, the training was certainly of great value.

At about the time this event was to have come off, fortunately, the mistaken estimate of his own powers which Goodwin shared with about every comedian that has a place in the history of the drama, was corrected by Mr. Stuart Robson, who, having made the acquaintance of the young man, and formed a more just notion of his talents, offered the unborn Macbeth an engagement in a company then supporting him at the Howard Athenæum in Boston. The play was written by Joseph Bradford, once an actor, and at that time the dramatic critic of the Boston *Courier*, and was called "Law in New York." The insignificant character of the Newsboy was intrusted to Goodwin; and upon the night of March 5, 1874, he made his actual *début* on the stage in this part, introducing in one of his scenes the imitations which subsequently became so popular.

The reception by the public of these really admirable feats of mimicry was instantaneously enthusiastic. His repertory comprised nineteen imitations in all,

including about all the popular actors of that time. His reproductions of their characteristic traits were of remarkably even excellence, and in voice, manner, and gesture singularly faithful to their originals. Nothing equalling them in truth, vitality, and fineness of perception, had been seen in Boston, or has been seen since. It was something more, indeed, than mere mimicry; some subtle infusion of the spirit of the original in each case coloring and elevating the merely mechanical feats of vocal reproduction.

The outcome of this revelation of his exceptional powers was not, however, immediately flattering. The only practical result was an offer from the management of Niblo's Garden, New York, of an engagement to play "utility" business in their stock company under Charles Thorne, Sr., and Edward Eddy, which he at once accepted. The following season of 1874-1875 advanced him but little professionally; and though he played a portion of the time with some forgotten travelling company on the road, he was for the most part idle. It was perhaps the niggardly behavior of the legitimate stage towards her younger votaries which experience brought forcibly to his notice at this period, that turned his attention toward the "variety" business, a branch of the profession then even more than now generous in its rewards to successful men. It was, at any rate, toward the close of this season that he made his *début* upon the variety stage in a sketch written for him by Joseph Bradford, and entitled, "Stage Struck," in the course of which he introduced his imitations.

He appeared in this at the Howard Athenæum, the scene of his first success, to a somewhat diminished

popularity, and so was easily induced to abandon this private venture, and to accept an offer of engagement from Tony Pastor, whose company he joined at a salary of fifty dollars a week. A goodly portion of the year 1875 was passed by Mr. Goodwin as a member of this organization at Mr. Pastor's New York house, then situated on Broadway. This period was one of rapid advancement for the young actor both in popularity and profit, his salary — the best measure of his success — having attained, at the time he finally left New York, the handsome figure of five hundred dollars a week.

But the variety business, however lucrative, was never wholly to Mr. Goodwin's liking; and always upon the lookout for some better vehicle for his talents, he finally hit upon burlesque. Refusing many flattering offers to continue upon the variety stage, he resolutely turned his back upon its fugitive honors, and accepted an engagement with Matt Morgan, then managing what is now the Fourteenth Street Theatre, where he appeared as Captain Crosstree in the burlesque of "Black-Eyed Susan." His success in this new line was pronounced, and elicited a flood of offers during the remainder of the season of 1875-1876. At the close of his season at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, he went to Philadelphia to play a "star" engagement at the Walnut Street Theatre in conjunction with the late John Brougham. Here he played his first legitimate comedy part, that of Tom Tape in "Sketches in India," the second being Stephen Poppincourt in "The Little Rebel." The Laura of the latter piece was Miss Minnie Palmer, who later in the season appeared with Mr. Goodwin at the Howard Athenæum in his old sketch, "Stage Struck," for a brief season.

It was in the part of Captain Crosstree that Mr. Goodwin first attracted the attention of Mr. E. E. Rice, with whom he was afterwards long and closely associated, and who promptly engaged him to play the part of Captain Dietrich in the forthcoming production of his and Mr. J. Cheever Goodwin's once famous burlesque, "Evangeline," in which Mr. Goodwin appeared on the evening of July 10, 1876, at the Boston Museum, with great success. This cast is also notable for the circumstance, that in it Messrs. Henry E. Dixey and Richard Golden, both of whom have since become distinguished in their several ways in their profession, appeared, in a purely figurative sense, as the fore and hind legs, respectively, of the celebrated heifer.

This date marks the beginning of an engagement which endured without interruption until 1878, when Mr. Goodwin parted company with Mr. Rice, and went upon the road at the head of an organization of his own. It was during this engagement that he met Miss Eliza Weathersby, one of the famous beauties of Lydia Thompson's celebrated burlesque company, to whose Gabriel he played Le Blanc, at the Boston Museum, during the second engagement of the "Evangeline" Company, in January, 1877. An attachment sprang up between them during this season, which culminated in their marriage on June 24, 1877, by the Rev. M. Kennedy of New Rochelle, N.Y. This well-assorted union of talent and beauty continued in mutual artistic helpfulness and probable domestic bliss until the melancholy death of Mrs. Goodwin in New York, March 23, 1887.

At the close of Mr. Goodwin's engagement with Mr. Rice in 1878, he and his wife gathered about them a

company, and, under the name of "The Eliza Weathersby Froliques," went on tour in a piece called "Hobbies," written for them by Mr. B. E. Woolf, of the *Boston Saturday Evening Gazette*. This proved a most profitable venture, the piece continuing in great popularity for the greater part of two seasons. It was an invertebrate work written, as it was played, in the most extravagant spirit of burlesque humor, and developed nothing new in Mr. Goodwin. In 1881 Mr. Goodwin again joined forces with Mr. Rice, with whom he produced at the Boston Museum, on July 4, 1881, Mr. Woolson Morse's "Cinderella at School," the partnership being described as "The Rice-Goodwin Lyric Comedy Co." The piece was not long-lived; its early demise forcing the surviving partnership into the more successful expedient of presenting Mr. Goodwin as Lorenzo, Bunthorne, and other heroes of light opera, a line in which his comic powers enabled him to make a good impression.

In the following regular season of 1881-1882, Mr. Goodwin, again supported by his own company, appeared as Onesimus Epps, in a production of Mr. George R. Sims's comedy, "The Member for Slocum." His admirable light comedy acting in this part gave to the public the first hint of this actor's possession of powers of a much higher and finer order than his previous opportunities had permitted to appear. But the public were singularly obtuse; and the piece, eked out by the familiar and uproarious "Hobbies," only ran a single season. His Sim Lazarus, in "The Black Flag," produced in conjunction with Mr. Edwin Thorne during the season 1882-1883, was a much less praiseworthy piece of acting, but a more pronounced hit. During

this season, in May, 1883, Mr. Goodwin participated in the Cincinnati Dramatic Festival, appearing as the First Grave-digger in "Hamlet," and as Modus in "The Hunchback." The former was his first Shakespearian part, save that of Launcelot Gobbo, which he once played as an amateur. His next and last serious essay of Shakespeare was his performance of Mark Antony, at Tony Hart's benefit in New York, March 22, 1888.

The last decade of Mr. Goodwin's career is much too familiar to theatre-goers to require more than the most summary review. In his bill for the season of 1884-1885 is seen his abject surrender to circumstances, and his practical acceptance of his admirers' humble valuation of his talent. It was "Hobbies" again, re-enforced by "Those Bells," a short burlesque of a most depressing and dispiriting sort, notwithstanding Mr. Goodwin's clever imitation of Mr. Irving in the leading character. "The Skating Rink," his attraction for 1885-1886, again presented its leading actor in a state of artistic eclipse to an enormous business. "Little Jack Sheppard" (1886-1887) also did a great deal for the box-office, and very little for Mr. Goodwin. "Turned Up," the hit of the next two seasons, was a little better, the gradual return of the actor's artistic courage being somewhat unfortunately marked by the addition, in 1888-1889, to this bill, of a version of De Barville's "Gringoire," in which little play of almost tragic power and elevation, Mr. Goodwin, notwithstanding some very earnest, painstaking and praiseworthy acting, was very disappointing. It was during this season in Chicago, on Oct. 17, 1888, that Mr. Goodwin married his second wife, Miss Nella Baker (Mrs. Edward Pease).

The season of 1889-1890 was a memorable one in Mr. Goodwin's career, since it provided him in the part of Woolcott, in Messrs. Brander Matthews's and George H. Jessop's admirable play, "A Gold Mine," with a means of demonstrating the possession of dramatic powers of the highest order in the line of comedy, in a purity of quality and strength of exercise that surprised even his most sanguine critics. Mr. Goodwin's boundless capacity for surprising his audiences in burlesque by the fecundity of his comic invention and the variety and unexpectedness of his humor, and in farce by the justness, delicacy, and discretion of his art of caricature, did not fail him in the higher walk of comedy. In his faithful and earnest presentation of the character of Woolcott, he attained a cogency of characterization and a moving force of pathos that were altogether admirable. His power of conviction in this character, notwithstanding the faint flavor of exaggeration which some of its scenes possessed, was simply overwhelming in its authority, and his command of the serious sympathies of his audience absolute and potent. Nothing at once finer, stronger, or more entirely artistic than this performance had been given to the stage for many years, yet there were still to be found among his admirers those who pined for "The Skating Rink" and its incoherent joys. To this class he made, during the season of 1890-1891, the customary concession in the production of "The Nominee," an ingenious piece of a more farcical sort than its predecessor, in which Mr. Goodwin again found popularity. In conjunction with this piece Mr. Goodwin also appeared nightly to no particular result in a short play of serious interest entitled "The Viper on the Hearth."

In England, which Mr. Goodwin visited professionally for the first time in the summer of 1890, his talents met with a very flattering recognition both from press and public. His Woolcott in "A Gold Mine" was warmly praised, though the general impression made by the piece was less favorable than here, and the critical estimate of its chief actor somewhat tinctured by a consequent prejudice. In "The Bookmaker," a play by Mr. J. W. Pigott, in which he essayed the character of Sir Joseph Trent, a cockney type quite alien to his experience, his abilities were warmly and unreservedly recognized by the critical press. Altogether, the position which Mr. Goodwin established for himself before the English public was juster to his talents, and of considerably greater artistic dignity, than he held at that period at home. In this year Mr. Goodwin also produced, in addition to the successful "A Gold Mine," a piece by the late Steele Mackaye, entitled "Col. Tom," which signally failed to earn good opinions, either for itself or for its producer.

The list of the plays in which Mr. Goodwin has appeared during the last five seasons is a most gratifying one; since it indicates no halting or retrogression in his artistic progress, and gives ample assurance that this actor's emancipation from his early admirers is final and complete. They are, briefly, as follows: 1891-1892, "A Gold Mine" and "The Nominee," the latter supplemented by a curtain raiser called "Art and Nature;" 1892-1893, Mr. Henry Guy Carlton's "A Gilded Fool," a most satisfactory piece both in itself and in its relation to its protagonist, though standing toward Messrs. Jessop and Matthews's play much as plated ware stands towards solid metal, as its title

happily indicates ; 1893-1894, Mr. Gus. Thomas's admirable play, "In Mizzoura," in which, in the character of Jim Radburn, Mr. Goodwin again impressed himself upon his critics as an actor of the highest powers in comedy ; 1894-1895, Robertson's "David Garrick," eked out with "Lend Me Five Shillings," and revivals of "A Gilded Fool" and "In Mizzoura ;" 1895-1896, Mr. Henry Guy Carlton's "Ambition," which happily summarizes the spirit of this excellent series.

This ends the portion of Mr. Goodwin's career which has become history ; his present he is himself writing nightly upon the stage, while his future can only be determined by astrologers, who alone know the "stars," among which he may be indubitably reckoned. His present historian can only hope, upon what he deems excellent grounds, for the best.

There is a certain difficulty in ending the "life" of a man who is still alive, closely akin to the awkwardness of committing actual homicide. The speediest way in either case is undoubtedly the most humane, and so the bell rings and the curtain falls upon this chronicle. But it is the "act drop," fortunately, that is rung down upon suspended dramatic interest, as in a good play, and not the "green baize" that dismally descends upon the final catastrophe ; and in the acts still to come from the author's hands, we have no reason to fear any falling off of interest or anti-climax until the great culminating "death scene" that the worst of actors must still play naturally.



DENMAN THOMPSON.

DENMAN THOMPSON

AND OUR RURAL LIFE DRAMA.

BY E. IRENÆUS STEVENSON.

THE theatre's picturing of country life, according to its most real and familiar aspects in the United States, — that is to say, the play in which such picturing is an end, and not an incident, — is relatively a recent matter. The play is not the thing in such a development. The types and scenery and properties are the first considerations. An old plough, or the sunset on a barn-door, are more valuable details in these phases of art than "situation;" and a cowherd's call well shouted is nearer the point of things than a rattling dialogue. In Austria and Germany an admirable and delightful dramatic article of this kind has achieved a firm existence, thanks, especially, to the sympathetic cleverness of such a pair of collaborators as Hans Neuert and Ludwig Ganghofer, and to the art of such a company — now, alas! dispersed — as Munich's "Gärtnerplatz-Theater" one. France has had no such concentrated pictures of its provincial and rustic existence. England has lacked them. Italy and the North know nothing so special. In this country, only with the careers of Mr. Denman Thompson and a small group — in which Mr. Neil Burgess and Mr. Richard Golden have grown famous —

have the similitudes of humble country existence been transferred to the city, with instant, attentive, and vast favor, — a result much like the thriving of a potted wild-flower in a florist's window.

Mr. Thompson certainly has afforded an extraordinary exposition of this fact. Born in Girard, Pa., in 1833, but growing up in the little suburb, so to say, of Keene, N.H., he early trifled with the profession until he attracted the notice of a shrewd manager. He therewith stepped into stage-life for good, out of an uncle's big "store," when about nineteen. He spent a considerable number of early seasons as a stock-actor, playing melodrama in Canada and the States. There be those who have seen Mr. Thompson long ago in vaudeville, and even as Sir Lucius O'Trigger, — to Mr. Robson's Bob Acres! But Mr. Thompson did not meet his true and happiest future until, out of a mere afterpiece, out of a feature of a variety performance, he began to elaborate, and at last to bring to an independent and widely-known fame, the play, "Joshua Whitcomb," with which his name — almost his personality — is now associated, including in the association its sequel, "The Old Homestead." "Joshua Whitcomb" undoubtedly owed much of its "start" to managerial enterprise and expense. It will be recalled that Mr. Hill made the indifferent eye weary with his enormous flood of advertisements of every sort, in degrees and ways then novel. But all the *affiches* in creation will not make a play a national success; and such successes, beyond a question, have been both "Joshua Whitcomb" and even more violently "The Old Homestead."

For some twenty years Mr. Thompson has played nothing else. The public would have nothing else

from him. One passing effort to substitute a new piece was almost ignored, and it had to be retired. "Uncle Joshua" ran a course of nearly a dozen years before Mr. Thompson and his agent, Mr. Ryder, concocted its successor. Accordingly, with "The Old Homestead" appended, the stage history of Mr. Thompson is told. He has lately retired. He has retired enriched and almost beloved by his enormous American public. The play continues, to be sure, in other charge; but the original Uncle Josh is only a spectator from afar of its intense vitality. How long is it going to keep on living, pleasing, drawing? Ten years longer? — twenty?

The play, taking "The Old Homestead," undoubtedly owes its success to its sincerity as tableau, if not drama. It presents studies, as now we all know, of "real folk"—good men and true—of Keene and adjacent neighborhoods. The original Uncle Josh, the original Cy Prime, are transferences from flesh and blood. Moreover, in general physique, voice, and outward havior Mr. Thompson has curiously fitted into the part he plays with such simplicity and naturalness. The story is well constructed, and not too theatric. One can hardly detect where Mr. Thompson's professional technique enters into so smooth and apparently spontaneous a delineation. He dominates the action and scenes delightfully. He and they bring the heart of the country into the metropolis, bring thither the element from which the latter's bone and sinews so largely have come. The old New York or Boston or Chicago merchant, his fashionable but warm-hearted wife, ah! they forget these times of their club-life and opera-box in this play. They are carried back to

the countryfied environment and feelings of childhood. The present seems unreal, the theatrical hours seem the truth. The children enjoy the piece's humor less sentimentally, but just as keenly. It catches every genuine nature in its honest grip. It is almost wholly genuine; the nearest and most unexaggerated stage-picture of character that is the salt of the American race.

With Mr. Neil Burgess and "The County Fair," we have a hurried and ill-carpentered bit of rural drama, originally intended only as broad humor, intended even as caricature. But gradually it became perceptibly modified and a bit chastened by Mr. Burgess's employment of a more refined and natural art in the central character of Abigail Prue. The piece, through his skill and simplicity of treatment, as well as by its elaborate and attractive incidents of New England farm-keeping, is valuable as a type of the special rural-life drama; much as is Mr. Thompson's little repertory. Mr. Burgess has made an emotional evolution of Abigail. We may laugh at her pantalettes. But there are traits of her warm heart, her sentiment under an uncouth exterior, her simplicity of nature, that bring deeper emotions to us. The femininity of Mr. Burgess's brusque presentation is wonderful; and it makes Abigail a lesson in Vermontism in petticoats, in homely, cordial spinsterhood. Therein lies its merit and even dignity. No, Abigail Prue must not be counted now as mere burlesque or horse-play. Mr. Burgess has little by little elevated his heroine, given us a finer and carefuller study of human nature to take home with us. We would go to a real Abigail in trouble, to meet good advice and a grave face. She is American, a daughter of her country in spindle-curls and thick

boots ; and she deserves perpetual honor and affection, in undercurrent to our mirth.

Mr. Golden's "Old Jed Prouty" has ceased its course. It was a mechanical and insincere piece, too much of the "real-pump, splendid-tub" manufacture, at best. But as Old Jed Mr. Golden delineated a Maine hotel-keeper in the Bucksport neighborhood with much truthfulness, — a shrewd, kindly, well-seasoned stick of Northern timber. The play's pictures, too, in setting him, were delightfully rustic. His making-up, dressing, manner, accent, everything was lifelike ; and the scenes became more natural as he predominated them. In such a little episode as the dialogue between Prouty and the chattering youngsters, Mr. Golden was charming. The "real" people, the actual, every-day sort of situation, could not be more faithful. The play was too obviously carpentered to deserve life ; but Prouty merited a longer career than was his fate.

I have not touched here on the picture-drama of our distinctively Western or Southern country life ; for it has not achieved, as yet, any such independent existence as has the New England article. Of this latter, however, the three best types are those above noted. Differentiating them, I should say that Mr. Thompson, on the whole, has expressed it with the nicest actuality of the three, — Mr. Burgess coming short only because of an original strain of caricature not convenient to dismiss ; and Mr. Golden perhaps more an idealizer than either, during the short-lived example he undertook. In any case, by such efforts we have quite faithful studies of New England mankind and womankind ; and it is strange, it is sometimes pathetic, to sit and watch and hear them with the clangor of

cable-cars and the roar of the elevated railway penetrating the metropolitan theatre, as a reminder that the real chapter is remote, is passed or passing — for us, at least !¹

¹ Since the above article was written, it is due to Mr. James A. Hearn to note that he has added through the play of "Shore Acres" another special and significant illustration of our drama of rustic life and rural character. The limits of this article permit only a reference here to Mr. Hearn's delineation, so genuinely and affectionately just; and that esteemed actor deserves a biographic page and lines of appreciation not practicable here.

E. I. S.



EDWARD HARRIGAN IN "OLD LAVENDER "

EDWARD HARRIGAN.

BY W. S. BLAKE.

THE stage possesses in Edward Harrigan an interesting and unique personality, — interesting, as continued and most liberal public approval attests, unique both in the matter and in the manner of his dramatic doings. Toplofty criticism finds it difficult, or so affects, to seriously consider the plays and acting of the Harrigan stage; but the play-going public has not waited for these official declarations, and has crowded pit and gallery in enthusiastic commendation. The verdict of the masses is decidedly with Mr. Harrigan, and for reasons to them more positive and palpable than often present themselves to the professional critic. Enumerate these, and you have that which is peculiar and effective in the work of Edward Harrigan.

Natural scenes, local incidents, fidelity to actual conditions, the sayings and doings of a real life of which we personally know by contact or observation, an unforced portrayal of types of character that may easily be more comical in the every-day world than in its mimic counterpart, a *bona fide* Irishman, a prime article in Irishwomen, a dyed-in-the-wool negro, and a jolly mob of lesser lights of the same general persuasions,

in a rollicking jumble of ludicrous incident, rough-and-tumble fightings, violent breakdowns, hurrah singings of most popular melodies original to these representations, — this is about what the thousands turn out to see, and this is a Harrigan play.

Mr. Harrigan catches Nature at her vantage points, and makes real life serve the ends of public amusement. He does this with apparent ease, and yet only by the exercise of observation most varied and acute, and by a sensitive apprehension of the dramatic possibilities in things around him. And people like it all because they feel a human relationship to their dramatic environment, a fellow-feeling for fellow-men. Imagination is not taxed to catch obscurities, nor credulity to surround improbabilities. No matter what the absurdity of situation, it is all for fun; and, like a lot of children, we agree to play it's so. With Harrigan both brain and nerves may take a full night off. We are then at mental ease for frolic only; and in the comfortable atmosphere of this very world in which we all must play our parts, both audience and actor rollick along, and have a mighty good time together.

The full measure of Mr. Harrigan's abilities as a writer of acceptable plays we believe has never yet been taken. Popular favor caught the clever comedian years ago in the midst of some local one-act sketches that served as after-pieces to the old-time regulation variety show, and has held him to his work ever since, with a tenacity that has indeed been profitable in box-office returns, but neither encouragement nor education for other and better work. The amusement-loving public holds Harrigan to a perpetual contract to serve up Mulligans and Reilys only, and joins with the crit-

ical gentlemen of the press in jealous watch against all attempts at emancipation from these familiar lines.

To act in such lines as Mr. Harrigan proposes for himself seems again too simple a task to give criticism a hold ; it is all so easy, all so lifelike, nothing of art about it, nothing of effort. Anybody could do it, with only a mouth full of brogue and a sea-dog roll to his legs — that is all. But is it ? First, the conventional Irishman of the variety stage is an undivided affliction — may we be spared his brogue and his wit ! Then, too, there is hardly such a thing as spontaneous, natural acting ; the nearer the approach to nature on the stage, the greater the art. It is easier to stride and to strut than to easily walk through the scenes, and to declaim than simply to talk. Heroics is the cheapest type of dramatic outfit. The very best to be said of Harrigan's acting is that he makes us forget he is acting. His methods are his own, neither broad nor flexible, neither elaborate nor subtle, but direct and legitimate at every point of application. Jovial but not boisterous, as wholesome in his wit as hearty, free and easy in every movement, yet never coarse. The art that can maintain itself amidst such temptations to buffoonery and extravagance must be both an instinct and a cultivated sense.

If all we knew of Mr. Harrigan were what we have seen of him in his usual lines, we would yet yield to his impersonations this undoubted merit of real creations. But here, again, satisfaction is tempered with regret. Whatever the success of the favorite Harrigan *rôle*, and whatever the commercial reasons for its continuance, we cannot refrain from once more calling to the footlights our old friend Lavender, that we may

applaud the actor in this creation quite as generously as the author.

Everybody likes "Ned" Harrigan, as thousands who have never met him socially yet term him; and when the fine-faced Irishman rolls in on the stage, under whatever name for the occasion, he is welcomed with a warm-hearted, personal fervor that is at once half the battle for an all-around evening's enjoyment. Harrigan belongs to New York; by birth and education, and by the more significant part of his professional history, his ties are in that city. There he was born of Irish parentage, Oct. 26, 1845. Though beginning his stage career in 1867 in San Francisco, as far from his native town as the confines of the country would permit, he soon found himself amidst his immediate friends again, and began at once to surround himself with that wide personal clientage which is so peculiarly his property to-day.

After a few years of experience in variety, he formed a partnership with Tony Hart in 1871; and that partnership continued fourteen years. In 1875 Mr. Hanley joined forces with the then famous Harrigan and Hart combination; and a year later the firm opened, fast and furious, at the old Comique. Those were the halcyon days of variety entertainments, when Nat Goodwin was doing his act all unconscious of coming comedy successes, and Wilson and Hopper were acquiring agility for "Merry Monarch" and "Wang" successes, and when Harrigan and Hart wound up the show with some roaring sketch of local stripe. Soon this usually neglected after-piece began to have a special importance with the crowds at the Comique. Harrigan had hit the public fancy. Gradually there was added to

these originally trivial conceits, until they bloomed out at last into full-fledged farce, and bore the brunt of the evening's entertainment. That meant "The Mulligan Guards," the jolliest lot of local trash that ever held the boards. A new and spacious theatre only increased the public appetite for Harrigan wit, and then came the fire that wiped out the faithful work of years. At this house (1881-1884) were produced "The Major," "Squatter Sovereignty," more "Mulligan Guards" pieces, "Cordelia's Aspirations."

A less strong character than that of the subject of this sketch might have quailed at the misfortune of the fire; but this man was not so constituted, and soon had the curtain raised to a Harrigan play at the Park Theatre, farther up town. Here came in rapid succession "The Leather Patch," "The O'Reagans," "Pete," "Old Lavender," and the other plays that have made so many of us laugh with pleasure. But fortune did not fix the actor-author permanently in any play-house, and a still later experience with theatre-managing had to be abandoned. Other cities, however, are thereby the gainer, since Harrigan's company is the more to be seen in the combination houses of the country.



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