LITTLE MASTERPIECES OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY: ACTORS

George Iles, editor

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Revision: B3
Date: 01/30/2008

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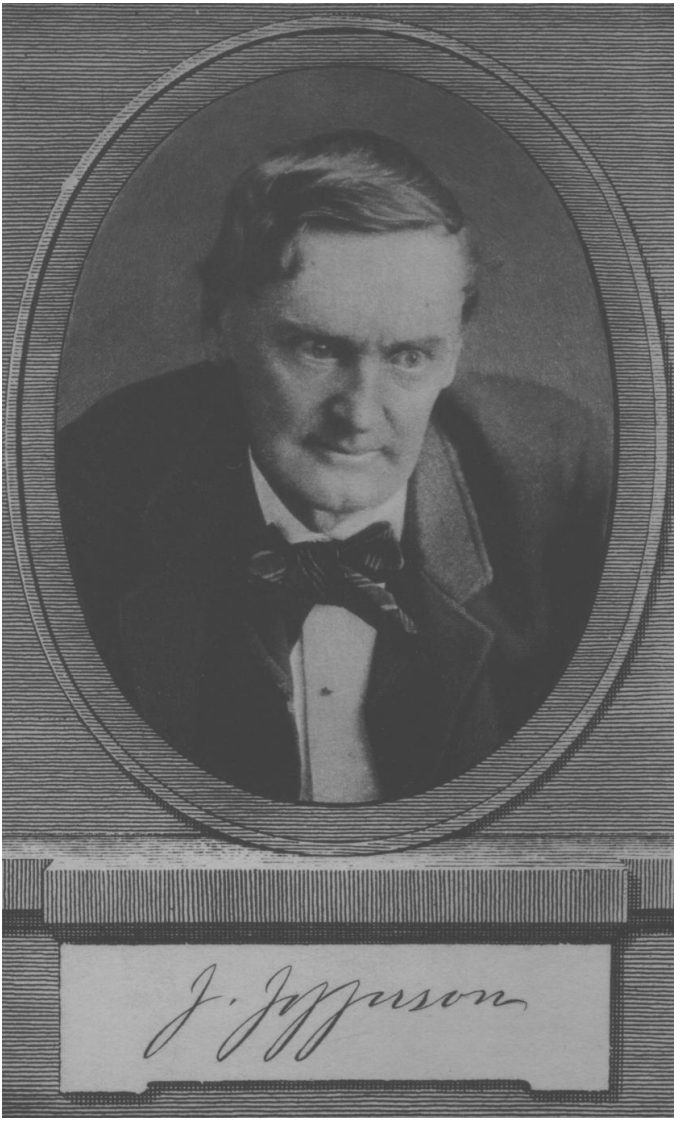
J. Jefferson

PREFACE

A good play gives us in miniature a cross-section of life, heightened by plot and characterisation, by witty and compact dialogue. Of course we should honour first the playwright, who has given form to each well-knit act and telling scene. But that worthy man, perhaps at this moment sipping his coffee at the Authors' Club, gave his drama its form only; its substance is created by the men and women who, with sympathy, intelligence and grace, embody with convincing power the hero and heroine, assassin and accomplice, lover and jilt. For the success of many a play their writers would be quick to acknowledge a further and initial debt, both in suggestion and criticism, to the artists who know from experience on the boards that deeds should be done, not talked about, that action is cardinal, with no other words than naturally spring from action. Players, too, not seldom remind authors that every incident should not only be interesting in itself, but take the play a stride forward through the entanglement and unravelling of its plot. It is altogether probable that the heights to which Shakespeare rose

as a dramatist were due in a measure to his knowledge of how a comedy, or a tragedy, appears behind as well as in front of the footlights, all in an atmosphere quite other than that surrounding a poet at his desk. This little volume begins with part of the life story of Joseph Jefferson, chief of American comedians. Then we are privileged to read a few personal letters from Edwin Booth, the acknowledged king of the tragic stage. He is followed by the queen in the same dramatic realm, Charlotte Cushman. Next are two chapters by the first emotional actress of her day in America, Clara Morris. When she bows her *adieu*, Sir Henry Irving comes upon the platform instead of the stage, and in the course of his thoughtful discourse makes it plain how he won renown both as an actor and a manager. He is followed by his son, Mr. Henry Brodribb Irving, clearly an heir to his father's talents in art and in observation. Miss Ellen Terry, long Sir Henry Irving's leading lady, now tells us how she came to join his company, and what she thinks of Sir Henry Irving in his principal rôles. The succeeding word comes from Richard Mansfield, whose untimely death is mourned by every lover of the drama. The next pages are from the hand of Tommaso Salvini, admittedly the greatest Othello and Samson that ever trod the boards. A few words, in closing, are from Adelaide Ristori, whose Medea, Myrrha and Phaedra are among the great traditions of the modern stage. From first to last this little book sheds light on the severe toil demanded for excel-

lence on the stage, and reveals that for the highest success of a drama, author and artist must work hand in hand.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON

[William Winter, the dramatic critic of the New York *Tribune*, in 1894 wrote the "Life and Art of Joseph Jefferson," published by the Macmillan Company, London and New York. He gives an account of Jefferson's lineage, and then says:

> "In Joseph Jefferson, fourth of the line, famous as Rip Van Winkle, and destined to be long remembered by that name in dramatic history, there is an obvious union of the salient qualities of his ancestors. The rustic luxuriance, manly vigour, careless and adventurous disposition of the first Jefferson; the refined intellect, delicate sensibility, dry humour, and gentle tenderness of the second; and the amiable, philosophic, and drifting temperament of the third, reappear in this descendant. But more than any of his ancestors, and more than most of his contemporaries, the present Jefferson is an originator in the art of acting.... Joseph Jefferson is as distinct as Lamb among essayists, or George

> Darley among lyrical poets. No actor of the past prefigured him, ... and no name, in the teeming annals of modern art, has shone with a more tranquil lustre, or can be more confidently committed to the esteem of posterity."

The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson, copyright, 1889, 1890, by the Century Company, New York, was published 1891. From its chapters, by permission, have been taken these pages.—*Ed*.]

HOW I CAME TO PLAY RIP VAN WINKLE

The hope of entering the race for dramatic fame as an individual and single attraction never came into my head until, in 1858, I acted Asa Trenchard in "Our American Cousin"; but as the curtain descended the first night on that remarkably successful play, visions of large type, foreign countries, and increased remuneration floated before me, and I resolved to be a star if I could. A resolution to this effect is easily made; its accomplishment is quite another matter.

Art has always been my sweetheart, and I have loved her for herself alone. I had fancied that our affection was mutual, so that when I failed as a star, which I certainly did, I thought she had jilted me. Not so. I wronged her. She only reminded me that I had taken too great a liberty, and that if I expected to win her I must press my suit with more pa-

tience. Checked, but undaunted in the resolve, my mind dwelt upon my vision, and I still indulged in day-dreams of the future.

During these delightful reveries it came up before me that in acting Asa Trenchard I had, for the first time in my life on the stage, spoken a pathetic speech; and though I did not look at the audience during the time I was acting—for that is dreadful—I felt that they both laughed and cried. I had before this often made my audience smile, but never until now had I moved them to tears. This to me novel accomplishment was delightful, and in casting about for a new character my mind was ever dwelling on reproducing an effect where humour would be so closely allied to pathos that smiles and tears should mingle with each other. Where could I get one? There had been many written, and as I looked back into the dramatic history of the past a long line of lovely ghosts loomed up before me, passing as in a procession: Job Thornberry, Bob Tyke, Frank Ostland, Zekiel Homespun, and a host of departed heroes "with martial stalk went by my watch." Charming fellows all, but not for me, I felt I could not do them justice. Besides, they were too human. I was looking for a myth—something intangible and impossible. But he would not come. Time went on, and still with no result,

During the summer of 1859 I arranged to board with my family at a queer old Dutch farmhouse in Paradise Valley, at the foot of Pocono Mountain, in Pennsylvania. A ridge of hills covered with tall hemlocks surrounds

the vale, and numerous trout-streams wind through the meadows and tumble over the rocks. Stray farms are scattered through the valley, and the few old Dutchmen and their families who till the soil were born upon it; there and only there they have ever lived. The valley harmonised with me and our resources. The scene was wild, the air was fresh, and the board was cheap. What could the light heart and purse of a poor actor ask for more than this?

On one of those long rainy days that always render the country so dull I had climbed to the loft of the barn, and lying upon the hay was reading that delightful book "The Life and Letters of Washington Irving." I had gotten well into the volume, and was much interested in it, when to my surprise I came upon a passage which said that he had seen me at Laura Keene's theater as Goldfinch in Holcroft's comedy of "The Road to Ruin," and that I reminded him of my father "in look, gesture, size, and make." Till then I was not aware that he had ever seen me. I was comparatively obscure, and to find myself remembered and written of by such a man gave me a thrill of pleasure I can never forget. I put down the book, and lay there thinking how proud I was, and ought to be, at the revelation of this compliment. What an incentive to a youngster like me to go on.

And so I thought to myself, "Washington Irving, the author of 'The Sketch-Book,' in which is the quaint story of Rip Van Winkle." Rip Van Winkle! There was to me magic in

the sound of the name as I repeated it. Why, was not this the very character I wanted? An American story by an American author was surely just the theme suited to an American actor.

In ten minutes I had gone to the house and returned to the barn with "The Sketch-Book." I had not read the story since I was a boy. I was disappointed with it; not as a story, of course, but the tale was purely a narrative. The theme was interesting, but not dramatic. The silver Hudson stretches out before you as you read, the quaint red roofs and queer gables of the old Dutch cottages stand out against the mist upon the mountains; but all this is descriptive. The character of Rip does not speak ten lines. What could be done dramatically with so simple a sketch? How could it be turned into an effective play?

Three or four bad dramatisations of the story had already been acted, but without marked success, Yates of London had given one in which the hero dies, one had been acted by my father, one by Hackett, and another by Burke. Some of these versions I had remembered when I was a boy, and I should say that Burke's play and performance were the best, but nothing that I remembered gave me the slightest encouragement that I could get a good play out of any of the existing materials. Still I was so bent upon acting the part that I started for the city, and in less than a week, by industriously ransacking the theatrical wardrobe establishments for old leather and mildewed cloth and by

personally superintending the making of the wigs, each article of my costume was completed; and all this, too, before I had written a line of the play or studied a word of the part.

This is working in an opposite direction from all the conventional methods in the study and elaboration of a dramatic character, and certainly not following the course I would advise any one to pursue. I merely mention the out-of-the-way, upside-down manner of going to work as an illustration of the impatience and enthusiasm with which I entered upon the task, I can only account for my getting the dress ready before I studied the part to the vain desire I had of witnessing myself in the glass, decked out and equipped as the hero of the Catskills.

I got together the three old printed versions of the drama and the story itself. The plays were all in two acts. I thought it would be an improvement in the drama to arrange it in three, making the scene with the spectre crew an act by itself. This would separate the poetical from the domestic side of the story. But by far the most important alteration was in the interview with the spirits. In the old versions they spoke and sang. I remembered that the effect of this ghostly dialogue was dreadfully human, so I arranged that no voice but Rip's should be heard. This is the only act on the stage in which but one person speaks while all the others merely gesticulate, and I was quite sure that the silence of the crew would give a lonely and desolate character to the scene and add its to supernatural weird-

ness. By this means, too, a strong contrast with the single voice of Rip was obtained by the deathlike stillness of the "demons" as they glided about the stage in solemn silence. It required some thought to hit upon just the best questions that could be answered by a nod and shake of the head, and to arrange that at times even Rip should propound a query to himself and answer it; but I had availed myself of so much of the old material that in a few days after I had begun my work it was finished.

In the seclusion of the barn I studied and rehearsed the part, and by the end of summer I was prepared to transplant it from the rustic realms of an old farmhouse to a cosmopolitan audience in the city of Washington, where I opened at Carusi's Hall under the management of John T. Raymond. I had gone over the play so thoroughly that each situation was fairly engraved on my mind. The rehearsals were therefore not tedious to the actors; no one was delayed that I might consider how he or she should be disposed in the scene. I had by repeated experiments so saturated myself with the action of the play that a few days seemed to perfect the rehearsals. I acted on these occasions with all the point and feeling that I could muster. This answered the double purpose of giving me freedom and of observing the effect of what I was doing on the actors. They seemed to be watching me closely, and I could tell by little nods of approval where and when the points hit.

I became each day more and more inter-

ested in the work; there was in the subject and the part much scope for novel and fanciful treatment. If the sleep of twenty years was merely incongruous, there would be room for argument pro and con; but as it is an impossibility, I felt that the audience would accept it at once, not because it was an impossibility, but from a desire to know in what condition a man's mind would be if such an event could happen. Would he be thus changed? His identity being denied both by strangers, friends, and family, would he at last almost accept the verdict and exclaim, "Then I am dead, and that is a fact?" This was the strange and original attitude of the character that attracted me.

In acting such a part what to do was simple enough, but what not to do was the important and difficult point to determine. As the earlier scenes of the play were of a natural and domestic character, I had only to draw upon my experience for their effect, or employ such conventional methods as myself and others had used before in characters of that ilk. But from the moment Rip meets the spirits of Hendrik Hudson and his crew I felt that all colloquial dialogue and commonplace pantomime should cease. It is at this point in the story that the supernatural element begins, and henceforth the character must be raised from the domestic plane and lifted into the realms of the ideal.

To be brief, the play was acted with a result that was to me both satisfactory and disappointing. I was quite sure that the charac-

ter was what I had been seeking, and I was equally satisfied that the play was not. The action had neither the body nor the strength to carry the hero; the spiritual quality was there, but the human interest was wanting. The final alterations and additions were made five years later by Dion Boucicault.

"Rip Van Winkle" was not a sudden success. It did not burst upon the public like a torrent. Its flow was gradual, and its source sprang from the Hartz Mountains, an old German legend, called "Carl the Shepherd," being the name of the original story. The genius of Washington Irving transplanted the tale to our own Catskills. The grace with which he paints the scene, and, still more, the quaintness of the story, placed it far above the original. Yates, Hackett, and Burke had separate dramas written upon this scene and acted the hero, leaving their traditions one to the other. I now came forth, and saying, "Give me leave," set to work, using some of the before-mentioned tradition, mark you. Added to this, Dion Boucicault brought his dramatic skill to bear, and by important additions made a better play and a more interesting character of the hero than had as yet been reached. This adaptation, in my turn, I interpreted and enlarged upon. It is thus evident that while I may have done much to render the character and the play popular, it has not been the work of one mind, but both as its to narrative and its dramatic form has been often moulded, and by many skilful hands. So it would seem that those dramatic successes

that "come like shadows, so depart," and those that are lasting, have ability for their foundation and industry for their superstructure. I speak now of the former and the present condition of the drama. What the future may bring forth it is difficult to determine. The histrionic kaleidoscope revolves more rapidly than of yore and the fantastic shapes that it exhibits are brilliant and confusing; but under all circumstances I should be loath to believe that any conditions will render the appearance of frivolous novices more potent than the earnest design of legitimate professors.

THE ART OF ACTING

Acting has been so much a part of my life that my autobiography could scarcely be written without jotting down my reflections upon it, and I merely make this little preparatory explanation to apologise for any dogmatic tone that they may possess, and to say that I present them merely as a seeker after truth in the domain of art.

In admitting the analogy that undoubtedly exists between the arts of painting, poetry, music, and acting, it should be remembered that the first three are opposed to the last, in at least the one quality of permanence. The picture, oratorio, or book must bear the test of calculating criticism, whereas the work of an actor is fleeting: it not only dies with him, but, through his different moods, may vary from night to night. If the performance be indif-

ferent it is no consolation for the audience to hear that the player acted well last night, or to be told that he will act better to-morrow night; it is this night that the public has to deal with, and the impression the actor has made, good or bad, remains as such upon the mind of that particular audience.

The author, painter, or musician, if he be dissatisfied with his work, may alter and perfect it before giving it publicity, but an actor cannot rub out; he ought, therefore, in justice to his audience, to be sure of what he is going to place before it. Should a picture in an art gallery be carelessly painted we can pass on to another, or if a book fails to please us we can put it down. An escape from this kind of dulness is easily made, but in a theatre the auditor is imprisoned. If the acting be indifferent, he must endure it, at least for a time. He cannot withdraw without making himself conspicuous; so he remains, hoping that there may be some improvement as the play proceeds, or perhaps from consideration for the company he is in. It is this helpless condition that renders careless acting so offensive.

PREPARATION AND INSPIRATION

I have seen impulsive actors who were so confident of their power that they left all to chance. This is a dangerous course, especially when acting a new character. I will admit that

there are many instances where great effects have been produced that were entirely spontaneous, and were as much a surprise to the actors who made them as they were to the audience who witnessed them; but just as individuals who have exuberant spirits are at times dreadfully depressed, so when an impulsive actor fails to receive his inspiration he is dull indeed, and is the more disappointing because of his former brilliant achievements.

In the stage management of a play, or in the acting of a part, nothing should be left to chance, and for the reason that spontaneity, inspiration, or whatever the strange and delightful quality may be called, is not to be commanded, or we should give it some other name. It is, therefore, better that a clear and unmistakable outline of a character should be drawn before an actor undertakes a new part. If he has a well-ordered and an artistic mind it is likely that he will give at least a symmetrical and effective performance; but should he make no definite arrangement, and depend upon our ghostly friends Spontaneity and Inspiration to pay him a visit, and should they decline to call, the actor will be in a maze and his audience in a muddle.

Besides, why not prepare to receive our mysterious friends whether they come or not? If they fail on such an invitation, we can at least entertain our other guests without them, and if they do appear, our preconceived arrangements will give them a better welcome and put them more at ease.

Acting under these purely artificial con-

ditions will necessarily be cold, but the care with which the part is given will at least render it inoffensive; they are, therefore, primary considerations, and not to be despised. The exhibition, however, of artistic care does not alone constitute great acting. The inspired warmth of passion in tragedy and the sudden glow of humour in comedy cover the artificial framework with an impenetrable veil: this is the very climax of great art, for which there seems to be no other name but genius. It is then, and then only, that an audience feels that it is in the presence of a reality rather than a fiction. To an audience an ounce of genius has more weight than a ton of talent; for though it respects the latter, it reverences the former. But the creative power, divine as it may be, should in common gratitude pay due regard to the reflective; for Art is the handmaid of Genius, and only asks the modest wages of respectful consideration in payment for her valuable services. A splendid torrent of genius ought never to be checked, but it should be wisely guided into the deep channel of the stream, from whose surface it will then reflect Nature without a ripple. Genius dyes the hues that resemble those of the rainbow; Art fixes the colours that they may stand. In the race for fame purely artificial actors cannot hope to win against those whose genius is guided by their art; and, on the other hand, Intuition must not complain if, unbridled or with too loose a rein, it stumbles on the course, and so allows a well-ridden hack to distance it.

SHOULD AN ACTOR "FEEL" HIS PART

Much has been written upon the question as to whether an actor ought to feel the character he acts, or be dead to any sensations in this direction. Excellent artists differ in their opinions on this important point. In discussing it I must refer to some words I wrote in one of my early chapters:

> "The methods by which actors arrive at great effects vary according to their own natures; this renders the teaching of the art by any strictly defined lines a difficult matter."

There has lately been a discussion on the subject, in which many have taken part, and one quite notable debate between two distinguished actors, one of the English and the other of the French stage [Henry Irving and *Mons*. Coquelin]. These gentlemen, though they differ entirely in their ideas, are, nevertheless, equally right. The method of one, I have no doubt, is the best he could possibly devise for himself; and the same may be said of the rules of the other as applied to himself. But they must work with their own tools; if they had to adopt each other's they would be as much confused as if compelled to exchange languages. One believes that he must feel the character he plays, even to the shedding of real tears, while the other prefers never to

lose himself for an instant, and there is no doubt that they both act with more effect by adhering to their own dogmas.

For myself, I know that I act best when the heart is warm and the head is cool. In observing the works of great painters I find that they have no conventionalities except their own; hence they are masters, and each is at the head of his own school. They are original, and could not imitate even if they would.

So with acting, no master-hand can prescribe rules for the head of another school. If, then, I appear bold in putting forth my suggestions, I desire it to be clearly understood that I do not present them to original or experienced artists who have formed their school, but to the student who may have a temperament akin to my own, and who could, therefore, blend my methods with his preconceived ideas.

Many instructors in the dramatic art fall into the error of teaching too much. The pupil should first be allowed to exhibit his quality, and so teach the teacher what to teach. This course would answer the double purpose of first revealing how much the pupil is capable of learning, and, what is still more important, of permitting him to display his powers untrammeled. Whereas, if the master begins by pounding his dogmas into the student, the latter becomes environed by a foreign influence which, if repugnant to his nature, may smother his ability.

It is necessary to be cautious in studying elocution and gesticulation, lest they be-

come our masters instead of our servants. These necessary but dangerous ingredients must be administered and taken in homeopathic doses, or the patient may die by being over-stimulated. But, even at the risk of being artificial, it is better to have studied these arbitrary rules than to enter a profession with no knowledge whatever of its mechanism. Dramatic instinct is so implanted in humanity that it sometimes misleads us, fostering the idea that because we have the natural talent within we are equally endowed with the power of bringing it out. This is the common error, the rock on which the histrionic aspirant is oftenest wrecked. Very few actors succeed who crawl into the service through the "cabin windows"; and if they do it is a lifelong regret with them that they did not exert their courage and sail at first "before the mast."

Many of the shining lights who now occupy the highest positions on the stage, and whom the public voice delights to praise, have often appeared in the dreaded character of *omnes*, marched in processions, sung out of tune in choruses, and shouted themselves hoarse for Brutus and Mark Antony.

If necessity is the mother of invention, she is the foster-mother of art, for the greatest actors that ever lived have drawn their early nourishment from her breast. We learn our profession by the mortifications we are compelled to go through in order to get a living.

The sons and daughters of wealthy parents who have money at their command, and can

settle their weekly expenses without the assistance of the box office, indignantly refuse to lower themselves by assuming some subordinate character for which they are cast, and march home because their fathers and mothers will take care of them. Well, they had better stay there!

But whether you are rich or poor, if you would be an actor begin at the beginning. This is the old conventional advice, and is as good now in its old age as it was in its youth. All actors will agree in this, and as Puff says, in the *Critic*, "When they do agree on the stage the unanimity is wonderful." Enroll yourself as a "super" in some first-class theatre, where there is a stock Company and likely to be a periodical change of programme, so that even in your low degree the practice will be varied. After having posed a month as an innocent English rustic, you may, in the next play, have an opportunity of being a noble Roman. Do the little you have to do as well as you can; if you are in earnest the stage-manager will soon notice it and your advancement will begin at once. You have now made the plunge, the ice is broken; there is no more degradation for you; every step you take is forward.

A great American statesman said, "There is always plenty of room at the top." So there is, Mr. Webster, after you get there. But we must climb, and climb slowly too, so that we can look back without any unpleasant sensations; for if we are cast suddenly upon the giddy height our heads will swim and down we shall go. Look also at the difficulties that

will beset you by beginning "at the top." In the first place, no manager in his senses will permit it; and if he did, your failure—which is almost inevitable—not only will mortify you, but your future course for some time to come will be on the downward path. Then, in disgust, sore and disheartened, you will retire from the profession which perhaps your talents might have ornamented if they had been properly developed.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON IN MONTREAL: PLAYWRIGHTS AND ACTORS

In May, 1886, Mr. Jefferson paid a visit to Montreal, and greatly enjoyed a drive through Mount Royal Park and to Sault au Recollet. That week he appeared in "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Cricket on the Hearth." Speaking of Boucicault, who dramatised Rip, he said to the editor of this volume: "Yes, he is a consummate retoucher of other men's work. His experience on the stage tells him just what points to expand and emphasise with most effect. No author seated at his desk all his life, without theatrical training, could ever have rewritten Rip with such success. Among modern plays I consider 'The Scrap of Paper' by Victorien Sardou to be the most ingenious of all. If Sardou only had heart he would be one of the great-

est dramatists that ever lived. Had he written 'The Cricket on the Hearth,' Caleb Plummer instead of being patient, resigned and lovable would have been filled with the vengeful ire of a revolutionist."

With regard to Shakespeare Mr. Jefferson said:

"'Macbeth' is his greatest play, the deepest in meaning, the best knit from the first scene to the last. While 'Othello' centres on jealousy, 'Lear' on madness, 'Romeo and Juliet' on love, 'Macbeth' turns on fate, on the supernal influences which compel a man with good in him to a murderous course. The weird witches who surround the bubbling caldron are Fates."

Recalling his early days on the boards he remarked: "Then a young actor had to play a varied round of parts in a single season. To-night it would be farce, to-morrow tragedy, the next night some such melodrama as 'Ten Nights in a Bar-room.' This not only taught an actor his business, it gave him a chance to find out where his strength lay, whether as Dundreary, Hamlet, or Zeke Homespun."

THE JEFFERSON FACE

One of Mr. Jefferson's company that season was his son, Mr. Thomas Jefferson. When I spoke of his remarkable resemblance to the portraits of President Jefferson, I was told:

"If physiognomy counts for anything, all the Jeffersons have sprung from one stock; we look alike wherever you find us. The next time

you are in Richmond, Virginia, I wish you to notice the statue of Thomas Jefferson, one of the group surrounding George Washington beside the Capitol. That statue might serve as a likeness of my father. When his father was once playing in Washington, President Jefferson, who warmly admired his talents, sent for him and received him most hospitably. When they compared genealogies they could come no nearer than that both families had come from the same county in England."

Montreal has several highly meritorious art collections: these, of course, were open to Mr. Jefferson. He was particularly pleased with the canvases of Corot in the mansion of Sir George Drummond. That afternoon another collector showed him his gallery and pointed to a portrait of his son, for the three years past a student of art in Paris. Mr. Jefferson asked: "How can you bear to be parted from him so long?"

He could be witty as well as kind in his remarks. A kinswoman in his company grumbled that the Montreal *Herald* had called her nose a poem.

"No, my dear," was his comment, "it's not a poem, but a stanza, something shorter."

On Dominion Square I showed him the site occupied by the Ice Palace during the recent Winter Carnival; on the right stood a Methodist Church, on the left the Roman Catholic Cathedral. He remarked simply: "So there's a coolness between them!"

EDWIN BOOTH

[Mr. William Winter's "Life and Art of Edwin Booth" is indispensable to a student of the American stage. Here are two paragraphs chosen from many as illuminating:

> "The salient attributes of Booth's art were imagination, insight, grace, intense emotion, and melancholy refinement. In Hamlet, Richelieu, Othello, Iago, Lear, Bertuccio, and Lucius Brutus they were conspicuously manifest. But the controlling attribute,—that which imparted individual character, colour and fascination to his acting,—was the thoughtful introspective habit of a stately mind, abstracted from passion and suffused with mournful dreaminess of temperament. The moment that charm began to work, his victory was complete. It was that which made him the true image of Shakespeare's thought, in the glittering halls of Elsinore, on its midnight battlements, and in its lonely, wind-beaten place of graves.
>
> "Under the discipline of sorrow, and through years that bring the

> philosophic mind, Booth drifted further and further away from things dark and terrible, whether in the possibilities of human life or in the world of imagination. That is the direction of true growth. In all characters that evoked his essential spirit—in characters which rested on spiritualised intellect, or on sensibility to fragile loveliness, the joy that is unattainable, the glory that fades, and the beauty that perishes—he was peerless. Hamlet, Richelieu, Faust, Manfred, Jacques, Esmond, Sydney Carton, and Sir Edward Mortimer are all, in different ways, suggestive of the personality that Booth was fitted to illustrate. It is the loftiest type that human nature affords, because it is the embodied supremacy of the soul, and because therein it denotes the only possible escape from the cares and vanities of a transitory world."

The letters which follow are from "Edwin Booth: Recollections by his daughter, Edwina Booth Grossman, and Letters to Her and to His Friends." Copyright, 1894, Century Company, New York.—*Ed*.]

TO HIS DAUGHTER

BOOTH'S THEATER, NEW YORK,
NOVEMBER 15, 1871.

MY OWN DEAR DAUGHTER:

I arrived here last night, and found your pretty gift awaiting me. Your letter pleased me very, very much in every respect, and your little souvenir gave me far more delight than if it were of real gold. When you are older you will understand how precious little things, seemingly of no value in themselves, can be loved and prized above all price when they convey the love and thoughtfulness of a good heart. This little token of your desire to please me, my darling, is therefore very dear to me, and I will cherish it as long as I live. If God grants me so many years, I will show it you when you are a woman, and then you will appreciate my preference for so little a thing, made by you, to anything money might have bought. God bless you, my darling!...

God bless you again and again!

YOUR LOVING FATHER.

TO HIS DAUGHTER

CHICAGO, MARCH 2, 1873.

MY DEAR BIG DAUGHTER:

Your last letter was very jolly, and made me almost happy. Pip (the dog) is yelping to write to you, and so is your little brother, St. Valentine, the bird; but I greatly fear they will have to wait another week, for, you know, I have to hold the pen for them, and I have written so many letters, and to-day my hand is tired.

Don't you think it jollier to receive silly letters sometimes than to get a repetition of sermons on good behaviour? It is because I desire to encourage in you a vein of pleasantry, which is most desirable in one's correspondence, as well as in conversation, that I put aside the stern old father, and play papa now and then.

When I was learning to act tragedy, I had frequently to perform comic parts, in order to acquire a certain ease of manner that my serious parts might not appear too stilted; so you must endeavour in your letters, in your conversation, and your general deportment, to be easy and natural, graceful and dignified. But remember that dignity does not consist of over-becoming pride and haughtiness; self-respect, politeness and gentleness in all things and to all persons will give you sufficient dignity. Well, I declare, I've dropped into a sermon, after all, haven't I? I'm afraid I'll have to let Pip and the bird have a chance, or else I'll go on preaching till the end of my letter. You must tell me what you are reading now, and how you progress in your studies, and how good you are trying to be. Of that I have no fear. I doubt if I shall get to Philadelphia in June; so do not expect me until school breaks up and then—"hey for Cos Cob" and the fish-poles! When I was last there the snow was high above our knees; but still I liked it better than the city. . . .

Love and kisses from your grim old father.

TO HIS DAUGHTER

APRIL 23, 1876.

MY DARLING DAUGHTER,

. . . When I was at Eton (I don't refer now to the dinner-table) my Greek and Latin were of such a superior quality that had it not been for an unforeseen accident I would have carried off all the honours. The accident lay in this: I never went to school there except in dreams. How often, ah! how often have I imagined the delights of a collegiate education! What a world of never-ending interest lies open to the master of languages!

The best translations cannot convey to us the strength and exquisite delicacy of thought in its native garb, and he to whom such books are shut flounders about in outer darkness. I have suffered so much from the lack of that which my father could easily have given me in youth, and which he himself possessed, that I am all the more anxious you shall escape my punishment in that respect; that you may not, like me, dream of those advantages which others enjoy through any lack of opportunity or neglect of mine. Therefore, learn to love your Latin, your French, and your English grammar; standing firmly and securely on them, you have a solid foothold in the field of literature. . . .

Think how interesting it will be hereafter to refer to your journal, and see the rapid development, not only of your mind, but of your moral growth; only do not fail to record all

your shortcomings; they will not stand as reproaches, but as mere snags in the tortuous river of your life, to be avoided in succeeding trips farther down the stream. They beset us all along the route, from the cradle to the grave, and if we can only see them we can avoid many rough bumps.

God bless my darling!

PAPA.

TO HIS DAUGHTER

CHICAGO, OCTOBER 9, 1886

. . . I am glad to know that baby has begun to crawl; don't put her on her feet too soon; consider her legs *a la bow*. . . . I closed my first week here with two enormous houses. A hard week's work has greatly tired me. . . . Jefferson called and left with me the manuscript of his reminiscences, which he has been writing. So far as he has written it, it is intensely interesting and amusing, and well written in a free and chatty style; it will be the best autobiography of any actor yet published if he continues it in its present form. I sent you some book notices from Lawrence Hutton's clippings for me. . . . In the article I send to-day you will see that I am gently touched up on the point of the "old school"; my reference was not to the old style of acting, but the old stock theatre as a school—where a beginner had the advantage of a great variety of experience in farces, as well as tragedies and comedies, and

a frequent change of programme. There is no "school" now; there is a more natural style of acting, perhaps, but the novice can learn nothing from long runs of a single play . . .

TO HIS DAUGHTER

NEW YORK, JANUARY 5, 1888,

. . . As for God's reward for what I have done, I can hardly appreciate it; it is more like punishment for misdeeds (of which I've done many) than grace for good ones (if I've done any). Homelessness is the actor's fate; physical incapacity to attain what is most required and desired by such a spirit as I am a slave to. If there be rewards, I am certainly well paid, but hard schooling in life's thankless lessons has made me somewhat of a philosopher, and I've learned to take the buffets and rewards of fortune with equal thanks, and in suffering all to suffer—I won't say nothing, but comparatively little. Dick Stoddard wrote a poem called "The King's Bell," which fits my case exactly (you may have read it) . He dedicated it to Lorimer Graham, who never knew an unhappy day in his brief life, instead of to me, who never knew a really happy one. You mustn't suppose from this that I'm ill in mind or body: on the contrary, I am well enough in both; nor am I a pessimist. I merely wanted you to know that the sugar of my life is bittersweet; perhaps not more so than every man's whose experience has been above and below

the surface.... Business has continued large, and increases a little every night; the play will run two weeks longer. Sunday, at four o'clock, I start for Baltimore, arriving there at ten o'clock....

To-morrow, a meeting of actors, managers, and artists at breakfast, to discuss and organise, if possible, a theatrical club[1] like the Garrick of London....

TO HIS DAUGHTER

DETROIT, APRIL 4, 1890.

...Yes; it is indeed most gratifying to feel that age has not rendered my work stale and tiresome, as is usually the case with actors (especially tragedians) at my time. Your dear mother's fear was that I would culminate too early, as I seemed then to be advancing so rapidly. Somehow I can't rid myself of the belief that both she and my father helped me. But as for the compensation? Nothing of fame or fortune can compensate for the spiritual suffering that one possessing such qualities has to endure. To pass life in a sort of dream, where "nothing is but what is not"—a loneliness in the very midst of a constant crowd, as it were—is not a desirable condition of existence, especially when the body

[1]This took the form as "The Players"; its home, 16 Grammercy Park, New York, was a gift from Mr. Booth. It had long been his residence, and there he passed away.

also has to share the "penalty of greatness," as it is termed. Bosh! I'd sooner be an obscure farmer, a hayseed from Wayback, or a cabinetmaker, as my father advised, than the most distinguished man on earth. But Nature cast me for the part she found me best fitted for, and I have had to play it, and must play it till the curtain falls. But you must not think me sad about it. No; I am used to it, and am contented.

I continue well, and act with a vigour which sometimes surprises myself, and all the company notice it, and comment upon it. I'm glad the babes had a jolly birthday. Bless 'em! Love for all.

PAPA.

TO HIS DAUGHTER

THE PLAYERS, NEW YORK,
MARCH 22, 1891.

DEAR DAUGHTER:

I'm in no mood for letter-writing to-day. The shock (of Mr. Lawrence Barrett's death) so sudden and so distressing, and the gloomy, depressing weather, entirely unfit me for the least exertion—even to think. Hosts of friends, all eager to assist poor Mrs. Barrett, seem helpless in confusion, and all the details of the sad business seem to be huddled on her . . .

General Sherman's son, "Father Tom," as he is affectionately called by all the family and the friends of the dear old General, will attend. He was summoned from Europe recently to his father's deathbed, and he happens to be in time to perform services for his father's friend, poor Lawrence. After the services to-morrow, the remains and a few friends will go direct to Cohasset for the burial—Tuesday—where Barrett had only two weeks ago placed his mother, removed from her New York grave to a family lot which he had recently purchased at Cohasset. He had also enlarged his house there, where he intended to pass his old age in privacy. Doctor Smith was correct in his assertion that the glandular disease was incurable, and the surgical operation would prolong life only a year or so; the severe cold produced pneumonia; which Barrett's physicians say might

have been overcome but for the glandular disease still in the blood. Mrs. Barrett knew from the first operation that he had at most a year or so to live, and yet by the doctor's advice kept it secret, and did everything to cheer and humour him. She's a remarkable woman. She has been expecting to be suddenly called to him for more than a year past, yet the blow came with terrible force. Milly, Mr. Barrett's youngest daughter, and her husband, came last night. . . . When I saw Lawrence on Thursday he was in a burning fever and asked me to keep away for fear his breath might affect me, and it pained him to talk. He pulled through three acts of "De Mauprat" the night before, and sent for his wife that night. His death was very peaceful, with no sign of pain. A couple of weeks ago he and I were to meet General Sherman at dinner: death came instead. Tonight Barrett had invited about twenty distinguished men to meet me at Delmonico's, and again the grim guest attends. . . .

My room is like an office of some state official; letters, telegrams, and callers come every moment, some on business, many in sympathy. Three hours have elapsed since I finished the last sentence, and I expect a call from Bromley before I retire. A world of business matters have been disturbed by this sudden break of contracts with actors and managers, and everything pertaining to next season, as well as much concerning the balance of the present one, must be rearranged or cancelled. I, of course, am free; but for the sake of the company I shall fulfil my time, to pay

their salaries, this week here; and next week in Brooklyn, as they were engaged by Barrett for my engagement. After which they will be out of employment for the balance of the season. . . .

PAPA.

TO MISS EMMA F. CARY

SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY, 1864.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

A little lull in the whirl of excitement in which my brain has nearly lost its balance affords me an opportunity to write to you. It would be difficult to explain the many little annoyances I have been subjected to in the production of "Richelieu," but when I tell you that it far surpasses "Hamlet," and exceeds all my expectations, you may suppose that I have not been very idle all this while. I wish you could see it.

Professor Peirce[2] has been here, and he will tell you of it. It really seems that the dreams of my past life—so far as my profession is concerned—are being realised. What Mary and I used to plan for my future, what Richard and I used laughingly to promise ourselves in "our model theatre," seems to be

[2]The late Professor Peirce, professor of mathematics in Harvard University, father of Professor James Mills Peirce.

realised—in these two plays, at least. As history says of the great cardinal, I am "too fortunate a man not to be superstitious," and as I find my hopes being fulfilled, I cannot help but believe that there is a sufficient importance in my art to interest them still; that to a higher influence than the world believes I am moved by I owe the success I have achieved. Assured that all I do in this advance carries, even beyond the range of my little world (the theatre), an elevating and refining influence, while in it the effect is good, I begin to feel really happy in my once uneasy sphere of action. I dare say I shall soon be contented with my lot. I will tell you this much: I have been offered the means to a speedy and an ample fortune, from all parts of the country, but prefer the limit I have set, wherein I have the power to carry out my wishes, though "on half pay," as it were. . . .

Ever your friend,

EDWIN BOOTH.

TO MISS EMMA F. CARY

[Three weeks after the assassination by his brother, John Wilkes Booth, of President Lincoln.]

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1865.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I've just received your letter. I have been in one sense unable to write, but you know,

of course, what my condition is, and need no excuses.

I have been, by the advice of my friends, "cooped up" since I arrived here, going out only occasionally in the evening. My health is good, but I suffer from the want of fresh air and exercise.

Poor mother is in Philadelphia, about crushed by her sorrows, and my sister, Mrs. Clarke, is ill, and without the least knowledge of her husband, who was taken from her several days ago, with Junius.

My position is such a delicate one that I am obliged to use the utmost caution. Hosts of friends are staunch and true to me. Here and in Boston I feel safe. What I am in Philadelphia and elsewhere I know not. All I do [know] of the above named city is that there is one great heart firm and faster bound to me than ever.

Sent in answer to dear Mary's [his wife's] prayers—I faithfully believe it. She will do what Mary struggled, suffered, and died in doing. My baby, too, is there. Now that the greatest excitement is over, and a lull is in the storm, I feel the need of that dear angel; but during the heat of it I was glad she was not here.

When Junius and Mr. Clarke are at liberty, mother will come here and bring Edwina [his daughter] to me. I wish I could see with others' eyes; all my friends assure me that my name shall be free, and that in a little while I may be where I was and what I was; but, alas! it looks dark to me.

God bless you all for your great assistance in my behalf; even dear Dick aided me in my extremity, did he not?

Give my love to all and kisses to George.

. . . I do not think the feeling is so strong in my favour in Philadelphia as it is here and in Boston. I am not known there. Ever yours.

TO MR. NAHUM CAPEN

[In response to an inquiry regarding his brother, John Wilkes Booth.]

WINDSOR HOTEL, NEW YORK,
JULY 28, 1881.

DEAR SIR:

I can give you very little information regarding my brother John. I seldom saw him since his early boyhood in Baltimore. He was a rattle-pated fellow, filled with quixotic notions.

While at the farm in Maryland he would charge on horseback through the woods, "spouting" heroic speeches with a lance in his hand—a relic of the Mexican war—given to father by some soldier who had served under Taylor. We regarded him as a good-hearted, harmless, though wild-brained, boy, and used to laugh at his patriotic froth whenever secession was discussed. That he was insane on that one point no one who knew him well can doubt. When I told him that I had voted for Lincoln's reelection he expressed deep regret, and declared his belief that Lincoln would

be made king of America; and this I believe, drove him beyond the limits of reason. I asked him once why he did not join the Confederate army. To which he replied, "I promised mother I would keep out of the quarrel, if possible, and I am sorry that I said so." Knowing my sentiments, he avoided me, rarely visiting my house, except to see his mother, when political topics were not touched upon—at least in my presence. He was of a gentle, loving disposition, very boyish and full of fun—his mother's darling—and his deed and death crushed her spirit. He possessed rare dramatic talent, and would have made a brilliant mark in the theatrical world. This is positively all that I know about him, having left him a mere school-boy, when I went with my father to California in 1852. On my return in 1856 we were separated by professional engagements, which kept him mostly in the South while I was employed in the Eastern and Northern states.

I do not believe any of the wild, romantic stories published in the papers concerning him; but of course he may have been engaged in political matters of which I know nothing. All his theatrical friends speak of him as a poor crazy boy, and such his family think of him. I am sorry I can afford you no further light on the subject. Very truly yours,. . .

ADVICE TO A YOUNG ACTOR

[*To Walter Thomas*]

NEW YORK, AUGUST 28, 1889.

MY DEAR MR. THOMAS:

I was surprised to learn that your engagement with Mr. Barrett is terminated, and am sorry for the cause, although I believe the result will be to your advantage. Your chances for promotion will be better in a company that is not confined to so limited a repertoire as mine, in which so few opportunities occur for the proper exercise of youthful talent. A frequent change of rôle, and of the lighter sort—especially such as one does not like forcing one's self to use the very utmost of his ability in the performance of—is the training requisite for a mastery of the actor's art.

I had seven years' apprenticeship at it, during which most of my labour was in the field of comedy—"walking gentleman," burlesque, and low comedy parts—the while my soul was yearning for high tragedy. I did my best with all that I was cast for, however, and the unpleasant experience did me a world of good. Had I followed my own bent, I would have been, long ago, a "crushed tragedian."

I will, as you request, give you a line to Mr. Palmer, and I hope you may obtain a position that will afford you the necessary practice. With best wishes. Truly yours,

EDWIN BOOTH.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

[Charlotte Cushman, a native of Boston, died in that city in 1876. No actress ever excelled her as Meg Merrilies, Queen Katherine, and Lady Macbeth. On the morning following her death, Mr. William Winter wrote in the New York *Tribune*:—

> "... Charlotte Cushman was not a great actress merely, but she was a great woman. She did not possess the dramatic faculty apart from other faculties and conquer by that alone: but having that faculty in almost unlimited fulness, she poured forth through its channel such resources of character, intellect, moral strength, soul, and personal magnetism as marked her for a genius of the first order, while they made her an irresistible force in art. When she came upon the stage she filled it with the brilliant vitality of her presence. Every movement that she made was winningly characteristic. Her least gesture was eloquence, Her voice, which was soft or silvery, or deep or mellow, according as emo-

> tion affected it, used now and then to tremble, and partly to break, with tones that were pathetic beyond description. These were denotements of the fiery soul that smouldered beneath her grave exterior, and gave iridescence to every form of art that she embodied. Sometimes her whole being seemed to become petrified in a silent suspense more thrilling than any action, as if her imagination were suddenly inthralled by the tumult and awe of its own vast perceptions."

Her friend, Emma Stebbins, the sculptor, edited a memorial volume, "Charlotte Cushman: Her Letters and Memories of Her Life," published in 1878. By permission of the publishers and owners of the copyright, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, the pages that follow are offered.—*Ed*.]

AS A CHILD A MIMIC AND SINGER

On one occasion [wrote Miss Cushman] when Henry Ware, pastor of the old Boston Meeting House, was taking tea with my mother, he sat at table talking, with his chin resting in his two hands, and his elbows on the table. I was suddenly startled by my mother exclaiming, "Charlotte, take your elbows off the table and your chin out of your hands; it is not a pretty position for a young lady!" I was sitting in exact imitation of the parson, even assuming the expression of his face.

Besides singing everything, I exercised my imitative powers in all directions, and often found myself instinctively mimicking the tones, movement, and expression of those about me. I'm afraid I was what the French call *un enfant terrible*—in the vernacular, an awful child! full of irresistible life and impulsive will; living fully in the present, looking neither before nor after; as ready to execute as to conceive; full of imagination—a faculty too often thwarted and warped by the fears of parents and friends that it means insincerity and falsehood, when it is in reality but the spontaneous exercise of faculties as yet unknown even to the possessor, and misunderstood by those so-called trainers of infancy.

This imitative faculty in especial I inherited from my grandmother Babbit, born Mary Saunders, of Gloucester, Cape Ann. Her faculty of imitation was very remarkable. I remember sitting at her feet on a little stool and hearing her sing a song of the period, in which she delighted me by the most perfect imitation of every creature belonging to the farmyard.

FIRST VISITS TO THE THEATRE

My uncle, Augustus Babbit, who led a seafaring life and was lost at sea, took great interest in me; he offered me prizes for proficiency in my studies, especially music and writing. He first took me to the theatre on

one of his return voyages, which was always a holiday time for me. My first play was "Coriolanus," with Macready, and my second "The Gamester," with Cooper and Mrs. Powell as Mr. and Mrs. Beverley. All the English actors and actresses of that time were of the Siddons and Kemble school, and I cannot but think these early impressions must have been powerful toward the formation of a style of acting afterward slowly eliminated through the various stages of my artistic career.

My uncle had great taste and love for the dramatic profession, and became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. William Pelby, for whom the original Tremont Theatre was built. My uncle being one of the stockholders, through him my mother became acquainted with these people, and thus we had many opportunities of seeing and knowing something of the fraternity.

About this time I became noted in school as a reader, where before I had only been remarkable for my arithmetic, the medal for which could never be taken from me. I remember on one occasion reading a scene from Howard Payne's tragedy of "Brutus," in which Brutus speaks, and the immediate result was my elevation to the head of the class to the evident disgust of my competitors, who grumbled out, "No wonder she can read, she goes to the theatre!" I had been before this very shy and reserved, not to say stupid, about reading in school, afraid of the sound of my own voice, and very unwilling to trust it; but the greater familiarity with the theatre seemed suddenly

to unloose my tongue, and give birth as it were to a faculty which has been the ruling passion ever since.

PLAYS LADY MACBETH, HER FIRST PART

With the Maeders I went [in 1836, when twenty years of age] to New Orleans, and sang until, owing perhaps to my youth, to change of climate, or to a too great strain upon the upper register of my voice, which, as his wife's voice was a contralto, it was more to Mr. Maeder's interest to use, than the lower one, I found my voice suddenly failing me. In my unhappiness I went to ask counsel and advice of Mr. Caldwell, the manager of the chief New Orleans theatre, He at once said to me, "You ought to be an actress, and not a singer." He advised me to study some parts, and presented me to Mr. Barton, the tragedian of the theatre, whom he asked to hear me, and to take an interest in me.

He was very kind, as indeed they both were; and Mr. Barton, after a short time, was sufficiently impressed with my powers to propose to Mr. Caldwell that I should act Lady Macbeth to his Macbeth, on the occasion of his (Barton's) benefit. Upon this is was decided that I should give up singing and take to acting. My contract with Mr. Maeder was annulled, it being the end of the season. So enraptured was I with the idea of acting this

part, and so fearful of anything preventing me, that I did not tell the manager I had no dresses, until it was too late for me to be prevented from acting it; and the day before the performance, after rehearsal, I told him. He immediately sat down and wrote a note of introduction for me to the tragedienne of the French Theatre, which then employed some of the best among French artists for its company. This note was to ask her to help me to costumes for the rôle of Lady Macbeth, I was a tall, thin, lanky girl at that time, about five feet six inches in height. The Frenchwoman, Madame Closel, was a short, fat person of not more than four feet ten inches, her waist full twice the size of mine, with a very large bust; but her shape did not prevent her being a very great actress. The ludicrousness of her clothes being made to fit me struck her at once. She roared with laughter; but she was very good-natured, saw my distress, and set to work to see to how she could help it. By dint of piecing out the skirt of one dress it was made to answer for an underskirt, and then another dress was taken in in every direction to do duty as an overdress, and so make up the costume. And thus I essayed for the first time the part of Lady Macbeth, fortunately to the satisfaction of the audience, the manager, and all the members of the company.

TO A YOUNG ACTRESS [PART OF A LETTER]

. . . I should advise you to get to work; all ideal study of acting, without the trial or opportunity of trying our efforts and conceivings upon others, is, in my mind, lost time. Study while you act. Your conception of character can be formed while you read your part, and only practice can tell you whether you are right. You would, after a year of study in your own room, come out unbenefited, save in as far as self-communion ever must make us better and stronger; but this is not what you want just now. Action is needed. Your vitality must in some measure work itself off. You must suffer, labour, and wait, before you will be able to grasp the true and the beautiful. You dream of it now; the intensity of life that is in you, the spirit of poetry which makes itself heard by you in indistinct language, needs work to relieve itself and be made clear. I feel diffident about giving advice to you, for you know your own nature better than any one else can, but I should say to you, get to work in the best way you can.

All your country work will be wretched; you will faint by the way; but you must rouse your great strength and struggle on, bearing patiently your cross on the way to your crown! God bless you and prosper your undertakings. I know the country theatres well enough to know how utterly alone you will be in such companies; but keep up a good heart; we have

only to do well what is given us to do, to find heaven.

I think if you have to wait for a while it will do you no harm. You seem to me quite frantic for immediate work; but teach yourself quiet and repose in the time you are waiting. With half your strength I could bear to wait and labour with myself to conquer fretting. The greatest power in the world is shown in conquest over self. More life will be worked out of you by fretting than all the stage-playing in the world. God bless you, my poor child. You have indeed troubles enough; but you have a strong and earnest spirit, and you have the true religion of labour in your heart. Therefore I have no fears for you, let what will come. Let me hear from you at your leisure, and be sure you have no warmer friend than I am and wish to be,. . .

I was exceedingly pleased to hear such an account of your first appearance. You were quite right in all that was done, and I am rejoiced at your success. Go on; persevere. You will be sure to do what is right, for your heart is in the right place, your head is sound, your reading has been good. Your mind is so much better and stronger than any other person's whom I have known enter the profession, that your career is plain before you.

But I will advise you to remain in your own native town for a season, or at least the winter. You say you are afraid of remaining among people who know you. Don't have this feeling at all. You will have to be more particular in what you do, and the very feeling

that you cannot be indifferent to your audience will make you take more pains. Beside this, you will be at home, which is much better for a time; for then at first you do not have to contend with a strange home as well as with a strange profession. I could talk to you a volume upon this matter, but it is difficult to write. At all events I hope you will take my counsel and remain at home this winter. It is the most wretched thing imaginable to go from home a novice into such a theatre as any of those in the principal towns.

Only go on and work hard, and you will be sure to make a good position. With regard to your faults, what shall I say? Why, that you will try hard to overcome them. I don't think they would be perceived save by those who perhaps imagine that your attachment for me has induced you to join the profession. I have no mannerisms, I hope; therefore any imitation of me can only be in the earnest desire to do what you can do, as well as you can. Write to me often; ask of me what you will; my counsel is worth little, but you shall command it if you need it.

TO A YOUNG MOTHER

[*From a letter*]

. . . All that you say about your finding your own best expression in and through the little life which is confided to you is good and true, and I am so happy to see how you feel on the subject. I think a mother who devotes

herself to her child, in watching its culture and keeping it from baleful influences, is educating and cultivating herself at the same time. No artist work is so high, so noble, so grand, so enduring, so important for all time, as the making of character in a child, You have your own work to do, the largest possible expression. No statue, no painting, no acting, can reach it, and it embodies each and all the arts, Clay of God's fashioning is given into your hands to mould to perfectness. Is this not something grand to think of? No matter about yourself—only make yourself worthy of God's sacred trust, and you will be doing His work—and that is all that human beings ought to care to live for. Am I right?

EARLY GRIEFS. ART HER ONLY SPOUSE

[*From a letter to a friend*]

There was a time, in my life of girlhood, when I thought I had been called upon to bear the very hardest thing that can come to a Woman. A very short time served to show me, in the harder battle of life which was before me, that this had been but a spring storm, which was simply to help me to a clearer, better, richer, and more productive summer. If I had been spared this early trial, I should never have been so earnest and faithful in my art; I should have still been casting about for the "counterpart," and not given my en-

tire self to my work, wherein and alone I have reached any excellence I have ever attained, and through which alone I have received my reward. God helped me in my art isolation, and rewarded me for recognising him and helping myself. This passed on; and this happened at a period in my life when most women (or children, rather) are looking to but one end in life—an end no doubt wisest and best for the largest number, but which would not have been wisest and best for my work, and so for God's work, for I know he does not fail to set me his work to do, and helps me to do it, and helps others to help me. (Do you see this tracing back, and then forward, to an eternity of good, and do you see how better and better one can become in recognising one's self as a minister of the Almighty to faithfully carry out our part of His great plan according to our strength and ability?) 0 believe we cannot live one moment for ourselves, one moment of selfish repining, and not be failing him at that moment, hiding the God-spark in us, letting the flesh conquer the spirit, the evil dominate the good.

Then after this first spring storm and hurricane of young disappointment came a lull—during which I actively pursued what became a passion,—my art. Then I lost my younger brother, upon whom I had begun to build most hopefully, as I had reason. He was by far the cleverest of my mother's children. He had been born into greater poverty than the others; he received his young impressions through a different atmosphere; he was

keener, more artistic, more impulsive, more generous, more full of genius. I lost him by a cruel accident, and again the world seem to liquefy beneath my feet, and the waters went over my soul. It became necessary that I should suffer bodily to cure my heart-bleed. I placed myself professionally where I found and knew all my mortifications in my profession, which seemed for the time to strew ashes over the loss of my child-brother (for he was my child, and loved me best in all the world), thus conquering my art, which, God knows, has never failed me—never failed to bring me rich reward—never failed to bring me comfort. I conquered my grief and myself. Labour saved me then and always, and so I proved the eternal goodness of God. I digress too much; but you will see how, in looking back to my own early disappointments, I can recognise all the good which came out of them, and can ask you to lay away all repinings with our darling, and hope (as we must) in God's wisdom and goodness, and ask him to help us to a clearer vision and truer knowledge of his dealings with us; to teach us to believe that we are lifted up to him better through our losses than our gains. May it not be that heaven is nearer, the passage from earth less hard, and life less seductive to us, in consequence of the painless passing of this cherub to its true home, lent us but for a moment, to show how pure must be our lives to fit us for such companionship? And thus, although in one sense it would be well for us to put away the sadness of this thought if it would be likely to enervate

us, in another sense, if we consider it rightly, if we look upon it worthily, we have an angel in God's house to help us to higher and purer thinkings, to nobler aspirations, to more sublime sacrifices than we have ever known before.

FAREWELL TO NEW YORK

[In 1874 Miss Cushman bade farewell to New York at Booth's Theatre, after a performance as Lady Macbeth. William Cullen Bryant presented an ode in her honour. In the course of her response Miss Cushman said:}

Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you. Gentlemen, the heart has no speech; its only language is a tear or a pressure of the hand, and words very feebly convey or interpret its emotions. Yet I would beg you to believe that in the three little words I now speak, 'I thank you,' there are heart depths which I should fail to express better, though I should use a thousand other words. I thank you, gentlemen, for the great honour you have offered me. I thank you, not only for myself, but for my whole profession, to which, through and by me, you have paid this very grateful compliment. If the few words I am about to say savour of egotism or vainglory, you will, I am sure, pardon me, inasmuch as I am here only to speak of myself. You would seem to compliment me upon an honourable life. As I look back upon that life, it seems to me that it would have been impossi-

ble for me to have led any other. In this I have, perhaps, been mercifully helped more than are many of my more beautiful sisters in art. I was, by a press of circumstances, thrown at an early age into a profession for which I had received no special education or training; but I had already, though so young, been brought face to face with necessity. I found life sadly real and intensely earnest, and in my ignorance of other ways of study, I resolved to take therefrom my text and my watchword. To be thoroughly in earnest, intensely in earnest in all my thoughts and in all my actions, whether in my profession or out of it, became my one single idea. And I honestly believe herein lies the secret of my success in life. I do not believe that any great success in any art can he achieved without it. . . .

CLARA MORRIS

[Clara Morris, Mrs. Frederick C. Harriott, is a native of Toronto, Canada. Her remarkable powers as an emotional actress, early in evidence, gave her for years the foremost place at Daly's Theatre, and the Union Square Theatre, New York. Among the parts in which she achieved distinction were Camille, Alixe, Miss Multon, Corn in "Article 47," and Mercy Merrick in "The New Magdalen." Since her retirement from the stage Clara Morris has proved herself to be a capital writer, shedding the light of experience on the difficulties of dramatic success. One of her books, "Life on the Stage," copyright, 1901, by Clara Morris Harriott and the S. S. McClure Company, New York, by permission, has furnished this episode.—Ed.]

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH

In glancing back over two crowded and busy seasons, one figure stands out with clearness and beauty. In his case only (so far as my personal knowledge goes), there was nothing derogatory to dignity or to manhood in being called beautiful, for he was that bud of splen-

did promise blasted to the core, before its full triumphant blooming—known to the world as a madman and an assassin, but to the profession as "that unhappy boy"—John Wilkes Booth.

He was so young, so bright, so gay—so kind. I could not have known him well; of course, too—there are two or three different people in every man's skin; yet when we remember that stars are not generally in the habit of showing their brightest, their best side to the company at rehearsal, we cannot help feeling both respect and liking for the one who does.

There are not many men who can receive a gash over the eye in a scene at night, without at least a momentary outburst of temper; but when the combat between Richard and Richmond was being rehearsed, Mr. Booth had again and again urged Mr. McCollom (that six-foot tall and handsome leading-man, who entrusted me with the care of his watch during such encounters) to come on hard! to come on hot! hot, old fellow! harder-faster! He'd take the chance of a blow—if only they could make a hot fight of it!

And Mr. McCollom, who was a cold man, at night became nervous in his effort to act like a fiery one—he forgot he had struck the full number of head blows, and when Booth was pantingly expecting a thrust, McCollom, wielding his sword with both hands, brought it down with awful force fair across Booth's forehead; a cry of horror rose, for in one moment his face was masked in blood, one eye-

brow was cleanly cut through—there came simultaneously one deep groan from Richard and the exclamation: "Oh, good God! good God!" from Richmond, who stood shaking like a leaf and staring at his work. Then Booth, flinging the blood from his eyes with his left hand, said as genially as man could speak: " That's all right, old man! never mind me—only come on hard, for God's sake, and save the fight!"

Which he resumed at once, and though he was perceptibly weakened, it required the sharp order of Mr. Ellsler, to "ring the first curtain bell," to force him to bring the fight to a close a single blow shorter than usual. Then there was a running to and fro, with ice and vinegar-paper and raw steak and raw oysters. When the doctor had placed a few stitches where they were most required, he laughingly declared there was provision enough in the room to start a restaurant. Mr. McCollom came to try to apologise—to explain, but Booth would have none of it; he held out his hand, crying: "Why, old fellow, you look as if you had lost the blood. Don't worry—now if my eye had gone, that would have been bad!" And so with light words he tried to set the unfortunate man at ease, and though he must have suffered much mortification as well as pain from the eye—that in spite of all endeavours would blacken—he never made a sign.

He was, like his great elder brother, rather lacking in height, but his head and throat, and the manner of their rising from his shoulders, were truly beautiful, His colouring was

unusual—the ivory pallor of his skin, the inky blackness of his densely thick hair, the heavy lids of his glowing eyes were all Oriental, and they gave a touch of mystery to his face when it fell into gravity—but there was generally a flash of white teeth behind his silky moustache, and a laugh in his eyes.

I played the Player-Queen to my great joy, and in the "Marble Heart" I was one of the group of three statues in the first act. We were supposed to represent Lais, Aspasia, and Phryne, and when we read the cast I glanced at the other girls (we were not strikingly handsome) and remarked, gravely: "Well, it's a comfort to know that we look so like the three beautiful Grecians."

A laugh at our backs brought us around suddenly to face Mr. Booth, who said to me:

"You satirical little wretch, how do you come to know these Grecian ladies? Perhaps you have the advantage of them in being all beautiful within?"

"I wish it would strike outward then," I answered. "You know it's always best to have things come to the surface!"

"I know some very precious things are hidden from common sight; and I know, too, you caught my meaning in the first place. Good night!" and he left us.

We had been told to descend to the stage at night with our white robes hanging free and straight, that Mr. Booth himself might drape them as we stood upon the pedestal. It really is a charming picture—that of the statues in the first act. Against a backing of black vel-

vet the three white figures, carefully posed, strongly lighted, stand out so marble-like that when they slowly turn their faces and point to their chosen master, the effect is uncanny enough to chill the looker-on.

Well, with white wigs, white tights, and white robes, and half strangled with the powder we had inhaled in our efforts to make our lips stay white, we cautiously descended the stairs—we dared not talk, we dared not blink our eyes, for fear of disturbing the coat of powder—we were lifted to the pedestal and took our places as we expected to stand. Then Mr. Booth came—such a picture in his Greek garments as made even the men exclaim at him—and began to pose us. It happened one of us had very good limbs, one medium good, and the third had, apparently, walked on broom-sticks. When Mr. Booth slightly raised the drapery of No. 3 his features gave a twist as though he had suddenly tasted lemon-juice, but quick as a flash he said:

"I believe I'll advance you to the centre for the stately and wise Aspasia"—the central figure wore her draperies hanging straight to her feet, hence the "advance" and consequent concealment of the unlovely limbs. It was quickly and kindly done, for the girl was not only spared mortification, but in the word "advance" she saw a compliment and was happy accordingly. Then my turn came. My arms were placed about Aspasia, my head bent and turned and twisted—my right hand curved upon my breast so that the forefinger touched my chin—I felt I was a personified simper; but

I was silent and patient, until the arrangement of my draperies began—then I squirmed anxiously.

"Take care—take care!" he cautioned. "You will sway the others if you move!" But in spite of the risk of my marble makeup I faintly groaned: "Oh dear! must it be like that?"

Regardless of the pins in the corner of his mouth he burst into laughter, and, taking a photograph from the bosom of his Greek shirt, he said: "I expected a protest from you, Miss, so I came prepared—don't move your head, but just look at this."

He held the picture of a group of statuary up to me. "This is you on the right. It's not so dreadful; now, is it?" And I cautiously murmured: "That if I wasn't any worse than that I wouldn't mind."

And so we were all satisfied, and our statue scene was very successful. Next morning I saw Mr. Booth come running out of the theatre on his way to the telegraph office at the corner, and right in the middle of the walk, staring about him, stood a child—a small roamer of the stony streets, who had evidently got far enough beyond his native ward to arouse misgivings as to his personal safety, and at the very moment he stopped to consider matters Mr. Booth dashed out of the stage-door and added to his bewilderment by capsizing him completely.

"Oh, good lord! Baby, are you hurt?" exclaimed Mr. Booth, pausing instantly to pick up the dirty, tousled small heap and stand it on its bandy legs again.

"Don't cry, little chap!" And the aforesaid little chap not only ceased to cry, but gave him a damp and grimy smile, at which the actor bent towards him quickly, but paused, took out his handkerchief, and first carefully wiping the dirty little nose and mouth, stooped and kissed him heartily, put some change in each freckled paw, and continued his run to the telegraph office.

He knew of no witness to the act. To kiss a pretty, clean child under the approving eyes of mamma might mean nothing but politeness, but surely it required the prompting of a warm and tender heart to make a young and thoughtless man feel for and caress such a dirty, forlorn bit of babyhood as that.

Of his work I suppose I was too young and too ignorant to judge correctly, but I remember well hearing the older members of the company express their opinions. Mr. Ellsler, who had been on terms of friendship with the elder Booth, was delighted with the promise of his work. He greatly admired Edwin's intellectual power, his artistic care; but "John," he cried, "has more of the old man's power in one performance than Edwin can show in a year. He has the fire, the dash, the touch of strangeness. He often produces unstudied effects at night. I question him: 'Did you rehearse that business to-day, John?' He answers: 'No; I didn't rehearse it, it just came to me in the scene and I couldn't help doing it, but it went all right didn't it?' Full of impulse just now, like a colt, his heels are in the air nearly as often as his head, but wait a year or

two till he gets used to the harness and quiets down a bit, and you will see as great an actor as America can produce!"

One morning, going on the stage where a group were talking with John Wilkes, I beard him say: "No; oh, no: There's but one Hamlet to my mind—that's my brother Edwin. You see, between ourselves, he is Hamlet—melancholy and all!"

THE MURDER OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

That was an awful time, when the dread news came to us. We were in Columbus, Ohio. We had been horrified by the great crime at Washington. My room-mate and I had, from our small earnings, bought some black cotton at a tripled price, as all the black material in the city was not sufficient to meet the demand; and as we tacked it about our one window, a man passing told us the assassin had been discovered, and that he was the actor Booth. Hattie laughed, so she nearly swallowed the tack that, girl-like, she held between her lips, and I after a laugh, told him it was a poor subject for a jest, and we went in. There was no store in Columbus then where play-books were sold, and as Mr. Ellsler had a very large and complete stage library, he frequently lent his books to us, and we would hurriedly copy out our lines and return the book for his own use. On that occasion he was going to study

his part first and then leave the play with us as he passed, going home. We heard his knock. I was busy pressing a bit of stage finery. Hattie opened the door, and then I heard her exclaiming: "Why—why—what!" I turned quickly. Mr. Ellsler was coming slowly into the room. He is a very dark man, but be was perfectly livid then—his lips even were blanched to the whiteness of his cheeks. His eyes were dreadful, they were so glassy and seemed so unseeing. He was devoted to his children, and all I could think of as likely to bring such a look upon his face was disaster to one of them, and I cried, as I drew a chair to him: "What is it? Oh, what has happened to them?"

He sank down — he wiped his brow — he looked almost stupidly at me; then, very faintly, he said: "You — haven't — heard — anything?"

Like a flash Hattie's eyes and mine met. We thought of the supposed ill-timed jest of the stranger. My lips moved wordlessly. Hattie stammered: "A man — he — lied though — said that Wilkes Booth — but he did lie — didn't he?" and in the same faint voice Mr. Ellsler answered slowly: "No — no! he did not lie — it's true!"

Down fell our heads, and the waves of shame and sorrow seemed fairly to overwhelm us; and while our sobs filled the little room, Mr. Ellsler rose and laid two playbooks on the table. Then, while standing there, staring into space, I heard his far, faint voice saying: "So great—so good a man destroyed, and by the hand of that unhappy boy! my God! my

God!" He wiped his brow again and slowly left the house, apparently unconscious of our presence.

When we resumed our work—the theatre had closed because of the national calamity—many a painted cheek showed runnels made by bitter tears, and one old actress, with quivering lips, exclaimed: "One woe doth tread upon another's heels, so fast they follow!" but with no thought of quoting, and God knows, the words expressed the situation perfectly.

Mrs. Ellsler, whom I never saw shed a tear for any sickness, sorrow, or trouble of her own, shed tears for the mad boy, who had suddenly become the assassin of God's anointed—the great, the blameless Lincoln.

We crept about, quietly. Every one winced at the sound of the overture. It was as if one dead lay within the walls—one who belonged to us.

When the rumours about Booth being the murderer proved to be authentic, the police feared a possible outbreak of mob feeling, and a demonstration against the theatre building, or against the actors individually; but we had been a decent, law-abiding, well-behaved people—liked and respected—so we were not made to suffer for the awful act of one of our number. Still, when the mass-meeting was held in front of the Capitol, there was much anxiety on the subject, and Mr. Ellsler urged all the company to keep away from it, lest their presence might arouse some ill-feeling. The crowd was immense, the sun

had gloomed over, and the Capitol building, draped in black, loomed up with stern severity and that massive dignity only attained by heavily columned buildings. The people surged like waves about the speaker's stand, and the policemen glanced anxiously toward the not far away new theatre, and prayed that some bombastic, revengeful ruffian might not crop up from this mixed crowd of excited humanity to stir them to violence.

Three speakers, however, in their addresses had confined themselves to eulogising the great dead. In life Mr. Lincoln had been abused by many—in death he was worshipped by all; and these speakers found their words of love and sorrow eagerly listened to, and made no harsh allusions to the profession from which the assassin sprang. And then an unknown man clambered up from the crowd to the portico platform and began to speak, without asking any one's permission. He had a far-reaching voice—he had fire and go.

"Here's the fellow to look out for!" said the policemen; and, sure enough, suddenly the dread word "theatre" was tossed into the air, and every one was still in a moment, waiting for—what? I don't know what they hoped for—I do know what many feared; but this is what he said: "Yes, look over at our theatre and think of the little body of men and women there, who are to-day sore-hearted and cast down; who feel that they are looked at askant, because one of their number has committed that hideous crime! Think of what they have to bear of shame and horror, and spare them,

too, a little pity!"

He paused. It had been a bold thing to do—to appeal for consideration for actors at such a time. The crowd swayed for a moment to and fro, a curious growling came from it, and then all heads turned toward the theatre. A faint cheer was given, and afterward there was not the slightest allusion made to us—and verily we were grateful.

That the homely, tender-hearted "Father Abraham"—rare combination of courage, justice, and humanity—died at an actor's hand will be a grief, a horror, and a shame to the profession forever; yet I cannot believe that John Wilkes Booth was "the leader of a band of bloody conspirators."

Who shall draw a line and say: here genius ends and madness begins? There was that touch of—strangeness. In Edwin it was a profound melancholy; in John it was an exaggeration of spirit—almost a wildness. There was the natural vanity of the actor, too, who craves a dramatic situation in real life. There was his passionate love and sympathy for the South—why, he was "easier to be played on than a pipe."

Undoubtedly he conspired to kidnap the President—that would appeal to him; but after that I truly believe he was a tool—certainly he was no leader. Those who led him knew his courage, his belief in Fate, his loyalty to his friends; and, because they knew these things, he drew the lot, as it was meant he should from the first. Then, half mad, he accepted the part Fate cast

him for—committed the monstrous crime, and paid the awful price. And since

> God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform,

we venture to pray for His mercy upon the guilty soul who may have repented and confessed his manifold sins and offences during those awful hours of suffering before the end came.

And "God shutteth not up His mercies forever in displeasure!" We can only shiver and turn our thoughts away from the bright light that went out in such utter darkness. Poor, guilty, unhappy John Wilkes Booth!

WHEN IN MY HUNT FOR A LEADING MAN FOR MR. DALY I FIRST SAW COGHLAN AND IRVING

[From "Life of a Star" copyright by the S. S. McClure Company, New York, 1906.]

When the late Mr. Augustin Daly bestowed even a modicum of his confidence, his friendship, upon man or woman, the person so honoured found the circulation of his blood well maintained by the frequent and generally unexpected demands for his presence, his unwavering attention, and sympathetic comprehension. As with the royal invitation that is a command, only death positive or threatening could excuse non-attendance; and though

his friendship was in truth a liberal education, the position of even the humblest confidant was no sinecure, for the plans he loved to describe and discuss were not confined to that day and season, but were long, daring looks ahead; great coups for the distant, unborn years.

The season had closed on Saturday. Monday I was to sail for England, and early that morning the housemaid watched for the carriage. My landlady was growing quivery about the chin, because I had to cross alone to join Mr. and Mrs. James Lewis, who had gone ahead, My mother was gay with a sort of crippled hilarity that deceived no one, as she prepared to go with me to say good bye at the dock, while little Ned, the son of the house, proudly gathered together rug, umbrella, hand-bag, books, *etc*., ready to go down with us and escort my mother back home—when a cab whirled to the door and stopped.

"Good heaven!" I cried, "what a blunder! I ordered a carriage; we can't all crowd into that thing!"

Then a boy was before me, holding out one of those familiar summoning half-sheets, with a line or two of the jetty-black, impishly-tiny, Daly scrawls—and I read: "Must see you one minute at office. Cabby will race you down. Have your carriage follow and pick you up here. Don't fail! A. DALY."

Ah, well! A. Daly—he who must be obeyed—had me in good training. I flung one hand to the mistress, the other to the maid in

farewell, pitched headlong into the cab, and went whirling down Sixth Avenue and across to the theatre stage-door, then upstairs to the morsel of space called by courtesy the private office.

Mr. Daly nonchalantly held out his hand, looked me over, and said: "That's a very pretty dress—becoming too—but is it not too easily soiled? Salt water you know is—"

"Oh," I broke in, "it's for general street wear—my travelling will be done in night-dress, I fancy."

"Ah, bad sailor, eh?" he asked, as I stood trembling with impatience.

"The worst! But you did not send for me to talk dress or about my sailing qualities?"

"My dear," he said suavely, "your temper is positively rabid." Then he glanced at the clock on his desk and his manner changed. He said swiftly and curtly: "Miss Morris, I want you to go to every theatre in London, and—"

"But I can't!" I interrupted, "I have not money enough for that and my name is not known over there!"

He frowned and waved his hand impatiently. "Use my name, then, or ask courtesy from E. A. Sothern. He crosses with you and you know him. But mind, go to every reputable theatre, and," impressively, "report to me at once if you see any leading man with exceptional ability of any kind."

I gasped. It seemed to me I heard the leaden fall of my heart. "But Mr. Daly, what a responsibility! How on earth could I judge an actor for you?"

He held up an imperative hand. "You think more after my own manner than any other person I know of. You are sensitive, responsive, quick to acknowledge another's ability, and so are fitted to study London's leading men for me!"

I was aghast, frightened to the point of approaching tears! Suddenly I bethought me.

"I'll tell Mr. Lewis. He is there already you know, and let him judge for you."

"Lewis? Good Lord! He has no independence! He'd see in an actor just what he thought I wanted him to see! I tell you, I want you to sort over London's leading men, and, if you see anything exceptional, secure name and theatre and report to me. Heavens knows, two long years have not only taught me that you have opinions, but the courage of them!"

Racing steps came up the stairs, and little Ned's voice called: "Miss Clara. Miss Clara, We are here!"

I turned to Mr. Daly and said mournfully:

"You have ruined the pleasure of my trip."

"Miss Morris, that's the first untruth you ever told me. Here, please" and he handed me a packet of new books.

"Thanks!" I cried and then flew down the stairs. Glancing up, I saw him looking earnestly after me. "Did you speak?" I asked hurriedly.

"That gown fits well—don't spoil it with sea-water!"

And half-laughing, half-vexed, but wholly frightened at the charge laid upon me, I sprang into the carriage, to hold hands with

mother all the way down to the crowded dock.

One day I received in London this note from Mr. Augustin Daly:

> "MY DEAR MISS MORRIS: I find no letter here. Impatiently, A. D."

And straightway I answered:

> "MY DEAR MR. DALY: I find no actor here. Afflictedly, C. M."

And lo, on my very last night in London, after our return from Paris, I found the exceptional leading man.

Ten days later, on a hot September morning, I was hurling myself upon my mother in all the joy of home-coming when I saw leaning against the clock on the mantel the unmistakable envelope, bearing the impious black scriggle that generally meant a summons. I opened it and read: "Cleaners in full possession here—look our for soap and pails, and report directly at box-office—don't fail! A. DALY."

I confess I was angry, for I was so tired and the motion of the steamer was still with me, and besides my own small affairs were of more interest to me just then than the greater ones of the manager. However, my two years of training held good. In an hour I was picking my way across wet floors, among mops and pails toward the sanity and dry comfort of Mr. Daly's office. He held my hands closely for a moment, then broke out complainingly: "You've behaved nicely, haven't you? Not a

single line sent to tell what you were seeing, doing, thinking?"

"I beg your pardon—I distinctly remember sending you a line." He scowled blackly. I went on: "I thought your note to me was meant as a model, so I copied it carefully."

Formerly this sort of thing had kept us at daggers drawn, but now he only laughed, and shaking his hand impatiently to and fro, said: "Stop it! ah, stop it! So you could not find even one leading man worth while, eh?"

"Yes—just one!"

"Then why on earth didn't you write me?"

"Couldn't—I only found him on our last night in London."

Mr. Daly's face was alight in a moment. He caught up a scrap of paper and a pencil, and, after the manner of the inexperienced interviewer, began: "What's he like?"

"Tall, flat-backed, square-shouldered, free-moving, and wears a long dress-coat—that shibboleth of a gentleman—as if that had been his custom since ever he left his mother's knee."

Mr. Daly ejaculated "good!" at each clause, and scribbled his impish small scribble on the bit of paper which rested on his palm.

"What did he do?" he asked eagerly.

"He didn't do," I answered lucidly.

"What do you mean, Miss Morris?"

"What I say, Mr. Daly."

"But if the man doesn't do anything, what is there remarkable about him?"

"Why, just that. It was what he didn't do that produced the effect."

"A-a-ah," said Mr. Daly, with long-drawn satisfaction, scribbling rapidly. "I understand, and you thought, miss, that you could not judge an actor for me! What was the play?"

"Bulwer's 'Money,' and Marie Wilton was superb as—"

"Never mind Marie Wilton," he interrupted impatiently, writing, "but Alfred Evelyn is such an awful prig."

"Isn't he?" I acquiesced, "but this actor made him human. You see, Mr. Daly, most Evelyns are like a bottle of gas-charged water: forcibly restrained for a time, then there's a pop and a bang, and in wild freedom the water is foaming thinly over everything in sight. This man didn't kowtow in the early acts, but was curt, cold, showing signs of rebellion more than once, and in the big scene, well—!"

"Yes?" asked Mr. Daly eagerly.

"Well, that was where he didn't do. He didn't bang nor rave nor work himself up to a wild burst of tears!" ("Thank God!" murmured Mr. Daly and scribbled fast.) "He told the story of his past sometimes rapidly, sometimes making a short, absolute pause. When he reached the part referring to his dead mother, his voice fell two tones, his words grew slower, more difficult, and finally stopped. He left some of his lines out entirely—actually forcing the people to do his work in picturing for themselves his sorrow and his loss—while he sat staring helplessly at the floor, his closed fingers slowly tightening, trying vainly to moisten his dry lips. And when the unconsciously sniffling audi-

ence broke suddenly into applause, he swiftly turned his head aside, and with the knuckle of his forefinger brushed away two tears. Ah, but that knuckle was clever! His fingertips would have been girly-girly or actory, but the knuckle was the movement of a man, who still retained something of his boyhood about him."

Mr. Daly's gray, dark-lashed eyes were almost black with pleased excitement as he asked: "What's his name?"

"Coghlan—Charles Coghlan."

"Why, he's Irish?"

"So are you—Irish-American," I answered defensively, pretending to misunderstand him.

"Well, you ought to be Irish yourself!" he said sternly.

"I did my best," I answered modestly. "I was born on St. Patrick's Day!"

"In the mornin'?" he asked.

"The very top of it, sor!"

"More power to you then!" at which we both laughed, and I rose to go.

As I picked up my sunshade, I remarked casually: "Ah, but I was glad to have seen, for once at least, England's great actor."

"This Coghlan?"

"Good gracious, no!"

"What, there is another, and you have not mentioned him—after my asking you to report any exceptional actor you saw?"

"I beg your pardon, sir. You asked me to report every exceptional leading man. This actor's leading man's days are past. He is a star

by the grace of God's great gifts to him, and his own hard work."

"Well!" snapped Mr. Daly. "Even a star will play where money enough is offered him, will he not?"

"There's a legend to that effect, I believe.'

"Will you favour me, Miss Morris, with this actor's name?"

"Certainly. He is billed as Mr. Henry Irving."

Mr. Daly looked up from his scribbling. "Irving? Irving? Is not he the actor that old man Bateman secured as support for his daughters?"

"Yes, that was the old gentleman's mistaken belief; but the public thought differently, and laboured with Papa Bateman till it convinced him that his daughters were by way of supporting Mr. Irving."

A grim smile came upon the managerial lips as he asked. "What does he look like?"

"Well, as a general thing, I think he will look wonderfully like the character he is playing. Oh, don't frown so! He—well, he is not beautiful, neither can I imagine him a pantaloon actor, but his face will adapt itself splendidly to any strong character make-up, whether noble or villainous." Mr. Daly was looking pleased again. I went on: "He aspires, I hear, to Shakespeare, but there is one thing of which I am sure. He is the mightiest man in melodrama to-day!"

"How long did it take to convince you of that, Miss Morris? One act—two—the whole five acts?"

"His first five minutes on the stage, sir. His business wins applause without the aid of words, and you know what that means."

Again that elongated "A-a-ah!" Then, "Tell me of that five minutes," and he thrust a chair toward me.

"Oh," I cried, despairingly, "that will take so long, and will only bore you.

"Understand, please, nothing under heaven that is connected with the stage can ever bore me." Which statement was unalloyed truth.

"But, indeed," I feebly insisted, only to be brought up short with the words, "Kindly allow me to judge for myself."

To which I beamingly made answer: "Did I not beg you to do that months ago?" But he was growing vexed, and curtly commanded:

"I want those first five minutes—what he did, and how he did it, and what the effect was, and then"—speaking dreamily—"I shall know—I shall know."

Now at Mr. Daly's last long-drawn-out "A-a-ah," anent Mr. Irving's winning applause without words, I believed an idea, new and novel, had sprung into his mind, while his present rapt manner would tell anyone familiar with his ways that the idea was rapidly becoming a plan. I was wondering what it could be, when a sharp "Well?" startled me into swift and beautiful obedience,

"You see, Mr. Daly, I knew absolutely nothing of the story of the play that night. 'The Bells' were, I supposed, church-bells. In the first act the people were rustic—the sea-

son winter—snow flying in every time the door opened. The absent husband and father was spoken of by mother and daughter, lover and neighbour. Then there were sleigh-bells heard, whose jingle stopped suddenly. The door opened—Mathias entered, and for the first time winter was made truly manifest to us, and one drew himself together instinctively, for the tall, gaunt man at the door was cold-chilled, just to the very marrow of his bones. Then, after general greetings had been exchanged, he seated himself in a chair directly in the centre of the stage, a mere trifle in advance of others in the scene, and proceeded to remove his long leggings. He drew a great coloured handkerchief and brushed away some clinging snow; then leaning forward, with slightly tremulous fingers, he began to unfasten a top buckle. Suddenly the trembling ceased, the fingers clenched hard upon the buckle, the whole body became still, then rigid—it seemed not to breathe! The one sign of life in the man was the agonisingly strained sense of hearing! His tortured eyes saw nothing. Utterly without speech, without feeling, he listened—breathlessly listened! A cold chill crept stealthily about the roots of my hair, I clenched my hands hard and whispered to myself: 'Will it come, good God, will it come, the thing he listens for?' When with a wild bound, as if every nerve and muscle had been rent by an electric shock, he was upon his feet; and I was answered even before that suffocating cry of terror—'The bells! the bells!'—and under cover of the applause that followed I

said: 'Haunted! Innocent or guilty, this man is haunted!' And Mr. Daly, I bowed my head to a great actor, for though fine things followed, you know the old saying, that 'no chain is stronger than its weakest link.' Well I always feel that no actor is greater than his carefulest bit of detail."

Mr. Daly's pale face had acquired a faint flush of colour, "Thank you!" he said, with real cordiality, and I was delighted to have pleased him, and also to see the end of my troubles, and once more took up the sun-shade.

"I think an actor like that could win any public, don't you?"

"I don't know," I lightly answered. "He is generally regarded as an acquired taste."

"What do you mean?" came the sharp return.

"Why, you must have heard that Mr. Irving's eccentricities are not to be counted upon the fingers of both hands?"

Mr. Daly lifted his brows and smiled a contented smile: "Indeed? And pray, what are these peculiarities?"

"Oh, some are of the figure, some of movement, and some of delivery. A lady told me over there that he could walk like each and every animal of a Noah's ark; and people lay wagers as to whether London will force him to abandon his elocutionary freaks, or he will force London to accept them. I am inclined to back Mr. Irving, myself."

"What! What's that you say? That this fine actor you have described has a marked peculiarity of delivery—of speech?"

"Marked peculiarities? Why, they are murderous! His strange inflections, his many mannerisms are very trying at first, but he conquers before—"

A cry stopped me—a cry of utter disappointment and anger! Mr. Daly stood staring at his notes a moment, then he exclaimed violently: "D–n! d–n! oh, d–n!!!" and savagely tore his scribbled-on paper into bits and flung them on the floor.

Startled at his vexation, convulsed with suppressed laughter at the infantile quality of his profanity, I ventured, in a shaking voice, "I think I'd better go?"

"I think you had!" he agreed curtly; but as I reached the door he said in his most managerial tone: "Miss Morris, it would be better for you to begin with people's faults next time—"

But with the door already open I made bold to reply: "Excuse me, Mr. Daly, but there isn't going to be any next time for me!"

And I turned and fled, wondering all the way home, as I have often wondered since, what was the plan that went so utterly agley that day? Mr. Coghlan he engaged after failing in his first effort, but that other, greater plan; what was it?

SIR HENRY IRVING

[On November 24, 1883, Henry Irving closed his first engagement in New York. William Winter's review appeared next morning in the *Tribune*, It is reprinted in his book, "Henry Irving," published by G. J. Coombes, New York, 1889. Mr. Winter said:

> "Mr. Irving has impersonated here nine different men, each one distinct from all the others. Yet in so doing he has never ceased to exert one and the same personal charm, the charm of genialised intellect. The soul that is within the man has suffused his art and made it victorious. The same forms of expression, lacking this spirit, would have lacked the triumph. All of them, indeed, are not equally fine. Mr. Irving's 'Mathias' and 'Louis XI,' are higher performances than his 'Shylock' and 'Dorincourt,' higher in imaginative tone and in adequacy of feeling and treatment. But, throughout all these forms, the drift of his spirit, setting boldly away from conventions and formalities, has been manifested

> with delightful results. He has always seemed to be alive with the specific vitality of the person represented. He has never seemed a wooden puppet of the stage, bound in by formality and straining after a vague scholastic ideal of technical correctness."

Mr. Irving's addresses, "The Drama," copyright by the United States Book Company, New York, were published in 1892. They furnish the pages now presented,—abounding on self-revelation,—*Ed*.]

THE STAGE AS AN INSTRUCTOR

To boast of being able to appreciate Shakespeare more in reading him than in seeing him acted used to be a common method of affecting special intellectuality. I hope this delusion—a gross and pitiful one to most of us—has almost absolutely died out. It certainly conferred a very cheap badge of superiority on those who entertained it. It seemed to each of them an inexpensive opportunity of worshipping himself on a pedestal. But what did it amount to? It was little more than a conceited and feather-headed assumption that an unprepared reader, whose mind is usually full of far other things, will see on the instant all that has been developed in hundreds of years by the members of a studious and enthusiastic profession. My own conviction is that there are few characters or passages of our

great dramatists which will not repay original study. But at least we must recognise the vast advantages with which a practised actor, impregnated by the associations of his life, and by study—with all the practical and critical skill of his profession up to the date at which he appears, whether he adopts or rejects tradition—addresses himself to the interpretation of any great character, even if he have no originality whatever. There is something still more than this, however, in acting. Every one who has the smallest histrionic gift has a natural dramatic fertility; so that as soon as he knows the author's text, and obtains self-possession, and feels at home in a part without being too familiar with it, the mere automatic action of rehearsing and playing it at once begins to place the author in new lights, and to give the personage being played an individuality partly independent of, and yet consistent with, and rendering more powerfully visible, the dramatist's conception. It is the vast power a good actor has in this way which has led the French to speak of creating a part when they mean its first being played, and French authors are as conscious of the extent and value of this cooperation of actors with them, that they have never objected to the phrase, but, on the contrary, are uniformly lavish in their homage to the artists who have created on the boards the parts which they themselves have created on paper.

INSPIRATION IN ACTING

It is often supposed that great actors trust to the inspiration of the moment. Nothing can be more erroneous. There will, of course, be such moments, when an actor at a white heat illumines some passage with a flash of imagination (and this mental condition, by the way, is impossible to the student sitting in his armchair); but the great actor's surprises are generally well weighed, studied, and balanced. We know that Edmund Kean constantly practised before a mirror effects which startled his audience by their apparent spontaneity. It is the accumulation of such effects which enables an actor, after many years, to present many great characters with remarkable completeness.

I do not want to overstate the case, or to appeal to anything that is not within common experience, so I can confidently ask you whether a scene in a great play has not been at some time vividly impressed on your minds by the delivery of a single line, or even of one forcible word. Has not this made the passage far more real and human to you than all the thought you have devoted to it? An accomplished critic has said that Shakespeare himself might have been surprised had he heard the "Fool, fool, fool!" of Edmund Kean. And though all actors are not Keans, they have in varying degree this power of making a dramatic character step out of the page, and come nearer to our hearts and our understandings.

After all, the best and most convincing ex-

position of the whole art of acting is given by Shakespeare himself: "To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." Thus the poet recognised the actor's art as a most potent ally in the representations of human life. He believed that to hold the mirror up to nature was one of the worthiest functions in the sphere of labour, and actors are content to point to his definition of their work as the charter of their privileges.

ACTING AS AN ART. HOW IRVING BEGAN

The practice of the art of acting is a subject difficult to treat with the necessary brevity. Beginners are naturally anxious to know what course they should pursue. In common with other actors, I receive letters from young people many of whom are very earnest in their ambition to adopt the dramatic calling, but not sufficiently alive to the fact that success does not depend on a few lessons in declamation. When I was a boy I had a habit which I think would be useful to all young students. Before going to see a play of Shakespeare's I used to form—in a very juvenile way—a theory as to the working out of the whole drama, so as to correct my conceptions by those of the actors; and though I was, as a rule, absurdly wrong, there can be no doubt that any

method of independent study is of enormous importance, not only to youngsters, but also to students of a larger growth. Without it the mind is apt to take its stamp from the first forcible impression it receives, and to fall into a servile dependence upon traditions, which, robbed of the spirit that created them, are apt to be purely mischievous. What was natural to the creator is often unnatural and lifeless in the imitator. No two people form the same conceptions of character, and therefore it is always advantageous to see an independent and courageous exposition of an original ideal. There can be no objection to the kind of training that imparts a knowledge of manners and customs, and the teaching which pertains to simple deportment on the stage is necessary and most useful; but you cannot possibly be taught any tradition of character, for that has no permanence. Nothing is more fleeting than any traditional method or impersonation. You may learn where a particular personage used to stand on the stage, or down which trap the ghost of Hamlet's father vanished; but the soul of interpretation is lost, and it is this soul which the actor has to re-create for himself. It is not mere attitude or tone that has to be studied; you must be moved by the impulse of being; you must impersonate and not recite.

FEELING AS A REALITY OR A SEMBLANCE

It is necessary to warn you against the theory expounded with brilliant ingenuity by Diderot that the actor never feels. When Macready played Virginius, after burying his beloved daughter, he confessed that his real experience gave a new force to his acting in the most pathetic situations of the play. Are we to suppose that this was a delusion, or that the sensibility of the man was a genuine aid to the actor? Bannister said of John Kemble that he was never pathetic because he had no children. Talma says that when deeply moved he found himself making a rapid and fugitive observation on the alternation of his voice, and on a certain spasmodic vibration which it contracted in tears. Has not the actor who can thus make his feelings a part of his art an advantage over the actor who never feels, but who makes his observations solely from the feelings of others? It is necessary to this art that the mind should have, as it were, a double consciousness, in which all the emotions proper to the occasion may have full swing, while the actor is all the time on the alert for every detail of his method. It may be that his playing will be more spirited one night than another. But the actor who combines the electric force of a strong personality with a mastery of the resources of his art must have a greater power over his audiences than the passionless actor who gives a most artis-

tic simulation of the emotions he never experiences.

GESTURE. LISTENING AS AN ART. TEAM-PLAY ON THE STAGE

With regard to gesture, Shakespeare's advice is all-embracing. "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance that you overstep not the modesty of nature." And here comes the consideration of a very material part of the actor's business—by-play. This is of the very essence of true art. It is more than anything else significant of the extent to which the actor has identified himself with the character he represents. Recall the scenes between Iago and Othello, and consider how the whole interest of the situation depends on the skill with which the gradual effect of the poisonous suspicion instilled into the Moor's mind is depicted in look and tone, slight of themselves, but all contributing to the intensity of the situation. One of the greatest tests of an actor is his capacity for listening. By-play must be unobtrusive; the student should remember that the most minute expression attracts attention, that nothing is lost, that by-play is as mischievous when it is injudicious as it is effective when rightly conceived, and that while trifles make perfection, perfection is no trifle. This lesson was enjoined on me when I was a very young man

by that remarkable actress, Charlotte Cushman. I remember that when she played Meg Merrilies I was cast for Henry Bertram, on the principle, seemingly, that an actor with no singing voice is admirably fitted for a singing part. It was my duty to give Meg Merrilies a piece of money, and I did it after the traditional fashion by handing her a large purse full of the coin of the realm, in the shape of broken crockery, which was generally used in financial transactions on the stage, because when the virtuous maid rejected with scorn the advances of the lordly libertine, and threw his pernicious bribe upon the ground, the clatter of the broken crockery suggested fabulous wealth. But after the play Miss Cushman, in the course of some kindly advice, said to me: "Instead of giving me that purse, don't you think it would have been much more natural if you had taken a number of coins from your pocket, and given me the smallest? That is the way one gives alms to a beggar, and it would have added to the realism of the scene." I have never forgotten that lesson, for simple as it was, it contained many elements of dramatic truth. It is most important that an actor should learn that he is a figure in a picture, and that the least exaggeration destroys the harmony of the composition. All the members of the company should work toward a common end, with the nicest subordination of their individuality to the general purpose. Without this method a play when acted is at best a disjoined and incoherent piece of work, instead of being a harmonious whole like the fine perfor-

mance of an orchestral symphony.

HENRY BRODRIBB IRVING

[Henry Brodribb Irving, son of the late Sir Henry Irving, was born in London in 1870. His first appearance on the stage was at the Garrick Theatre, London, in "School," when twenty-one. In 1906 he toured with success throughout the United States, appearing in plays made memorable by his father, "The Lyons Mail," "Charles I.," and "The Bells." Mr. Irving distinctly inherits Sir Henry Irving's ability both as an actor and as a thoughtful student of acting as an art. In 1905 he gave a lecture, largely autobiographical, to the Academy of Dramatic Art in London. It appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1905, and is republished by Small, Maynard & Co., Boston, in "Occasional Papers. Dramatic and Historical" by Mr. Irving. By his kindness, and that of his publishers, its pages are here drawn upon.—*Ed*.]

THE CALLING OF AN ACTOR

I received, not very long ago, in a provincial town, a letter from a young lady, who wished to adopt the stage as a profession but was troubled in her mind by certain anxieties and uncertainties. These she desired me to relieve. The questions asked by my correspondent are rather typical questions—-questions that are generally asked by those who, approaching the stage from the outside, in the light of prejudice and misrepresentation, believe the calling of the actor to be one morally dangerous and intellectually contemptible; one in which it is equally easy to succeed as an artist and degenerate as an individual. She begins by telling me that she has a "fancy for the stage," and has "heard a great many things about it." Now, for any man or woman to become an actor or actress because they have a "fancy for the stage" is in itself the height of folly. There is no calling, I would venture to say, which demands on the part of the aspirant greater searching of heart, thought, deliberation, real assurance of fitness, reasonable prospect of success before deciding to follow it, than that of the actor. And not the least advantage of a dramatic school lies in the fact that some of its pupils may learn to reconsider their determination to go on the stage, become convinced of their own unfitness, recognise in time that they will be wise to abandon a career which must always

be hazardous and difficult even to those who are successful, and cruel to those who fail. Let it be something far sterner and stronger than mere fancy that decides you to try your fortunes in the theatre.

My correspondent says she has "heard a great many things about the stage." If I might presume to offer a piece of advice, it would be this: Never believe anything you hear about actors and actresses from those who are not actually familiar with them. The amount of nonsense, untruth, sometimes mischievous, often silly, talked by otherwise rational people about the theatre, is inconceivable were it not for one's own personal experience. It is one of the penalties of the glamour, the illusion of the actor's art, that the public who see men and women in fictitious but highly exciting and moving situations on the stage, cannot believe that when they quit the theatre, they leave behind them the emotions, the actions they have portrayed there. And as there is no class of public servants in whom the public they serve take so keen an interest as actors and actresses, the wildest inventions about their private lives and domestic behaviour pass as current, and are eagerly retailed at afternoon teas in suburban drawing-rooms.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STAGE

Now, the first question my correspondent asks me is this: "Does a young woman going on the stage need a good education and also to know languages?" To answer the first part of the question is not, I think, very difficult. The supremely great actor or actress of natural genius need have no education or knowledge of languages; it will be immaterial whether he or she has enjoyed all the advantages of birth and education or has been picked up in the streets; genius, the highest talent, will assert itself irrespective of antecedents. But I should say that any sort of education was of the greatest value to an actor or actress of average ability, and that the fact that the ranks of the stage are recruited to-day to a certain extent from our great schools and universities, from among classes of people who fifty years ago would never have dreamed of entering our calling, is one on which we may congratulate ourselves. Though the production of great actors and actresses will not be affected either one way or the other by these circumstances, at the same time our calling must benefit in the general level of its excellence, in its fitness to represent all grades of society on the stage, if those who follow it are picked from all classes, if the stage has ceased to be regarded as a calling unfit for a man or woman of breeding or education,

The second question this lady asks me is

this:

"Does she need to have her voice trained, and about what age do people generally commence to go on the stage?" The first part of this question as to voice training touches on the value of an Academy of Acting. Of the value—the practical value—of such an institution rightly conducted there can be no doubt. That acting cannot be taught is a well-worn maxim and perhaps a true one; but acting can be disciplined; the ebullient, sometimes eccentric and disordered manifestations of budding talent may be modified by the art of the teacher; those rudiments, which many so often acquire painfully in the course of rehearsal, the pupils who leave an academy should be masters of and so save much time and trouble to those whose business it is to produce plays. The want of any means of training the beginner, of coping at all with the floods of men and women, fit and unfit, who are ever clamouring at the doors of the theatre, has been a long-crying and much-felt grievance. The establishment of this academy should go far to remove what has been by no means an unjust reproach to our theatrical system. As to the age at which a person should begin a theatrical career, I do not think there is any actor or actress who would not say that it is impossible to begin too early—at least, as early as a police magistrate will allow. That art is long and life short applies quite as truthfully to the actor's as to any other art, and as the years go on there must be many who regret that they did not sooner

decide to follow a calling which seems to carry one all too quickly through the flight of time.

TEMPTATIONS ON THE STAGE

My correspondent also asks me a question which I shall answer very briefly, but which it is as well should be answered; She writes, "Are there many temptations for a girl on the stage, and need she necessarily fall into them?" Of course there are such temptations on the stage, as there must be in any calling in which men and women are brought into contact on a footing of equality; perhaps these temptations are somewhat intensified in the theatre. At the same time, I would venture to say from my own experience of that branch of theatrical business with which I have been connected—and in such matters one can only speak from personal experience—that any woman yielding to these temptations has only herself to blame, that any well-brought-up, sensible girl will, and can, avoid them altogether, and that I should not make these temptations a ground for dissuading any young woman in whom I might be interested from joining our calling. To say, as a writer once said, that it was impossible for a girl to succeed on the stage without impaired morals, is a statement as untrue as to say that no man can succeed as a lawyer unless he be a rogue, a doctor unless he be a

quack, a parson unless be be a hypocrite.

To all who intend to become actors and actresses, my first word of advice would be—Respect this calling you have chosen to pursue. You will often in your experience hear it, see it in print, slighted and contemned. There are many reasons for this. Religious prejudice, fostered by the traditions of a by no means obsolete Puritanism, is one; the envy of those who, forgetting the disadvantages, the difficulties, the uncertainty of the actor's life, see only the glare of popular adulation, the glitter of the comparatively large salaries paid to a few of us—such unreasoning envy as this is another; and the want of sympathy of some writers with the art itself, who, unable to pray with Goethe and Voltaire, remain to scoff with Jeremy Collier, is a third. There are causes from without that will always keep alive a certain measure of hostility towards the player. As long as the public, in Hazlitt's words, feel more respect for John Kemble in a plain coat than the Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack, so long will this public regard for the actor provoke the resentment of those whose achievements in art appeal less immediately, less strikingly, to their audience. But if they would only pause to consider, surely they might lay to their souls the unction that the immediate reward of the actor in his lifetime is merely nature's compensation to him for the comparative oblivion of his achievements when he has ceased to be. Imagine for one moment Shakespeare and Garrick contemplating at the present moment

from the heights the spectacle of their fame. Who would grudge the actor the few years of fervid admiration he was privileged to enjoy, some one hundred and fifty years ago, as compared with the centuries of living glory that have fallen to the great poet?

Sometimes you may hear your calling sneered at by those who pursue it. There are few professions that are not similarly girded at by some of their own members, either from disappointment or some ingrained discontent. When you hear such detraction, fix your thoughts not on the paltry accidents of your art, such as the use of cosmetics and other little infirmities of its practice, things that are obvious marks for the cheap sneer, but look rather to what that art is capable of in its highest forms, to what is the essence of the actor's achievement, what he can do and has done to win the genuine admiration and respect of those whose admiration and respect have been worth the having.

ACTING IS A GREAT ART

You will read and hear, no doubt, in your experience, that acting is in reality no art at all, that it is mere sedulous copying of nature, demanding neither thought nor originality. I will only cite in reply a passage from a letter of the poet Coleridge to the elder Charles Mathews, which, I venture to think, goes some way to settle the question. "A great actor," he writes, "comic or tragic, is not to be a mere

copy, a fac-simile, but an imitation of nature; now an imitation differs from a copy in this, that it of necessity implies and demands a difference, whereas a copy aims at identity and what a marble peach on the mantelpiece, that you take up deluded and put down with a pettish disgust, is compared with a fruit-piece of Vanhuysen's, even such is a mere copy of nature, with a true histrionic imitation. A good actor is Pygmalion's statue, a work of exquisite art, animated and gifted with motion; but still art, still a species of poetry." So writes Coleridge. Raphael, speaking of painting, expresses the same thought, equally applicable to the art of acting. "To paint a fair one," he says, "it is necessary for me to see many fair ones; but because there is so great a scarcity of lovely women, I am constrained to make use of one certain ideal, which I have formed to myself in my own fancy." So the actor who has to portray Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth—any great dramatic character—has to form an ideal of such a character in his own fancy, in fact, to employ an exercise of imagination similar to that of the painter who seeks to depict an ideal man or woman; the actor certainly will not meet his types of Hamlet and Othello in the street.

But, whilst in your hearts you should cherish a firm respect for the calling, the art you pursue, let that respect be a silent and modest regard; it will be all the stronger for that. I have known actors and actresses who were always talking about their art with a big A, their "art-life," their "life-work," their careers

and futures, and so on. Keep these things to yourselves, for I have observed that eloquence and hyper-earnestness of this kind not infrequently go with rather disappointing achievement. Think, act, but don't talk about it. And, above all, because you are actors and actresses, for that very reason be sincere and unaffected; avoid rather than court publicity, for you will have quite enough of it if you get on in your profession; the successful actor is being constantly tempted to indiscretion. Do not yield too readily to the blandishments of the photographer, or the enterprising editor who asks you what are the love scenes you have most enjoyed playing on the stage, and whether an actor or actress can be happy though married. Be natural on the stage, and be just as natural off it; regard the thing you have to do as work that has to be done to the best of your power; if it be well done, it will bring its own reward. It may not be an immediate reward, but have faith, keep your purpose serious, so serious as to be almost a secret; bear in mind that ordinary people expect you, just because you are actors and actresses, to be extraordinary, unnatural, peculiar; do your utmost at all times and seasons to disappoint such expectations.

RELATIONS TO "SOCIETY"

To the successful actor society, if he desire it, offers a warm and cordial welcome. Its members do not, it is true, suggest that he should

marry with their daughters, but why should they? An actor has a very unattractive kind of life to offer to any woman who is not herself following his profession. What I mean is that the fact of a man being an actor does not debar him from such gratification as he may find in the pleasures of society. And I believe that the effect of such raising of the actor's status as has been witnessed in the last fifty years has been to elevate the general tone of our calling and bring into it men and women of education and refinement.

At the same time, remember that social enjoyments should always be a secondary consideration to the actor, something of a luxury to be sparingly indulged in. An actor should never let himself be beguiled into the belief that society, generally speaking, is seriously interested in what he does, or that popularity in drawing-rooms connotes success in the theatre. It does nothing of the kind. Always remember that you can hope to have but few, very few friends or admirers of any class who will pay to see you in a failure; you will be lucky if a certain number do not ask you for free admission to see you in a success.

THE FINAL SCHOOL IS THE AUDIENCE

It is to a public far larger, far more real and genuine than this, that you will one day have to appeal. It is in their presence that you will

finish your education. The final school for the actor is his audience; they are the necessary complement to the exercise of his art, and it is by the impression he produces on them that he will ultimately stand or fall; on their verdict, and on their verdict alone, will his success or failure as an artist depend. But, if you have followed carefully, assiduously, the course of instruction now open to you, when the time has arrived for you to face an audience you will start with a very considerable handicap in your favour. If you have learnt to move well and to speak well, to be clear in your enunciation and graceful in your bearing, you are bound to arrest at once the attention of any audience, no matter where it may be, before whom you appear. Obvious and necessary as are these two acquirements of graceful bearing and correct diction, they are not so generally diffused as to cease to be remarkable. Consequently, however modest your beginning on the stage, however short the part you may be called upon to play, you should find immediately the benefit of your training. You may have to unlearn a certain amount, or rather to mould and shape what you have learnt to your new conditions, but if you have been well grounded in the essential elements of an actor's education, you will stand with an enormous advantage over such of your competitors as have waited till they go into a theatre to learn what can be acquired just as well, better, more thoroughly, outside it.

It has been my object to deal generally with the actor's calling, a calling, difficult and

hazardous in character, demanding much patience, self-reliance, determination, and good temper. This last is not one of its least important demands on your character. Remember that the actor is not in one sense of the word an independent artist; it is his misfortune that the practice of his art is absolutely dependent on the fulfilment of elaborate external conditions. The painter, the musician, so long as they can find paint and canvas, ink and paper, can work at their art, alone, independent of external circumstances. Not so the actor. Before he can act, the theatre, the play, scenery, company, these requisites, not by any means too easy to find, must be provided. And then it is in the company of others, his colleagues, that his work has to be done. Consequently patience, good temper, fairness, unselfishness are qualities he will do well to cultivate, and he will lose nothing, rather gain, by the exercise of them. The selfish actor is not a popular person, and, in my experience, not as a rule a successful one. "Give and take," in this little world of the theatre, and you will be no losers by it.

Learn to bear failure and criticism patiently. They are part of the actor's lot in life. Critics are rarely animated by any personal hostility in what they may write about you, though I confess that when one reads an unfavourable criticism, one is inclined to set it down to anything but one's own deserving. I heard a great actor once say that we should never read criticisms of ourselves till a week after they were written—admirable

counsel—but I confess I have not yet reached that pitch of self-restraint that would enable me to overcome my curiosity for seven days. It is, however, a state of equanimity to look forward to. In the meantime, content yourself with the recollection that ridicule and damning criticism have been the lot at some time in their lives of the most famous actors and actresses, that the unfavourable verdict of to-day may be reversed to-morrow. It is no good resenting failure; turn it to account rather; try to understand it, and learn something from it. The uses of theatrical adversity may not be sweet, but rightly understood they may be very salutary.

Do not let failure make you despond. Ours is a calling of ups and downs; it is an advantage of its uncertainty that you never know what may happen next; the darkest hour may be very near the dawn. This is where Bohemianism, in the best sense of the term, will serve the actor. I do not mean by Bohemianism chronic intemperance and insolvency. I mean the gay spirit of daring and enterprise that greets failure as graciously as success; the love of your own calling and your comrades in that calling, a love that, no matter what your measure of success, will ever remain constant and enduring; the recognition of the fact that as an actor you but consult your own dignity in placing your own calling as a thing apart, in leading such a life as the necessities of that calling may demand; and choosing your friends among those who regard you for yourself, not those to whom an actor is

a social puppet, to be taken up and dropped as he happens for the moment to be more or less prominent in the public eye. If this kind of Bohemianism has some root in your character, you will find the changes and chances of your calling the easier to endure.

FAILURE AND SUCCESS

Do not despond in failure, neither be over-exalted by success. Remember one success is as nothing in the history of an actor's career; he has to make many before he can lay claim to any measure of fame; and over-confidence, an inability to estimate rightly the value of a passing triumph, has before now harmed incalculably many an actor or actress. You will only cease to learn your business when you quit it; look on success as but another lesson learnt to be turned to account in learning the next. The art of the actor is no less difficult, no less long in comparison with life, than any other art. In the intoxicating hour of success let this chastening thought have some place in your recollection.

When you begin work as actors or actresses, play whenever you can and whatever you can. Remember that the great thing for the actor is to be seen as often as possible, to be before the public as much as he can, no matter how modest the part, how insignificant the production. It is only when an actor has reached a position very secure in the public esteem that he can afford, or that it may

be his duty, to be careful as to what he undertakes. But before such a time is reached his one supreme object must be to get himself known to the public, to let them see his work under all conditions, until they find something to identify as peculiarly his own; he should think nothing too small or unimportant to do, too tiresome or laborious to undergo. Work well and conscientiously done must attract attention; there is a great deal of lolling and idleness among the many thoughtless and indifferent persons who drift on to the stage as the last refuge of the negligent or incompetent.

The stage will always attract a certain number of worthless recruits because it is so easy to get into the theatre somehow or other; there is no examination to be passed, no qualification to be proved before a person is entitled to call himself an actor. And then the life of an actor is unfortunately, in these days of long runs, one that lends itself to a good deal of idleness and waste of time, unless a man or woman be very determined to employ their spare time profitably. For this reason, I should advise any actor, or actress, to cultivate some rational hobby or interest by the side of their work; for until the time comes for an actor to assume the cares and labours of management, he must have a great deal of time on his hands that can be better employed than in hanging about clubs or lolling in drawing-rooms. At any rate, the actor or actress who thinks no work too small to do, and to do to the utmost of his or her ability, who

neglects no opportunity that may be turned to account—and every line he or she speaks is an opportunity—must outstrip those young persons who, though they may be pleased to call themselves actors and actresses, never learn to regard the theatre as anything but a kind of enlarged back-drawing-room, in which they are invited to amuse themselves at an altogether inadequate salary.

In regard to salary, when you start in your profession, do not make salary your first consideration; do not suffer a few shillings or a pound or two to stand between you and work. This is a consideration you may keep well in mind, even when you have achieved some measure of success. Apart from the natural tendency of the individual to place a higher value on his services than that attached to them by others, it is often well to take something less than you ask, if the work offered you is useful. Remember that the public judge you by your work, they know nothing and care little about what is being paid you for doing it. To some people their own affairs are of such supreme importance that they cannot believe that their personal concerns are unknown to, and unregarded by, the outside world. The intensely personal, individual character of the actor's work is bound to induce a certain temptation to an exaggerated egotism. We are all egotists, and it is right that we should be, up to a point. But I would urge the young actor or actress to be always on the watch against developing, especially in success, an extreme egotism which induces a selfishness

of outlook, an egregious vanity that in the long run weakens the character, induces disappointment and discontent, and bores to extinction other persons.

I would not for one moment advise an actor never to talk "shop"; it is a great mistake to think that men and women should never talk in public or private about the thing to which they devote their lives; people, as a rule, are most interesting on the subject of their own particular business in life. Talk about the affairs of the theatre within reason, and with due regard to the amenities of polite conversation, but do not confuse the affairs of the theatre, broadly speaking, with your own. The one is lasting, general; the other particular and fleeting. "*Il n'y a pas de l'homme necessaire*" [No man is indispensable]. Many persons would be strangely surprised if they could see how rapidly their place is filled after they are gone, no matter how considerable their achievement. It may not be filled in the same way, as well, as fittingly, but it will be filled, and humanity will content itself very fairly well with the substitute. This is especially true of the work of the actor. He can but live as a memory, and memory is proverbially short.

ELLEN TERRY

[In the autumn of 1883, during Henry Irving's first engagement in New York, Ellen Terry played a round of characters as his leading lady. In the *Tribune*, Mr. William Winter said: "Miss Ellen Terry's Portia is delicious. Her voice is perfect music. Her clear, bell-like elocution is more than a refreshment, it is a luxury. Her simple manner, always large and adequate, is a great beauty of the art which it so deftly conceals. Her embodiment of a woman's loveliness, such as, in Portia, should be at once stately and fascinating and inspire at once respect and passion, was felicitous beyond the reach of descriptive phrases." Then, on her appearance in "Much Ado About Nothing:" "She permeates the raillery of Beatrice with an indescribable charm of mischievous sweetness. The silver arrows of her pungent wit have no barb, for evidently she does not mean that they shall really wound. Her appearance and carriage are beautiful, and her tones melt into music. There is no hint of the virago here, and even the tone of sarcasm is superficial. It is archness playing over kindness that is presented here." On her Ophelia, Mr. Winter remarks: "Ophelia is an image, or personification of innocent, delirious, feminine youth and beauty, and she passes before us in the two stages of sanity and delirium. The embodiment is fully within

Miss Terry's reach, and is one of the few unmistakably perfect creations with which dramatic art has illumined literature and adorned the stage."

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HAMLET—IRVING'S GREATEST PART

When I went with Coghlan to see Henry Irving's Philip I was no stranger to his acting. I had been present with Tom Taylor, then dramatic critic of the *Times*, at the famous first night at the Lyceum, in 1874, when Henry put his fortune—counted, not in gold, but in years of scorned delights and laborious days, years of constant study and reflection, of Spartan self-denial and deep melancholy—when he put it all to the touch "to win or lose it all." This is no exaggeration. Hamlet was by far the greatest part that he had ever played or ever was to play. If he had failed—but why pursue it? He could not fail.

Yet, the success on the first night at the Lyceum, in 1874, was not of that electrical, almost hysterical splendour which has greeted the momentous achievements of some actors. The first two acts were received with indifference. The people could not see how packed they were with superb acting—perhaps because the new Hamlet was so simple, so quiet, so free from the exhibition of actors' artifices

which used to bring down the house in "Louis XI" and in "Richelieu," but which were really the easy things in acting, and in "Richelieu" (in my opinion) not especially well done. In "Hamlet" Henry Irving did not go to the audience; he made them come to him. Slowly, but surely, attention gave place to admiration, admiration to enthusiasm, enthusiasm to triumphant acclaim.

I have seen many Hamlets,—Fechter, Charles Kean, Rossi, Friedrich Haase, Forbes-Robertson, and my own son, Gordon Craig, among them,—but they were not in the same hemisphere! I refuse to go and see Hamlets now. I want to keep Henry Irving's fresh and clear in my memory until I die.

THE BIRMINGHAM NIGHT

When he engaged me to play Ophelia in 1878, he asked me to go down to Birmingham to see the play, and that night I saw what I shall always consider the perfection of acting. It had been wonderful in 1874; in 1878 it was far more wonderful. It has been said that when he had the "advantage" of my Ophelia his Hamlet "improved." I don't think so; he was always quite independent of the people with whom he acted.

The Birmingham night he knew I was there. He played—I say it without vanity—for me. We players are not above that weakness, if it be a weakness. If ever anything inspires us to do our best, it is the presence in the au-

dience of some fellow-artist who must, in the nature of things, know more completely than any one what we intend, what we do, what we feel. The response from such a member of the audience flies across the footlights to us like a flame. I felt it once when I played Olivia before Eleonora Duse. I felt that she felt it once when she played Marguerite Gautier for me.

When I read "Hamlet" now, everything that Henry did in it seems to me more absolutely right even than I thought at the time. I would give much to be able to record it all in detail, but—it may be my fault—writing is not the medium in which this can be done. Sometimes I have thought of giving readings of "Hamlet," for I can remember every tone of Henry's voice, every emphasis, every shade of meaning that he saw in the lines and made manifest to the discerning. Yes, I think I could give some pale idea of what his Hamlet was if I read the play!

"Words, words, words!" What is it to say, for instance, that the cardinal qualities of his Prince of Denmark were strength, delicacy, distinction? There was never a touch of commonness. Whatever he did or said, blood and breeding pervaded it.

THE ENTRANCE SCENE IN "HAMLET"

His "make-up" was very pale, and this made his face beautiful when one was close to him,

but at a distance it gave him a haggard look. Some said he looked twice his age.

He kept three things going at the same time—the antic madness, the sanity, the sense of the theatre. The last was to all that he imagined and thought what, in the New Testament, charity is said to be to all other virtues.

He was never cross or moody—only melancholy. His melancholy was as simple as it was profound. It was touching, too, rather than defiant. You never thought that he was wantonly sad and enjoying his own misery.

He neglected no *coup de theatre* [theatrical artifice] to assist him, but who notices the servants when the host is present?

For instance, his first entrance as Hamlet was what we call, in theatrical parlance, very much "worked up." He was always a tremendous believer in processions, and rightly. It is through such means that royalty keeps its hold on the feeling of the public and makes its mark as a figure and a symbol. Henry Irving understood this. Therefore, to music so apt that it was not remarkable in itself, but a contribution to the general excited anticipation, the court of Denmark came on to the stage. I understood later on, at the Lyceum, what days of patient work had gone to the making of that procession.

At its tail, when the excitement was at fever-heat, came the solitary figure of Hamlet, looking extraordinarily tall and thin, The lights were turned down—another stage trick—to help the effect that the figure was

spirit rather than man.

He was weary; his cloak trailed on the ground. He did not wear the miniature of his father obtrusively round his neck! His attitude was one which I have seen in a common little illustration to the "Reciter," compiled by Dr. Pinch, Henry Irving's old schoolmaster. Yet, how right to have taken it, to have been indifferent to its humble origin! Nothing could have been better when translated into life by Irving's genius.

The hair looked blue-black, like the plumage of a crow; the eyes burning—two fires veiled, as yet, by melancholy. But the appearance of the man was not single, straight, or obvious, as it is when I describe it, any more than his passions throughout the play were. I only remember one moment when his intensity concentrated itself in a straightforward unmistakable emotion, without side-current or back water. It was when he said:

> The play's the thing
> Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King

and, as the curtain came down, was seen to be writing madly on his tablets against one of the pillars.

"O God, that I were a writer!" I paraphrase Beatrice with all my heart. Surely a writer could not string words together about Henry Irving's Hamlet and say nothing, nothing.

"We must start this play a living thing," he used to say at rehearsals, and he worked until the skin grew tight over his face, until he became livid with fatigue, yet still beautiful, to

get the opening lines said with individuality, suggestiveness, speed, and power:

BERNARDO: Who's there?

FRANCISCO: Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO: Long live the king!

FRANCISCO: Bernardo?

BERNARDO: He.

FRANCISCO: You come most carefully upon your hour.

BERNARDO: 'Tis now struck twelve: get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO: For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold.

And all that he tried to make others do with these lines he himself did with every line of his own part. Every word lived.

Some said: "Oh, Irving only makes 'Hamlet' a love poem!" They said that, I suppose, because in the nunnery scene with Ophelia he was the lover above the prince and the poet. With what passionate longing his hands hovered over Ophelia at her words, "Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind!"

THE SCENE WITH THE PLAYERS

His advice to the players was not advice. He did not speak it as an actor. Nearly all Hamlets in that scene give away the fact that they are actors and not dilettanti of royal blood. Henry defined the way he would have the

players speak as an order, an instruction of the merit of which he was regally sure. There was no patronising flavour in his acting here, not a touch of "I'll teach you how to do it." He was swift, swift and simple—pausing for the right word now and again, as in the phrase "to hold as 't were the mirror up to nature." His slight pause and eloquent gesture, as the all embracing word "nature" came in answer to his call, were exactly repeated unconsciously, years later, by the Queen of Roumania (Carmen Sylva). She was telling us the story of a play that she had written. The words rushed out swiftly, but occasionally she would wait for the one that expressed her meaning most comprehensively and exactly, and, as she got it, up went her hand in triumph over her head—"Like yours in Hamlet," I told Henry at the time.

IRVING ENGAGES ME ON TRUST

The first letter that I ever received from Henry Irving was written on the 20th of July, 1878, from 15A Grafton Street, the house in which he lived during the entire period of his Lyceum management.

> DEAR MISS TERRY:
>
> I look forward to the pleasure of calling upon you on Tuesday next at two o'clock.

With every good wish, believe me, yours sincerely,

HENRY IRVING.

The call was in reference to my engagement as Ophelia. Strangely characteristic I see it now to have been of Henry that he was content to take my powers as an actress more or less on trust. A mutual friend, Lady Pollock, had told him that I was the very person for him; that "All London" (a vile but convenient phrase) was talking of my Olivia; that I had acted well in Shakespeare with the Bancrofts; that I should bring to the Lyceum Theatre what players call "a personal following." Henry chose his friends as carefully as he chose his company and his staff. He believed in Lady Pollock implicitly, and he did not—it is possible that he could not—come and see my Olivia for himself.

I was living in Longridge Road when Henry Irving came to see me. Not a word of our conversation about the engagement can I remember. I did notice, however, the great change that had taken place in the man since I had last met him in 1867. Then he was really very ordinary-looking—with a moustache, an unwrinkled face, and a sloping forehead. The only wonderful thing about him was his melancholy. When I was playing the piano, once, in the green room at the Queen's Theatre, he came in and listened. I remember being made aware of his presence by his sigh—the deepest, profoundest, sincerest sigh I ever heard from any human be-

ing. He asked me if I would not play the piece again. The incident impressed itself on my mind, inseparably associated with a picture of him as he looked at thirty—a picture by no means pleasing. He looked conceited, and almost savagely proud of the isolation in which he lived. There was a touch of exaggeration in his appearance, a dash of Werther, with a few flourishes of Jingle! Nervously sensitive to ridicule, self-conscious, suffering deeply from his inability to express himself through his art, Henry Irving in 1867 was a very different person from the Henry Irving who called on me at Longridge Road in 1878. In ten years he had found himself, and so lost himself—lost, I mean, much of that stiff, ugly self-consciousness which had encased him as the shell encases the lobster. His forehead had become more massive, and the very outline of his features had altered. He was a man of the world, whose strenuous fighting now was to be done as a general—not, as hitherto, in the ranks. His manner was very quiet and gentle. "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," says the psalmist. That was always like Henry Irving.

And here, perhaps, is the place to say that I, of all people, can perhaps appreciate Henry Irving least justly, although I was his associate on the stage for a quarter of a century, and was on terms of the closest friendship with him for almost as long a time. He had precisely the qualities that I never find likable.

IRVING'S EGOTISM

He was an egotist, an egotist of the great type, never "a mean egotist," as he was once slanderously described; and all his faults sprang from egotism, which is, after all, only another name for greatness. So much absorbed was he in his own achievement that he was unable or unwilling to appreciate the achievements of others. I never heard him speak in high terms of the great foreign actors and actresses who from time to time visited England. It would be easy to attribute this to jealousy, but the easy explanation is not the true one. He simply would not give himself up to appreciation. Perhaps appreciation is a wasting though a generous quality of the mind and heart, and best left to lookers-on who have plenty of time to develop it.

I was with him when he saw Sarah Bernhardt act for the first time. The play was "Ruy Blas," and it was one of Sarah's bad days. She was walking through the part listlessly, and I was angry that there should be any ground for Henry's indifference. The same thing happened years later when I took him to see Eleonora Duse. The play was "Locandiera," to which she was eminently unsuited, I think. He was surprised at my enthusiasm. There was an element of justice in his attitude toward the performance which infuriated me, but I doubt if he would have shown more enthusiasm if he had seen her at her best.

As the years went on he grew very much attached to Sarah Bernhardt, and admired

her as a colleague whose managerial work in the theatre was as dignified as his own; but of her superb powers as an actress I don't believe he ever had a glimmering notion!

Perhaps it is not true, but, as I believe it to be true, I may as well state it: It was never any pleasure to him to see the acting of other actors and actresses. Salvini's Othello I know he thought magnificent, but he would not speak of it.

IRVING'S SIMPLICITY OF CHARACTER

How dangerous it is to write things that may not be understood! What I have written I have written merely to indicate the qualities in Henry Irving's nature which were unintelligible to me, perhaps because I have always been more woman than artist. He always put the theatre first. He lived in it, he died in it. He had none of my bourgeois qualities—the love of being in love, the love of a home, the dislike of solitude. I have always thought it hard to find my inferiors. He was sure of his high place. In some ways he was far simpler than I. He would talk, for instance, in such an ignorant way to painters and musicians that I blushed for him. But was not my blush far more unworthy than his freedom from all pretentiousness in matters of art?

He never pretended. One of his biographers had said that he posed as being a

French scholar. Such a thing, and all things like it, were impossible to his nature. If it were necessary, in one of his plays, to say a few French words, he took infinite pains to learn them, and said them beautifully.

Henry once told me that in the early part of his career, before I knew him, he had been hooted because of his thin legs. The first service I did him was to tell him that they were beautiful, and to make him give up padding them.

"What do you want with fat, podgy, prize-fighter legs!" I expostulated.

I brought help, too, in pictorial matters. Henry Irving had had little training in such matters; I had had a great deal. Judgment about colours, clothes, and lighting must be trained. I had learned from Mr. Watts, from Mr. Goodwin, and from other artists, until a sense of decorative effect had become second nature to me.

Praise to some people at certain stages of their career is more developing than blame. I admired the very things in Henry for which other people criticised him. I hope this helped him a little.

RICHARD MANSFIELD

[Richard Mansfield, one of the great actors of his time, was born in Heligoland, then a British Possession, in 1857. He prepared himself for the East Indian civil service, then studied art, and opened a studio in Boston. He was soon attracted to the stage, and began playing minor parts in comic opera, displaying marked ability from the first. His versatility took him all the way from the rôle of Koko in the "Mikado," to Beau Brummel and Richard III. His success soon enabled him to assemble a company of his own; as its manager he produced with memorable effect "Cyrano de Bergerac," "Henry V.," and "Julius Caesar." He died in 1907, a few weeks after a striking creation of "Peer Gynt." A biography of Mr. Mansfield by Mr. Paul Wilstach is published by C. Scribner's Sons, New York.

[Mr. Mansfield's article on "Man and the Actor," which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1906, copyright by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, is here given almost in full by the kind permission of the publishers and of Mrs. Richard Mansfield. It is in effect an autobiographical revelation of the artist and the man.—*Ed.*]

MAN AND THE ACTOR

> I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,
> A stage where every man must play a part.

Shakespeare does not say "may" play a part, or "can" play a part, but he says *must* play a part; and he has expressed the conviction of every intelligent student of humanity then and thereafter, now and hereafter. The stage cannot be held in contempt by mankind; because all mankind is acting, and every human being is playing a part. The better a man plays his part, the better he succeeds. The more a man knows of the art of acting, the greater the man; for, from the king on his throne to the beggar in the street, every man is acting. There is no greater comedian or tragedian in the world than a great king. The knowledge of the art of acting is indispensable to a knowledge of mankind, and when you are able to pierce the disguise in which every man arrays himself, or to read the character which every man assumes, you achieve an intimate knowledge of your fellow men, and you are able to cope with the man, either as he is, or as he pretends to be. It was necessary for Shakespeare to be an actor in order to know men. Without his knowledge of the stage, Shakespeare could never have been the reader of men that he was. And yet we are asked, "Is the stage worth while?"

NAPOLEON AS ACTOR

Napoleon and Alexander were both great actors—Napoleon perhaps the greatest actor the world has ever seen. Whether on the bridge of Lodi, or in his camp at Tilsit; whether addressing his soldiers in the plains of Egypt; whether throwing open his old gray coat and saying, "Children, will you fire on your general?" whether bidding farewell to them at Fontainebleau; whether standing on the deck of the *Bellerophon*, or on the rocks of St. Helena—he was always an actor. Napoleon had studied the art of acting, and he knew its value. If the power of the eye, the power of the voice, the power of that all-commanding gesture of the hand, failed him when he faced the regiment of veterans on his return from Elba, he was lost. But he had proved and compelled his audience too often for his art to fail him then. The leveled guns fell. The audience was his. Another crown had fallen! By what? A trick of the stage! Was he willing to die then? to be shot by his old guard? Not he! Did he doubt for one moment his ability as an actor? Not he! If he had, he would have been lost. And that power to control, that power to command, once it is possessed by a man, means that that man can play his part anywhere, and under all circumstances and conditions. Unconsciously or consciously, every great man, every man who has played a great part, has been an actor. Each man, every man, who has made his mark has chosen his char-

acter, the character best adapted to himself, and has played it, and clung to it, and made his impress with it. I have but to conjure up the figure of Daniel Webster, who never lost an opportunity to act; or General Grant, who chose for his model William of Orange, surnamed the Silent. You will find every one of your most admired heroes choosing early in life some admired hero of his own to copy. Who can doubt that Napoleon had selected Julius Caesar? For, once he had founded an empire, everything about him was modelled after the Caesarean regime. Look at his coronation robes, the women's gowns—the very furniture! Actors, painters, musicians, politicians, society men and women, and kings and queens, all play their parts, and all build themselves after some favourite model. In this woman of society you trace the influence of the Princess Metternich. In another we see her admiration (and a very proper one) for Her Britannic Majesty. In another we behold George Eliot, or Queen Louise of Prussia, or the influence of some modern society leader. But no matter who it is, from the lowest to the highest, the actor is dominant in the human being, and this trait exhibits itself early in the youngest child. Everywhere you see stage-craft in one form or another. If men loved not costumes and scenery, would the king be escorted by the lifeguards, arrayed in shining helmets and breastplates, which we know are perfectly useless in these days when a bullet will go through fifty of them with ease? The first thing a man thinks of when

he has to face any ordeal, be it a coronation or an execution, is, how am I going to look? how am I to behave? what manner shall I assume? shall I appear calm and dignified, or happy and pleased? shall I wear a portentous frown or a beaming smile? how shall I walk? shall I take short steps or long ones? shall I stoop as if bowed with care, or walk erect with courage and pride? shall I gaze fearlessly on all about me, or shall I drop my eyes modestly to the ground? If man were not always acting, he would not think of these things at all, he would not bother his head about them, but would walk to his coronation or his execution according to his nature. In the last event this would have to be, in some cases, on all fours.

I stretch my eyes over the wide world, and the people in it, and I can see no one who is not playing a part; therefore respect the art of which you are all devotees, and, if you must act, learn to play your parts well. Study the acting of others, so that you may discover what part is being played by others.

THE GIFT FOR ACTING IS RARE

It is, therefore, not amazing that everybody is interested in the art of acting, and it is not amazing that every one thinks he can act. You have only to suggest private theatricals, when a house party is assembled at some country house, to verify the truth of the statement.

Immediately commences a lively rivalry as to who shall play this part or that. Each one considers herself or himself best suited, and I have known private theatricals to lead to life-long enmities.

It is surprising to discover how very differently people who have played parts all their lives deport themselves before the footlights. I was acquainted with a lady in London who had been the wife of a peer of the realm, who had been ambassadress at foreign courts, who at one time had been a reigning beauty, and who came to me, longing for a new experience, and implored me to give her an opportunity to appear upon the stage. In a weak moment I consented, and as I was producing a play, I cast her for a part which I thought she would admirably suit—-that of a society woman. What that woman did and did not do on the stage passes all belief. She became entangled in her train, she could neither sit down nor stand up, she shouted, she could not be persuaded to remain at a respectful distance, but insisted upon shrieking into the actor's ears, and she committed all the gaucheries you would expect from an untrained country wench. But because everybody is acting in private life, every one thinks he can act upon the stage, and there is no profession that has so many critics. Every individual in the audience is a critic, and knows all about the art of acting. But acting is a gift. It cannot be taught. You can teach people how to act acting—but you can't teach them to act. Acting is as much an in-

spiration as the making of great poetry and great pictures. What is commonly called acting is acting acting. This is what is generally accepted as acting. A man speaks lines, moves his arms, wags his head, and does various other things; he may even shout and rant; some pull down their cuffs and inspect their finger nails; they work hard and perspire, and their skin acts. This is all easily comprehended by the masses, and passes for acting, and is applauded, but the man who is actually the embodiment of the character he is creating will often be misunderstood, be disliked, and fail to attract. Mediocrity rouses no opposition, but strong individualities and forcible opinions make enemies. It is here that danger lies. Many an actor has set out with an ideal, but, failing to gain general favour, has abandoned it for the easier method of winning popular acclaim. Inspiration only comes to those who permit themselves to be inspired. It is a form of hypnotism. Allow yourself to be convinced by the character you are portraying that you are the character. If you are to play Napoleon, and you are sincere and determined to be Napoleon, Napoleon will not permit you to be any one but Napoleon, or Richard III. Richard III., or Nero Nero, and so on. He would be a poor, miserable pretence of an actor who in the representation of any historical personage were otherwise than firmly convinced, after getting into the man's skin (which means the exhaustive study of all that was ever known about him), that he is living that very man for a few brief hours. And so

it is, in another form, with the creation or realisation of the author's, the poet's, fancy. In this latter case the actor, the poet actor, sees and creates in the air before him the being he delineates; he makes him, he builds him during the day, in the long hours of the night; the character gradually takes being; he is the actor's genius; the slave of the ring, who comes when he calls him, stands beside him, and envelops him in his ghostly arms; the actor's personality disappears; he is the character. You, you, and you, and all of you, have the right to object to the actor's creation; you may say this is not your conception of Hamlet or Macbeth or Iago or Richard or Nero or Shylock—but respect his. And who can tell whether he is right or you are right? He has created them with much loving care; therefore don't sneer at them—don't jeer at them—it hurts! If you have reared a rosebush in your garden, and seen it bud and bloom, are you pleased to have some ruthless vandal tear the flowers from their stem and trample them in the mud? And it is not always our most beautiful children we love the best. The parent's heart will surely warm toward its feeblest child.

THE CREATION OF A CHARACTER

It is very evident that any man, be he an actor or no actor, can, with money and with good taste, make what is technically termed a pro-

duction. There is, as an absolute matter of fact, no particular credit to be attached to the making of a production. The real work of the stage, of the actor, does not lie there. It is easy for us to busy ourselves, to pass pleasantly our time, designing lovely scenes, charming costumes, and all the paraphernalia and pomp of mimic grandeur, whether of landscape or of architecture, the panoply of war, or the luxury of royal courts. That is fun—pleasure and amusement. No; the real work of the stage lies in the creation of a character. A great character will live forever, when paint and canvas and silks and satins and gold foil and tinsel shall have gone the way of all rags.

But the long, lone hours with our heads in our hands, the toil, the patient study, the rough carving of the outlines, the dainty, delicate finishing touches, the growing into the soul of the being we delineate, the picture of his outward semblance, his voice, his gait, his speech, all amount to a labour of such stress and strain, of such loving anxiety and care, that they can be compared in my mind only to a mother's pains. And when the child is born it must grow in a few hours to completion, and be exhibited and coldly criticised. How often, how often, have those long months of infinite toil been in vain! How often has the actor led the child of his imagination to the footlights, only to realise that he has brought into the world a weakling or a deformity which may not live! And how often he has sat through the long night brooding over the corpse of this dear figment of his fancy! It has lately be-

come customary with many actor-managers to avoid these pangs of childbirth. They have determinedly declined the responsibility they owe to the poet and the public, and have instead dazzled the eye with a succession of such splendid pictures that the beholder forgets in a surfeit of the sight the feast that should feed the soul. This is what I am pleased to term talk versus acting. The representative actors in London are much inclined in this direction.

COPY LIFE

The student may well ask, "What are we to copy, and whom are we to copy?" Don't copy any one; don't copy any individual actor, or his methods. The methods of one actor—the means by which he arrives—cannot always be successfully employed by another. The methods and personality of one actor are no more becoming or suitable or adapted to another than certain gowns worn by women of fashion simply because these gowns are the fashion. In the art of acting, like the art of painting, we must study life—copy life! You will have before you the work of great masters, and you will learn very much from them—quite as much what to avoid as what to follow. No painting is perfect, and no acting is perfect. No actor ever played a part to absolute perfection. It is just as impossible for an actor to simulate nature completely upon the stage as it is impossible for the painter to portray

on canvas the waves of the ocean, the raging storm clouds, or the horrors of conflagration.

The nearer the artist gets to nature, the greater he is. We may admire Rubens and Rembrandt and Vandyke and Gainsborough and Turner, but who will dare to say that any one of their pictures is faultless? We shall learn much from them all, but quite as much what to avoid as what to emulate. But when you discover their faults, do not forget their virtues. Look, and realise what it means to be able to do so much, And the actor's art is even more difficult! For its execution must be immediate and spontaneous. The word is delivered, the action is done, and the picture is painted! Can I pause and say, "Ladies and gentlemen, that is not the way I wanted to do this, or to say that; if you will allow me to try again, I think I can improve upon it?"

SELF-CRITICISM

The most severe critic can never tell me more, or scold me more than I scold myself. I have never left the stage satisfied with myself. And I am convinced that every artist feels as I do about his work. It is the undoubted duty of the critic to criticise, and that means to blame as well as to praise; and it must be confessed that, taking all things into consideration, the critics of this country are actuated by honesty of purpose and kindliness of spirit, and very often their work is, in addition, of marked literary value. Occasionally we will still meet

the man who is anxious to impress his fellow citizens with the fact that he has been abroad, and tinctures all his views of plays and actors with references to Herr Dinkelspiegel or Frau Mitterwoorzer; or who, having spent a few hours in Paris, is forced to drag in by the hair Monsieur Popin or Mademoiselle Fifine. But as a matter of fact, is not the interpretation of tragedy and comedy by the American stage superior to the German and French?—for the whole endeavour in this country has been toward a closer adherence to nature. In France and in Germany the ancient method of declamation still prevails, and the great speeches of Goethe and Schiller and Racine and Corneille are to all intents and purposes intoned. No doubt this sounds very fine in German and French, but how would you like it now in English?

The old-time actor had peculiar and primitive views as to elocution and its uses. I remember a certain old friend of mine, who, when he recited the opening speech in "Richard III.," and arrived at the line "In the deep bosom of the ocean buried," suggested the deep bosom of the ocean by sending his voice down into his boots. Yet these were fine actors, to whom certain young gentlemen, who never saw them, constantly refer. The methods of the stage have completely changed, and with them the tastes of the people. The probability is that some of the old actors of only a few years ago would excite much merriment in their delineation of tragedy. A very great tragedian of a past generation was

wont, in the tent scene in "Richard III.," to hold a piece of soap in his mouth, so that, after the appearance of the ghosts, the lather and froth might dribble down his chin! and he employed, moreover, a trick sword, which rattled hideously; and, what with his foam-flecked face, his rolling eyes, his inarticulate groans, and his rattling blade, the small boy in the gallery was scared into a frenzy of vociferous delight!

Yet, whilst we have discarded these somewhat crude methods, we have perhaps allowed ourselves to wander too far in the other direction, and the critics are quite justified in demanding in many cases greater virility and force. The simulation of suppressed power is very useful and very advisable, but when the fire-bell rings the horses have got to come out, and rattle and race down the street, and rouse the town!

DISCIPLINE IMPERATIVE

Whilst we are on the subject of these creations of the poets and the actors, do you understand how important is discipline on the stage? How can an actor be away from this earth, moving before you in the spirit he has conjured up, only to be dragged back to himself and his actual surroundings of canvas and paint and tinsel and limelights by some disturbing influence in the audience or on the stage? If you want the best, if you love the art, foster it. It is worthy of your gentlest care and your kindest,

tenderest thought. Your silence is often more indicative of appreciation than your applause. The actor does not need your applause in order to know when you are in sympathy with him.

He feels very quickly whether you are antagonistic or friendly. He cares very little for the money, but a great deal for your affection and esteem. Discipline on the stage has almost entirely disappeared, and year after year the exercise of our art becomes more difficult. I am sorry to say some newspapers are, unwittingly perhaps, largely responsible for this. When an editor discharges a member of his force for any good and sufficient reason—and surely a man must be permitted to manage and control his own business—no paper will publish a two-column article, with appropriate cuts, detailing the wrongs of the discharged journalist, and the hideous crime of the editor! Even an editor—and an editor is supposed to be able to stand almost anything—would become weary after a while; discipline would cease, and your newspapers would be ill-served. Booth, Jefferson, and other actors soon made up their minds that the easiest road was the best for them. Mr. Booth left the stage management entirely to Mr. Lawrence Barrett and others, and Mr. Jefferson praised everybody and every thing. But this is not good for the stage. My career on the stage is nearly over, and until, shortly, I bid it farewell, I shall continue to do my best; but we are all doing it under ever-growing difficulties. Actors on the stage are

scarce, actors off the stage, as I have demonstrated, I hope, are plentiful. Life insurance presidents—worthy presidents, directors, and trustees—have been so busy acting their several parts in the past, and are in the present so busy trying to unact them, men are so occupied from their childhood with the mighty dollar, the race for wealth is so strenuous and all-entrancing, that imagination is dying out; and imagination is necessary to make a poet or an actor; the art of acting is the crystallisation of all arts. It is a diamond in the facets of which is mirrored every art. It is, therefore, the most difficult of all arts. The education of a king is barely sufficient for the education of the comprehending and comprehensive actor. If he is to satisfy every one, he should possess the commanding power of a Caesar, the wisdom of Solomon, the eloquence of Demosthenes, the patience of Job, the face and form of Antinous, and the strength and endurance of Hercules.

DRAMATIC VICISSITUDES

The stage is not likely to die of neglect anywhere. But at this moment it cannot be denied that the ship of the stage is drifting somewhat hither and thither, Every breath of air and every current of public opinion impels it first in one direction and then in another, At one moment we may be said to be in the doldrums of the English society drama, or we are sluggishly rolling along in a heavy ground

swell, propelled by a passing cat's paw of revivals of old melodramas. Again we catch a very faint northerly breeze from Ibsen, or a southeaster from Maeterlinck and Hauptmann. Sometimes we set our sails to woo that ever-clearing breeze of Shakespeare, only to be forced out of our course by a sputter of rain, an Irish mist, and half a squall from George Bernard Shaw; but the greater part of the time the ship of the stage is careering wildly under bare poles, with a man lashed to the helm (and let us hope that, like Ulysses, he has cotton wool in his ears), before a hurricane of comic opera. We need a recognised stage and a recognised school. America has become too great, and its influence abroad too large, for us to afford to have recourse to that ancient and easy method of criticism which decries the American and extols the foreign. That is one of those last remnants of colonialism and provincialism which must depart forever.

A NATIONAL THEATRE

What could not be done for the people of this land, were we to have a great and recognised theatre! Consider our speech, and our manner of speech! Consider our voices, and the production of our voices! Consider the pronunciation of words, and the curious use of vowels! Let us say we have an established theatre, to which you come not only for your pleasure, but for your education.

Of what immense advantage this would be if behind its presiding officer there stood a board of literary directors, composed of such men as William Winter, Howells, Edward Everett Hale, and Aldrich, and others equally fine, and the presidents of the great universities. These men might well decide how the American language should be spoken in the great American theatre, and we should then have an authority in this country at last for the pronunciation of certain words. It would finally be decided whether to say fancy or fahncy—dance or dahnce—advertisement or advertysement, and so with many other words; whether to call the object of our admiration "real elegant"—whether we should say "I admire" to do this or that, and whether we should say "I guess" instead of "I think." And the voice! The education of the American speaking voice is, I am sure all will agree, of immense importance. It is difficult to love, or to continue to endure, a woman who shrieks at you; a high-pitched, nasal, stringy voice is not calculated to charm. This established theatre of which we dream should teach men and women how to talk; and how splendid it would be for future generations if it should become characteristic of American men and women to speak in soft and beautifully modulated tones!

These men of whom I have spoken could meet once a year in the great green-room of this theatre of my imagination, and decide upon the works to be produced—the great classics, the tragedies and comedies; and living authors should be invited and encouraged.

Here, again, we should have at last what we so badly need, an encouragement for men and women to write poetry for the stage. Nothing by way of the beautiful seems to be written for us to-day, but perhaps the acknowledgment and the hall-mark of a great theatre might prove an incentive.

TRAINING THE ACTOR

The training of the actor! To-day there is practically none. Actors and actresses are not to be taught by patting them on the shoulders and saying, "Fine! Splendid!" It is a hard, hard school, on the contrary, of unmerciful criticism. And he is a poor master who seeks cheap popularity amongst his associates by glossing over and praising what he knows to be condemnable. No good result is to be obtained by this method, but it is this method which has caused a great many actors to be beloved, and the public to be very much distressed.

As for the practical side of an established theatre, I am absolutely convinced that the national theatre could be established in this country on a practical and paying basis; and not only on a paying basis, but upon a profitable basis. It would, however, necessitate the investment of a large amount of capital. In short, the prime cost would be large, but if the public generally is interested, there is no reason why an able financier could not float a company for this purpose. But under no cir-

cumstances must or can a national theatre, in the proper use of the term, be made an object of personal or commercial profit. Nor can it be a scheme devised by a few individuals for the exploitation of a social or literary fad. The national theatre must be given by the people to the people, and be governed by the people. The members of the national theatre should be elected by the board of directors, and should be chosen from the American and British stage alike, or from any country where English is the language of the people. Every inducement should be offered to secure the services of the best actors; by actors, I mean actors of both sexes; and those who have served for a certain number of years should be entitled to a pension upon retirement.

It is not necessary to bother with further details; I only mention this to impress the reader with the fact that the national theatre is a practical possibility. From my personal experience I am convinced that serious effort upon the American stage meets with a hearty endorsement.

TOMMASO SALVINI

[During his American tour of 1882-1883, Salvini played in Boston. One of his auditors, Henry James, the distinguished novelist, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, 1883, gave a detailed criticism of the performances. Of Salvini's Othello he said:

> . . . "What an immense impression—simply as an impression—the actor makes on the spectator who sees him for the first time as the turbaned and deep-voiced Moor! He gives us his measure as a man: he acquaints us with that luxury of perfect confidence in the physical resources of the actor which is not the most frequent satisfaction of the modern play-goer. His powerful, active, manly frame, his noble, serious, vividly expressive face, his splendid smile, his Italian eye, his superb, voluminous voice, his carriage, his ease, the assurance he instantly gives that he holds the whole part in his hands and can make of it exactly what he chooses,—all this descends upon the spectator's mind with a rich-

> ness which immediately converts attention into faith, and expectation into sympathy. He is a magnificent creature, and you are already on his ride. His generous temperament is contagious; you find yourself looking at him, not so much as an actor, but as a hero.... The admirable thing in this nature of Salvini's is that his intelligence is equal to his material powers, so that if the exhibition is, as it were, personal, it is not simply physical. He has a great imagination: there is a noble intention in all he does."

The pages which now follow, taken from Salvini's *Autobiography*, are presented with the permission of his publishers, the Century Company, New York.—*Ed*.]

FIRST APPEARANCE

The Bon and Berlaffa Company, in which my father was engaged, alternated in its repertory between the comedies of Goldoni and the tragedies of Alfieri.

One evening the "Donne Curiose" by Goldoni was to be given, but the actor who was to take the harlequin's part, represented in that piece by a stupid slave called Pasquino, fell sick a few hours before the curtain was to rise. The company had been together for a few days only, and it was out of the question to substitute another play. It had been decided to close the theatre for that night, when Berlaffa asked:

"Why couldn't your Tom take the part?" My father said that there was no reason why he shouldn't, but that Tom had never appeared in public, and he didn't know whether he had the courage.

The proposition was made to me, and I accepted on the spot, influenced to no little extent by a desire to please the managers, who in my eyes were people of great importance. Within three hours, with my iron memory, I had easily mastered my little part of Pasquino, and, putting on the costume of the actor who had fallen ill, I found myself a full-fledged if a new performer. I was to speak in the Venetian dialect; that was inconvenient for me rather than difficult, but at Forte, where we were, any slip of pronunciation would hardly be observed.

It was the first time that I was to go on the stage behind the dazzling footlights, the first time that I was to speak in an unaccustomed dialect, dressed up in ridiculous clothes which were not my own; and I confess that I was so much frightened that I was tempted to run back to my dressing-room, to take off my costume, and to have nothing more to do with the play. But my father, who was aware of my submissive disposition toward him, with a few words kept me at my post.

"For shame!" said he; "a man has no right to be afraid." A man! I was scarce fourteen, yet I aspired to that title.

The conscript who is for the first time under fire feels a sense of fear. Nevertheless, if he has the pride of his sex, and the dignity of

one who appreciates his duty, he stands firm, though it be against big will. So it was with me when I began my part. When I perceived that some of Pasquino's lines were amusing the audience, I took courage, and, like a little bird making its first flight, I arrived at the goal, and was eager to try again. As it turned out, my actor's malady grew worse, so that he was forced to leave the company, and I was chosen to take his place.

I must have had considerable aptitude for such comic parts as those of stupid servants, for everywhere that we went I became the public's Benjamin. I made the people laugh, and they asked for nothing better. All were surprised that, young and inexperienced as I was, I should have so much cleverness of manner and such sureness of delivery. My father was more surprised than anybody, for he had expected far less of my immaturity and total lack of practice. It is certain that from that time I began to feel that I was somebody. I had become useful, or at least I thought I had, and, as a consequence, in my manner and bearing I began to affect the young man more than was fitting in a mere boy. I sought to figure in the conversation of grown people, and many a time I had the pain of seeing my elders smile at my remarks. It was my great ambition to be allowed to walk alone in the city streets; my father was very loath to grant this boon, but he let me go sometimes, perhaps to get a sample of my conduct. I don't remember ever doing anything at these times which could have displeased him; I was par-

ticularly careful about it, since I saw him sad, pensive, and afflicted owing to the misfortune which had befallen him, and soon he began to accord me his confidence, which I was most anxious to gain.

A FATHER'S ADVICE

Often he spoke to me of the principles of dramatic art, and of the mission of the artist. He told me that to have the right to call one's self an artist one must add honest work to talent, and he put before me the example of certain actors who had risen to fame, but who were repulsed by society on account of the triviality of their conduct; of others who were brought by dissipation to die in a hospital, blamed by all; and of still others who had fallen so low as to hold out their hands for alms, or to sponge on their comrades and to cozen them out of their money for unmerited subscriptions—all of which things moved me to horror and deep repugnance. It was with good reason that my father was called "Honest Beppo" by his fellows on the stage. The incorruptibility and firmness of principle which he cultivated in me from the time that I grew old enough to understand have been my spur and guide throughout my career, and it is through no merit of my own that I can count myself among those who have won the esteem of society; I attribute all the merit to my father. He was conscientious and honest to a scruple; so much so that of his own free will he sacri-

ficed the natural pride of the dramatic artist, and denounced the well-earned honour of first place in his own company to take second place with Gustavo Modena, whose artistic merit he recognised as superior to his own, in order that I might profit by the instruction of that admirable actor and sterling citizen. My father preferred his son's advantage to his own personal profit.

HOW SALVINI STUDIED HIS ART

The parts in which I won the most sympathy from the Italian public were those of Oreste in the tragedy of that name, Egisto in "Merope," Romeo in "Giulietta e Romeo," Paolo in "Francesca da Rimini," Rinaldo in "Pia di Tolommei," Lord Bonfield in "Pamela," Domingo in the "Suonatrice d 'Arpa," and Gian Galeazzo in "Lodovico il Moro." In all these my success was more pronounced than in other parts, and I received flattering marks of approval. I did not reflect, at that time, of how great assistance to me it was to be constantly surrounded by first-rate artists; but I soon came to feel that an atmosphere untainted by poisonous microbes promotes unoppressed respiration, and that in such an atmosphere soul and body maintain themselves healthy and vigorous. I observed frequently in the "scratch" companies, which played in the theatres of second rank young men and

women who showed very notable artistic aptitude, but who, for lack of cultivation and guidance, ran to extravagance, overemphasis, and exaggeration. Up to that time, while I had a clear appreciation of the reasons for recognising defects in others, I did not know how to correct my own; on the other hand, I recognised that the applause accorded me was intended as an encouragement more than as a tribute which I had earned. From a youth of pleasing qualities (for the moment I quell my modesty), with good features, full of fire and enthusiasm, with a harmonious and powerful voice, and with good intellectual faculties, the public deemed that an artist should develop who would distinguish himself, and perhaps attain eminence in the records of Italian art; and for this reason it sought to encourage me, and to apply the spur to my pride by manifesting its feeling of sympathy. By good fortune I had enough conscience and good sense to receive this homage at its just value. I felt the need of studying, not books alone, but men and things, vice and virtue, love and hate, humility and haughtiness, gentleness and cruelty, folly and wisdom, poverty and opulence, avarice and lavishness, long-suffering and vengeance—in short, all the passions for good and evil which have root in human nature. I needed to study out the manner of rendering these passions in accordance with the race of the men in whom they were exhibited, in accordance with their special customs, principles, and education; I needed to form a conception of the movement, the manner, the

expressions of face and voice characteristic of all these cases; I must learn by intuition to grasp the characters of fiction, and by study to reproduce those of history with semblance of truth, seeking to give to every one a personality distinct from every other. In fine, I must become capable of identifying myself with one or another personage to such an extent as to lead the audience into the illusion that the real personage, and not a copy, is before them. It would then remain to learn the mechanism of my art; that is, to choose the salient points and to bring them out, to calculate the effects and keep them in proportion with the unfolding of the plot, to avoid monotony in intonation and repetition in accentuation, to insure precision and distinctness in pronunciation, the proper distribution of respiration, and incisiveness of delivery. I must study; study again; study always. It was not an easy thing to put these precepts into practice. Very often I forgot them, carried away by excitement, or by the superabundance of my vocal powers; indeed, until I had reached an age of calmer reflection I was never able to get my artistic chronometer perfectly regulated; it would always gain a few minutes every twenty-four hours.

FAULTS IN ACTING

In my assiduous reading of the classics, the chief places were held among the Greeks by the masculine and noble figures of Hector,

Achilles, Theseus, Oedipus; among the Scots by Trenmor, Fingal, Cuchullin; and among the Romans by Caesar, Brutus, Titus, and Cato. These characters influenced me to incline toward a somewhat bombastic system of gesticulation and a turgid delivery. My anxiety to enter to the utmost into the conceptions of my authors, and to interpret them clearly, disposed me to exaggerate the modulations of my voice like some mechanism which responds to every touch, not reflecting that the abuse of this effort would bring me too near to song. Precipitation in delivery, too, which when carried too far destroys all distinctness and incisiveness, was due to my very high impressionability, and to the straining after technical scenic effects. Thus, extreme vehemence in anger would excite me to the point of forgetting the fiction, and cause me to commit involuntarily lamentable outbursts. Hence I applied myself to overcome the tendency to singsong in my voice, the exuberance of my rendering of passion, the exclamatory quality of my phrasing, the precipitation of my pronunciation, and the swagger of my motions.

I shall be asked how the public could abide me, with all these defects; and I answer that the defects, though numerous, were so little prominent that they passed unobserved by the mass of the public, which always views broadly and could be detected only by the acute and searching eye of the intelligent critic. I make no pretence that I was able to correct myself all at once. Sometimes my impetuosity would carry me away, and not until I

had come to mature age was I able to free myself to any extent from this failing. Then I confirmed myself in my opinion that the applause of the public is not all refined gold, and I became able to separate the gold from the dross in the crucible of intelligence. How many on the stage are content with the dross!

THE DESIRE TO EXCEL IN EVERYTHING

My desire to improve in my art had its origin in my instinctive impulse to rise above mediocrity—an instinct that must have been born in me, since, when still a little boy, I used to put forth all my energies to eclipse what I saw accomplished by my companions of like age. When I was sixteen, and at Naples, there were in the boarding-house, at two francs and a half a day, two young men who were studying music and singing, and to surpass them in their own field I practised the scales until I could take B natural. Later on, when the tone of my voice had lowered to the barytone, impelled always by my desire to accomplish something, I took lessons in music from the Maestro Terziani, and appeared at a benefit with the famous tenor Boucarde, and Signora Monti, the soprano, and sang in a duet from "Belisaria," the aria from "Maria di Rohan," and "La Settimana d'Amore," by Niccolai; and I venture to say that I was not third best in that triad. But I recognised that singing

and declamation were incompatible pursuits, since the method of producing the voice is totally different, and they must therefore be mutually harmful. Financially, I was not in a condition to be free to choose between the two careers, and I persevered of necessity in the dramatic profession. Whether my choice was for the best I do not know; it is certain that if my success had been in proportion to my love of music, and I have reason to believe that it might have been, I should not have remained in obscurity.

A MODEL FOR OTHELLO

[In 1871, Salvini organised a company for a tour in South America, On his way thither he paused at Gibraltar, and gainfully.]

At Gibraltar I spent my time studying the Moors. I was much struck by one very fine figure, majestic in walk, and Roman in face, except for a slight projection of the lower lip. The man's colour was between copper and coffee, not very dark, and he had a slender moustache, and scanty curled hair on his chin. Up to that time I had always made up Othello simply with my moustache, but after seeing that superb Moor I added the hair on the chin, and sought to copy his gestures, movements, and carriage. Had I been able I should have imitated his voice also, so closely did that splendid Moor represent to me the true type of the Shakespearian hero. Othello must have been a son of Mauritania, if we can argue from

Iago's words to Roderigo: "He goes into Mauritania"; for what else could the author have intended to imply but that the Moor was returning to his native land?

FIRST TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES

After a few months of rest [after the South American tour], I resolved to get together a new company, selecting those actors and actresses who were best suited to my repertory. The excellent Isolina Piamonti was my leading lady; and my brother Alessandro, an experienced, conscientious, and versatile artist, supported me. An Italian theatrical speculator proposed to me a tour in North America, to include the chief cities of the United States, and although I hesitated not a little on account of the ignorance of the Italian language prevailing in that country, I accepted, influenced somewhat by my desire to visit a region which was wholly unknown to me. Previous to crossing the ocean I had several months before me, and these served me to get my company in training.

My first impressions of New York were most favourable. Whether it was the benefit of a more vivifying atmosphere, or the comfort of the national life, or whether it was admiration for that busy, industrious, work-loving people, or the thousands of beautiful women whom I saw in the streets, free and proud in

carriage, and healthy and lively in aspect, or whether it was the thought that these citizens were the great-grandchildren of those high-souled men who had known how to win with their blood the independence of their country, I felt as if I had been born again to a new existence. My lungs swelled more freely as I breathed the air impregnated with so much vigour and movement, and so much liberty, and I could fancy that I had come back to my life of a youth of twenty, and was treading the streets of republican Rome. With a long breath of satisfaction I said to myself: "Ah, here is life!" Within a few days my energy was redoubled. A lively desire of movement, not a usual thing with me, had taken possession of me in spite of myself. Without asking myself why, I kept going here and there, up and down, to see everything, to gain information; and when I returned to my rooms in the evening, I could have set out again to walk still more. This taught me why Americans are so unwearied and full of business. Unfortunately I have never mastered English sufficiently to converse in that tongue; had I possessed that privilege, perhaps my stay in North America would not have been so short, and perhaps I might have figured on the English stage. What an enjoyment it would have been to me to play Shakespeare in English! But I have never had the privilege of the gift of tongues, and I had to content myself with my own Italian, which is understood by but few in America. This, however, mattered little; they understood me all the same, or, to put it bet-

ter, they caught by intuition my ideas and my sentiments.

My first appearance was in "Othello." The public received a strong impression, without discussing whether or not the means which I used to cause it were acceptable, and without forming a clear conception of my interpretation of that character, or pronouncing openly upon its form. The same people who had heard it the first night returned on the second, on the third, and even on the fourth, to make up their minds whether the emotions they experienced resulted from the novelty of my interpretation, or whether in fact it was the true sentiment of Othello's passions which was transmitted to them—in short, whether it was a mystification or a revelation. By degrees the public became convinced that those excesses of jealousy and fury were appropriate to the son of the desert, and that one of Southern blood must be much better qualified to interpret them than a Northerner. The judgment was discussed, criticised, disputed; but in the end the verdict was overwhelmingly in my favour. When the American has once said "Yes," he never weakens; he will always preserve for you the same esteem, sympathy, and affection. After New York I travelled through a number of American cities—Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Washington, and Boston, which is rightly styled the Athens of America, for there artistic taste is most refined. In Boston I had the good fortune to become intimately acquainted with the illustrious poet, Longfel-

low, who talked to me in the pure Tuscan. I saw, too, other smaller cities, and then I appeared again in New York, where the favour of the public was confirmed, not only for me, but also for the artists of my company, and especially for Isolina Piamonti, who received no uncertain marks of esteem and consideration. We then proceeded to Albany, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Toledo, and that pleasant city, Detroit, continuing to Chicago, and finally to New Orleans.

IN CUBA

From New Orleans we sailed to Havana, but found in Cuba civil war, and a people that had but small appetite for serious things, and was moreover alarmed by a light outbreak of yellow fever. One of my company was taken down with the disease, but I had the pleasure of seeing him recover, Luckily he had himself treated by Havanese physicians, who are accustomed to combat that malady, which they know only too well. Perhaps my comrade would have lost his life under the ministrations of an Italian doctor. In the city of sugar and tobacco, too, it was "Othello" which carried off the palm. Those good manufacturers of cigars presented me on my benefit with boxes of their wares, which were made expressly for me, and which I dispatched to Italy for the enjoyment of my friends. In spite of the many civilities which were tendered to me, in spite of considerable money profit, and

of the ovations of its kind-hearted people, I did not find Cuba to my taste. Sloth and luxury reign there supreme.

APPEARANCE IN LONDON

In Paris I found a letter from the Impresario Mapleson, who proposed that I should go to London with an Italian company, and play at Drury Lane on the off-nights of the opera. I was in doubt for a considerable time whether to challenge the verdict of the British public; but in two weeks after reaching Italy, by dint of telegrams I had got together the force of artists necessary, and I presented myself with arms and baggage in London, in the spring of 1875.

Hardly had I arrived, when I noticed the posting, on the bill-boards of the city, of the announcement of the seventy-second night of "Hamlet" at the Lyceum Theatre, with Henry Irving in the title-rôle. I had contracted with Mapleson to give only three plays in my season, "Othello," "The Gladiator," and "Hamlet," the last having been insisted upon by Mapleson himself, who, as a speculator, well knew that curiosity as to a Comparison would draw the public to Drury Lane.

IMPRESSIONS OF IRVING'S "HAMLET"

I was very anxious to see the illustrious English artist in that part, and I secured a box and went to the Lyceum. I was recognised by nobody, and remaining as it were concealed in my box, I had a good opportunity to satisfy my curiosity. I arrived at the theatre a little too late, so that I missed the scene of Hamlet in presence of the ghost of his father, the scene which in my judgment contains the clue to that strange character, and from which all the synthetic ideas of Hamlet are developed. I was in time to hear only the last words of the oath of secrecy. I was struck by the perfection of the stage-setting. There was a perfect imitation of the effect of moonlight, which at the proper times flooded the stage with its rays or left it in darkness. Every detail was excellently and exactly reproduced. The scene was shifted, and Hamlet began his allusions, his sallies of sarcasm, his sententious sayings, his points of satire with the courtiers, who sought to study and to penetrate the sentiments of the young prince. In this scene Irving was simply sublime. His mobile face mirrored his thoughts. The subtle penetration of his phrases, so perfect in shading and incisiveness, showed him to be a master of art. I do not believe there is an actor who can stand beside him in this respect, and I was so much impressed by it, that at the end of the second act I said to myself, "I will not

play Hamlet! Mapleson can say what he likes, but I will not play it"; and I said it with the fullest resolution. In the monologue, "To be or not to be," Irving was admirable; in the scene with Ophelia he was deserving of the highest praise; in that of the Players he was moving, and in all this part of the play he appeared to my eyes to be the most perfect interpreter of that eccentric character. But further on it was not so, and for the sake of art I regretted it. From the time when the passion assumes a deeper hue, and reasoning moderates impulses which are forcibly curbed, Irving seemed to me to show mannerism, and to be lacking in power, and strained, and it is not in him alone that I find this fault, but in nearly all foreign actors. There seems to be a limit of passion within which they remain true in their rendering of nature; but beyond that limit they become transformed, and take on conventionality in their intonations, exaggeration in their gestures, and mannerism in their bearing. I left my box saying to myself: "I too can do Hamlet, and I will try it!" In some characters Irving is exceptionally fine. I am convinced that it would be difficult to interpret Shylock or Mephistopheles better than he. He is most skilful in putting his productions on the stage; and in addition to his intelligence he does not lack the power to communicate his counsels or his teachings. Withal he is an accomplished gentleman in society, and is loved and respected by his fellow-citizens, who justly look upon him as a glory to their country. He should, however, for his own sake,

avoid playing such pants as Romeo and Macbeth, which are not adapted to his somewhat scanty physical and vocal power.

THE DECLINE OF TRAGEDY

The traditions of the English drama are imposing and glorious! Shakespeare alone has gained the highest pinnacle of fame in dramatic art. He has had to interpret him such great artists as Garrick, Kemble, Kean, Macready, Siddons, and Irving; and the literary and dramatic critics of the whole world have studied and analysed both author and actor. At present, however, tragedy is abandoned on almost all the stages of Europe. Actors who devote themselves to tragedy, whether classical romantic, or historical, no longer exist. Society-comedy has overflowed the stage, and the inundation causes the seed to rot which more conscientious and prudent planters had sown in the fields of art. It is desirable that the feeling and taste for the works of the great dramatists should be revived in Europe, and that England, which is for special reasons, and with justice, proud of enjoying the primacy in dramatic composition, should have also worthy and famous actors. I do not understand why the renown and prestige of the great name of Garrick do not attract modern actors to follow in his footsteps. Do not tell me that the works of Shakespeare are out of

fashion, and that the public no longer wants them. Shakespeare is always new—so new that not even yet is he understood by everybody, and if, as they say, the public is no longer attracted by his plays, it is because they are superficially presented. To win the approval of the audience, a dazzling and conspicuous *mise-en-scene* does not suffice, as some seem to imagine, to make up deficiency in interpretation; a more profound study of the characters represented is indispensable. If in art you can join the beautiful and the good, so much the better for you; but if you give the public the alternative, it will always prefer the good to the beautiful.

TRAGEDY IN TWO LANGUAGES

In 1880 the agent of an impresario and theatre-owner of Boston came to Florence to make me the proposal that I should go to North America for the second time, to play in Italian supported by an American company. I thought the man had lost his senses. But after a time I became convinced that he was in his right mind, and that no one would undertake a long and costly journey simply to play a joke, and I took his extraordinary proposition into serious consideration and asked him for explanations.

"The idea is this," the agent made answer; "it is very simple. You found favour

the last time with the American public with your Italian company, when not a word that was said was understood, and the proprietor of the Globe Theatre of Boston thinks that if he puts with you English-speaking actors, you will yourself be better understood, since all the dialogues of your supporters will be plain. The audience will concern itself only with following you with the aid of the play-books in both languages, and will not have to pay attention to the others, whose words it will understand."

"But how shall I take my cue, since I do not understand English? And how will your American actors know when to speak, since they do not know Italian?"

"Have no anxiety about that," said the agent. "Our American actors are mathematicians, and can memorise perfectly the last words of your speeches, and they will work with the precision of machines."

"I am ready to admit that," said I, "although I do not think it will be so easy; but it will in any case be much easier for them, who will have to deal with me alone, and will divide the difficulty among twenty or twenty-four, than for me, who must take care of all."

The persevering agent, however, closed my mouth with the words, "You do not sign yourself 'Salvini' for nothing!" He had an answer for everything, he was prepared to convince me at all points, to persuade me about everything, and to smooth over every difficulty, and he won a consent which, though almost involuntary on my part, was legalised by a contract

in due form, by which I undertook to be at New York not later than November 5, 1880, and to be ready to open at Philadelphia with "Othello" on the 29th of the same month.

I was still dominated by my bereavement, and the thought was pleasant to me of going away from places which constantly brought it back to my mind. Another sky, other customs, another language, grave responsibilities, a novel and difficult undertaking of uncertain outcome—I was willing to risk all simply to distract my attention and to forget. I have never in my life been a gambler, but that time I staked my artistic reputation upon a single card. Failure would have been a new emotion, severe and grievous, it is true, but still different from that which filled my mind. I played, and I won! The friends whom I had made in the United States in 1873, and with whom I had kept up my acquaintance, when they learned of the confusion of tongues, wrote me discouraging letters. In Italy the thing was not believed, so eccentric did it seem. I arrived in New York nervous and feverish, but not discouraged or depressed.

When the day of the first rehearsal came, all the theatres were occupied, and I had to make the best of a rather large concert-hall to try to get into touch with the actors who were to support me. An Italian who was employed in a newspaper office served me as interpreter in cooperation with the agent of my Boston impresario. The American artists began the rehearsal without a prompter, and with a sureness to be envied especially by our

Italian actors, who usually must have every word suggested to them. My turn came, and the few words which Othello pronounces in the first scene came in smoothly and without difficulty. When the scene with the Council of Ten came, of a sudden I could not recall the first line of a paragraph, and I hesitated; I began a line, but it was not that; I tried another with no better success; a third, but the interpreter told me that I had gone wrong. We began again, but the English was of no assistance to me in recognising which of my speeches corresponded to that addressed to me, which I did not understand. I was all at sea, and I told the interpreter to beg the actors to overlook my momentary confusion, and to say to them that I should be all right in five minutes. I went off to a corner of the hall and bowed my head between my hands, saying to myself, "I have come for this, and I must carry it through." I set out to number mentally all the paragraphs of my part, and in a short time I said. "Let us begin again."

During the remainder of the rehearsal one might have thought that I understood English, and that the American actors understood Italian, No further mistake was made by either side; there was not even the smallest hesitation, and when I finished the final scene of the third act between Othello and Iago, the actors applauded, filled with joy and pleasure. The exactitude with which the subsequent rehearsals of "Othello," and those of "Hamlet," proceeded was due to the memory, the application, and the scrupulous attention to their

work of the American actors, as well as to my own force of will and practical acquaintance with all the parts of the play, and to the natural intuition which helped me to know without understanding what was addressed to me, divining it from a motion, a look, or a light inflection of the voice. Gradually a few words, a few short phrases, remained in my ear, and in course of time I came to understand perfectly every word of all the characters; I became so sure of myself that if an actor substituted one word for another I perceived it. I understood the words of Shakespeare, but not those of the spoken language.

In a few days we went to Philadelphia to begin our representations. My old acquaintances were in despair. To those who had sought to discourage me by their letters others on the spot joined their influence, and tried everything to overthrow my courage. I must admit that the nearer came the hour of the great experiment, the more my anxiety grew and inclined me to deplore the moment when I had put myself in that dilemma. I owe it in a great degree to my cool head that my discouraging forebodings did not unman me so much as to make me abandon myself wholly to despair. Just as I was going on the stage, I said to myself: "After all, what can happen to me? They will not murder me. I shall have tried, and I shall have failed; that is all there will be to it, I will pack up my baggage and go back to Italy, convinced that oil and wine will not mix. A certain contempt of danger, a firm resolution to succeed, and, I am bound to add,

considerable confidence in myself, enabled me to go before the public calm, bold, and secure.

The first scene before the palace of Brabantio was received with sepulchral silence. When that of the Council of Ten came, and the narration of the vicissitudes of Othello was ended, the public broke forth in prolonged applause. Then I said to myself, "A good beginning is half the work." At the close of the first act, my adversaries, who were such solely on account of their love of art, and their belief that the two languages could not be amalgamated, came on the stage to embrace and congratulate me, surprised, enchanted, enthusiastic, happy, that they had been mistaken, and throughout the play I was the object of constant demonstrations of sympathy.

AMERICAN CRITICAL TASTE

From Philadelphia we went to New York where our success was confirmed. It remained for me to win the suffrages of Boston, and I secured them, first having made stops in Brooklyn, New Haven, and Hartford. When in the American Athens I became convinced that that city possesses the most refined artistic taste. Its theatrical audiences are serious, attentive to details, analytical—I might almost say scientific—and one might fancy that such careful critics had never in their lives done anything but occupy themselves

with scenic art. With reference to a presentation of Shakespeare, they are profound, acute, subtle, and they know so well how to clothe some traditional principle in close logic, that if faith in the opposite is not quite unshakable in an artist, he must feel himself tempted to renounce his own tenets. It is surprising that in a land where industry and commerce seem to absorb all the intelligence of the people, there should be in every city and district, indeed in every village, people who are competent to discuss the arts with such high authority. The American nation counts only a century of freedom, yet it has produced a remarkable number of men of high competence in dramatic art. Those who think of tempting fortune by displaying their untried artistic gifts on the American stage, counting on the ignorance or inexperience of their audience, make a very unsafe calculation. The taste and critical faculty of that public are in their fulness of vigour. Old Europe is more bound by traditions, more weary, more blasé, in her judgment, not always sincere or disinterested. In America the national pride is warmly felt, and the national artists enjoy high honour. The Americans know how to offer an exquisite hospitality, but woe to the man who seeks to impose on them! They profess a cult, a veneration, for those who practise our art, whether of their own nation or foreign, and their behaviour in the theatre is dignified. I recall one night when upon invitation I went to see a new play in which appeared an actor of reputation. The play was not liked, and from

act to act I noticed that the house grew more and more scanty, like a faded rose which loses its petals one by one, until at the last scene my box was the only one which remained occupied. I was more impressed by this silent demonstration of hostility than I should have been if the audience had made a tumultuous expression of its disapproval. The actors were humiliated and confounded, and as the curtain fell an instinctive sentiment of compassion induced me to applaud.

IMPRESSIONS OF EDWIN BOOTH

The celebrated actor Edwin Booth was at this time in Baltimore, a city distant two hours from the capital. I had heard so much about this superior artist that I was anxious to see him, and on one of my off nights I went to Baltimore with my impresario's agent. A box had been reserved for me without my knowledge, and was draped with the Italian colours. I regretted to be made so conspicuous, but I could not fail to appreciate the courteous and complimentary desire to do me honour shown by the American artist. It was only natural that I should be most kindly influenced toward him, but without the courtesy which predisposed me in his favour he would equally have won my sympathy by his attractive and artistic lineaments, and his graceful and well-proportioned figure. The play was

"Hamlet." This part brought him great fame, and justly; for in addition to the high artistic worth with which he adorned it, his elegant personality was admirably adapted to it, His long and wavy hair, his large and expressive eye, his youthful and flexible movements, accorded perfectly with the ideal of the young prince of Denmark which now obtains everywhere. His splendid delivery, and the penetrating philosophy with which he informed his phrases, were his most remarkable qualities. I was so fortunate as to see him also as Richelieu and Iago, and in all three of these parts, so diverse in their character I found him absolutely admirable. I cannot say so much for his Macbeth, which I saw one night when passing through Philadelphia. The part seemed to me not adapted to his nature. Macbeth was an ambitious man, and Booth was not. Macbeth had barbarous and ferocious instincts, and Booth was agreeable, urbane, and courteous. Macbeth destroyed his enemies traitorously—did this even to gain possession of their goods—while Booth was noble, lofty-minded, and generous of his wealth. It is thus plain that however much art he might expend, his nature rebelled against his portrayal of that personage, and he could never hope to transform himself into the ambitious, venal, and sanguinary Scottish king.

I should say, from what I heard in America, that Edwin Forrest was the Modena of America. The memory of that actor still lives, for no one has possessed equally the power to give expression to the passions, and to fruitful and

burning imagery, in addition to which he possessed astonishing power of voice. Almost contemporaneously a number of most estimable actors have laid claim to his mantle; but above them all Edwin Booth soared as an eagle.

After a very satisfactory experience in Baltimore, I returned for the third time to New York, and gave "Othello," "Macbeth," and "The Gladiator," each play twice, and made the last two appearances of my season in Philadelphia. After playing ninety-five times in the new fashion, I felt myself worn out, but fully satisfied with the result of my venturesome undertaking. When I embarked on the steamer which was to take me to Europe, I was escorted by all the artists of the company which had cooperated in my happy success, by my friends, and by courteous admirers, and I felt that if I were not an Italian I should wish to be an American.

ADELAIDE RISTORI

[George Henry Lewes, in his book on "Actors and the Art of Acting," published by Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1878, says:

> "I must repeat the expression of my admiration for Ristori as a distinguished actress; if not of the highest rank, she is very high, in virtue of her personal gifts, and the trained skill with which these gifts are applied. The question naturally arises, why is her success so great in certain plays and so dubious in others? It is of little use to say that Lady Macbeth and Adrienne Lecouvreur are beyond her powers; that is only restating the fact. Can we not trace both success and failure to one source? In what is called the ideal drama, constructed after the Greek type, she would be generally successful, because the simplicity of its motives and the artificiality of its structure, removing it from beyond the region of ordinary experience, demand from the actor a corresponding artifi-

> ciality. Attitudes, draperies, gestures, tones, and elocution which would be incongruous in a drama approaching more closely to the evolutions of ordinary experience, become, in the ideal drama, artistic modes of expression; and it is in these that Ristori displays a fine selective instinct, and a rare felicity of organisation."

"Memoirs and Artistic Studies of Adelaide Ristori," rendered into English by G. Mantellini, with a biographical appendix by L. D. Ventura, was published and copyrighted by Doubleday, Page & Co., New York, 1907. The chapters of that volume afford the pages which follow. The Artistic Studies comprise detailed histrionic interpretations of the chief rôles of Ristori: Mary Stuart, Queen Elizabeth, Lady Macbeth, Medea, Myrrha and Phedra.—*Ed*.]

FIRST APPEARANCES

When twelve years old, I was booked with the famous actor and manager, Giuseppe Moncalvo, for the rôles of a child. Soon after, owing to my slender figure, they made me up as a little woman, giving me small parts as maid. But they soon made up their minds that I was not fitted for such parts. Having reached the age of thirteen and developed in my figure, I was assigned several parts as second lady. In those days they could not be too particular in small companies. At the age of fourteen, I had to recite the first part among the young

girls and that of the leading lady alternately, like an experienced actress. It was about this time, in the city of Novara (Piedmont) that I recited for the first time the "Francesca da Rimini" of Silvio Pellico. Though I was only fifteen my success was such that soon afterward they offered me the parts of leading lady with encouragement of advancement.

My good father, who was gifted with a great deal of sense, did not allow his head to be turned by such offers. Reflecting that my health might suffer from being thrown so early into the difficulties of stage life he refused these offers and accepted a more modest place, as *ingénue*, in the Royal Company, under the auspices of the King of Sardinia and stationed during several months of the year at Turin. It was managed by the leading man, the most intelligent and capable among the stage managers of the time. The advice of this cultured, though severe man, rendered his management noteworthy and sought after as essential to the making of a good actor.

Among the members of the company shone the foremost beacon-lights of Italian art, such as Vestri, Madame Marchionni, Romagnoli, Righetti, and many others who were quoted as examples of dramatic art, as well as Pasta, Malibran, Rubini, and Tamburini in the lyric art,

My engagement for the part of *ingénue* was to have lasted three years, but, after the year, I was promoted to the parts of the first lady, and in the third year, to the absolute leading lady.

To such unhoped-for and flattering results I was able to attain, by ascending step by step through the encouragement and admonition of my excellent teacher, Madame Carlotta Marchionni, a distinguished actress, and the interest of Gaetano Bazzi who also had great affection for me. It was really then that my artistic education began. It was then that I acquired the knowledge and the rules which placed me in a position to discern the characteristics of a true artist. I learned to distinguish and to delineate the comic and the dramatic passions. My temperament caused me to incline greatly toward the tender and the gentle.

However, in the tragic parts, my vigour increased. I learned to portray transitions for the sake of fusing the different contrasts; a capital but difficult study of detail, tedious at times, but of the greatest importance. The lamentations in a part where two extreme and opposing passions are at play, are like those which in painting are called "chiaro-oscuro," a blending of the tones, which thus portrays truth devoid of artifice.

In order to succeed in this intent, it is necessary to take as model the great culture of art, and also to be gifted with a well-tempered and artistic nature. And these are not to be confined to sterile imitation, but are for the purpose of accumulating the rich material of dramatic erudition, so that one may present oneself before the audiences as an original and artistic individuality.

Some people think that distinction of birth

and a perfect education will render them capable of appearing upon the stage with the same facility and nonchalance with which one enters a ball-room, and they are not at all timid about walking upon the boards, presuming that they can do it as well as an actor who has been raised upon them. A great error!

One of the greatest difficulties that they meet is in not knowing how to walk upon a stage, which, owing to the slight inclination in construction, easily causes the feet to totter, particularly if one is a beginner, and especially at the entrances and exits. I myself encountered this difficulty. Though I had dedicated myself to the art from my infancy and had been instructed with the greatest care every day of my life by my grandmother, at the age of fifteen my movements had not yet acquired all the ease and naturalness necessary to make me feel at home upon the stage, and certain sudden turns always frightened me.

When I began my artistic apprenticeship, the use of diction was given great importance, as a means of judging an actor. At that time the audience was critical and severe.

In our days, the same audience has become less exacting, less critical, and does not aim to improve the artist, by counting his defects. According to my opinion, the old system was best, as it is not in excessive indulgence and solely by considering the good qualities, without correcting the bad ones, that real artists are made.

It is also my conviction that a person who wishes to dedicate himself to the stage should

not begin his career with parts of great importance, either comic, dramatic, or tragic. The interpretation becomes too difficult for a beginner and may harm his future career: first, the discouragement over the difficulties that he meets; secondly, an excessive vanity caused by the appreciation with which the public apparently honours him. Both these sentiments will lead the actor, in a short time, to neglect his study. On the other hand, by taking several parts, he becomes familiar with the means of rendering his part natural, thus convincing himself that by representing correctly characters of little importance, he will be given more important ones later on. Thus it will come about that his study will be more careful.

SALVINI AND ROSSI

One of the greatest of the living examples of the school of realism is my illustrious fellow artist, Signor Tommaso Salvini, with whom, for a number of years, I had the fortune to share the fatigues and the honours of the profession which I also shared with Ernesto Rossi. The former was and is still admired. His rare dramatic merits have nothing of the conventional, but owe their power to that spontaneity which is the most convincing revelation of art. The wealth of plasticity which Salvini possesses, is in him, a natural gift. Salvini is the true exponent of the Italian dramatic art

APPEARS AS LADY MACBETH

In the month of June, 1857, we began to rehearse "Macbeth," at Covent Garden, London, It had been arranged for our company by Mr. Clarke, and translated into most beautiful Italian verse by Giulio Carcano. The renowned Mr. Harris put it on the stage according to English traditions. The representation of the part of Lady Macbeth, which afterward became one of my favourite rôles, preoccupied me greatly, as I knew only too well what kind of comparisons would be made. The remembrance of the marvellous creation of that character as given by the famous Mrs. Siddons and the traditional criticisms of the press, might have rendered the public very severe and difficult to please.

I used all my ability of interpretation to reveal and transmit the most minute intentions of the author. To the English audience it seemed that I had really incarnated that perfidious but great character of Lady Macbeth, in a way that surpassed all expectations.

We had to repeat the drama for several evenings, always producing a most profound impression upon the minds of the audience, particularly in the grand sleep-walking scene. So thoroughly had I entered into the nature of Lady Macbeth, that during the entire scene my pupils were motionless in their orbit, causing me to shed tears. To this enforced immobility of the eye I owe the weakening of my

eyesight. From the analytical study which I shall give of this diabolical character [at the close of her Memoirs] the reader can form for himself an idea of how much its interpretation cost me (particularly in the final culminating scene), in my endeavour to get the right intonation of the voice and the true expression of the physiognomy.

AS MANAGER

My exceptionally good health never abandoned me through my long and tiresome journeys, though unfortunately I never was able to accustom myself to voyaging by sea. All through those rapid changes I acquired a marvellous store of endurance. That sort of life infused in me sufficient energy to lead me through every kind of hardship with the resolution and authority of a commanding general. All obeyed me. None questioned my authority owing to my absolute impartiality, being always ready, as I was, either to blame or correct him who did not fulfil his obligations, also to praise without any distinction of class those who deserved it. I almost always met with courtesy among the actors under my direction, and if any one of them dared to trouble our harmony, he was instantly put to his proper place by the firmness of my discipline.

The artistic management of the plays was left to me in all its details. Every order and every disposition came from me directly. I looked after all matters large and small,

the things that every actor understands contribute to making the success of a play.

Concerning my own personal interests, they were in charge of a private manager.

I am proud to say that my husband was the soul of all my undertakings. As I speak of him, my heart impels me to say that he ever exercised upon me and my professional career the kindest and most benevolent influence. It was he who upheld my courage, whenever I hesitated before some difficulty; it was he who foretold the glory I should acquire, he who pointed out to me the goal, and anticipated everything in order that I should secure it. Without his assistance I never should have been able to put into effect the daring attempt of carrying the flag of Italian dramatic art all over the globe.

FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA

During the month of September, 1866, for the first time in my life, I crossed the ocean on my way to the United States, where I remained until May 17th of the following year. It was in the elegant Lyceum Theatre of New York that I made my début, on the 20th of September, with "Medea." I could not anticipate a more enthusiastic reception than the one I was honoured with. I felt anxious to make myself known in that new part of the world, and let the Americans hear me recite for the first time, in the soft and melodic Italian language. I knew that in spite of the

prevailing characteristics of the inhabitants of the free country of George Washington, always busy as they are in their feverish pursuit of wealth, that the love for the beautiful and admiration for dramatic art were not neglected. During my first season in New York I met with an increasing success, and formed such friendly relations with many distinguished and cultured people that time and distance have never caused me to forget them. While writing these lines I send an affectionate salutation to all those who in America still honour me with their remembrance.

BEGINS TO PLAY IN ENGLISH

I made my fourth trip to London in 1873. Not having any new drama to present and being tired of repeating the same productions, I felt the necessity of reanimating my mind with some strong emotion, of discovering something, in a word, the execution of which had never been attempted by others.

At last I believed I had found something to satisfy my desire. The admiration I had for the Shakespearean dramas, and particularly for the character of Lady Macbeth, inspired me with the idea of playing in English the sleeping scene from "Macbeth," which I think is the greatest conception of the Titanic poet. I was also induced to make this bold attempt, partly as a tribute of gratitude to the English

audiences of the great metropolis, who had shown me so much deference. But how was I going to succeed?... I took advice from a good friend of mine, Mrs. Ward, the mother of the renowned actress Genevieve Ward. She not only encouraged my idea, but offered her services in helping me to learn how to recite that scene in English.

I still had some remembrance of my study of English when I was a girl, and there is no language more difficult to pronounce and enunciate correctly, for an Italian. I was frightened only to think of that, still I drew sufficient courage even from its difficulties to grapple with my task. After a fortnight of constant study, I found myself ready to make an attempt at my recitation. However, not wishing to compromise my reputation by risking a failure, I acted very cautiously.

I invited to my house the most competent among the dramatic critics of the London papers, without forewarning them of the object and asked them kindly to hear me and express frankly their opinion, assuring them that if it should not be a favourable one, I would not feel badly over it.

I then recited the scene in English, and my judges seemed to be very much pleased. They corrected my pronunciation of two words only, and encouraged me to announce publicly my bold project. The evening of the performance, at the approach of that important scene, I was trembling!... The enthusiastic reception granted me by the audience awakened in me all vigour, and the happy success of

my effort compensated me a thousandfold for all the anxieties I had gone through. This success still increased my ambitious aspirations, and I wished to try myself in even a greater task.

I aimed at no less a project than the impersonation of the entire rôle of Lady Macbeth in English, but such an arduous undertaking seemed so bold to me that I finally gave up the idea and drove away from my mind forever the temptation to try it.

THE ACTOR

VALEDICTORY STANZAS TO J. P. KEMBLE, JUNE, 1817, BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

His was the spell o'er hearts
  Which only Acting lends—
The youngest of the sister arts,
  Which all their beauty blends:
For ill can Poetry express
  Full many a tone of thought sublime,
And Painting, mute and motionless,
  Steals but a glance of time,
But by the mighty actor brought,
  Illusion's perfect triumphs come—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
  And Sculpture to be dumb.