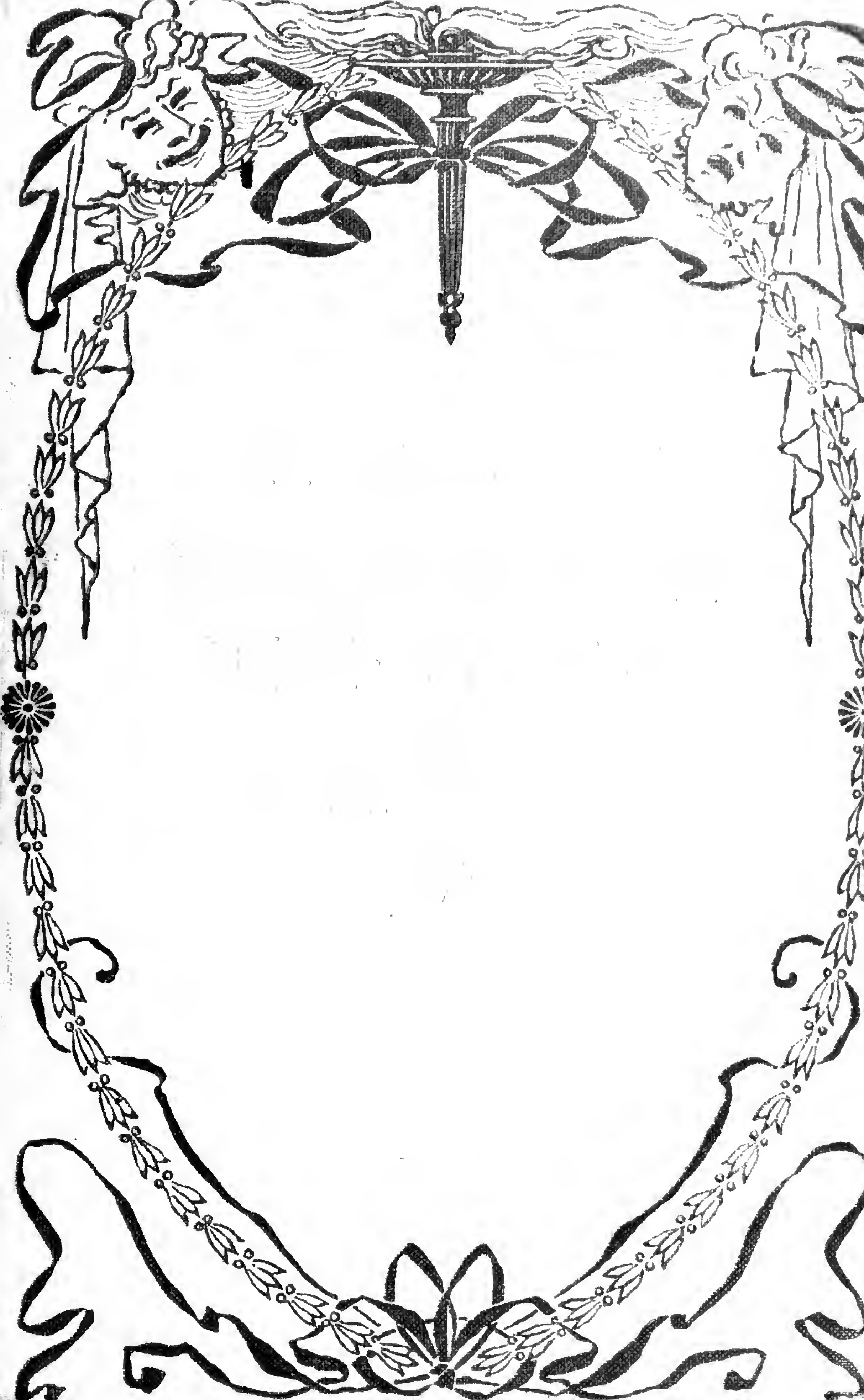

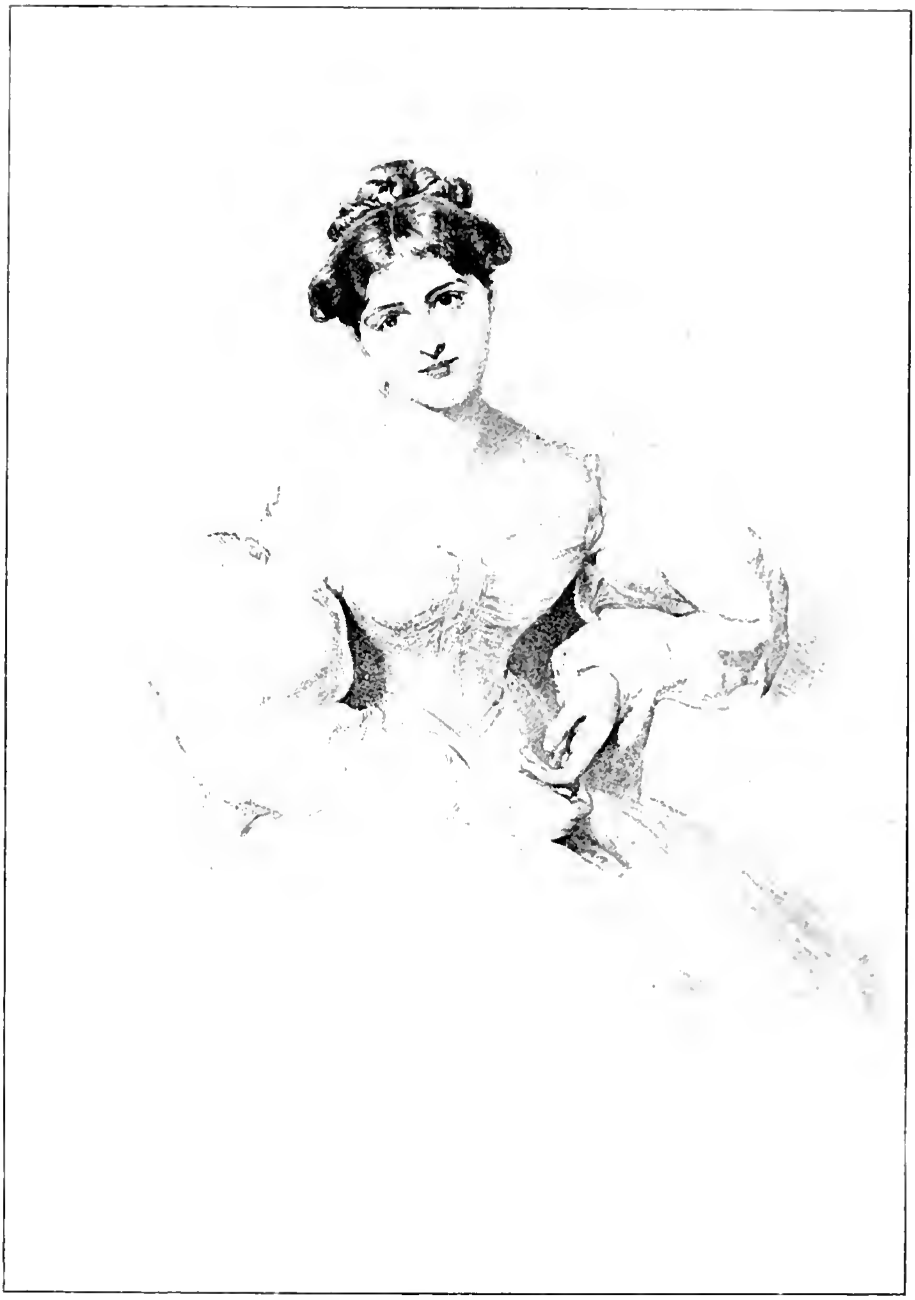

FANNY KEMBLE (MRS BUTLER).
Painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, R.A. (His Last Work).

SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES

ON THE STAGE

BY

CHARLES E. L. WINGATE

AUTHOR OF AN IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBILITY, CAN SUCH THINGS BE?
THE PLAY-GOERS YEAR BOOK, ETC.

WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS
From Photographs and Rare Prints

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PREFACE.

In so far as it is a literary sin to attempt the writing of any bit of history in a brief and anecdotical vein, I cry *Peccavi.* But what would you? To obtain simply the foundation for this book required patience-trying researches among dust-covered shelves where rested antique play-bills and moth-eaten records. To produce the much desired, but as yet unexisting, "Complete History of Shakespeare on the Stage," would necessitate the patience of Job and the age of Methuselah. I have not the one, nor can I reasonably expect the other. And even if I had both gifts, I should not ask my friends, the gentle readers, to emulate the man of sorrows in mentally struggling through such a ponderous work. For their sakes I have made this book as short as I could; I hope none will wish it were shorter.

In the present volume the "heroines" hold the centre of the stage — to speak in their own language; but within the descriptions, criticisms, and anecdotes regarding their lives and their impersonations, will be found sufficient historical record, it is hoped, to serve as a portion of the one missing book in Shakespearian lore. And if, in their mind's eye, admirers of the plays in the library, and admirers of the players on the stage, cannot, through this medium, see the impersonators and impersonations which delighted their fathers, and their fathers' fathers before them, while they also catch a glimpse of the Shakespearian acting of to-day, then I have failed to give pleasure to more than one person in the world — myself; for to me the work was a pleasure. My good helpmate, the proof-reader, whispers in my ear, that he, too, has read the work thoroughly; but simply the fact that he has endured the book does not prove that it will be enduring. "Time is the old justice that examines all such offenders."

Under any circumstances the pictures must prove attractive. Most of them are copies of rare and interesting prints, a large number of which were kindly loaned, for reproduction, by Mr. John Bouvé Clapp of Boston. Three of the chapters, I must add (Hermione, Cleopatra, and Imogen), have been enlarged from articles written originally by me for the *Cosmopolitan*, and are now reprinted, with their illustrations, by the permission of the editor of that magazine.

C. E. L. W.

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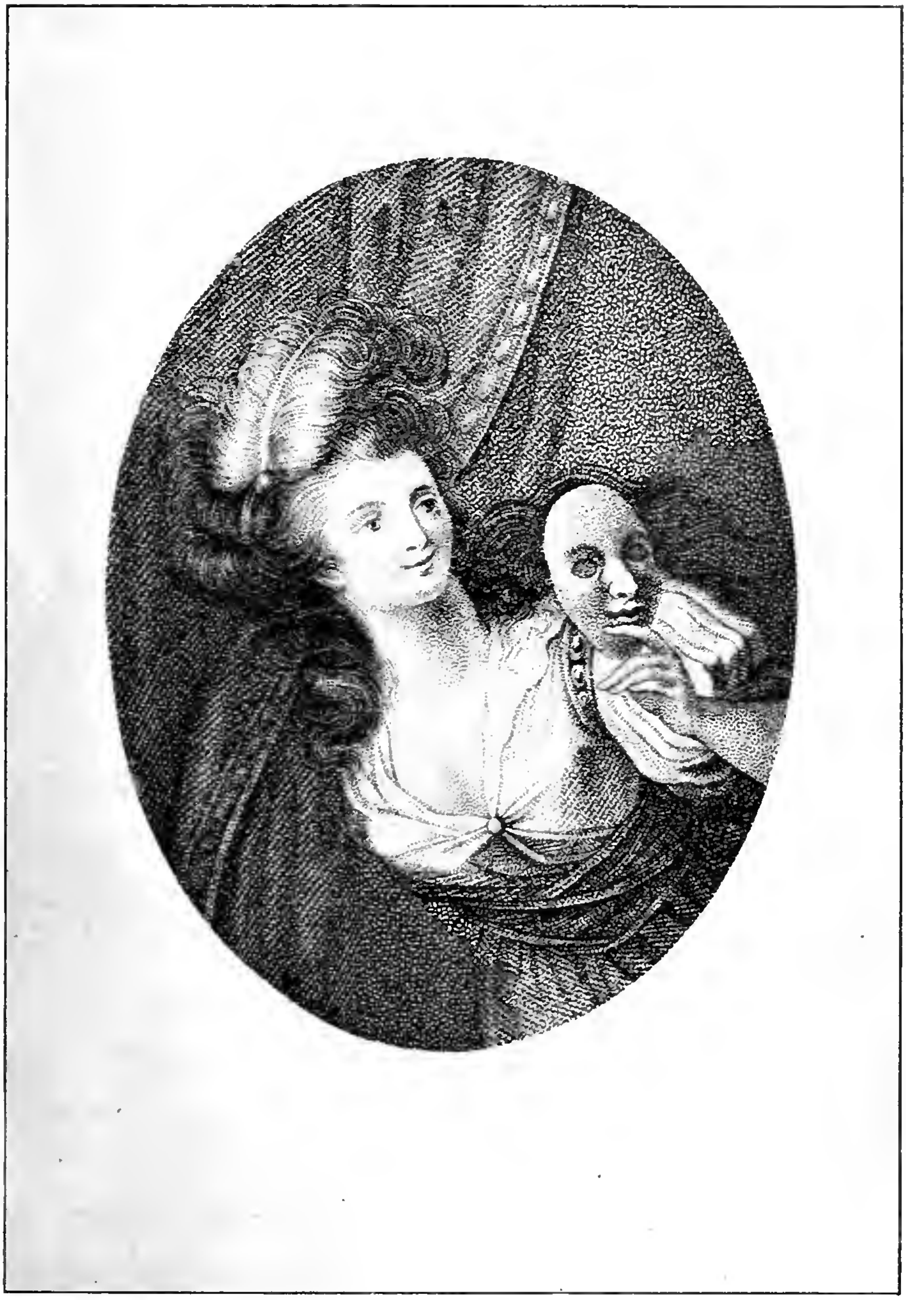
JULIET.

(ROMEO AND JULIET.)

WHEN the beautiful siren, Mrs. Bellamy, played Juliet to the passionate Garrick, and the unsurpassable Mrs. Cibber acted the Capulet to the silver-tongued Barry, then the theatre saw such a contest for fame as it never saw before. London was in a fever of excitement at the declared rivalry of the great kings and queens of the drama; and at each house the play ran for the then unprecedented period of twelve nights — Garrick adding a thirteenth performance so as to have the last word.

Spranger Barry had grown weary of Garrick's jealousy. Little Davy, not content with the profits as manager and part-proprietor of Drury Lane, together with his seven hundred pounds a year as an actor, could not brook the applause showering down upon the handsome, captivating Barry; and, if we may believe the latter, drove his rival to the other theatre, Covent Garden, to associate there with Quin, who was rejoicing in a salary of a thousand pounds for the season, up to that time the largest sum ever paid to a player.

On the 28th of September, 1750, "Romeo and Juliet" was billed at both houses. An occasional prologue spoken by Barry maintained, in poor verse, that he and Mrs. Cibber had been driven from Drury Lane by Garrick's selfishness and arrogance — to which Garrick on his stage replied in an epilogue, more good natured than the attack of his rival, delivered by the saucy tongue of Kitty Clive. The statelier beauty and the strength of tragic action that marked Mrs. Cibber's Juliet contrasted with the loveliness and amorous rapture of Mrs. Bellamy, as did the tender, melting pleading of Barry with the impetuous love-making of Garrick; and the town knew not which to place above the other. They pointed out on the one side the effective acting of gallant Barry in the garden scenes of the second and fourth acts, and in the opening part of the tomb scene, and then turned to Garrick's strong acting with the friar and the apothecary; and finally, tired of the double-edged argument, and wondering when the lengthened rivalry would end, they recited in humorous glee the epigram that so well hit off the prolonged run of the play: —



MRS. BELLAMY.

"'Well, what's to-night?' says angry Ned,
As up from bed he rouses:
'Romeo again!' he shakes his head:
'A plague on both your houses!'"

One lady hearer told in a sentence her sensations at the play: "Had I been Juliet to Garrick's Romeo," she said, "so ardent and impassioned was he, I should have expected that he would have *come up* to me in the balcony: but had I been Juliet to Barry's Romeo, so tender, so eloquent, and so seductive was he, I should certainly have *gone down* to him!"

Old Macklin had his critical fling at them both. He told Garrick to his face that in his next lecture he intended to settle the claims of the Romeos, then agitating the town; and when Garrick anxiously inquired what he proposed to do, Barry's Mercutio replied, "I mean to show your different merits in the garden scene. Barry comes into it, sir, as a great lord, swaggering about his love, and talking so loud that, if we don't suppose the servants of the Capulet family almost dead with sleep, they must have come out and tossed him in a blanket. Well, sir, after having fixed my auditor's attention to this part, then I shall ask: But how does Garrick act this? Why, sir, sensible that the family are at enmity with him and his house, he comes creeping in upon his toes, whispering his love, and looking about him like a thief in the night."

And an old sailor in the gallery one night laconically set off the true reason of all this hot theatrical fight when, after Bellamy sighed, "O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?" the tar cried out, "Why? Because Barry plays the part at the other house, to be sure."

But Garrick, though he kept up the rivalry through the season, ultimately abandoned the character to handsome Barry. In his arrangement of the play, he caused Romeo to be in love with Juliet from the beginning (an innovation that held the stage thenceforth until Henry Irving's productions of 1882), and also made Juliet awake before Romeo's death.

As for the Juliets — what contrasting love scenes had been their fate in actual life! Only two years before the "Romeo and Juliet" controversy, Mrs. Bellamy had been carried off (perhaps not unwillingly) by a gentleman named Metham, who, during an intermission in the play, had requested her to come into the hall, only to bundle the fair actress away to his carriage without a moment's delay, leaving Quin to explain to the audience why the Lady

Fanciful of the evening could not finish the play. The same fickle dame had previously been abducted by an Earl, who carried her off, he said, for his friend, Lord Byron, and who received from her brother a severe chastisement after that young man had followed the abducting carriage (ignorant for a time that it contained his sister), in order to rescue the unknown female within. Before the entire audience she had slapped the face of a reckless officer who dared kiss her neck as she passed him at the wings, and, in return, had received the standing applause of all the notables, including Lord Chesterfield, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Again, by her vigorous denunciation of another gentlemanly ruffian who insulted a sister actress, this fair, blue-eyed actress had led to a scene of excitement in the house, resulting in the fellow throwing a missile at Manager Sheridan, and the latter cudgelling the scoundrel behind the scenes; a little episode to be followed the next night by a riot in the playhouse in which property was smashed, and Sheridan obliged to fly for his life, and the next day by the ducking of the mob's ringleaders at the hands of the college students, who felt somewhat annoyed at having their favorite amusement, the play-acting, thus interrupted. And then came the Metham interlude, then the execution of a formal contract with a wealthy army contractor who engaged to marry her within six or seven years or to forfeit fifty thousand pounds (and who fled from the altar, for the good and sufficient reason that he was already married), and then — the fall.

Neglectful of her profession, careless of her purse, she dropped to such privation that gladly she accepted the paltry six pounds a week offered by a pitying manager. Mossop sought to bring her once again to the front; but the disappointment, chagrin, and pity of the audience sufficed to make the night the last in her stage career.

"The roses were fled," said Tate Wilkenson, describing this reappearance of the once beautiful favorite; "the young, the lovely Bellamy was turned haggard, and her eyes that used to charm all hearts appeared sunk, large, hollow, and ghastly."

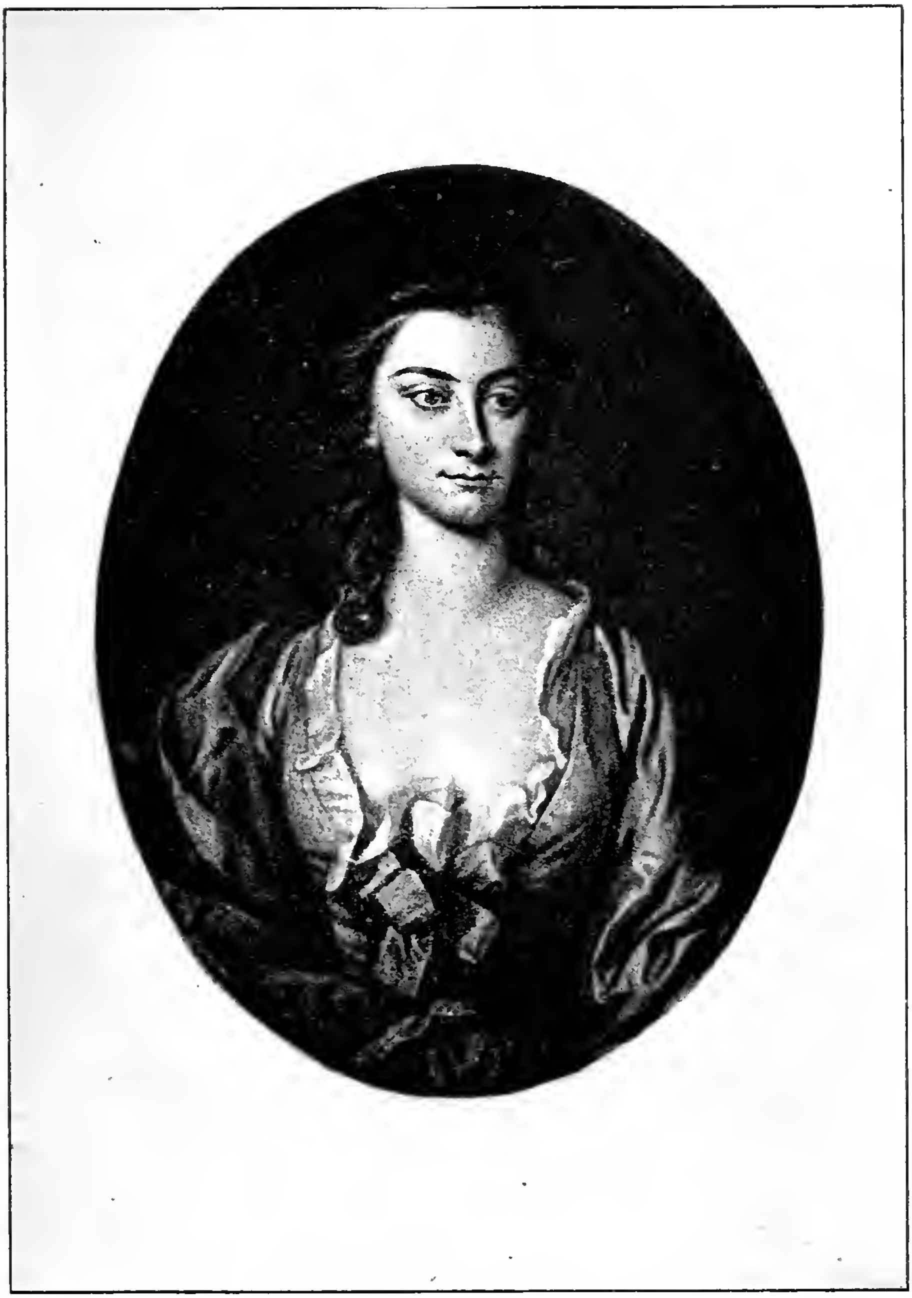
Yet Bellamy was then but twenty-nine years of age. Alas! the picture: "A little dirty creature, bent nearly double, enfeebled by fatigue, her countenance tinged with jaundice, and in every respect the reverse of a person who could make the least pretension to beauty" — this is her own description of herself in her memoirs. Constantly arrested for debt, selling all her diamonds and clothes, and borrowing all she could: deterred from casting herself into the Thames only by overhearing the sad plaints of a creature even more wretched than herself, at last, in 1788, at the age of fifty-seven, this illegitimate daughter of Lord Tyrawley, by the wife of Captain Bellamy, died.

Sad also is a portion of the story of the rival Juliet; but her afflictions came from marriage with a contemptible, vile scoundrel, Theophilus Cibber, the spendthrift son of famous, foppish Colley. A sweet-faced girl, delicate in form, and possessed of an attractive voice, Susannah Arne married this ruffian, only to have her salary squandered by her husband, and herself neglected, and even beguiled into another man's arms that he, the husband, might play the blackmailer. But the public sustained her through it all. As for her Juliet, an old critic said, "He who has seen Mrs. Cibber from the first suspicion of the draught not working as intended, rise to the terror of her waking before her time, finding herself encompassed with 'reeking shanks and yellow chapless skulls,' become distracted with the horror of the place, 'plucking the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,' till at length she shall 'with some great kinsman's bone madly dash out her desperate brains,' has seen all that is possible to be conveyed, this way, of terror, and has had an example of that gradation by which fire and spirit may be raised from the most slight step to the most exalted height."

Three years after this great contest of stage lovers, Mrs. Cibber returned to Drury Lane to play Juliet to Garrick's Romeo, and in her place at Covent Garden appeared Miss Nossiter. Here, then, were genuine Romeo and Juliet, for Barry loved Nossiter and by her was beloved. The delicate girl died, however, after a brief career, bequeathing to her Romeo three thousand pounds.

Another "realism" of the stage was the appearance of mother and daughter in the *rôles* of Lady Capulet and Juliet, when Miss Pritchard first appeared in the character of the sweet maiden, and Mrs. Pritchard, with maternal care, assisted in such loving anxiety as to move some of the audience to tears.

Richard Burbadge, it is held, was the Romeo when the great love tragedy was originally produced in Shakespeare's day, and Will Kempe the original First Grave-digger: but the first Juliet of whom we have definite word was Miss Saunderson, afterwards Mrs. Betterton, who played the part in 1662, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, to the Mercutio of her



MRS. CIBBER.

future husband, and to the Romeo of Joseph Harris, —a player, curiously enough, equally successful as Romeo, Cardinal Wolsey, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

It was only the year before this that actresses had appeared upon the English stage. Smooth-faced boys had interpreted the maids of the drama until the fashion of having women in the *rôles* was imported from France. On the 3d of January, 1661, Pepys, attending the "Beggar's Bush" at Killegrew's Theatre, notes that then was "the first time that ever I saw women come upon the stage."

On March 1, 1662, our good friend of diary fame saw "Romeo and Juliet," but he did not agree with his successors of the present century in regarding the tragedy as a great play. In fact, he declared, "It is a play of itself the worst that ever I heard, and the worst acted that ever I saw these people do." But then, perhaps Pepys had some cause for complaint, as the tragedy had been "improved" by Mr. James Howard so as to save the lives of both Romeo and Juliet, while the players rendered it tragically one day, and then tragi-comically the next day, and so on for several days.

Since the time of Miss Saunderson, Juliets without number have crowded the stage, and to-day no actress apparently thinks a better start can be made in the theatrical profession than by essaying this character. We will, therefore, glance only at those who from some especial reason have made their performances of interest.

There was the *début* of Mrs. Robinson, the Perdita whose romantic tale is told in the story of the Hermiones. The youthful wife of an imprisoned adventurer, this fascinating woman sought to earn a living by taking up the stage, and, having recited with good effect scenes from "Romeo and Juliet" before Garrick and Sheridan, was given the chance of making an appearance in that play. She was a notoriety even then in fashionable circles, and the house was crowded. 'T was thus she made her *début*, as narrated by herself: —

"The green room and orchestra (where Mr. Garrick sat during the night) were thronged with critics. When I approached the side wing my head throbbed convulsively: I then began to feel my resolution would fail, and I leaned upon the nurse's arm, almost fainting. Mr. Sheridan and several other friends encouraged me to proceed; and at length, with trembling limbs and fearful apprehension, I approached the audience. The thundering applause that greeted me nearly overpowered all my faculties; I stood mute and bending with alarm, which did not subside till I had feebly articulated the few sentences of the first short scene, during the whole of which I never once ventured to look at the audience. The second scene being the masquerade, I had time to collect myself; I never shall forget the sensation which rushed through my bosom when first I looked toward the pit. I beheld a gradual ascent of heads; all eyes were fixed upon me, and the sensation they conveyed was awfully impressive: but the keen and penetrating eyes of Mr. Garrick, darting their lustre from the centre of the orchestra, were beyond all others the objects most conspicuous. As I acquired courage I found the applause augment, and the night was concluded with peals of clamorous approbation. . . . The second character which I played was Amanda, in 'A Trip to Scarborough.' The play was based upon Vanbrugh's 'Relapse:' and the audience, supposing it was a new piece, on finding themselves deceived, expressed a considerable degree of disapprobation. I was terrified beyond imagination when Mrs. Yates, no longer able to bear the hissing of the audience, quitted the scene, and left me alone to encounter the critic-tempest. I stood for some moments as though I had been petrified: Mr. Sheridan from the side wing desired me not to quit the boards; the late Duke of Cumberland, from the side box, bade me to take courage; 'It is not you, but the play they hiss,' said his royal highness. I courtesied: and that courtesy seemed to electrify the whole house, for a thundering peal of encouraging applause followed — the comedy was suffered to go on, and is to this hour a stock play at Drury Lane Theatre."

Immediately Mrs. Robinson became the rage. She had the fame, and her husband drew the salary. But, after two seasons, that fateful performance of "The Winter's Tale" came off.

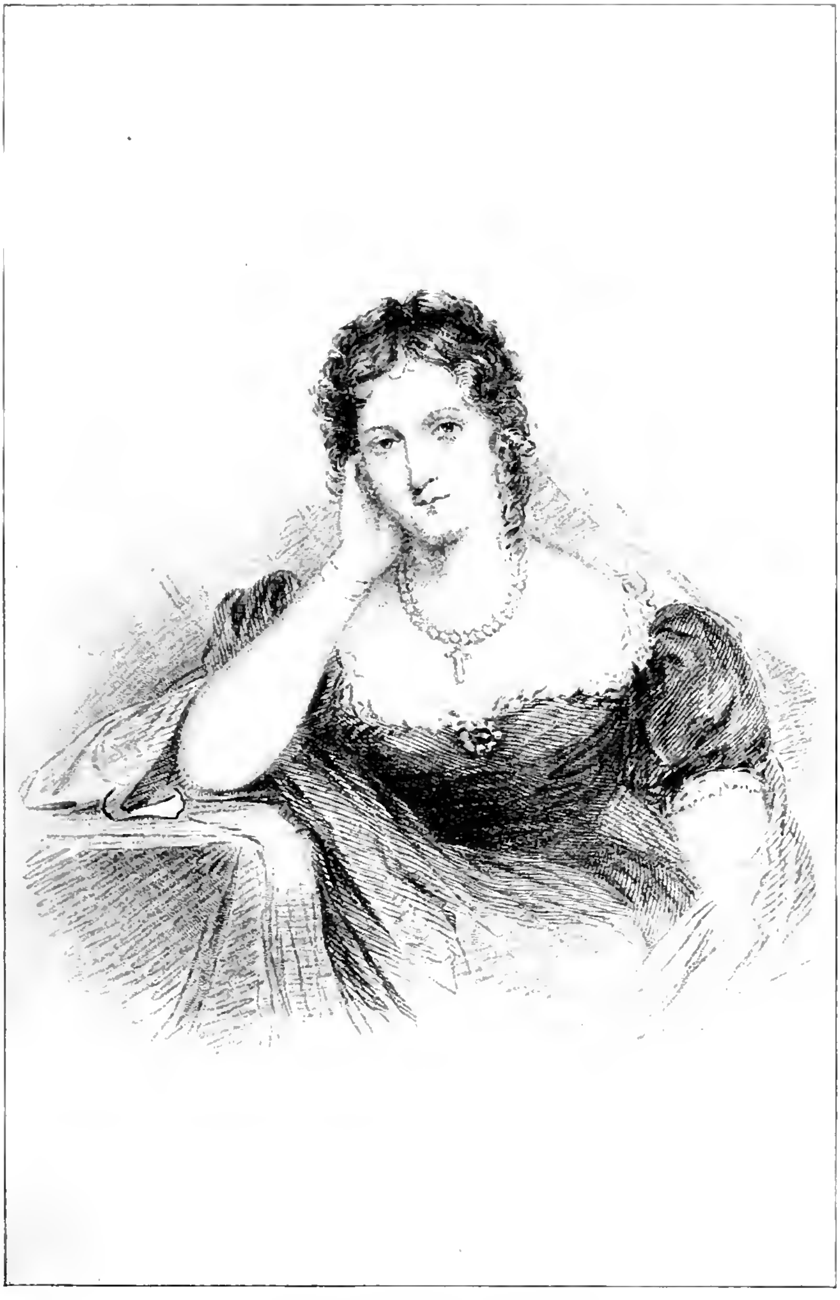
When Mrs. Siddons undertook Juliet her tragic face, through time and study, had lost the youthful freshness necessary for the part; for she was then thirty-four years old, and by nature too dignified and thoughtful to affect a maidenly love. Impassioned, terrific, sublime, was the verdict in her tragic scenes, but the love portions were not received with favor. That was in 1789 at Old Drury, when the Romeo (equally unsuccessful) was Juliet's brother, John Kemble.

Around the Juliet of Julia Grimani hangs no fame, but yet a pretty romance, resembling that of Miss Nossiter. She was of an ancient family, one that had furnished five Doges to Venice. Her father, early destined for the church, but breaking his vow of celibacy to marry a nun, whom he also persuaded to break her vow, was in later years an eminent professor at Eton, in England. Born of his second wife, Julia lived for some time as the *protégée* of the Countess of Suffolk. The offers of several nobles she turned aside for lack of love; but when, in 1804, in spite of the efforts of her prominent friends, she adopted the stage, then her coldness thawed most rapidly under the ardent passion of the Romeo who acted to her Juliet. This was the gentlemanly Charles Mayne Young, the stately, Greek-faced rival of the fiery, dark-skinned Edmund Kean. One year after their first appearance together as Montague and Capulet they were married; fifteen months later the lady, giving birth to her child (afterwards the Rev. Julian Young), died. For fifty years her husband survived; but never did his constant heart waver from its affection for his first love, if we are to believe the words of his son. Almost his last words were, "Thank God, I shall soon see my Julia."

But now we are reaching a Juliet of high rank, the elegant Miss O'Neill, whose external advantages, according to one who knew her, were merely the mediums through which her internal powers displayed their brilliancy. All by chance had the pretty Irish lass obtained the opportunity to play fair Juliet, and thereby make her first step to popularity. The daughter of an eccentric, careless, strolling play-actor, she happened to be in Dublin on the day when the leading actress of the city, "striking" for more salary, refused to go on with the play unless her demands were granted. The manager in disgust, rather than yield, was about to close his theatre, when some one suggested trying the unknown young actress then in town. This was on the 6th of October, 1814; and Miss O'Neill's Juliet of that night was accorded such favor as to lead to a good salary, and ultimately to the driving from the town of the petted favorite who, unintentionally, had thus left open the door for an unexpected superior. To London then went the Irish player; and there such wealth poured to her coffers that in 1819, when she married William Wrixton Becher, M. P., later baronet, the generous girl was able to settle upon her family £30,000 of her legitimate savings.

Miss O'Neill's Juliet, to Charles Kemble's passionate Romeo, was a combination that overawed any attempt of others to essay the part. Macready paid his testimony to her powers when he noted not alone her matchless beauty of face and form, and the spirit of perfect innocence and purity that shone forth in her Juliet, but also the total absence of any approach to affectation.

"I have heard objections to the warmth of her passionate confessions in the garden scene; but the love of the maid of sunny Italy is not to be measured and judged by the phlegmatic formalist," declared Macready, overjoyed by the O'Neill's Juliet. "In the second act," he added, "the impatience of the love-sick maid to obtain tidings of her lover was delightfully contrasted with the winning playfulness with which she so dexterously lured back to doting fondness the pettish humor of the testy old nurse.



MISS O'NEILL (LADY BECHER).
Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

and in rushing to her appointment at the Friar's cell, her whole soul was in the utterance of the words, 'Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.' The desperate alternative to which the command of Capulet that she should marry Paris reduced her, transformed the gentle girl at once into a heroine; and the distracting contention of her fears and resolution rose to a frantic climax of passion, abruptly closed by her exclamation, 'Romeo, I come! This do I drink to thee!' Through my whole experience hers was the only representation of Juliet I have seen."

Miss O'Neill was but twenty-nine when she retired, and her peaceful life continued until 1872. Long after she had left the stage she met one day, in a private parlor, the Romeo with whom, nearly fifty years before, she had loved and died. At the quick cry of the white-haired Kemble of seventy-five, "Ah, dear Juliet," the lady of the Capulets again embraced her Romeo of old with touching, half-real, half-dramatic tenderness, reminiscent of those earlier days.

It was as Mercutio that this famous Romeo of O'Neill's day appeared, when, Oct. 5, 1829, his daughter, Fanny Kemble, the niece of the great Siddons, as Juliet, made her first appearance upon any stage, and inaugurated a success destined, in that very first season, to save Covent Garden, the theatre of her father, from bankruptcy. As in the days of the Pritchards, so now the Lady Capulet was in truth the mother of the Juliet, Mrs. Kemble returning to the stage after an absence of ten years simply to perform this introduction, and then to retire forever. This interesting relationship of characters found a parallel in the early history of the American stage, when Mrs. Douglass played Juliet to the Romeo of her son, then a mere lad of twenty, the first and only time that the two lovers of the cast were thus related in real life.

In her own "Records of a Girlhood," Frances Ann Kemble has narrated the sensations of her *début*: —

> "My dear Aunt Dall and my maid and the theatre dresser performed my toilet for me," she wrote; "and at length I was placed in a chair, with my satin train carefully laid over the back of it, and there I sat, ready for execution, with the palms of my hands pressed convulsively together, and the tears I in vain endeavored to repress welling up into my eyes and brimming slowly over down my rouged cheeks; upon which my aunt, with a smile full of pity, renewed the color as often as those heavy drops made unsightly streaks in it. Once and again my father came to the door, and I heard his anxious, 'How is she?' to which my aunt answered, sending him away with words of comforting cheer. At last 'Miss Kemble called

for the stage, ma'am,' accompanied with a brisk tap at the door, started me upright on my feet, and I was led round to the side scene opposite to the one from which I saw my mother advance on the stage; and while the uproar of her reception filled me with terror, dear old Mrs. Davenport, my Nurse, and dear Mr. Keely, her Peter, and half the *dramatis personæ* of the play (but not my father, who had retreated, quite unable to endure the scene) stood around me as I lay, all but insensible, in my aunt's arms. 'Courage, courage, dear child! Poor thing, poor thing!' reiterated Mrs. Davenport. 'Never mind 'em, Miss Kemble,' urged Keely, in that irresistibly comical, nervous, lachrymose voice of his, which I have never since heard without a thrill of anything but comical association; 'Never mind 'em! Don't think of 'em any more than if they were so many rows of cabbages!' 'Nurse!' called my mother, and on waddled Mrs. Davenport, and, turning back, called in her turn, 'Juliet!' My aunt gave me an impulse forward, and I ran straight across the stage, stunned with the tremendous shout that greeted me, my eyes covered with mist, and the green baize flooring of the stage feeling as if it rose up against my feet; but I got hold of my mother, and stood like a terrified creature at bay, confronting the huge theatre full of gazing human beings. I do not think a word I uttered during this scene could have been audible. In the next, the ball-room, I began to forget myself; in the following one, the balcony scene, I had done so, and, for aught I knew, I was Juliet; the passion I was uttering sending hot waves of blushes all over my neck and shoulders, while the poetry sounded like music to me as I spoke it, with no consciousness of anything before me, utterly transported into the imaginary existence of the play. After this I did not return into myself till all was over, and, amid a tumultuous storm of applause, congratulations, tears, embraces, and a general joyous explosion of unutterable relief at the fortunate termination of my attempt, we went home. And so my life was determined, and I devoted myself to an avocation which I never liked or honored, and about the very nature of which I have never been able to come to any decided opinion. It is in vain that the undoubted specific gifts of great actors and actresses suggest that all gifts are given for rightful exercise, and not suppression; in vain that Shakespeare's plays urge their imperative claim to the most perfect illustration they can receive from histrionic interpretation — a business which is incessant excitement and factitious emotion seems to me unworthy of a man; a business which is public exhibition, unworthy of a woman."

Juliet was the second character Miss Kemble gave upon the American stage, when, in 1832, she came here with her father, destined to win not only audiences, but, to her subsequent unhappiness, a husband, Mr. Pierce Butler of Philadelphia.

There was a rather amusing little dispute described by Mrs. Kemble-Butler during her experience as Juliet, with Ellen Tree (Mrs. Charles Kean) acting the part of Romeo. That was in 1829, at Covent Garden. Tall and broad-shouldered, the long-limbed Ellen Tree looked the part as well as a woman could, and even acquitted herself successfully in the fencing scene with Tybalt. But when it came to the clap-trap performance of

Romeo seizing Juliet from her bier and bearing her body in his arms down to the footlights, then Miss Kemble strenuously objected. She would have no such risk run with her rather heavy person. Finally, when remonstrances proved in vain against the determined will of her gymnastic co-worker, the irritated Juliet exclaimed, "Very well, then, mark this: if you attempt to lift me or carry me down the stage, I'll kick and scream till you set me down." And Miss Tree, eying her fair sweetheart for a moment, decided that the latter meant what she said. Juliet rested comfortably on her bier.

When Macready made his first appearance on the stage, it was as Romeo to Mrs. Young's Juliet. He acted, too, with Miss O'Neill and with other noted actresses of the day. But to him there was to come no such reputation as a Montague as that which fell to the noted leading lady of his theatre, Helen Faucit, as a Capulet. She, too, made her *début* in "Romeo and Juliet." It was in 1833, before the actress had herself reached the age of Shakespeare's heroine (for she was born in 1820), that in a curious way this initial performance was brought about.

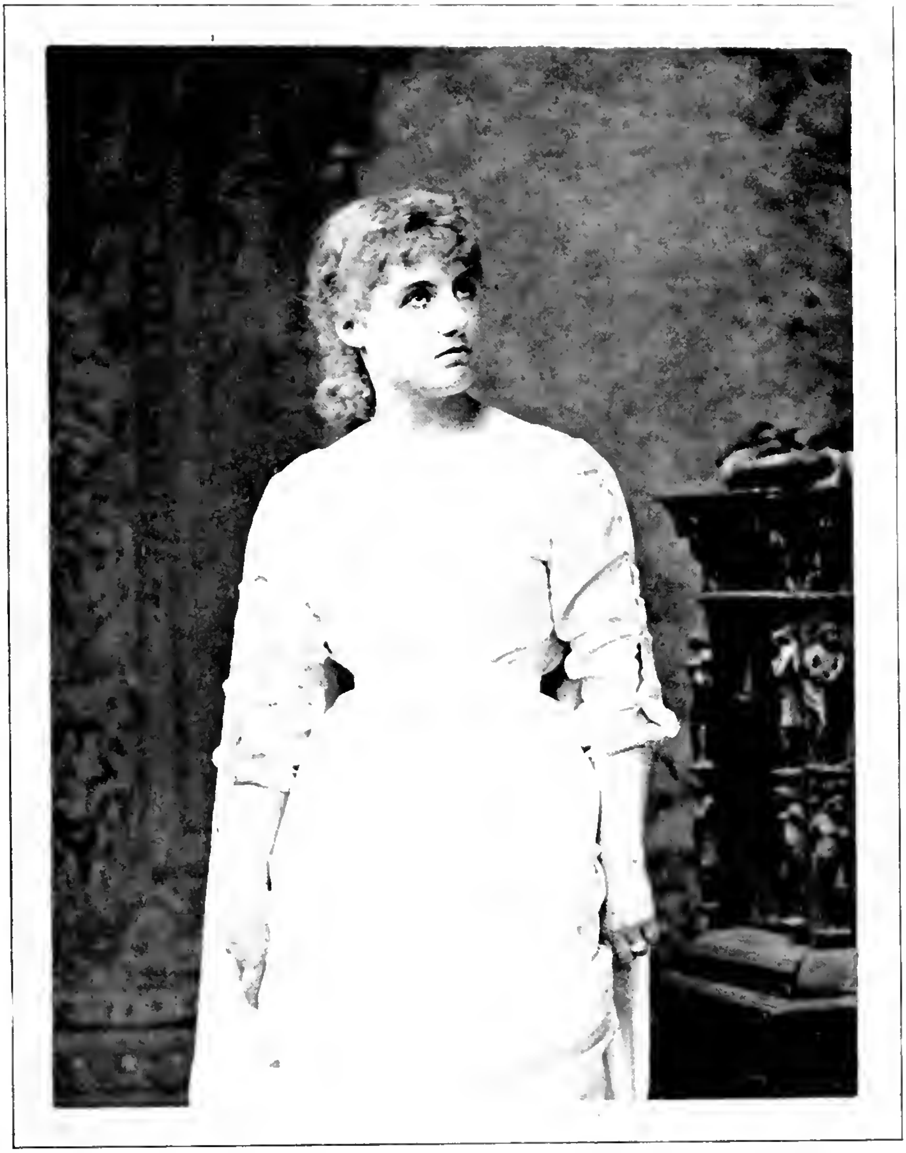
Seeking shelter from the sun, the maiden of thirteen, with her sister, had slipped through the stage door of the theatre at Richmond, and, seeing no one around, had begun a half-humorous rehearsal of the balcony scene. But the manager was hidden behind the wings, and so struck was he with the admirable recitation of Helen as Juliet, that he induced her friends to permit her appearance in public announced simply as "A Young Lady." Success crowned her essay. Three years later she appeared as a regularly enlisted actress at Covent Garden; and there she continued even after her marriage, in 1851, to Sir Theodore Martin. It is said that to her the characters were always real personages, and that Juliet's horror of the tomb carried genuine terror to her mind. That she was in love with her Shakespeare is evident from the fact that, rather than omit the prologue to "Romeo and Juliet," she herself, throwing a silk domino over her dress, used to speak the words before the tragedy.

Up to 1840 the version of the play prepared by Garrick held the stage completely, and even after that date it was frequently played; but in that year Mme. Vestris, as manager of Covent Garden, set the good example of presenting the original text. Unfortunately the Juliet of the cast, Jane Mordaunt, though a sister of Mrs. Nisbett, was unequal to her *rôle*, and the play languished.

The Sadler's Wells revivals of 1845 saw as the heroine Miss Laura Addison, the actress who, Americans remember, died in this country in 1852, in her twenty-sixth year, while making a trip from Albany to New York. Ellen Terry's Juliet was first shown to the English public on the 8th of March, 1882, at Irving's Lyceum Theatre, and with Adelaide Neilson's Juliet may well be used to connect the stories of the British and the American theatres.

The least of her successes is the best verdict that can be given Miss Terry's Juliet, first undertaken at almost the same age that Mrs. Siddons essayed the part. But Neilson's Juliet is, and ever will be, famous. Her youth and her rare beauty made the character charming; her sensitive voice thrilled the listener, and her passionate enthusiasm gave to Juliet an ideal warmth and fervor. The fact that Neilson glided at once into harmony with the tragical undertone of the character, indicating with seemingly entire unconsciousness of its existence the shadow of the terrible fate that overhung Juliet, even while she was prattling to the nurse or dancing the minuet, is held by that careful and poetical critic, William Winter, to have been the secret of her successful impersonation. The actress struck at once the keynote of the character in causing the prophetic doom always to be felt. At the age of seventeen Miss Neilson made her *début* in London as Capulet's daughter; and seven years later, 1872, her Juliet carried America by storm. Preceding her on this side of the Atlantic were Mrs. Duff, Anna Cora Mowatt, Mrs. George H. Barrett, Julia Bennett Barrow, and Julia Dean; and following her have come Mary Anderson, Modjeska, and Julia Marlowe as the more notable in the line of Juliets.

Mrs. Duff, a bride but fifteen years of age, coming to America with her actor-husband, made her first appearance in this country at the Boston Theatre on Dec. 31, 1810, as Juliet, and, though she failed then to render the impersonation notably, succeeded later in winning high praises in the *rôle*. Her intensity was so marked that Edmund Kean once asked her to modify her acting, as he wished his efforts seconded, not rivalled. One brilliant success was her life, till Fanny Kemble came to throw her from her pedestal. Then, suffering from mental aberration after her husband's death, this Juliet contracted a singular marriage. It may have been the effects of opium, it may have been the hope of retrieving her financial troubles, or it may have been eccentricity, that led her, as the story goes, to reply, "With all my heart," to Charles Young, the actor, as the two chanced to



ADELAIDE NEILSON AS JULIET.

meet on the street, and he proposed that they step then and there into the registrar's office and be married. But, whatever the reason, it was said the marriage was legalized with the provision that it be kept secret for six weeks. Yet Mrs. Duff afterwards repudiated the whole affair, claiming that she was not in her right mind at the time. This marriage was annulled; and in later years Mrs. Duff became the wife of a New Orleans gentleman, Joel G. Sevier. She died Sept. 5, 1857, no one of her friends, not even her children, knowing of her decease until years afterwards. With her husband she had ostensibly started for Texas — and the world knew no more.

Of Anna Cora Mowatt, the society actress of 1845–1854, who, unlike many of her successors of to-day, was talented as well as successful, it will be interesting to narrate a little anecdote which she herself told about her Juliet. The property man one night had forgotten to procure a sleeping-potion vial for the Friar to give fair Juliet. Confused at his own neglect, the man hastily seized the nearest small bottle at hand, and gave it to the player. Juliet, absorbed in her character, failed to notice the style of the vial, and returning to her chamber, dismissed her nurse, turned towards the audience with the words, "Romeo! this do I drink to thee!" and down her throat poured —the contents of the prompter's ink-bottle. She was astounded: but the spectators, seeing the dark stain on her lips and hands, simply supposed it was a stage trick to simulate the quick workings of the poison.

As for the prompter, nettled at the loss of his writing-fluid, he rushed to the side of the actress, when the curtain fell, exclaiming, "Good gracious! you have been drinking my bottle of ink!"

Whereat, as Mrs. Mowatt says, she could not resist the temptation of quoting the remark of a dying wit under similar circumstances, and replied, "Quick, —let me swallow a piece of blotting-paper."

More than once, Mrs. Mowatt confessed, so imbued with the character of Juliet did she become, that she actually thrust the dagger into her flesh, drawing the blood. As she soon found the subsequent sensation anything but poetical, she finally resorted to a blunted dagger for the scene.

In 1844, at the age of twenty-eight, Charlotte Cushman visited England, urged thereto by the encouragement of Macready, and in the British Isle she remained five years. In the *rôle* of Bianca in "Fazio" she made her London *début*, Feb. 14, 1845, following with Lady Macbeth, Emilia, Mrs. Haller, and Rosalind: meanwhile, as she herself wrote home, "sitting to five artists." Her success was greater than she had ever dreamed of obtaining. Up to that time her stage career had been a hard experience of eight years, her fame growing only by continued severe work, but this triumph recompensed her for all her troubles.

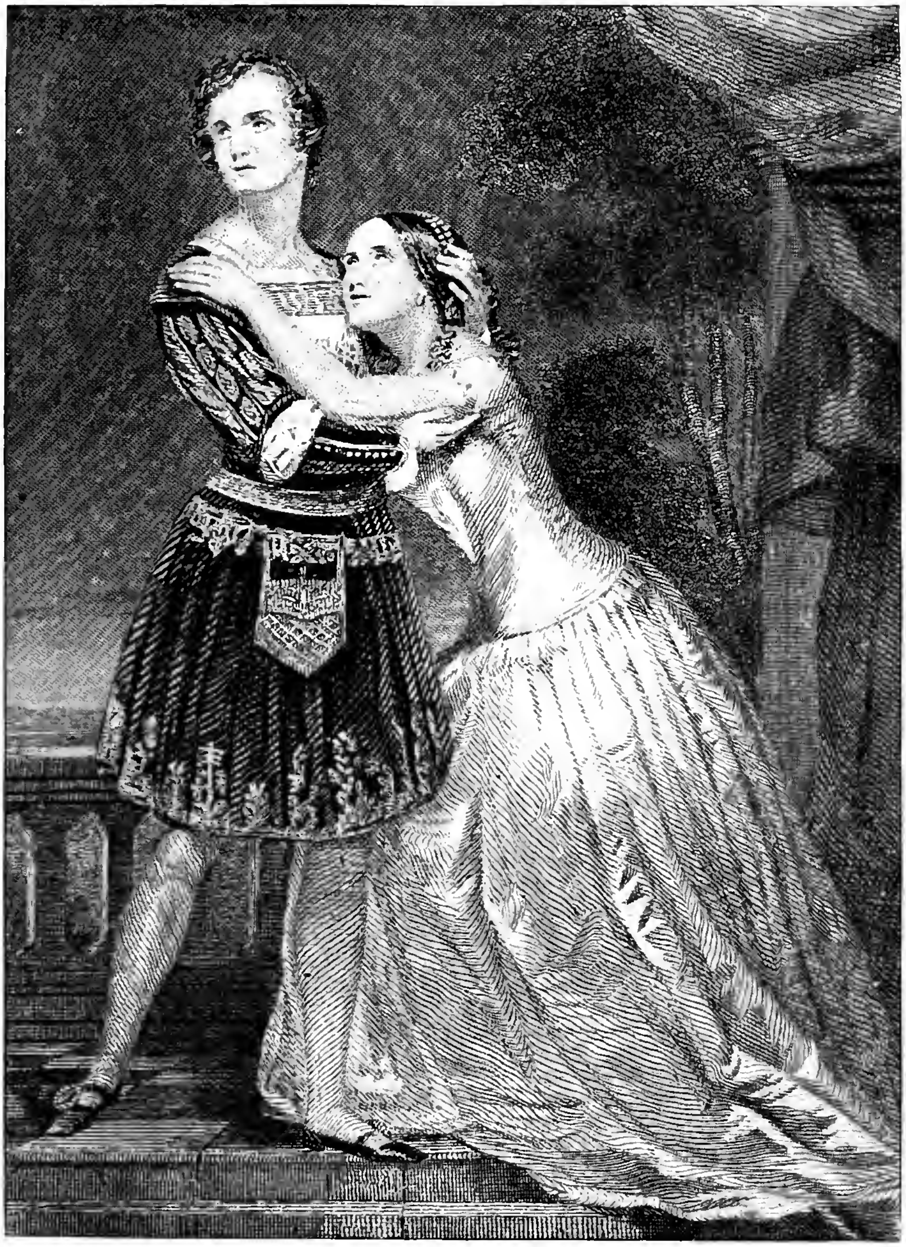
While abroad, Miss Cushman studied the part of Romeo, and on the 30th of December, 1845, acted the character at the Haymarket to the Juliet of her sister, the shrewish Susan. The "American Indians," as the English players termed the two ladies, won the stamp of favor for the performance with a run of eighty nights in London. The critics even commended Charlotte's manly way of fencing, when, with a single blow, indicative of the force of indignation in the soul of Romeo, she beat down the guard of Tybalt, and with one lunge struck him dead, as lightning strikes the pine.

In America, in 1850, a Juliet to Miss Cushman's Romeo was Fanny Wallack; in 1851–1852 a Juliet was Miss Anderton: in 1858 her Juliet was Mary Devlin, then making her New York *début*, and destined two years later to become the wife of Edwin Booth; in 1860, Mrs. D. P. Bowers played the Veronese. Mrs. Field, the original impersonator in

America of Julia in "The Hunchback," and the mother of Kate Field, the well-known journalist and lecturer of to-day, was yet another Capulet to Cushman's Montague; while Kate Reignolds acted Juliet to the Romeo of the great tragedienne on one occasion, and the next year herself essayed Romeo to the Juliet of Kate Bateman.

While playing with Miss Anderton at the National Theatre in Boston, Miss Cushman, during one of the love scenes, was obviously disturbed by an artificial and derisive sneeze from some enemy in the auditorium. With all the dignity and determination of a princely character, the actress at once stopped the dialogue, and in courtly manner leading her Juliet off the scene, returned at once to demand, in her own firm voice, "Some man must put that person out, or I shall do it myself." The audience cheered her pluck to the echo; the disturber was thrust from the theatre, and the play went on.

Probably to-day the last surviving Juliet to Miss Cushman's Romeo is Mrs. Anna Crowell-Cruise, who is still active in her profession. It was Miss Crowell who spoke the last lines ever uttered on the stage of the National Theatre in Boston, appearing as Margery in "The Rough Diamond." She was also one of the company that played the last piece in the



CHARLOTTE AND SUSAN CUSHMAN AS ROMEO AND JULIET.
Tallis Print.

famous old Federal Street Theatre of Boston. The National had burned shortly after a performance was ended: and the Federal Street, then about to be torn down, was given into the charge of the troupe until the engagement was completed. Not only to Cushman's Romeo did she play Juliet, but also to Fanny Wallack's, and a fascinating player she is said to have been.

When the lavish expenditure of time and money had brought into existence that magnificent but ill-fated Booth's Theatre in New York, the Juliet of the gorgeous opening production of Feb. 3, 1869, when Edwin Booth played Romeo, was Mary McVicker. Two years before that date she had made her *début* in his company in the same character; four months after the opening she became the actor's wife. In 1881 she died in New York. When the curtain fell for the last time in the noble theatre that bore Booth's name, April 30, 1883, it was Mme. Modjeska, the Juliet, who spoke the final words upon the stage. The same playhouse saw an odd combination in May, 1877, when at the benefit of George Rignold, he, as Romeo, had six different Juliets, one for each especial scene, — Grace D'Urfrey, Fanny Davenport, Ada Dyas, Maude Granger, Marie Wainwright, and Minnie Cummings.

Simply as a "Louisville young lady," Mary Anderson made her first appearance on the stage in Louisville, Nov. 27, 1875, assuming the character of Juliet. The next day the *Courier* declared that no man of judgment who had witnessed Miss Anderson's *début* could doubt that she was a great actress. "She interpreted the very spirit and soul of tragedy," cried this critic, who was then, unknowingly, touching the key-note of laudation that was to resound year after year throughout the country. Miss Anderson thrilled the whole house into silence that night by the depth of her passion, and, after the scene in which the nurse tells Juliet of what she supposes is her lover's death, "the quick gasp, the terrified, stricken face, the tottering step, the passionate and heart-rending accents, were nature's own marks of affecting, overwhelming grief." Miss Anderson owes as much to this critic, who at the very outset could thus outline the tone of later writers, as Miss Neilson owed Mr. Knight for his first discriminative commendation. From then until her retirement the character of Juliet was a favorite with Mary Anderson and with her audiences.

As in the past, so in the future, each year will undoubtedly bring ambitious new Juliets upon the stage: but with that great obstacle confronting them

MARY ANDERSON.

which oftentimes has been quoted, — that to act Juliet well the actress must have so many years of experience as to prevent her looking Juliet acceptably, — the roll of really great Juliets in the shadowy future will not be longer than the roll of the past.

BEATRICE.

(Much Ado About Nothing.)

THE whole town laughed at simple-minded George the Third. He always enjoyed the pranks of the clowns, and took no offence even when the rash Parsons, set down by the text of the "Siege of Calais" to exclaim, "So the King is coming! An the King like not my scaffold, I am no true man," cried out instead, looking directly into His Majesty's box, "An the King were here, and did not admire my scaffold, I would say, 'D——n him, he has no taste!'" No, the King actually roared louder than the common folk in the pit.

But now the laugh was against the King in another way. The funeral of his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, had just been solemnized, and the mournful pageant was still in the eyes of the populace, when His Majesty commanded the players to present in his presence "Much Ado About

Nothing." No wonder the merry folks over this also made much ado about nothing.

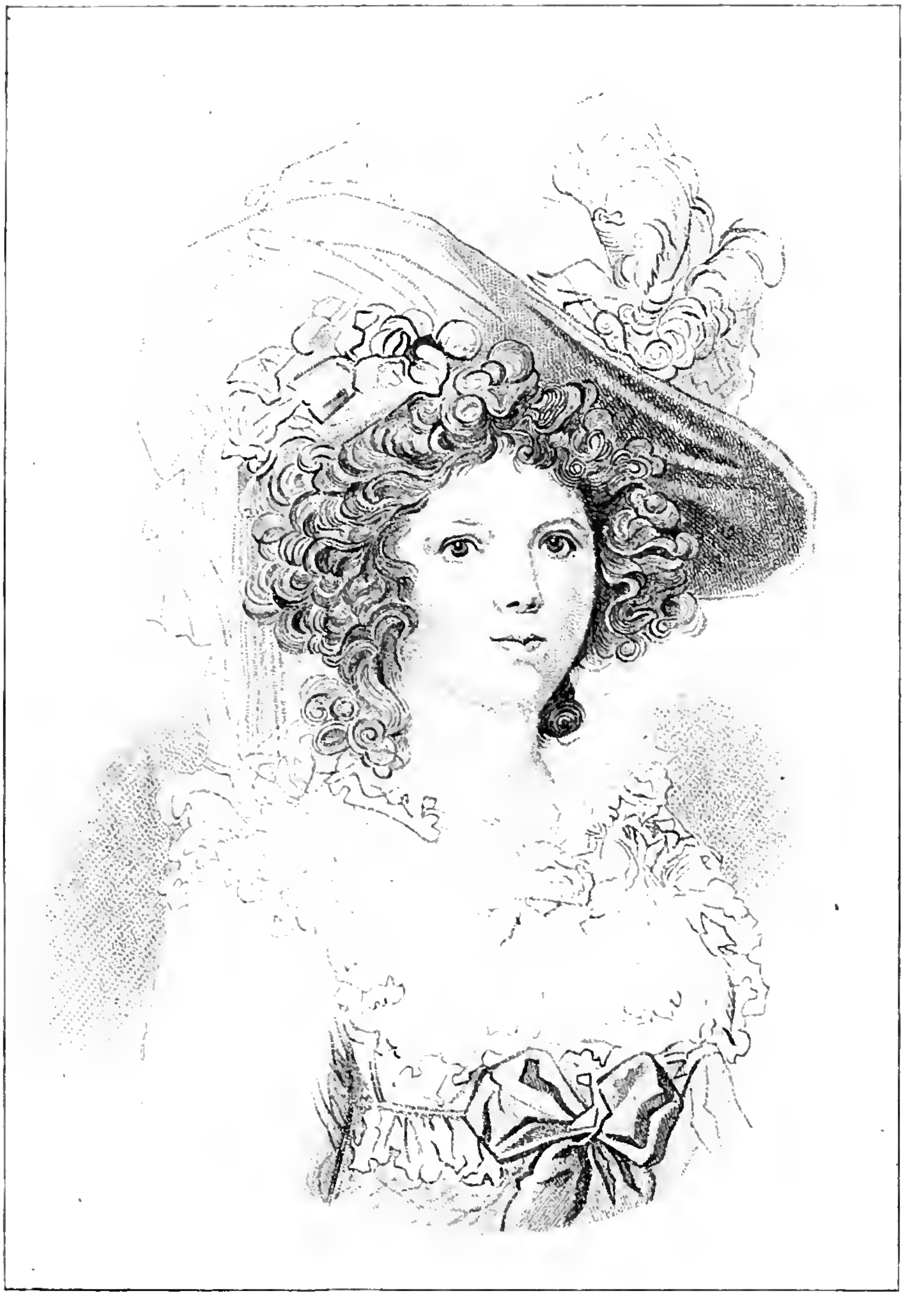
It was this same monarch who, after seeing Henderson play Benedick, bade Sir Charles Thompson carry to the actor the King's applauding praise, and assure him that were "the King a manager, Mr. Henderson should perform upon the same stage with Mrs. Siddons." But the King was not the manager, and Henderson failed to reach that goal. They tell a story of the famous Henderson, that one night, when playing the gallant lover — perhaps to the Beatrice of Miss Pope, or of Miss Younge, or of Mrs. Abington, for they all acted the *rôle* with him — he completely forgot his cue. Such an idea as Henderson, the thorough master of Benedick's character, breaking down had never entered the head of Prompter Wild, and so that worthy had negligently strolled away from his accustomed place to chat with a friend while Henderson went on. But Henderson did not go on. He stopped. No word from the prompt table. The actor began the speech again — and stopped at exactly the same place. Still no helping voice from the wings. At that our play-actor became enraged, and loudly called, "Give me the word:" whereupon the audience, recognizing the situation, and loving more the actor than the prompter, showered such applause upon the forgetful and unassisted Benedick that he was compelled to rise from his seat and bow his thanks. Wild, meanwhile, had hurried back to his post, the word was given, and the play went on.

One of Henderson's Beatrices, Mrs. Abington, gave glowing illustration of the perennial youthfulness of her profession. In 1775, at Drury Lane, she was acting the sparkling Beatrice to Garrick's well-known Benedick, and again in 1797 was still playing the *rôle*, though now to Lewis as a lover. On the first occasion she was thirty-eight years of age; on the latter occasion she was sixty. "Nosegay Fan," as they called her, the daughter of a cobbling soldier and the sister of a hostler, was only a flower-girl in her teens; but she lived to set the fashion for the noble ladies, and to be welcomed to the highest homes. She even reached that height of delight — for a woman — of having the "Abington Cap" named in her honor; and reached that height of favor with Sam Johnson of having him attend her parties and praise her jellies. As might be expected, however, her Beatrice is applauded more for its wit and pertness than its good breeding.

Finicky Horace Walpole, who invited the actress to his teas, protested in his own crisp, cavilling way: "Mrs. Abington can never go beyond Lady Teazle, which is a second-rate character:" but to have had the glory of being the original Lady Teazle was perhaps enough of honor. Still, Boaden, when he saw her first, insisted that she was "peculiarly qualified" for Beatrice: though, for truth's sake, it must be acknowledged that this same warm critic, when he saw her acting the *rôle* at the age of three-score, confessed that while in point of skill her playing then might equal the efforts of her best time, yet "she had enlarged her figure and her face too, by time, and could perhaps fascinate no one without the aid of recollection on his part." "Alas," he cries, "she is no longer the glass of fashion she has once been, but is now a matronly Beatrice, whom the modern costume *à la Grecque* does not suit."

There were only two famous predecessors to Mrs. Abington in the character, so far as the record goes: Mrs. Pritchard, the first Beatrice of Garrick's Benedick, and Mrs. Barry. To be sure, Mrs. Cross had acted the character in a three days' revival after a thirty years' sleep, and Mrs. Vincent had undertaken the character; but we know little of them.

Far back at the beginning, when "Much Ado"



MRS. ABINGTON.
From a Steel Portrait after Cosway.

made its bow upon the stage, that "most comical and conceited cavaliere, M. de Kempe, jest-monger and vicegerent-general to the ghost of Dick Tarleton," was the original Dogberry, and 'tis said that against Will Kempe's bad habit of "gagging" on the stage the diatribe of Hamlet to the players was designed by the great author. A merry fellow was this Dogberry of old, a prankish youth who could walk backward the entire road to Berwick on a wager, and travel from France to Rome, dancing all the way. Cowley is thought to have been the original Verges; but the other originals of the play, including Beatrice, lie buried in oblivion. Then the adapters so often "improved" Shakespeare as to leave the successors of the first boy actor somewhat doubtful. Sir William Davenant deliberately mixed together "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Measure for Measure;" while a lecturing divine of Oxford even borrowed in equal parts from Shakespeare and from Molière, altered the names of the characters, and gave the world a nine days' wonder (it died then) under the title "The Universal Passion."

And now we come to Mrs. Pritchard. Excellent, indeed, was her playing; so fine that every scene between her and the great Garrick was a continued struggle for superiority, in which the spectators could not award preference. Of course the needle-fine critic was there at the play, and his sharp eye moved his pen to write of Beatrice's "uncharacteristic corpulence." But yet that undue size could not count for very much when even the lovely Woffington shrank from her rivalry, while it is known that in Lady Macbeth she was Mrs. Siddons's greatest predecessor. If we may believe Walpole, Garrick hated Mrs. Pritchard because she won in the contest with him, by giving her Beatrice more spirit and originality than he gave his Benedick. He himself, always painstaking to develop carefully each character, devoted sixty days to rehearsing and improving his Benedick — and played it as if it were spontaneous at the moment. His distinct expression, his vivacity, and the stage manœuvres of his scenes of repartee with Beatrice, stamped the character as among his best. After his marriage to the mysterious dancer, Mademoiselle Violette, — who was hurried to England disguised as a boy, because Maria Theresa had become jealous of the attentions of the Emperor to the little lass, and who on British soil became the *protégée* of the Countesses of Burlington and Talbot, and who made a most romantic love affair with Davy Garrick, — he, as the husband of a day, when the whole town was talking of his marriage, had the bad taste to play on the night after his wedding "Much Ado About Nothing," amusing the audience greatly by his allusions to Benedick, the married man.

"Not acted these twenty years," read the playbill at Covent Garden in 1774, when Mrs. Barry for the first time played Beatrice, with Lee as her Benedick. Tragedy she played to please the town, — so she said, — but comedy to please herself; and it is no wonder, therefore, that her Beatrice was full of life and animation. Yet her unfortunate life, told in another chapter, would not seem conducive to high spirits.

That same Miss Younge, who with Abington and Yates gave rise to the couplet, —

> "Three thousand wives killed Orpheus in a rage,
> Three actresses drove Garrick from the stage," —

played Beatrice well, although not equal to Mrs. Abington, and helped well to torment poor Davy, though perhaps also not equally to the Abington. The rhymester of the day gave a glimpse at the bickerings when he wrote: —

> "'I have no nerves,' says Y——ge, 'I cannot act.'
> 'I've lost my limbs,' cried A——n, ''tis fact.'
> Y——s screams, 'I've lost my voice, my throat's so sore.'
> Garrick declares he'll play the fool no more."

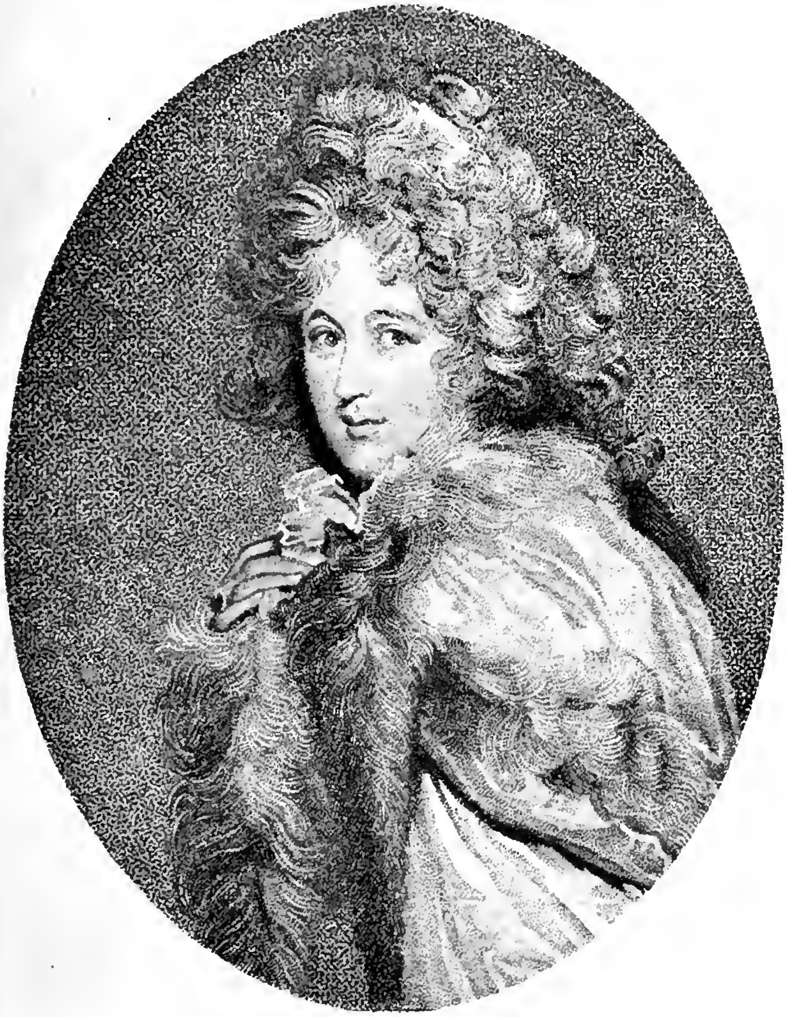
There was a Countess of Derby once in the *rôle* — or let me say a prospective countess, since her first appearance as the dashing Beatrice was as Miss Elizabeth Farren, just ten years before the Earl of Derby offered her his coronet. Horace Walpole saw her act the part, and criticised it in these words, in a letter to Miss Berry: "I agree with you in not thinking Beatrice one of Miss Farren's capital parts. Mrs. Pritchard played it with more spirit, and was superior to Garrick's Benedick; so is Kemble too, [as Benedick] as he is to Quin in Maskwell."

What a strange career had this slip of a girl, who in her childish days was helped over the ice by a gallant lad while she bore a bowl of milk to her father, the locked-up, strolling play-manager, one-time surgeon, who had by mishap broken a local law. The lad became Chief Justice Burroughs; the lass, the Countess of Derby. She danced, and then acted into favor, until, before her twentieth year, her success in what we now call "the old comedies" gave the beautiful girl the favor of all London. Tall and graceful, with elegant bearing, attractive voice, and natural ease, she made the fine ladies of the stage actually fine. She might have had for a lover Charles James Fox, but she waited until the rather grewsome prediction printed at that day was to come true; namely, the prediction that when "*one* certain event should happen, a countess's coronet would fall on her brow." That certain event was the death of the living Countess of Derby, and its "certainty" was prolonged for some twenty years. The Earl himself was an amateur actor. Six weeks after the death of his first wife he married our Beatrice; and her blood now flows in the descendants of the Earl of Wilton, to whom her daughter Mary was married in 1821.

Rather oddly, two other countesses are to be reckoned among the Beatrices of the stage, both belonging to this period, and both associated with Charles Kemble in the play. Louisa Brunton played the heroine of "Much Ado" in 1803 to the Benedick of Lewis, when Charles Kemble was the Claudio, and Mrs. Henry Siddons the Hero. Beautiful, well-educated, and bright, this daughter of a respectable theatre proprietor was not intended by her parents for the stage. But her Beatrice, as her second character, meeting with the same success that fell to her Lady Townly in the "Provoked Husband," induced her to adopt the profession for four years at least. Then, in 1807, the seventh Earl of Craven, aged thirty-six, and Louisa Brunton, aged twenty-four, niece of Col. Richard Brunton, a hero of Waterloo, were married at Craven House. It was her niece, Elizabeth Brunton, who married in 1824 Frederick H. Yates, the actor, and became the mother of Edmund Yates, the well-known writer of recent years. And it was this same niece who, in 1817, at Covent Garden, acted Beatrice to the Benedick of Charles Kemble, the Claudio of the cast in which the aunt had appeared.

Thirteen years later Kemble was acting to the Beatrice of Miss Foote, the Maria Foote who, when but nineteen years of age, captivated Colonel Berkeley, afterwards Earl Fitzhardinge. His loose morals were on a par with those of the actress who could sell out her acquaintance with the noble gentleman for a thousand pounds a year, and afterwards sue another wealthy gentleman for three thousand pounds on breach of promise, only ultimately to become the Countess of Harrington. And yet on the stage she was the image of pure and innocent beauty.

At the time of her retirement from the theatre, Thomas H. Smith declared, "We can scarcely believe that the beautiful vision has passed from our sight forever. Will she no more cling so tenderly about Virginius, the living image of all that is daughterly and gentle? Shall we not see her again bend silently before the accusations of Guido, like



ELIZABETH FARREN (COUNTESS OF DERBY).
Painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, R.A.

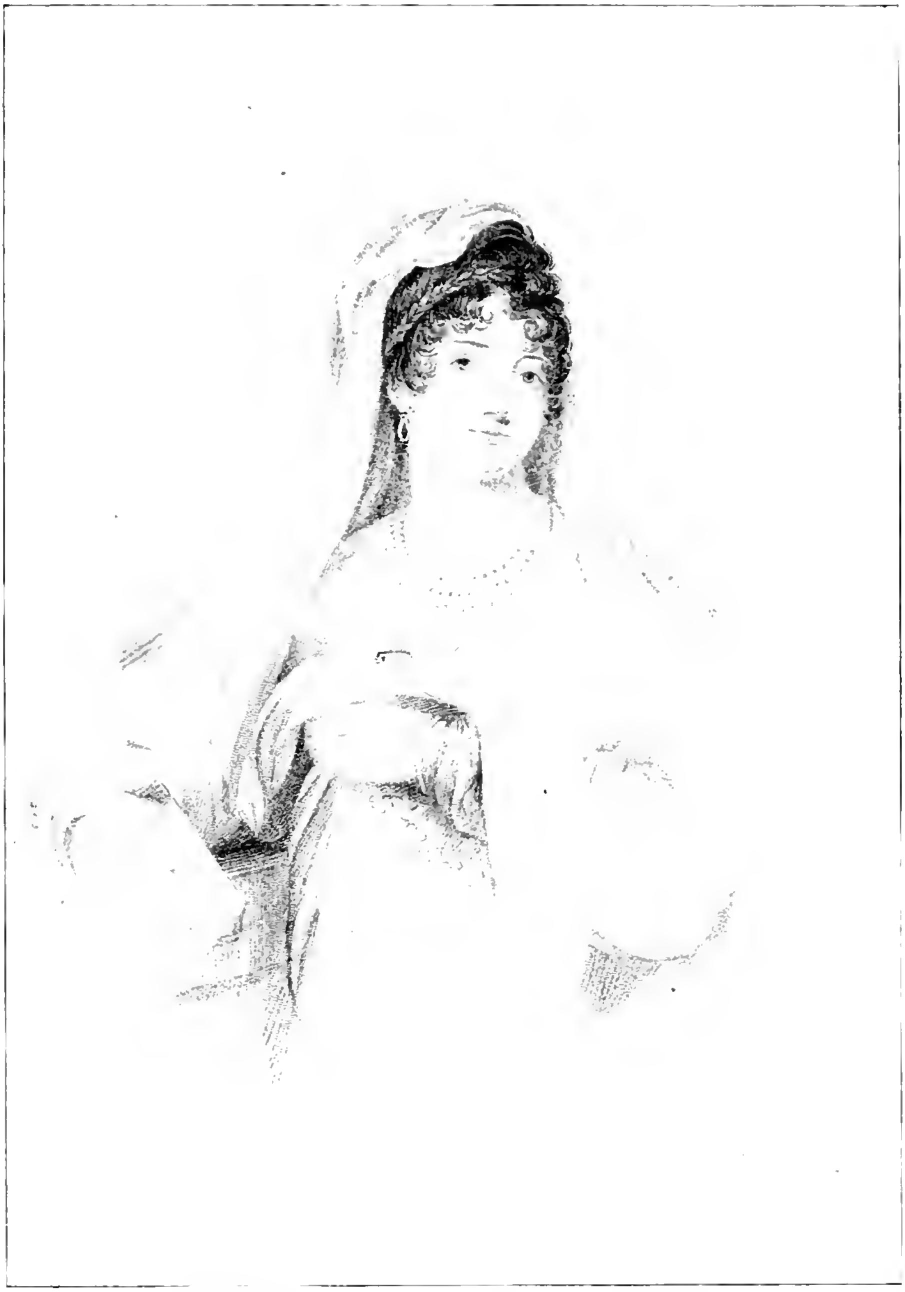
a fair flower stooping beneath the rough blast, with which contention would be vain? Is comedy entirely to lose the most delicate and graceful of its handmaidens, and tragedy the loveliest of its sufferers? In return for those images of pure and innocent beauty with which she has enriched our imaginations, we wish her all the good which should attend one of nature's choicest favorites." *Apropos* of this reference to "Virginius," it may be stated that Miss Foote was the original interpreter of the daughter of the old Roman when Macready brought out the play.

In 1831 Kemble played Benedick to the Beatrice of his own daughter, Fanny Kemble. Leigh Hunt regarded Charles Kemble as admirable in this part, and praised particularly as "a bit of right masterly gusto" his utterance of the final reason for marrying — "The world must be peopled" — when the actor stood with his hands linked behind him, a general elevation of his aspect, and a sort of look at the whole universe before him, as if he saw all the future generations that might depend on his verdict. But imagine the incongruity, if the fact were not skilfully hidden on the stage, of a father old enough to have a daughter who could play the heroine, acting the lover to that same heroine! This heroine of

Miss Kemble's creation Leigh Hunt pronounced very clever, though satisfactory rather in parts than as a whole, wanting chiefly the flowing and perpetual vivacious grace of Beatrice, who, like a girl at the top of her school, should have her movements run on like her tongue. The young actress created a veritable sensation in the way of applause by her half-good-humored, half-peevish saying and unsaying of her confession of love to Benedick, wherein she ends abruptly with the tearful words, "I'm sorry for my cousin." Quoth Hunt, "With a few less peacock-like movements of the head and gait, and a little more abandonment of herself to Beatrice's animal spirits, the character in her hands would come very nearly in merit to that of her father's Benedick."

Of Mrs. Jordan's Beatrice, which preceded Miss Kemble's, Hunt said, "It sparkled with vivacity, possessed a laugh and heartiness that were always inimitable, but wanted the air of good breeding."

Then, too, there was the Beatrice of another Kemble, Mrs. Siddons. But though the queen of the drama began and ended her regular London theatrical life with Shakespeare, — beginning with Portia in 1775, and ending with Lady Macbeth in 1812, — yet she was a tragic queen for the most part, and rarely tried bright Beatrice. Her brother



LOUISA BRUNTON (COUNTESS OF CRAVEN).
Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

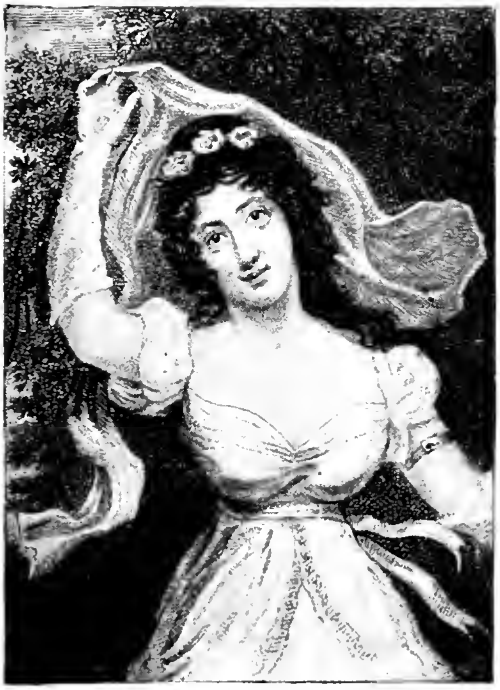
Charles also began and ended his career with Shakespeare, playing Orlando in "As You Like It" in 1792, when but a lad of seventeen, and Benedick in 1836, when a man of sixty-one; both times the lover impetuous and ardent. It was her Beatrice that won for Mrs. Siddons the favor of Henderson, when he came down from London to act a few nights at Bath with the young provincial player; and his praises of her performance, sung in the manager's ears in London, gained her the offer of that fateful London engagement of 1782, by which she made her first grand bound into fame. Of the vital points of her Beatrice, there is little record; of one bit of odd gossip Miss Seward writes, when she expresses her great delight that the famous actress, called before the curtain after "Much Ado" at Birmingham, first courtesied to the house, and then with a smile of favor bowed with marked preference to Miss Seward and her friends in the stage box.

But now steps upon the stage of "Much Ado," for the first time in our record, an actor known to both England and America. It is Macready, that scholarly and thoughtful player-manager, who to the past generation stood somewhat in the same light that Henry Irving stands to this; and like

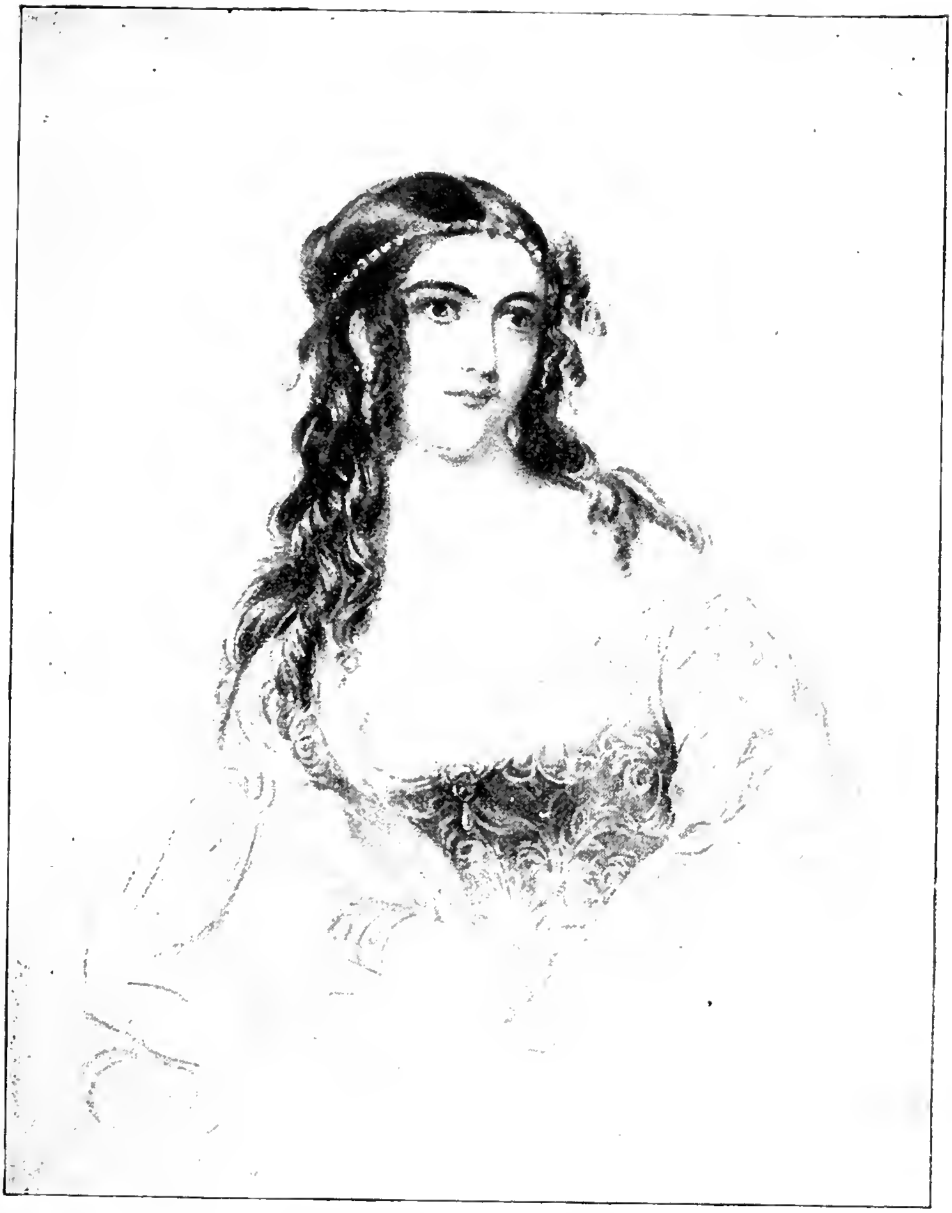
Henry Irving. Macready could not make of the quick-minded, merry Benedick a thorough success, compared with his success in other *rôles*. He himself records in his diary, under date of Feb. 24, 1843, that he "acted Benedick very well;" but although he did display great humor in the part, yet it was held by discerning critics to be of a dry, caustic sort. His chief effect, it is said, was to picture "a sort of matrimonial theorist — ludicrous from the gravity with which he supports a favorite hypothesis, and not a crotchety individual with a curious temper needing amelioration."

Yet the great manager, although gradually dropping comedy as he advanced higher in tragic *rôles*, still clung to his Benedick; and in his farewell engagement at the Haymarket Theatre in 1851, when lacking but two years of threescore, played the merry lover as one of the two comedy parts he would then assume, the other being Mr. Oakley in "The Jealous Wife." For one thing, at least, Macready might have held the character in pleasant remembrance: it was his Benedick that first gained for him the friendship of the Twiss family, who introduced him into the best society, and who gave him their attachment through life.

Alas, how the critical men of his time scorched



MARIA FOOTE. (Countess of Harrington.)
Drawn by T. O. Steeden. Engraved by J. Rogers.



LOUISA C NISBETT (Lady Bootnby)
Painted by J G Middleton. Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

his impersonation! "He clutched at drollery as Macbeth at the dagger, — with convulsive energy," wrote *John Bull* with scathing force: while the actor James Anderson declared that the general public said Macready in the part was as melancholy as a mourning-coach in a snow-storm.

His Beatrice? Another lady of rank is to be added to our interesting list. Mrs. Nisbett (Lady Boothby), who, 'tis said, made an admirable Beatrice, even though inclined sometimes to indulge in mirth, when by seriousness she should have made the audience also serious. There was nothing of the pathetic ever in Mrs. Nisbett, although her life had seen much affliction. Her brilliant eyes, her clear face with its beautiful oval set off by a wealth of dark hair, her tall but sinuous form — all combined to give her dashing animation, while her laugh was the type of merry *abandon*. At the age of forty-six she died from the results of domestic afflictions. The daughter of a lieutenant in the English Army, Louisa Cranstoun Macnamara, by family misfortune, was forced, while yet a girl of only thirteen years, to take up the stage in order to earn a living. At the age of nineteen she was the wife of a captain of the Life-Guards, John A. Nisbett, who himself was but a youth, and who before he attained his majority lost his life in recklessly trying to ride a horse not thoroughly broken in. The courts would allow the widow of a minor none of the property, and she was again forced to the stage. But before she had reached her thirtieth year, Sir William Boothby, ninth baronet of that name, sought her hand in marriage, and peaceful life seemed once more at hand. Yet only a brief period passed before his death. Once more the widow, seeking her first love, the theatre, found the affliction of personal ill health soon compelling her retirement to her mother's home. As if Fate had not played its worst with this beautiful girl, now, in her despondent condition, she was obliged to face the successive shocks of three sudden deaths of nearest and dearest relatives — and the spirit could hold out no longer. Overworked mentally and physically, she fell sick on a Thursday, and died on the Sunday following.

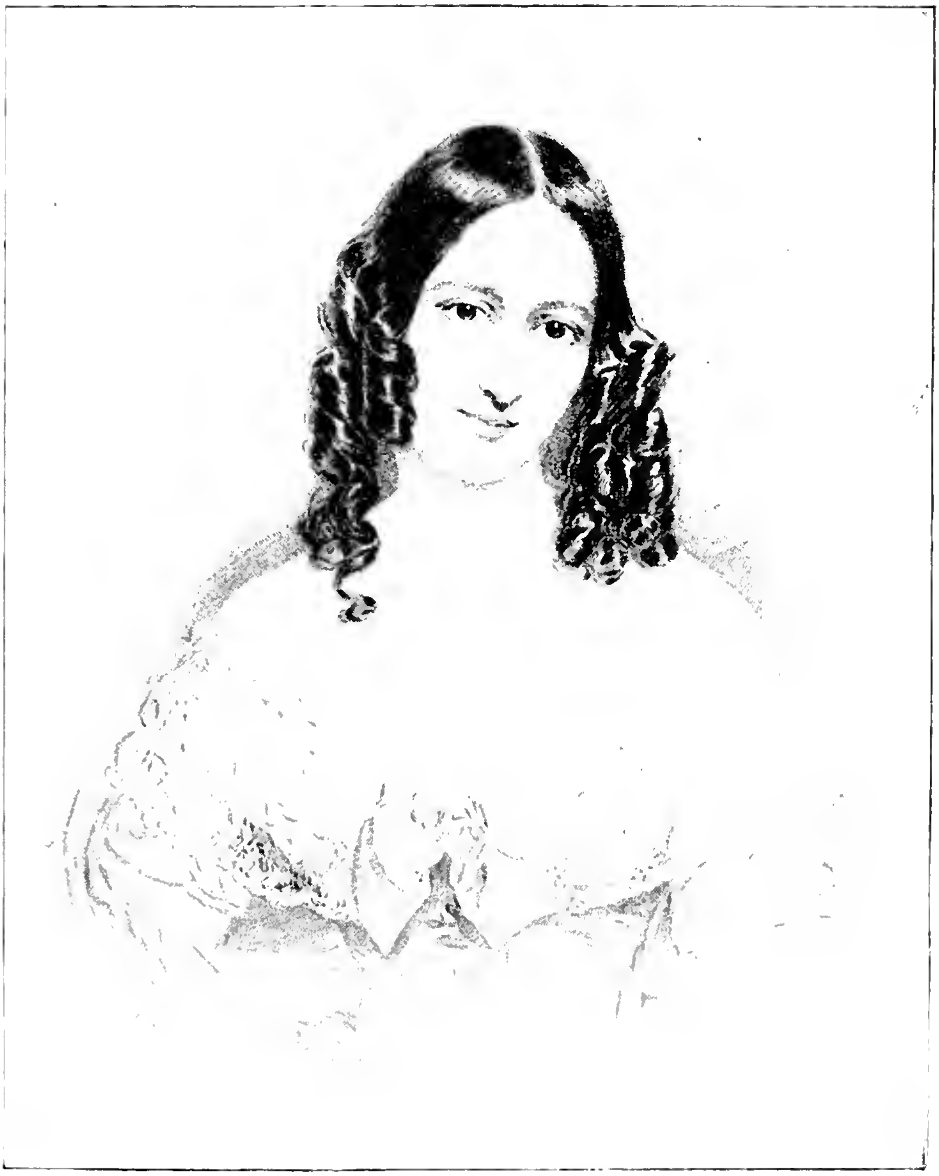
Happier the lot of another lady of title who, like Mrs. Nisbett, was once a leading lady with Macready. Helen Faucit, now as Lady Martin living in England respected and happy, often starred as Beatrice, and moreover dared at the age of sixty-nine act the part at the opening of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford. Six months later

(October, 1879) she made her last appearance on the stage, playing Rosalind, at Manchester, for the benefit of the widow of Charles Calvert. When Edwin Booth made his last visit but one to England, he was invited to the house of Lady Martin, where the entertainment consisted of a reading of "Much Ado," the hostess reciting the speeches of Beatrice, and Henry Irving those of Benedick.

As the Shakespeare revival of Macready at Drury Lane, Feb. 24, 1843, through Macready's faithfulness to truth, saw the male characters costumed for the first time appropriately in close-fitting, parti-colored suits with short tunics, while the women also wore the proper historical dresses, lovers of the play can thank that actor for the help he gave to "Much Ado" upon the stage.

Charles Kean, too, followed this example by giving liberal and attractive adornment to the play, though he did not make it one of his pageant productions. At the Princess's Theatre, in 1858, he opened the comedy with a sunset view of the Port of Messina, the king of the heavens gradually disappearing in the west, casting its declining rays on the houses and the ships, to be followed by the rising moon with equally striking light-effects. Then came a brilliant masquerade scene, with variegated lights from garden and bridge lamps. The Friar of Macready's revival, old John Ryder, was the Leonato of Kean's: the Hero was Miss Heath, afterwards the wife of Wilson Barrett. Beatrice fell to the lot of Ellen Tree (Mrs. Charles Kean): and the spectators, while they praised it in entirety, yet could not help singling out for special admiration that scene when Beatrice, looking saucily into the face of Benedick, drawled mockingly, "I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you."

When she played the part in America, our theatre-goers, too, exclaimed in the words of Joseph Ireland, "She is inimitably great in the *rôle*." What enthusiasm must have been felt over her performance, when, twenty years after having seen it, the remembrance of the acting so clung to the mind of a veteran play-goer as to lead him to write, "Her merry, rollicking laugh, which used to set the house in a sympathetic roar, yet lingers delightfully in my ears. There is not an actress on our stage who can express the gayety of Beatrice or point Beatrice's wit." That merry laugh in one scene, when heard before she entered the stage, was so joyous that it was wont to set the whole house into laughter before the actress could utter a word. No wonder, too, the theatre-goers liked Kean's Benedick while he was



ELLEN TREE (Mrs. Charles Kean.)
Painted by Sir W. C. Ross, A.R.A. Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

young, when one recalls that even after he became a shrivelled player of threescore years, who could look no more like Benedick "than a dried herring," as one discourteous writer put it, yet by the token of the same critic, the actor could by sheer art give even then the best Benedick of many a year.

At the old Park Theatre in New York, Kemble and his daughter played Benedick and Beatrice on the 25th of September, 1832; but the receipts, $657, were the smallest taken during this their first American engagement, the largest being $1,520, taken six days before, when "Romeo and Juliet" was staged. On the 16th of January, 1893, Fanny Kemble (Mrs. Butler) died in London.

We are coming now rapidly upon the American productions; but before dismissing the British stage, let us record simply the appearances of Miss Glyn and of Miss Cooper at Sadler's Wells, under Phelps's management; of Miss Kate Terry, who essayed the *rôle* in 1867, on the very eve of her retirement from the stage; of Miss Amy Sedgewick, of Genevieve Ward, of Miss Neilson, and Miss Ada Cavendish. Mrs. Mowatt, too, the American actress, in those days played Beatrice to Mr. E. L. Davenport's Benedick at the Princess's Theatre, when Kean was its manager; and Mrs. Sinclair, the divorced wife of Edwin Forrest, acted the part at the Haymarket. A curious experiment was tried in 1872 at the Holborn Theatre, when Creswick won some applause from the unthinking by the freak of "doubling" the characters of Benedick and Dogberry — but the less said of that innovation the better. Let its memory die.

Ellen Terry's Beatrice is now both England's and America's. Beginning the 11th of October, 1882, she played the *rôle* two hundred and twelve consecutive nights at the London Lyceum with Henry Irving as Benedick. On the 15th of February, 1884, the two made their bow in the characters in America at Haverley's Theatre, Chicago. Not in the leading rank of his impersonations does Irving's Benedick stand: though as he depicts the manliness of the friend, the gallantry of the soldier, and the courtesy of the gentleman, he places it in happy mean between the extremes of Lewis's restless, dashing coxcomb, as tradition shows it, and Macready's moody, saturnine, reflective lover. In point of fact, Irving rather elevates the character of Benedick, and, as William Winter puts it, "amuses, but is less amusing than charming." Miss Terry's Beatrice, also, is elevated in its tone: and her archness and mischievous sweetness are of the highest order.

"She is nothing harsher than a merry tease," writes Winter: "and in the soliloquy after the arbor scene she drops all flippancy, and glows with tender and loving womanhood."

The American stage first saw Beatrice on the 18th of March, 1789, when Mrs. Morris played the part to Hallam's Benedick in Philadelphia. Tall and elegant in person, she was regarded as the leading attraction of the early American company, even though her education was wretchedly imperfect and her enunciation bad. She had a queer, mysterious way about her that seems little like our natural, frank-minded Beatrice. One hobby was invariably to wear shoes with heels so high that the utmost caution was necessary to prevent her pitching over frontwards; another eccentricity was her dislike of being seen by the public in the daytime, a whim she carried to such an extreme as to have a little private way opened through a neighbor's garden, so that she might reach the theatre in New York from her lodgings without going down Broadway.

New York first saw "Much Ado," May 30, 1796. Mrs. John Johnson (*née* Ford), the handsome young actress of fascinating manners, acting Beatrice; while Boston's first Beatrice, of the season of 1796–1797, was Mrs. Williamson, a vivacious actress "from the

London stage," where, as Miss Fontenelle, she had on her very first appearance bounded into favor.

Sad was the career of a Beatrice of 1826, Mrs. Charles Gilfort, to whom "Gentleman George" Barrett was the Benedick, at the Bowery Theatre, New York. The daughter of Joseph G. Holman the actor, she made her first appearance at the Park Theatre in New York, on October 3, 1812, five days after her father, at the same theatre, had made his bow to an American audience. Then she was Lady Townly, and a rare, good Lady Townly, to her father's Lord Townly. So strong did her position become, that, as the leading comedy actress of the American stage of her time, she was able in 1814 to command two hundred dollars a night, a remarkable amount in those days, and even now a good-sized guaranty. Three years after her *début* she married a musician, Charles Gilfort, who was also the manager of the Bowery. He died fourteen years later a ruined man. The widow herself died in poverty and distress.

When J. B. Booth was managing the Tremont Theatre in Boston in 1828, Miss Clara Fisher (Mrs. Maeder) played Beatrice to the elder Wallack's Benedick, just a few days before John Gilbert, on the same stage, made his *début*. Two years later Miss Fisher, acting the character to Caldwell's Benedick, in New York, received from the *Mirror* of that date a discriminating notice, in which it was held that though she was correct, interesting, and delightful, yet she was not by nature best fitted for that class of work. Her swift play of features, rapidly expressing changes of emotion, was well illustrated in her Beatrice. "Watch her looks," writes the *Mirror* critic, "when she snatches the stanzas from Benedick, the joy and triumph beaming in her eyes, and the light of successful vanity and love gleaming altogether from her radiant face: then, when her own verses are produced and seized by Benedick, mark the change, — rapid and complete as the workings of thought, — and then the gradual yielding, as the archness and merriment break forth again, and she accepts him — out of pity, 'for I was told you were in a consumption!'" The Beatrice of 1828, who had been an "infant prodigy" eleven years before, is living to-day, after a stage career of seventy years.

Twenty-four years after the Boston production Wallack was playing Benedick, but with another Beatrice, Laura Keene. The actress had but just come over from England, where she had gained considerable celebrity at Mme. Vestris's theatre, and on this 18th of October, 1852, had been seen on our stage only a month. Naturally of spiritnelle appearance, with her slender, graceful form, her dark eyes and lovely features, Miss Keene often dressed in white garments to heighten this effect in her characters. Besides cultivating a swift, gliding motion, she also possessed another strange trick of continually winking both eyes in the expression of feeling. But that she was energetic enough was illustrated by her action one night in her own New York theatre, as narrated by Kate Reignolds. At the last moment it was found that the costumes for "Much Ado" were not ready. Without hesitation Laura Keene called before her every man in the cast, and then bade all the female attendants in the theatre sew the unfinished garments upon the people they were to fit. Still time ran short, and the curtain must go up. With humorous originality the paints of the scenic artist were seized by Miss Keene herself, and with their aid the decorations of the lords and attendants were added. "Don't come too near the ladies," was the parting admonition of the managing leading lady, as she flew away to dress herself for the play.

A twelvemonth before Laura Keene's first appearance, handsome Julia Bennett Barrow had left the British theatre to win fame in America; and in a few years she was to make her name and face popular here, not only in Beatrice, but in other attractive characters. Mrs. Conway, too, was one of our notable Beatrices, playing the character to Wallack's Benedick when he was sixty years of age.

It was as Beatrice that Charlotte Cushman, on Oct. 25, 1844, made her farewell appearance in New York, prior to her first visit to Europe; but George Vandenhoff, the Benedick of the cast, records in his "Note Book" that the house was disappointed. "A heavy assumption" was the verdict of another critic.

The beautiful and charming favorite of the stage, Mrs. John Hoey, proved an excellent Beatrice when, on the 14th of May, 1859, she played the *rôle;* and the date of the performance is worth remembering, from the fact that it marked the last time James W. Wallack appeared on the stage. He was then three score years and four, and had acted more than half a century, maintaining to the last his courtliness and vivacious grace.

Elegant and refined, Mrs. Hoey (Miss Josephine Shaw, later Mrs. Russell, later Mrs. Hoey) was called, by those who knew her, the personification of all that was bright and attractive. Though a native of England, she came to this country when a young girl, making her first appearance on the New York stage in 1841, at the National Theatre. In 1849 she joined Burton's Chamber Street Company as Mrs. Russell, remaining there until her marriage to John Hoey, of Adams Express fame, in 1851, when she took a farewell benefit, June 13, and retired. Three years later she was induced by Wallack, on the secession of Miss Keene from his theatre, to return to professional life, and on that stage for nine years was a popular leading lady.

Not long did the character essayed by Adelaide Neilson in 1874, during her second visit to America, remain in the repertoire of that actress; for she realized that her sphere lay with the romantic heroines of Shakespeare. Clara Jennings played the part admirably in support of Edwin Booth, while Mme Modjeska, Fanny Davenport, and Julia Marlowe have helped carry Beatrice into the memory of the present theatre-goer, without either one making the character essentially her own. The comedy acting of Clara Jennings was throughout graceful and elegant; and in the great cathedral scene, she rose to the situation with really splendid power. Her "Kill Claudio," meant all it expressed: the Benedick that failed to seek young Claudio after that would, indeed, have been faint-hearted.

Marlowe's Beatrice is a child of the sun, not of the lightning. It shines prettily but never scintillates, becoming more a saucy girl than a keenly witty woman — and is, therefore, not Shakespeare's Beatrice. Modjeska's merry but too poetical Beatrice, shrewdish but never shrewish, displays a vast love of wit, but at the same time a constant, underlying womanly affection. Fanny Davenport, too, has conceived the character in its lightest-hearted mood, divesting it of the shade of cutting bitterness that could be made over-prominent, and emphasizing the quick witticisms without sign of unkindness. She has more nearly approached the ideal than her contemporaries.

Yet a great Beatrice is to-day lacking to the American stage.

HERMIONE AND PERDITA.

(WINTER'S TALE.)

THE name of the youth who played Hermione when Dr. Simon Forman, at the Globe theatre of Shakespeare's day, became so impressed with the story of the play as to write down its synopsis in his diary, would scarcely be a matter of much moment, even if it was the first "run" of the "Winter's Tale" after the prompt-book left its author's hands. The beardless youths who then took on themselves the mimicry of ladies fair may be forgotten without much loss, and the Hermione and Perdita of that month of May, 1611, be left unrecorded in the memory. But around the actresses of later days clings an interest aroused by the fact that Miss Mary Anderson's marriage, June 17, 1890, to Antonio de Navarro, made the two chief characters of the play her farewell *rôles* on the stage.

Fairly popular for a while after its initial performance, the "Winter's Tale" then disappeared for nearly a century, reappearing on the 15th of January, 1741, at Goodman's Fields. Then it was that Miss Hippesley danced through the part of Perdita. She was an actress who could claim rivalship with Kitty Clive, inheriting talent from a father who dared play against Garrick, and improving her natural gifts even after she became Mrs. Green, so that she won the distinction of creating, in later life, the characters of Mrs. Hardcastle and Mrs. Malaprop. The Hermione of this January, a little more than one hundred and fifty years ago, was a Mrs. Giffard, a mediocre actress, but the wife of the manager, and so the recipient of the plums of the theatrical pudding.

Hippesley, father, a little after this time was playing the Clown at the first production of the play at Covent Garden: but the Perdita was not his daughter: it was Mrs. Hale. Hermione was "one of the most beautiful women that ever trod the stage." Mrs. Horton, at one time a wretched strolling player, content to picture Cupid at the country fairs: then, in the opinion of Booth and Wilks, the worthy successor of Mrs. Oldfield; then so lowly as to receive the offer of a paltry four pounds a week for her services, and that offer, too, made out of pity. From bottom to top, and then down again on the professional ladder, but retaining even into advanced age her singular beauty, powerful to bring youth and age to her feet! Had Mrs. Horton been a player of the natural, instead of the stilted school, she might longer have retained the place of honor from which Peg Woffington and Mrs. Pritchard drove her. Pritchard it was who played Paulina at this Covent Garden production.

A few years later Mrs. Pritchard was playing Hermione to the Perdita of Colley Cibber's daughter-in-law, for whom, 'tis said, Händel, in admiration of her musical talent, arranged one of the airs in his Messiah to meet the requirements of her voice, before she changed her ambition from the concert hall to the theatre. Garrick was Leontes; and the version used then upon the Drury Lane stage was his "alteration" of the play, an alteration that, in its effort to avoid the incongruity of a babe in one act appearing as a woman in the next, gently dropped out half the play, and to dodge the maritime question changed Bohemia to Bithynia. This last idea Kean imitated in his famous revival just a century later.

The critics and gossips of old said that Garrick's version was well acted; that Mrs. Pritchard, whom Johnson called a vulgar idiot, because she said "gownd," but who was inspired by gentility on the stage, was excellent; that Garrick's performance in the statue scene was masterly; and, in curious wording, that "Mrs. Cibber's neat simplicity in singing a song made Perdita appear of the greatest consequence." Mrs. Pritchard could then better play Hermione than she could the light-footed Perdita, since her stoutness had reached that point where it was exceedingly difficult to stoop with grace; as was shown to humorous disadvantage in the ineffectual attempt both she and Mrs. Clive (suffering from a like unflattering fleshly abundance) made in reaching for the letter dropped on the stage when "The Careless Husband" was performing. In the character of Hermione her picture was painted by Pine, and the copying print of 1765 showed strong and expressive rather than pleasing features.

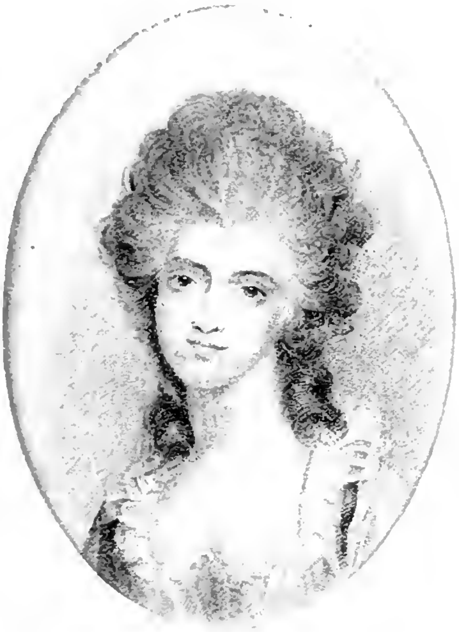
Garrick's version kept the stage till Kemble revised the original; though a benefit performance in 1771 saw Shakespeare's work presented in entirety, with Hermione cast to that Mrs. Mattocks who would have shown the actress even under the influence of a nunnery, and who was an actress for the extraordinary period of nearly sixty years. Perdita was cast to Mrs. Bulkley, the original Miss Hardcastle and Julia ("The Rivals").

Beauty was almost always well represented in Hermione's gracious features, if the olden chronicles are to be believed. Mrs. Hartley, who played the part in the very year when she retired from the stage (though, to be sure, she was then only of the age that claimed Miss Anderson at the time of her retirement), was pronounced "the most perfect beauty that was ever seen," with voluptuous loveliness that drove even stage lovers to real adoration. The Perdita that then appeared was of like distracting prettiness. But, alas, poor Mrs. Robinson! Her sad, romantic story is a twice-told tale, yet always affecting, however often heard. Born in the midst of a terrible storm, her life never left the gloom of the clouds. Afflicted with a father inattentive and cruel, and an unloved husband dissolute and neglectful, little wonder the homage of the town turned her head to frivolity. She was but twenty-one years of age when she played Perdita at Drury Lane.

"You will make a conquest of the Prince to-night," said Smith, as he stepped forth to the green-room, clad in the garb of Leontes. "I never saw you look so handsome as you do now."

His chance prediction proved too true. It was Mrs. Robinson's first appearance before royalty, and naturally she was very nervous. "I hurried through the first scene," she says in the record she has left behind her, "not without much embarrassment, owing to the fixed attention with which the Prince of Wales honored me. Indeed, some flattering remarks which were made by His Royal Highness met my ear as I stood near his box, and I was overwhelmed with confusion. The Prince's particular attention was observed by every one, and I was again rallied at the end of the play. On the last courtesy the royal family condescendingly returned a bow to the performers; but just as the curtain was falling, my eyes met those of the Prince of Wales, and with a look that I shall never forget, he gently inclined his head a second time. I felt the compliment, and blushed my gratitude. As I was going to my chair, I again met the royal family crossing the stage. I was again honored with a very marked and low bow from the Prince of Wales."

Next comes Lord Malden, as a go-between, bringing from the Prince a note addressed to "Perdita," and signed "Florizel;" and after that, letter upon letter reaches her hands, all brimming with pledges of undying love. Perdita's husband, meanwhile, stands aloof, perfectly indifferent to her. She becomes so nettled at his actions, as well as touched by the apparent devotion of the most admired and most accomplished Prince of Europe, as to consent



MRS. MARY ROBINSON.

to a secret meeting at Kew. This is followed by other meetings, then by her retirement from the stage, and then, naturally, to gossip in the public prints, and to notoriety that overwhelms her whenever she appears on the street. The Prince, to bind her closer as he thinks, gives her a bond for twenty thousand pounds, to be paid upon his coming of age: but this, she declared afterwards, was a total surprise, as the idea of pecuniary interest had never entered her mind. It need not have been considered deeply, as she found to her cost: for when her royal admirer, for court reasons, broke off his alliance with fair Perdita, the bond was shown to be of little value, and was ultimately surrendered in consideration of an annuity of five hundred pounds. At the age of twenty-four, the unfortunate woman became a cripple, and two years later passed away.

And now we find in the "Winter's Tale" Miss Farren, tall, beautiful in face, and elegant in person, though in figure far the opposite to Mrs. Pritchard, perhaps too far: an actress whose fate was to be more happy than poor Mrs. Robinson's, since she not only won her nobleman, but married him. And there was Mrs. Yates, whose tragic power was so great as to frighten every actress except Mrs. Pope from attempting Medea against her, but whose comedy power was an absent quality, to use a phrase that borders on the "bull." Of her Hermione, Campbell writes: "Mrs. Yates had a sculpturesque beauty that suited the statue as long as it stood still; but when she had to speak, the charm was broken, and the spectators wished her back to her pedestal."

Hermione also fell to the lot of Mrs. Pope, who played against Mrs. Yates's Medea, and who is more interesting from having played Portia to Macklin's last character, his Shylock, when the poor old man lost his memory, and Cordelia to the last Lear of Garrick.

One of Miss Farren's glories was that of creating the character of Rosara in the "Barber of Seville;" a remembrance which might, indeed, have lost its pleasure, had the side lights that one night set Rosara's dress in a blaze carried her to death. Fortunately Jack Bannister extinguished the fire with his Spanish coat. Miss Farren's Perdita was that frail creature, Mrs. Crouch; and Mrs. Pope's first Perdita was Mrs. Mountain, an actress whose assumed characters strongly resembled Mrs. Crouch's in acting and singing, but whose real character strongly contrasted with the other fair one's. Another Perdita to Mrs. Pope's Hermione was chiefly noteworthy for the difference the married state made in her popularity, — as Miss Wallis she was a favorite: as Mrs. Campbell she was a broken idol.

With the dawning of the nineteenth century Shakespeare's entire play returned to the stage, driving out the mutilated fragment by Garrick, and that still worse arrangement by Morgan which held the stage at times between 1754 and 1798, and in which the play was reduced to a two-act afterpiece under the title of "The Sheep-Shearing, or Florizel and Perdita." One of the most interesting heroines of "The Sheep-Shearing" was the fair and delicate Miss Nossiter, who fell in love with handsome Spranger Barry, and though all the town was in the secret, did not hesitate to display her real affection when her lover played the princely Florizel.

The great revival of the "Winter's Tale" at Drury Lane saw a notable cast: John P. Kemble as Leontes, Charles Kemble as Florizel, Miss Hickes (for the first time on any stage) as Perdita, and Mrs. Siddons (for the first time in this character) as Hermione. Of Miss Hickes, however, comment is not enthusiastic. Boaden some years later declared, "the Perdita was a very delicate and pretty young lady of the name of Hickes — this much I remember of her: but whether she had more or fewer requisites than other candidates for this lovely character I am now unable to decide."

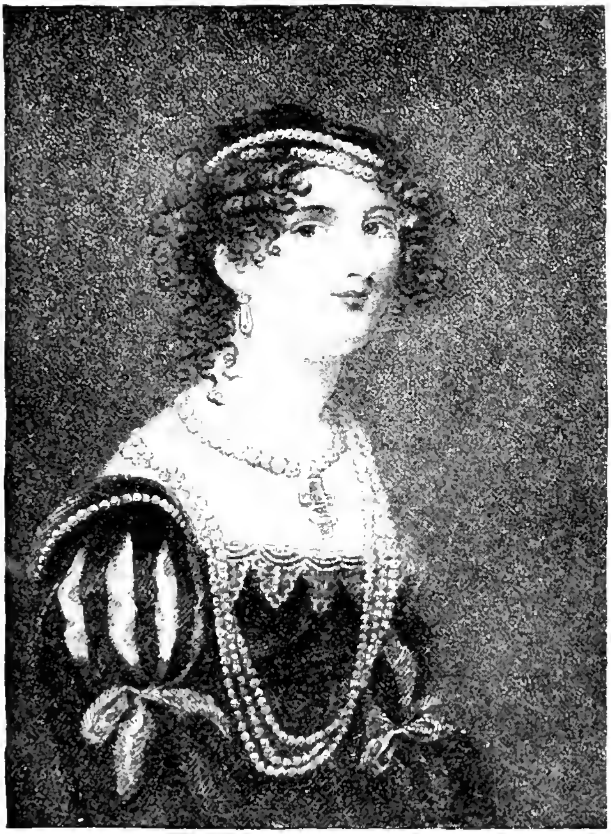
Again and again the play was repeated, until at Covent Garden Theatre, on the 25th of June, in the year 1812, grand Mrs. Siddons appeared for the last time as Sicily's Queen, just four days before her farewell of the stage. She played Isabella ("Measure for Measure"), Belvidera, and Lady Macbeth on the succeeding days, and with the latter character made her formal exit from professional life, although she returned for a few scattered performances in after years. She "looked the statue," says Campbell, "even to literal illusion; and whilst its draperies hid her lower limbs, it showed a beauty of head, neck, shoulders, and arms that Praxiteles might have studied." The words of Boaden, picturing her conception with more detail, declare she "stood, one of the noblest statues that even Grecian taste ever invented. Upon the magical words by Paulina, 'Music, awake her: strike!' the sudden action of the head absolutely startled, as though such a miracle had really vivified the statue; and the descent from the pedestal was equally graceful and affecting."

One evening while Mrs. Siddons was posing as the statue, her long, flowing drapery caught fire from a stage-lamp. Quick as thought a scene-shifter rushed to her side, and with a ready and unfearing hand extinguished the blaze, saving the great actress from disfigurement, perhaps from death. That she appreciated the danger and the worth of the rescue was evident: for her purse overflowed its gold into the pocket of the poor stage-worker, and better still, her aid helped to save his son, a deserter from the army, from severity of punishment. The shock of the occurrence never faded from the mind of the actress: whenever, after that, the "Winter's Tale" was mentioned, it caused her an uncontrollable shudder.

Mrs. Siddons's successor in the *rôle* was Miss Somerville, afterward Mrs. Bunn, that actress whose initial performance, but for her undoubted talent, would have been spoiled through the malignity of Kean's action when, after the manner of a crafty old stager, he persisted in taking his position back of the young *débutante*, compelling her constantly to turn her face away from the audience. This was a trick of Macready also, of whose action *Punch* said that it supposed he thought Miss Helen Faucit had a very handsome back, for when on the stage with her he always managed that the audience should see it and little else.

Our ambitious Miss Somerville, though but nineteen years of age when she played Hermione, yet was of fully matured figure — in fact, the story exists that Kean, with effrontery, refused to act with this same well developed young lady, except in one play, because she was "too big for him." Yet Mrs. Somerville-Bunn was not "too big" for Macready to play Leontes to her Hermione some four or five years later, when that tragedian for the first time in London acted the part of the jealous and tyrannical husband. It was then, too, that Wallack gave his first impersonation of Florizel, and then that Mrs. W. West, another of the paragons, "one of the most beautiful women the British stage can boast of," pictured Perdita for the first time.

The Covent Garden Hermione of four years later date was that Mrs. Faucit whose queen was termed most brilliant, and who received the very high praise that "since the retirement of Mrs. Siddons no actress has exceeded our heroine in representations of majesty." Tall, and of voluptuous figure, with a charming, even if not strikingly handsome face, she made a superb picture of Hermione. The Perdita of that date was Miss Jarman, a lady with a lisp and an unconquerable desire to play parts for which she was not fitted.



MRS. W. WEST
Painted by Stump. Engraved by J. Thomson.

A little less than ten years later, Mrs. Faucit was playing Paulina in the "Winter's Tale," while in the same decade, though at another theatre, her daughter, Helen Faucit, was sustaining the *rôle* that her mother once had filled. Helen Faucit (now Lady Martin) was one of the few Hermiones who by reason of youth seemed better adapted for the part of Perdita. She was at that time but seventeen years of age, and had enjoyed barely two years of stage experience. Macready, when he leased Covent Garden, engaged her services; and on the opening of that house, when the actor-manager, as he records in his Reminiscences, "acted Leontes artist-like, but not until the last act very effectively," the graceful, sympathetic young actress played Hermione. Her impersonations, years ago, were pronounced as nature itself in its finest and most beautiful aspect, and her Hermione accorded a success. In 1837 and 1838 Paulina was Miss Huddart (Mrs. Warner), who made known the character of Hermione to American theatre-goers of three or four decades ago. The accompanying Perdita of 1838, Miss Vandenhoff, was the daughter of John Vandenhoff, who on this latter occasion took Macready's place in the leading male *rôle*. Miss Vandenhoff, we are told, was a woman of "handsome and expressive features, dazzling fairness of complexion, and a manner perfectly graceful and natural."

An earlier Hermione to Macready's Leontes was Mrs. Sloman, a coldly classical performer, whose history is uninteresting to Americans, save in the fact that she twice visited this country, only to find that during the interval of ten years she had been almost forgotten, and her popularity become a thing of the past. Her granddaughter still survives, living in Brooklyn, N.Y., where she has made a position in the world of music.

The productions by Macready, by Phelps, and by Charles Kean have been true glories in the history of the play since the day of the Kembles. Isabel Glyn (Mrs. E. S. Dallas), one of the Hermiones at Sadler's Wells, during that wonderful series of revivals when all but six of Shakespeare's works were reproduced, died in England on the eighteenth of May, 1889, at the age of three-score years and six. Twenty years after the performance under the management of Phelps, just as she was retiring from the stage, Mrs. Glyn-Dallas repeated her Hermione at the Standard Theatre, Bishopsgate, and then turned to America for a time, here reading selections in one of her best characters, Cleopatra.

Following Miss Glyn as Hermione at the famous

Sadler's Wells came an actress "in the alarm of fear caught up." Manager Phelps, at his wits' end to find a new heavy-tragedy lady, without a minute's hesitation accepted the advice of his prompter when that *Fidus Achates* of all stage heroes and heroines, and villains as well, recommended a certain Miss Atkinson. Phelps's first dismay can be conceived when he found the young lady not only homely in face, but entirely destitute of elementary education; yet he liked her tall, stately figure, and soon discovered that those plain features were remarkably expressive. Assiduously coaching this illiterate but crudely talented player, he made of her an actress capable of sustaining with success such *rôles* as Lady Macbeth and Queen Katharine, as well as Hermione.

To her belongs the distinction of being the original Duchess in Tom Taylor's "Fool's Revenge," just as to Frederic Robinson, now so well known to the American stage, belongs the distinction of being the original Dell' Aquila of the same play. It was Mr. Robinson who played Florizel in the "Winter's Tale" revival thirty and more years ago, when the Hermione was Miss Atkinson, and the Perdita was Miss Jenny Marston, an ambitious little juvenile lady, whose mother was the Paulina in the production, and whose father, Henry Marston, was for a long time a well-known figure on the London stage.

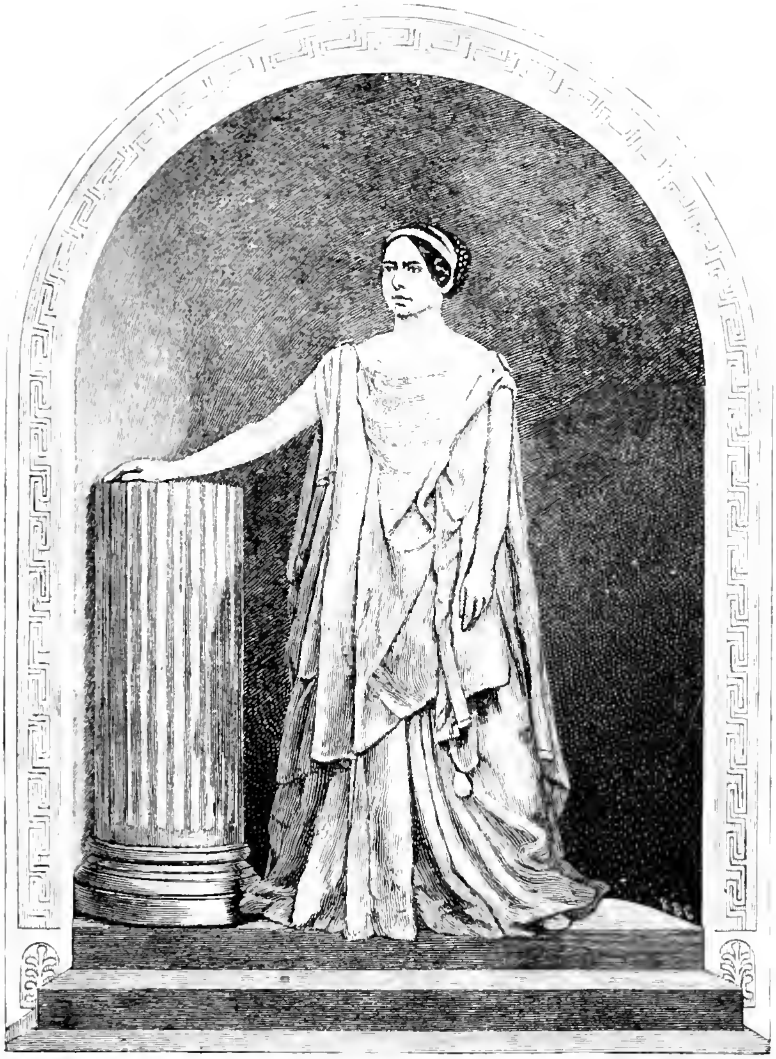
The Princess's production of April 28, 1856, saw an elaborate setting of the "Winter's Tale," with costly Greek antiquities and superb scenery. Mrs. Charles Kean's (Ellen Tree's) Hermione was pronounced full of womanly gentleness and tenderness. Her first appearance in the character had been made under Alfred Bunn's management at Drury Lane, twenty-one years before, when Macready played Leontes; Mrs. Yates, Perdita; and Mrs. Faucit, Paulina. Ellen Tree was then thirty years of age. At the Princess's production, Mr. Kean was Leontes, Carlotta Leclercq was Perdita, and Miss Heath (afterward Mrs. Wilson Barrett) was Florizel, that being the first time the character of the princely lover was ever given to a woman. The Mamillius of 1856 was a child, then making her first appearance on the stage, now known as the leading actress of England, Miss Ellen Terry.

The last Hermione on the London stage, previous to Miss Anderson, was Miss Ellen Wallis. She took part in Chatterton's attempted reproduction of Kean's arrangement at the reopening of Drury Lane in 1878; but her acting was not entirely satisfactory, and the production itself proved a total failure. She, like her predecessor Mrs. Giffard, became a manager's wife, and is known to the London stage as Mrs. Lancaster-Wallis, of the Shaftesbury Theatre.

Few indeed have been the productions of the "Winter's Tale" that America has viewed, and the two performances previous to Burton's day were only single-night benefits. Mrs. Bartley was the original Hermione here, when with her husband she made her last appearance in this country on the 5th of May, 1820, at the Park Theatre, New York. She was then only thirty-six years of age, but had been on the stage a quarter of a century. When known to the world under her maiden name, Miss Smith won the affectionate esteem of the Wizard of the North, the great Sir Walter. Scott took such friendly interest in her career that he often wrote to her letters of encouraging advice and friendly badinage, some of which contained sly and characteristic "digs" at his friend, Daniel Terry of the little Adelphi Theatre in the Strand. Mr. George Bartley, the original Max Harkaway in "London Assurance," played Autolycus, when his wife acted Hermoine. They made a great deal of money in America: but Mrs. Bartley — poor woman! — could not enjoy it, for her body suffered fearfully for many years from paralysis, and her mind became weakened as well. She had given promise of taking Mrs. Siddons's place as the tragic leader, until Miss O'Neill seized the dramatic sceptre.

At the Park, ten years later almost to a month, lovely Mrs. Hilton impersonated Hermione; and Mr. Hilton, Autolycus. The great metropolis, of course, saw the most of the American revivals, three at Burton's, with Mrs. Warner and Mrs. Parker as Hermione; one at the Bowery, with Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr., in the leading female *rôle*; and then that magnificent production at Booth's, with Mrs. Mollenhauer (Ada Clifton) as Hermione, and Isabella Pateman as Perdita. Of these people Mrs. Warner and Mrs. Wallack gave their interpretations elsewhere.

Mrs. Warner, as a leading heavy actress of England, and the possessor of the personal friendship of the Queen, came to America with a great prestige, and with the "Winter's Tale" began her tour. In comparison with the many who have played Hermione in their younger years, it is interesting to note that Mrs. Warner was over fifty when she gave the part in this country. Curious enough it seems, in contrast, to find that she had played Lady Macbeth when she was but fifteen years of age! The stage companion of Macready, Phelps, Webster, Power, and Forrest; the lessee,



MRS. WARNER AS HERMIONE
Tallis Print

with Phelps, of Sadler's Wells, and the manager of Marylebone Theatre, Mrs. Warner's stage experience was of wide extent. Her death occurred three years after her American *début*. Of her appearance as Hermione the Athenaeum declared, "Mrs. Warner in the statue scene looked passing beautiful."

When Mrs. Parker for the second time played Hermione in New York, J. W. Wallack, Jr., impersonated Leontes: and the next year Mr. Wallack showed his portrayal of the part to Bostonians at the famous old stock theatre, the Museum. His wife then starred as Hermione, while Rose Skerrett (later Mrs. L. R. Shewell) was Perdita: and William Warren, Autolycus.

Lawrence Barrett, who in the course of his career played three different characters of the play, probably more than any other American actor could claim, was the Polixenes at the Boston Museum production. In 1857, the year he made his *début* in New York, he acted Florizel at Burton's Theatre. In 1871, at Booth's Theatre, he was the Leontes of the cast.

Another Hermione of repute to be recorded is Madame Janauschek. On a Cleveland, Ohio, playbill of a decade ago we find that the Perdita to

Madame Janauschek's Hermione was the pretty Miss Anna Warren Story of Washington.

In all this list of Herminones and Perditas not one player is found venturing to assume both the characters. Mary Anderson, on the 23d of April, 1887, at Nottingham, England, was the first to break in upon tradition: and her lovable and gracious, even if not thoroughly regal, Hermione, combined with her sprightly, winsome Perdita, certainly gave the old play a new lease of theatrical life. Curious it is to recall that one feature in this last stage character of Mary Anderson displayed for the first time an utter abandonment of the charge which, from the very first of her career, had been held up against her acting. All critics had admitted her natural beauty, all had commended her intelligence, and many had praised her for earnestness and strength. But all declared that she was cold and passionless. From the time of her first appearance on Nov. 27, 1875, at Macauley's Theatre in Louisville, Ky., when the California-born girl was in her seventeenth year, her Juliet, her Rosalind, her Parthenia, her Galatea, her Pauline, her Julia, had shown what popular favor a magnificent figure, a superb voice, and natural tragic power could gain, even if command of pathos and

MARY ANDERSON AS HERMIONE

naturalness in comedy acting were less marked; but at the same time the world constantly repeated the two words, "cold" and "stately." Perdita, however, her last character on the stage, was a revelation. The quick-footed gazelle could scarcely have been more light of foot, more animated, or more fascinating in action. The wild, gypsy-like dance showed a living picture of free, easy, voluptuous movement, so devoid of artificiality or restraint as to be as captivating as it was real for such an ideal country-bred character. Who could have believed the stately Mary Anderson capable of such graceful romping?

The music sounded, the shepherds and shepherdesses seized hands, forward and back, turned about and formed in line, with Perdita and Florizel in the centre. A breathless dash to the front of the stage sweeps Perdita's soft clinging garments of white tight around her limbs: her brown hair falls negligently over the one and then the other shoulder, as the shapely head follows from side to side the swaying motions of the lithe body; a beautiful, merry face glances out from under the floating hair, and the portrait of unconventional, natural loveliness is complete. It needed only the rhythm of the dancing movements to make the spectators fascinated, captivated in admiration. No petty mincing steps were here, but long, swift, sweeping dashes, that outlined the figures of the dance like the broad strokes of a free-hand artist, carrying the dancer, almost as though floating in air, from cottage to rocks and back to cottage again. It was the poetry of luxurious unrestraint, of boundless freedom from the artificial rules and order affected by mankind, united with the harmony of that natural love for the symmetrically beautiful with which the best of humanity is gifted.

Mary Anderson's Perdita will not easily be forgotten.

VIOLA.

(TWELFTH NIGHT.)

It is said that Charles I., whose admiration of Shakespeare was a crime with the Puritans, gave to "Twelfth Night" the title of "Malvolio," which evidence of partiality for the character of the vain steward leads a critic of years ago to declare, "Had he seen Mrs. Jordan perform in the play, he would, perhaps, rather have called it 'Viola.'"

Many a play-goer of to-day, remembering the poor Malvolios and the admirable Violas he has seen, may repeat the phrase, substituting for Jordan the name of his favorite. The youth has but five to bring to mind: Modjeska the Viola of refinement, Marlowe the Viola of brightness, Rehan the Viola of seriousness, Terry the Viola of brilliancy, and Wainwright the Viola of elegance. The man bears in memory Neilson, Barrow, and others whose glory is now, alas, but history — and no two agree who is the best.

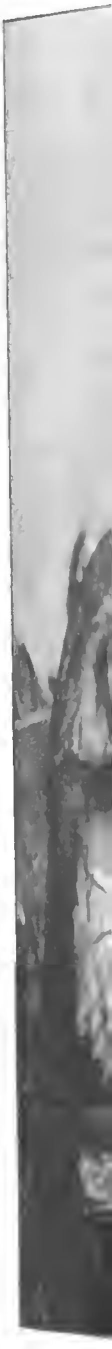
It is somewhat curious to note that love-sick Viola was the character leading to the professional separation of its latest interpreter and her husband. As stars together, Louis James and Marie Wainwright had for three seasons played, the lady acting Beatrice, Rosalind, Desdemona, and Ophelia, as well as Virginia and Gretchen; but to Mr. James the *rôle* of Malvolio presented no attraction, while to his wife Viola was a beacon towards which she sought to guide her histrionic career. The daughter of a Commodore of the United States Navy and the granddaughter of a noted bishop, Marie Wainwright made her *début* at Booth's Theatre, New York, in a scene of "Romeo and Juliet," as one of the six Juliets at the benefit of George Rignold. Then she joined the stock company of the old Boston Museum, and to her astonishment and dismay found herself obliged to act Josephine, in "Pinafore," when that comic opera was first brought out in America. Soon, however, she was in the legitimate drama, as leading lady with Lawrence Barrett, and there met her chief successes.

Like Miss Wainwright, another Viola of to-day found herself cast in "Pinafore" at the beginning of her career; but to this girl — for she was then a mere slip of a child — fell the part of Sir Joseph

Porter in a juvenile opera company. Yet the English-born maid, Julia Marlowe, — or, as she was then billed, Fanny Brough (her real name being in fact Sarah Frances Frost), — accredited herself well, and six years later shone suddenly and brilliantly as a theatrical star of some magnitude. Parthenia was her first character, Juliet her second, and Viola her third. In spite of her early discouragements she courageously continued, until to-day Mrs. Robert Taber — as her interesting marriage to her leading support entitles her to be called in private life — represents the best art of the younger stage.

In Modjeska the sentimental side of Viola is thrown into bold relief by marked tenderness, gentle timidity, and delicate pathos. The character was one of her later assumptions. Of Polish birth, this actress has now become one of the chief lights of the American stage. Her early life was full of struggle. Some little time after the burning of Cracow had swept away all the possessions of her widowed mother, Helena for a while was turned aside from her histrionic impulses by marriage, brought about by the mother, with the daughter's elderly guardian, Modrzejewski. One son was born to them: and it was after the birth of this son's child that Modjeska (a name, it may be stated, derived by popular abbreviation of Modrzejewska) fulfilled a promise, made half in joke and half in earnest, of playing Juliet when she had become a grandmother. Success in amateur theatricals called the attention of Modrzejewski to the value of such an accomplished wife, and he therefore soon assisted her to progress upon the stage. Her intense patriotism led her to refuse an engagement to play German tragedy in Austria, as it also caused her to decline an invitation from Dumas to play Camille in Paris; but her reward came in the honor of being regarded as the foremost of Warsaw's actors. In 1868 she married Charles Bozenta Chlapowski, a patriotic journalist of high social connections, and with him has enjoyed a most happy life. Ill health and family afflictions led Modjeska in 1876 to America, where for a time she essayed farming in California. But money ran short; and the plucky actress, learning in six months the English language, made her first appearance in this country in 1877 on the San Francisco stage. From that time her career has been uninterruptedly triumphant.

Of Rehan's Viola, undertaken after she had made successes in Rosalind and Katherine the Shrew, and when the actress had passed her thirtieth year, the commendatory word is not to be withheld, though it



MME. MODJESKA.

is tempered by the same criticism that records itself against Ellen Terry's interpretation: namely, that it expresses in full but one side of the character. With Rehan the serious predominates.

Of the four chief American Violas of to-day, three were born abroad, — Modjeska in Poland, Marlowe in England, and Rehan in Ireland. It was as Ada Crehan that the latter actress was born in Limerick on the 22d of April, 1860; but the name was changed forever, so the story goes, by the mistake of a printer who interpreted the handwriting on the play-bill copy to be Ada C. Rehan, and so printed it. Having made a success Miss Rehan continued under the new patronymic. Interesting it is to note that she was a member of the stock company at Macauley's Theatre in Louisville, Ky., when Mary Anderson made her first appearance on the stage, Nov. 27, 1875. Miss Rehan's *début* had been made at the age of thirteen, in Newark, N.J., when she acted a small part in "Across the Continent" for one night only, filling the place of an actress taken suddenly ill. Shortly afterward she played with her brother-in-law, Oliver Doud Byron, at Wood's Theatre, New York, and then obtained a regular engagement at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, following that with experiences in travelling combinations. Augustin

Daly, seeing her act at Albany and again in New York, noted the promise in the girl (who was at that time less than twenty), and engaged her for his company. In 1879 she became leading lady: and since then her life has been one round of triumphs, both in America and in England, with modern comedy *rôles* and with Rosalind, Katherine the Shrew, Mistress Ford, Helena, the Princess of France, and Viola.

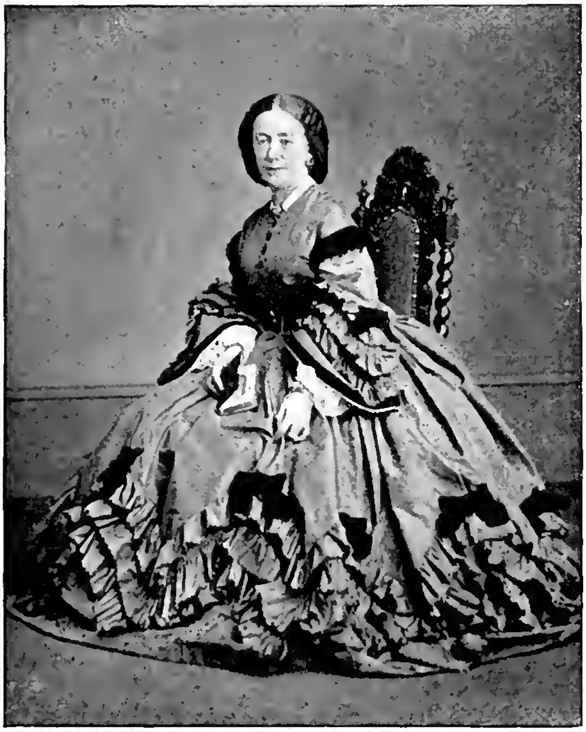
And now to glance back at the Violas of older memory. Neilson's third tour of America was begun May 12, 1877, at Daly's Theatre, New York, with her first performance of Viola, a character which, by the pathos and humor expressed in her acting, was at once ranked close beside her Juliet. Before her day the most noted revivals of the old comedy were at Burton's, in 1852 and 1858, when Burton himself played the fat knight, and Charles Fisher interpreted Malvolio. In the first production Mr. Lester (so Lester Wallack then billed his name) was Aguecheek: in the second that character was impersonated by Charles J. Mathews: while the 1858 performance also saw Lawrence Barrett, then just beginning his career, playing the part of Sebastian, twin brother of the heroine.

In all the life of the comedy on the stage it has been no easy matter to find for the heroine's brother a player who could so closely resemble her as to make the complications of the story seem possible. Dora Jordan's own brother, Mr. Bland, several times played Sebastian to her Viola; while W. Murray, the brother of Mrs. Henry Siddons, in later years carried out a similar combination. In 1869, for the first time on the English stage, the German fashion of having Viola also act Sebastian was adopted, the meeting of the two characters at the last moment being overcome by having as Sebastian a mute double, an actress dressed to resemble the character, but given nothing to say during her few minutes on the scene. Kate Terry played the *rôles*.

The Viola of the Burton revivals was Lizzie Weston, who first appeared under that name, and then as Mrs. A. H. Davenport, having in the interval between the productions, been married, — and divorced as well. On Feb. 14, 1858, she married Mathews, the Aguecheek of the second cast, only two years after the death of his first wife, Mme. Vestris, and from him received the compliment in print of being "a prudent, economical, industrious little helpmate, who, by two or three years of good management, repaired the cruelty of fortune in other respects, and who, with a clear little head and a good little heart, at length did for me what I had never been able to do myself — kept my expenditure within my income."

About this same time, Julia Bennett Barrow was acting Viola — she whom Forrest esteemed the best Desdemona of the stage, and who increased the furore over "Hiawatha" by her recitation of the poem as she stood in the picturesque costume of an Indian squaw behind the footlights, with Longfellow himself in one of the boxes, applauding her beauty and her melodious voice. With graceful figure and expressive voice, this highly cultivated daughter of a well-to-do English actor had advanced so far in music as to be urged towards the operatic stage. But in 1841, while a girl in her teens, she made her *début* on the English stage as an actress; and the success that met her efforts determined her career. When one and twenty years of age, Julia Bennett married Jacob Barrow; but her subsequent retirement from the stage was broken two years later by unfortunate circumstances. She returned to the theatre, and in 1851 came to America to gain extended triumphs.

Then there was Clara Fisher (Mrs. Maeder), also, as an interpreter of the "Twelfth Night" heroine; but with her the every-day character was stronger



MRS. JULIA BENNETT BARROW.

than the poetical. Viola was touchingly acted, yet not so well as was Ophelia, to which she gave grace and effective simplicity. Though not absolutely pretty in face, Clara Fisher in her younger days, with her short, plump, but finely formed figure, her arch expression and smiling features, and with her sprightly manner of acting, made herself so much the rage as to set the young ladies of the fashionable world even to dressing their hair *à la* Fisher, in boyish style, and actually to imitating her lisp.

A still earlier Viola was Mrs. Henry, whose support at the Park Theatre in New York, in 1825, included husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wallack, in the characters of Malvolio and Sebastian. Mrs. Henry was then twenty-four years of age, and had been on the New York stage but one year. She was also to mark the same year by marrying, June 24, "Gentleman George" Barrett. Her life had been full of sorrow, even at that early period, and its later record was no clearer of clouds. Married at the age of sixteen to a dancer named Drummond, she had been obliged, after the birth of two children, to obtain a divorce from him on the charge of ill treatment, and had resumed her name of Henry. Extraordinarily beautiful in person and accomplished in mind was this Philadelphia girl, —

"A faultless piece of mortality in outward loveliness," said Fanny Kemble, — while her acting in gay and refined characters was of the highest order. But an inordinate craving for liquor disturbed her happy third married life, and ultimately brought her to degradation. Then kind friends restored her to society, and again she took up a career of triumph on the stage until her death in December, 1853.

Before Mrs. Henry assumed our heroine's character, "Twelfth Night" appears to have enjoyed a veritable Rip Van Winkle sleep of twenty years. It was on a warm June day in the year 1804, at the old Park Theatre in New York City, when Hallam, a most popular actor of the time, was enjoying his regular benefit performance, that the graceful and stylish Mrs. Johnson stepped upon the stage in the masquerading garments of the newly created Cesario. She, the second Viola of the American theatre, may still hold a place in the memory of some veteran play-goer, for her death occurred but fifty-nine years ago. As the daughter of the British officer, Major Ford; as a young actress at Covent Garden; as the wife of John Johnson, one of the favorite "old men" of the New York theatre in its early days, — she was remarkable for the union in her person of ease, grace, refinement, and lightness of histrionic touch, together

MRS. GEORGE BARRETT.

with that tragic power that won for her the proud title of the "Siddons of America."

With her in that production — and the performance occurred, it is worth noting, only seventeen days after the introduction to the American stage of another Shakespearian play, "The Comedy of Errors" — were Hallam as the Clown, and Hallam's wife as Olivia, together with Harwood and Hogg, the original Dromios, as Sir Toby and Fabian. The recording honor to those toiling play-actors ought freely to be bestowed. They had but little else, even in their own day. Hogg and his wife drew a paltry fourteen dollars a week each for their services; while Hallam and his wife were content, or at least had been content up to a few years preceding that time, with a stipend of twenty-five dollars a week each. Indeed, at the opening of this century the reward of fifty dollars a week was recorded as the highest salary ever paid in America. What contrast with the modern performers in the Shakespearian play, who think themselves ill-requited if their salary falls below a hundred silver dollars every week, and who, if successful as a star, may count several times that sum for every night they play.

Preceding Mrs. Johnson, there is record of but one actress in the *rôle* of Orsino's page, Miss Harrison, the dignified and graceful *débutante* who gave the character its first presentation in America, May 5, 1794, a few months after her arrival in Boston from England, and who married, a few months later, the Orsino of the cast, Snelling Powell, the brother of the manager of the first Boston Theatre.

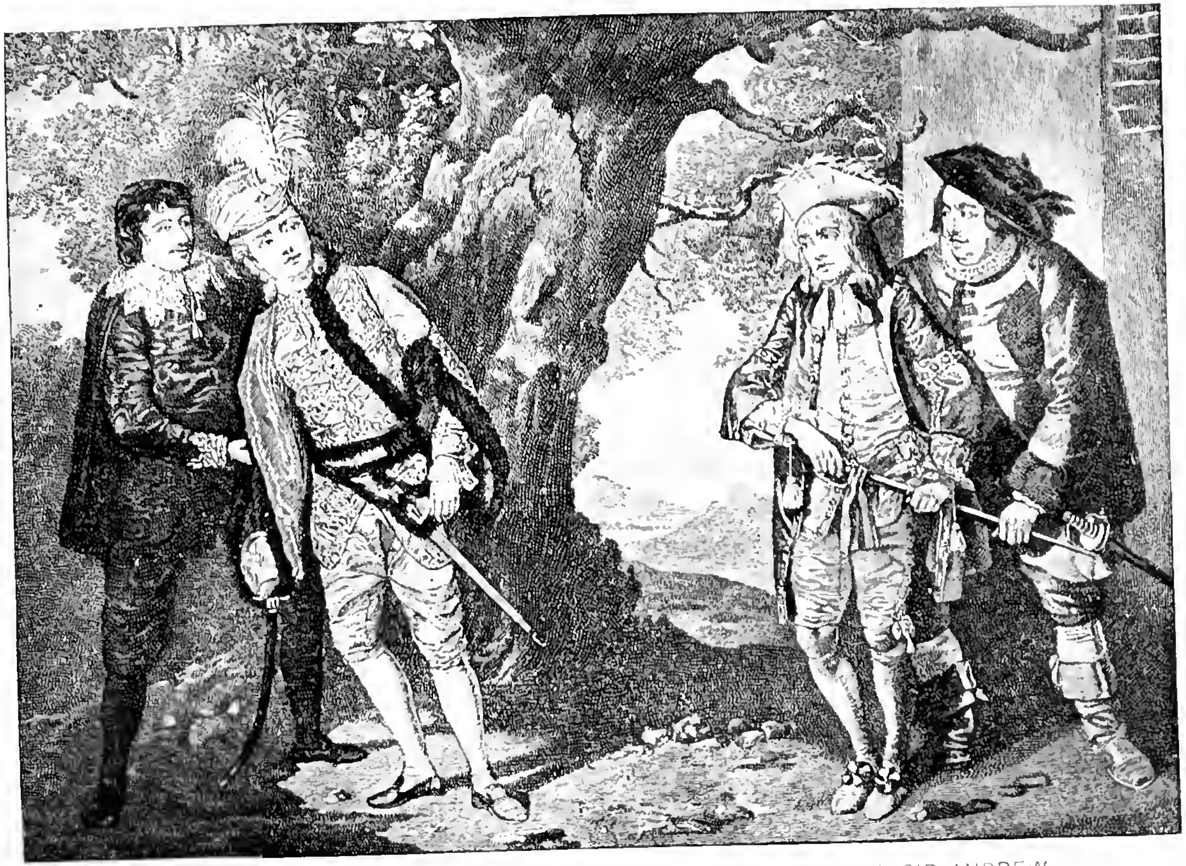
The very first production of the comedy on any stage was probably in 1601–1602, at the Blackfriar's Theatre; but though the play enjoyed popularity during the author's time, it afterwards languished. Pepys, who never seems to have appreciated Shakespeare, did not thoroughly enjoy the performance, the second of which we have any record, of Sept. 11, 1661 (though perhaps in good part it was the pricking of his conscience over a broken promise). In his gossiping Diary he records, "Walking through Lincoln's Inn Fields, observed at the Opera a new play, 'Twelfth Night,' was acted there, and the king there: so I, against my own mind and resolution, could not forbear to go in, which did make the play seem a burthen to me, and I took no pleasure at all in it; and so, after it was done, went home with my mind troubled for my going thither, after my swearing to my wife that I would never go to a play without her." Some seven years later Pepys saw "Twelfth Night" again under less self-reproachful circumstances, but even then he decided that it was "one of the weakest plays ever I saw on the stage." Undoubtedly Mrs. Saunderson, afterwards the wife of Betterton, the Sir Toby of the cast, was Viola.

More than seventy years later the comedy was revived at Drury Lane with Mrs. Pritchard as the heroine; and a few years later Peg Woffington came for the first time into the character, Old Macklin being in both cases the Malvolio.

How the Viola of gay O'Brien's day acted, would be interesting to know now in the light of the record made by that elegant light comedian as Sir Andrew Aguecheek. At the performance of Oct. 19, 1763, he played with such humor as to cause one of the two sentinels, posted, according to the custom of the time, on either side of the stage, absolutely to fall over on the floor in a paroxysm of laughter at Sir Andrew's comicality. A little after this O'Brien caused tears in the fashionable world by eloping with the highbred Lady Susan Fox Strangways, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, a step which led to his banishment for eight years to America.

Miss Younge (Mrs. Pope) ran rivalry in 1771 at Drury Lane to Mrs. Yates at Covent Garden, when the latter had her husband to act the vain steward; while Mrs. Spranger Barry, who could recover from grief at the death of her handsome husband quickly enough to play Viola at her own benefit two months after Spranger's decease, and who two years later married the scampish Crawford, helps, with Mrs. Bulkeley and "Perdita" Robinson, to bring the character down to the days of the most famous Viola of them all, Dora Jordan. Mrs. Barry, it may be said in passing, was a graceful, spirited actress of fair complexion, with light auburn hair and regular features, a modest appearing woman, with but one physical disadvantage, nearness of sight. This misfortune, in one case at least, played her ill. She was acting Calista in "The Fair Penitent," and having occasion, through the exigencies of the plot, to commit suicide, unluckily dropped her dagger upon the stage. There it lay before her eyes, but she could not discover it. Her attendant essayed to push it forward with her foot. In vain: it did not reach the lady's range of vision. At last the maid was compelled to kneel, pluck up the dangerous weapon and hand it to her mistress, to aid the latter in deliberately murdering herself.

But now listen to Charles Lamb as he dilates upon Dora Jordan's Viola, referring to her first appearance in the part, Nov. 11, 1785, at Drury Lane, when Bensley, the greatest of Malvolios, and Dodd, so



MISS YOUNGE, J. DODD, J. LOVE, AND F. WALDRON AS VIOLA, SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, SIR TOBY BELCH, AND FABIAN

Painted by Francis Wheatley, R.A.

famous as Sir Andrew, were in the cast. In his "Essays of Elia" he declares that Jordan's voice, before it was disfigured by coarseness, sank with her steady, melting eye into the heart. The disguised story of her love for Orsino was no set speech; but "when she had declared her sister's history to be 'a blank,' and that she never told her love, there was a pause as if the story had ended; and then 'the image of the worm in the bud' came up as a new suggestion, and the heightened image of 'patience' still followed after this as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law."

Sir Joshua Reynolds was charmed with Mrs. Jordan's "tender, exquisite Viola," as much "by the music of her melancholy as by the music of her laugh."

Leigh Hunt sang praises of her voice, melting with melody that delighted the ear, but he criticised her costume most severely. "She appeared," he said, "in thin white breeches and stockings that fitted her like her own skin; and just over her waist hung a vest, still thinner, of most transparent black lace. I shall not be exact in my description lest I should appear to be writing upon anatomy. Viola should have been really disguised, and not undressed as a woman under pretence of being dressed as a man."

Viola was Mrs. Jordan's first serious part in London. She was twenty-three when she came to Drury Lane, and both before and after that time was to find romance filling much of her life. An Irish lass, like many another bright light of the stage, she discovered at an early age that her family standing was rather uncertain. Her father, from whom she obtained the right (but little used by her) of calling herself Miss Bland, left her mother, with whom he had eloped, to wed a wealthier wife; and her mother, though a clergyman's child, saw little else in the daughter beyond an advantageous piece of furniture; though, indeed, she did express a fondness for the girl that was in part genuine and in part mercenary.

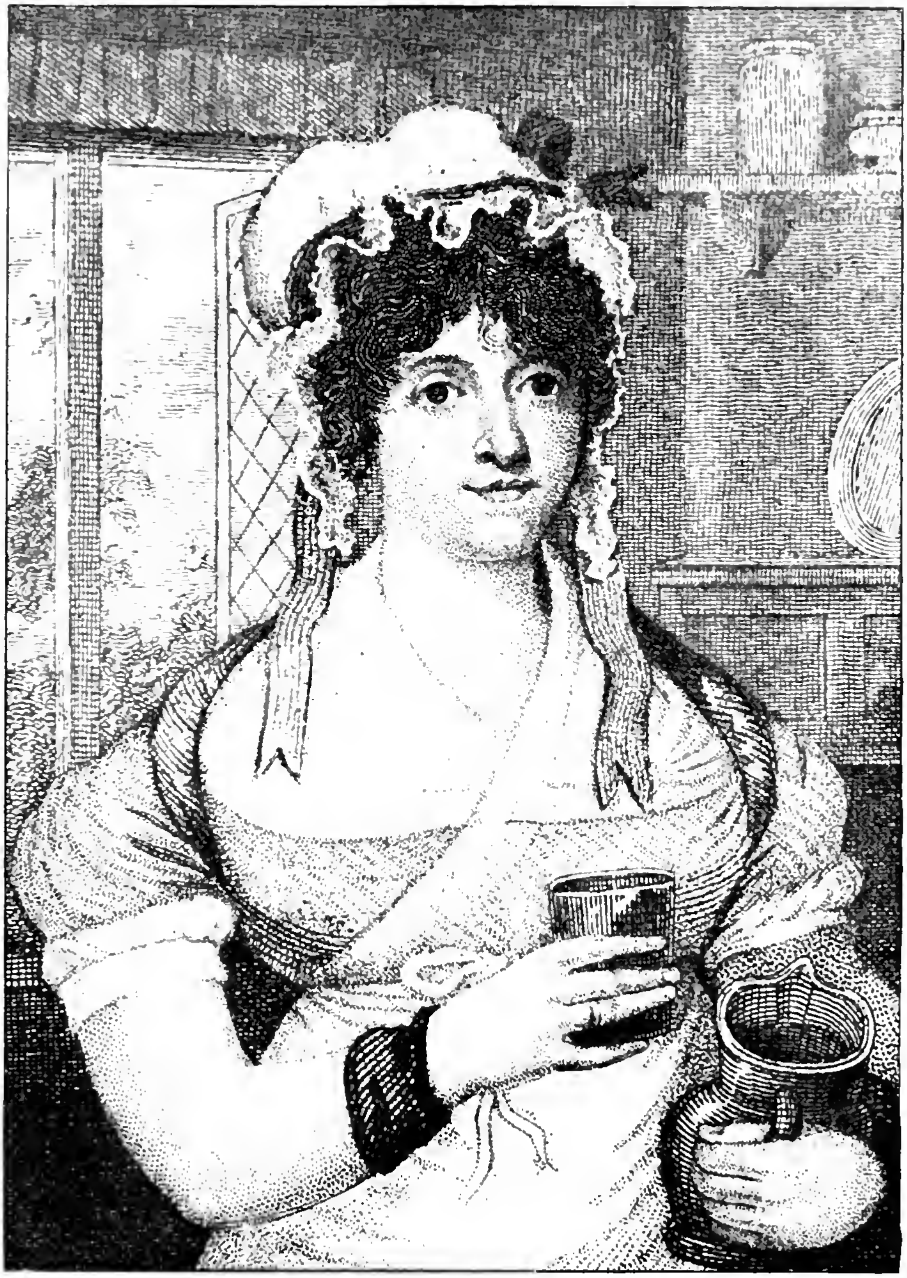
In "As You Like It," Dora made her first appearance upon the stage, her stage character being Phœbe, and her stage name Miss Francis. This was at the Dublin Theatre, eight years before she was to delight great London town. A wicked manager, a Don Juan in the profession, drove the resisting maid from Dublin: and before long she had become, by virtue of the playbill if not by clergyman's certificate, a madam — Mrs. Jordan.

The great Mrs. Siddons saw the handsome Irish girl during one of those early days, but shook her head disapprovingly, perhaps with the secret worm of envy even then prompting her to the act. Who can say? Yet to London town came Dora, and with her own dashing spirit played, now demurely, now saucily, the part of Peggy in "The Country Girl." It was enough. The first step to favoritism was taken: and from that cool October evening, in the year 1785, until 1814, with two seasons excepted, Dora Jordan ruled as Queen of Comedy.

First of Shakespeare's characters she played Viola, a great success, then Imogen, an ineffective impersonation, and then spirited Rosalind. Curiously enough, this glorious romp, this admired Miss Hoyden of "A Trip to Scarborough" fame, and this splendid Nell of "The Devil to Pay," had "a hankering after tender parts," as she confessed. Before she closed her career she was to take up Helena in "All's Well that Ends Well," Juliet, Ophelia, and Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing;" but her Viola and her Rosalind charmed the most. Her voice, sweet and melodious, her arch glances and her playful manners, combined with a magnificent figure to form an ideal portrait of happy, roguish Ganymede. The great painter of the age pronounced her figure the neatest and most perfect in symmetry that he had ever seen. Tate Wilkinson saw no wonder in her acting finely the boys' *rôles*, since nature had fitted her so well for such characters; and Tate found not only artistic charm in this model of living sculpture, but also a grace and elasticity of step born of perfection in form.

She was not accounted handsome; but she had a spirit of fun that would have "out-laughed Puck himself," and a merry, ringing laugh that carried all before her. The fine ladies she could not play with ease; but the "breeches parts" were hers alone, so long as she saw fit to command them.

In her private life there was what might be termed a morganatic marriage that has become famous, her alliance for twenty years with the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV. The Duke, when twenty-four years of age, had seen the gay actress at the play at Cheltenham, and, by one thousand pounds a year allowance, induced her in 1790 to leave Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Ford, with whom she had been living and by whom she had then several children. In 1811, after squandering



MRS. JORDAN.

From Oxberry's "Dramatic Biography and Histrionic Anecdotes." London, 1825.

all her earnings, this royal companion cast her aside. Five years later she died. The eldest of the ten children born to William IV. and Mrs. Jordan was created Earl of Munster. To-day his grandchild is one of the "court beauties" of London.

Of Dodd, who acted Sir Andrew to Dora Jordan's Viola, an anecdote may be related, on the authority of Lamb. Jem White met the player one day on Fleet Street, and having seen him the night before in "Twelfth Night," doffed his hat, half in fun and half in earnest, with the Shakespearian salutation, "Save you, Sir Andrew;" to which Dodd, not at all disconcerted by the stranger's greeting, waved his hand in a half-rebuking way, as he exclaimed, after his author's style, "Away, fool!"

Dora's daughter by Mr. Ford, Mrs. Alsop, never believed to her last day that her mother died at the time originally reported. It was a strange story. Towards the end of June, 1816, a letter came from Mrs. Jordan's companion in exile, announcing the lady's sudden death; three days later another letter bore the tidings that the writer had been deceived by Mrs. Jordan's appearance, and that she still lived, though ill. Then, before the daughter could start, as she intended, for Paris, a third letter announced the death as actually having occurred. Yet the gentleman who investigated the report heard from the landlord of her hotel no story of resuscitation, and assuredly so astounding a fact would not have been lost to his gossiping ears and tongue had it happened. So the report spread that Mrs. Jordan was not really dead. Moreover, Boaden, who knew Jordan well, insisted he saw her in London, though she quickly dropped her veil as if to avoid recognition; while Mrs. Alsop, ignorant of Boaden's experience, at about the same time thought she saw her mother in the Strand of the English capital, and was so overcome by the sight that she fell down in a fit. The mystery has never been solved.

To Maria Tree's Viola in 1823, in a musical adaptation of the comedy at Covent Garden Theatre, Ellen Tree, then eighteen years of age, made her first appearance on the stage, playing Olivia. Twenty-seven years later Ellen Tree, as Mrs. Charles Kean, played Viola at the opening performance of the Princess's Theatre, of which her husband was part manager. Her figure, features, expression, and elegant propriety in costume, are pointed out by the biographer of her husband as fitting her essentially for the part, while the delicate humor and exquisite pathos she gave the character are said to have been impossible of improvement.

The other member of the Tree family, Miss Maria, who afterwards became Mrs. Bradshaw, was a beautiful singer, and a gentle, unaffected, but not intense or forcible actress. Leigh Hunt maintained that, though it was the fashion to talk of her as a Shakespearian player, yet in such *rôles* as Viola, Rosalind, and Ophelia, while she looked interesting, spoke the verse in an unaffected tone, and did not spoil any idea which the spectator had cherished, yet her merit, except so far as it lay in her figure and voice, was chiefly negative. Vivacity, passion, and humor were lacking; eloquence and true feeling were all there was to supply their place.

That underlying pathos was the one lost art in Ellen Terry's Viola. Brilliant and bewitching in her gleeful moments, the actress thus gave alert interest to the part, but left the half-concealed sadness of the character less apparent. On July 8, 1884, she first interpreted the *rôle*, at the London Lyceum, to Irving's Malvolio. There have been other Violas, from the performance in 1846, at the Haymarket, of Charlotte Cushman to her sister's Olivia; and from the Violas of Laura Addison in Phelps's revivals of 1848, and of Mrs. Charles Young's to Phelps's Malvolio in 1857, down to Mrs. Scott-Siddons and her later-day theatrical sisters; but none has obtained enduring prominence.

IMOGEN.

(CYMBELINE.)

PEEPING through a tiny rent in the curtain of the John Street Theatre, Mrs. Johnson looked with becoming pride upon the large audience gathered within the bare, prim auditorium. Her husband, clothed in the costume of Pisanio, stood at her side: and as he, too, peered through the revealing hole, he ventured an exclamation of pleasure. "My dear," cried he, "there isn't a vacant seat in the pit, the boxes, or the gallery. That means eight hundred dollars in the box office!"

Fair Imogen smiled modestly. "Perhaps, John, it is the novelty of the bill," she said: "a performance of 'Cymbeline' for the first time in thirty years, and for the second time in the entire history of the New York stage, is an event in itself, to say nothing of the first performance in this city of Prince Hoare's 'Lock and Key,' in which Old Brummagen" —and here she courtesied in compliment to her lord and master — "will carry off the honors of the evening."

For his part he admiringly gazed at the tall, elegant figure of the beneficiary of this evening of April 24, 1797, noted anew the gracefulness of her bearing and the high-bred, refined character of her face, and declared to himself, "She will be the great actress of this country!"

He had a right to look forward with rich expectation. Even if the American stage was yet in its infancy, flourishing New York, with a population of fifty thousand people, was imbibing deeply the pleasures of theatre-going: and Johnson's wife, though but one year known to the city, had already received that greatest of all possible titles, "The Siddons of America." Her modesty and discretion had set the seal of propriety upon her character in an age when play-actors were not, as a rule, esteemed the ideal citizens: while her wonderful taste in dress had made her a model for the belles of the city, just as her beauty and fascinating brightness in conversation had made her the adored of the young men. The gay youth could admire the pretty woman as much as they desired, without arousing the jealousy of the elderly and trusting husband, for he understood thoroughly his wife's own self-respect.

In the auditorium that evening, a half-dozen rows back, sat old Colonel Anthony Moore with his youngest daughter. Her eyes throughout the performance were turned upon the boorish Cloten. "It's a shame," she whispered between the acts, a slight blush mantling her face as she spoke, "it's a perfect shame to put that handsome Mr. Jefferson in such an ugly part."

"He does it well," replied old Moore critically. "I never knew so good-looking a young man to have such power of changing his features to the most ludicrously ill-looking physiognomy as has this lithe little fellow. I think we'll hear from him later."

He did hear from him for many years. The Cloten of that night lived until 1832, and then left an heir of note, whose heir in turn became the great Rip Van Winkle of the stage. As for Mrs. Johnson, she lived, like the princess in the fairy tale, to a good age, dying in the arms of her worthy daughter, the lovely and amiable actress, Mrs. Hilton.

But it was not until three years after this interesting "Cymbeline" performance of 1797, that the daughter was born. At the time of the play Imogen was twenty-seven years old, and was herself spoken of as a daughter rather than a mother. The bluff veteran of the Revolution on the end settee half a dozen rows back declared to the heiress at his side, with a tone of complacency that showed how high he ranked his profession, whatever the side taken by one of its members in battle: "Mrs. Johnson is the daughter of a soldier. Kate, the daughter of Major Ford of the British army. She has acted at Covent Garden, I am told," he added, "and, bless my soul, if I don't think she's better than Miss Cheer."

"Miss Cheer?" inquired his daughter, "who, pray, is she?"

They were walking now along the old covered wooden pathway to John Street, carefully picking their way through the crowd in the dimly lighted passage.

"Miss Cheer, my dear, was the first actress to play Imogen in America. I remember the night well. This theatre was new then, had been in existence a few months only: and the night, three days after Christmas, 1767, was bitter cold. But we turned out nobly to applaud the favorite who was driving Mrs. Douglass from her throne. That was not an easy thing for a young actress to do, either, when this same Mrs. Douglass was so clever as to dare play Juliet to her own son's Romeo, — he a lad of twenty, and she an elderly matron with a second husband. But Miss Cheer supplanted Mrs.

Douglass at last. We thought the gay young actress wonderful; and yet now — bless my soul if I know what's become of her! Three years ago she came back to the stage as Mrs. Long; but, my dear, you know how that is! time robs even lovely woman of her charms and — well, Imogen was no longer an ideal for us."

The daughter remembered these words fifty years later, on the 28th of February, 1848, when she saw an Imogen who, suffering under the same "afflictions" as her earliest predecessor in America — viz., marriage and matronly appearance — yet held her own far, far better than had poor Mrs. Long. Mrs. Shaw was by necessity obliged to present a lady love and counterfeit boy whose plumpness was beyond the measure of beauty, and whose robust bearing could scarcely show the ingenuous sweetness of a youthful wife. In fact, "her worst fault," says a writer of that day, commenting on the "Cymbeline" performance at the Bowery, "was increasing matronliness in appearance."

Beautiful they had called Mrs. Shaw at her American *début* in 1836; and again as she pictured the first Constance (in America) in "The Love Chase," they re-echoed the adjective. They praised her figure when she daringly essayed Romeo and Hamlet, Ion and Young Norval, and they cheered till the gallery nearly raised its roof in astonishment when her shapely Jack Sheppard dashed upon the stage. But this last was a downward step: it increased her fortune, it lessened her fame. When a mere child this English maiden had married Dr. Shaw; but from him she separated because of domestic infelicity, and became the fourth wife of manager Thomas S. Hamblin. On the 4th of July, 1873, she passed away, the last of the Imogens before the play-going era of the present generation. Of those who took part with her in the production of 1848, one at least is still living, the Iachimo, Mr. Wyzeman Marshall.

Not long ago, in conversation with the writer, Mr. Marshall, who resides in Boston, narrated an amusing story regarding this performance. Iachimo had passed through the scene in Imogen's chamber, jotting down the description of the drapery and the book; had returned to Posthumus, and was then narrating the fictitious story destined to arouse his suspicions. While the house seemed intently following the story, just as Iachimo uttered the line regarding the mole, — "By my life I kissed it," — up sprang a young man in the very front row of the auditorium, crying out, "It's a lie. It's a lie, by all that's holy!" The players had to wait for the audience to recover.

Somewhere about 1837 the divine Imogen had been impersonated by Mrs. George H. Barrett, at the Tremont Theatre in Boston, to the Iachimo of the elder Booth. A score of years later, May 21, 1856, Mrs. Barrow acted the part, at a benefit performance at the Boston Theatre, to the Iachimo of F. Daly, the beneficiary, and to the Balarius of John Gilbert. The Cloten of the evening, who had the misfortune to cause a ripple of laughter through the whole audience by the unexpected loss of his wig during the tragic fight, was John Wood.

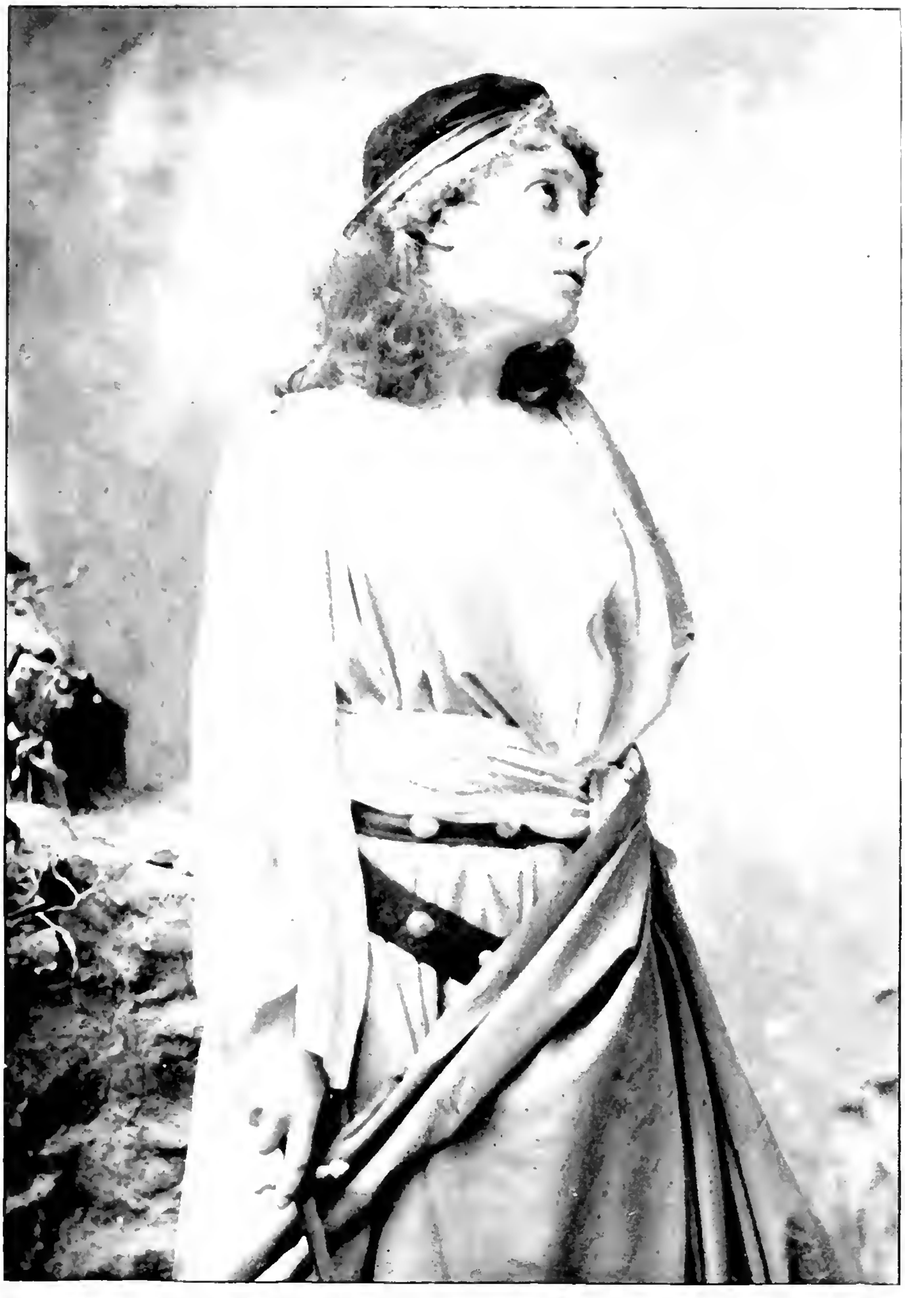
About this same time Anna Cora Mowatt, also, played Imogen. Her career was as interesting as it was remarkable. She became an actress, and a successful one at that, after a single rehearsal, while until three months before that rehearsal and the *début* of June 13, 1845, she had never been behind the scenes of a theatre. A gentle, refined, and educated woman, she found it necessary to support her sick husband (to whom she had been married when but fifteen years of age), and, having written a play entitled "Fashion," she was induced by its success to try acting. The heroine of the "Lady of Lyons" was her first character. A crowded house applauded the plucky young wife, then only twenty-six years old, and found pleasure in commending her fragile and exquisite form, soft, gentle voice, winning witchery of enunciation, subdued earnestness of manner, and grace of action. In Mrs. Mowatt's first year upon the stage she played more important parts more times before different audiences, travelling to nearly every important city of the United States, than is recorded for any other actress in her first year. England, too, welcomed the lady warmly. In 1851 Mr. Mowatt died; and on the 3d of June, 1854, the widow retired, to marry, four days later, William F. Ritchie.

Two earlier impersonators of Imogen should be mentioned before we pass to the present era; since one, Miss Hallam, was the first actress to impersonate the character in Philadelphia (1772); and the other, Mrs. Whitlock, was the first to act "Cymbeline's" heroine in Boston (1796). Of Mrs. Whitlock we shall hear more as Portia. Miss Hallam inspired the Muses. There can be no doubt of that, for we have it on the authority of a writer who was evidently as much under their divine influence as he was overcome by the personality of the mortal actress. "Such delicacy of manner! Such classical strictness of expression!" he cried, through the columns of the *Maryland Gazette* on the 6th of September, 1770; and that was seven days after the performance, so his ardor must have been superior to time. "The music of her tongue; the *vox liquida*, how melting! Notwithstanding the injuries it received from the horrid ruggedness of the roof and the untoward construction of the whole house, methought I heard once more the warbling of Cibber in my ear." Another auditor that night, on the authority of this same enthusiastic critic, was so carried away by Miss Hallam's Imogen, that "Immediately on going home he threw out, warm from his heart as well as brain," verses to the "wondrous maid." Moreover, Charles Wilson Peale, the pupil of Copley, painted her portrait in the character of Imogen.

It is an interesting illustration of the brief history of the English-speaking stage, that the father of Miss Kate Moore, who lived in New York at the time of our nation's birth, should have seen the first American production of "Cymbeline," after having witnessed as a boy the first recorded performance of the play on the London stage (barring the production of 1633), and that the son of that daughter should have seen the very latest of the Imogens on any stage. Yet such is the case.

The grandson of brave old Colonel Moore saw, not only the loving, modest Imogen of Adelaide Neilson in 1877, and the now almost forgotten Imogen of Fanny Davenport in 1879, but also the dainty, delicate, winsome Imogen of Madame Modjeska in the season of 1887–1888, and the final Imogen of Julia Marlowe in 1890. It was Miss Neilson who captivated all hearts, arousing smiles of delight and tears of sympathy, and who drew the most delightful boy that ever the cave scene brought to the front. Her Posthumus, Mr. Eben Plympton, was the Posthumus also of Madame Modjeska's Imogen ten years later. During Miss Neilson's last performance on the New York stage, she acted again the part of Cymbeline's daughter. This was at Booth's theatre, May 24, 1880, when she appeared at her farewell benefit in scenes from "Twelfth Night," "Romeo and Juliet," "Measure for Measure," and "Cymbeline;" and when she said, in her speech before the curtain, "It seems to me that I am leaving not only friends but happiness itself; that the skies can never again be as bright as they have been to me here, nor flowers bloom as beautifully, nor music sound as sweetly any more." On the 14th of the following August she died in Paris.

In 1890 "Cymbeline" was revived by Julia Mar-



JULIA MARLOWE AS IMOGEN.

lowe: but the bright young actress, whose Rosalind and Viola have been so praiseworthy, did not succeed in making of Imogen all that the character merits. The earlier scenes were acted to acceptance: the cave scene fell beneath its rightful strength. And yet it is said that Miss Marlowe regards Imogen with more affection than any other character of Shakespeare. "Imogen as a woman," she is quoted as saying, "seems to me to possess every quality which makes woman adorable, — youth, beauty, purity, femininity in its finest sense, and a touching, never-swerving loyalty. Juliet, I fear, is not half so good a woman, but she had a more interesting thing happen to her. I feel that had Juliet survived Romeo she might have loved again, passion was so much to her: but with Imogen that whole question was settled forever: it was Posthumus, not emotion, that moved her."

This latest revival of Cymbeline dates just one hundred and forty-six years after the notable production at the Haymarket Theatre in London. Notable is that production solely because, in all the annals of the stage, there is recorded but one earlier performance, and that a century before. On the opening day of the year 1633, when the great author had been in his grave for nearly seventeen years, the play (as recorded by Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King Charles I.) was given before the court by the King's players, and was well liked by the King. There were, indeed, before Theophilus Cibber's later revival of 1744, several presentations of Tom d'Urfey's twisted version of the Shakespearian work, a version which appeared after the Revolution under the melodramatic title of "The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager," and which had Mrs. Bullock and Mrs. Templar among its list of Eugenias (Eugenia being the new name given to Imogen): but this version as little interests us as does the later maltreatment by Professor Hawkins of Oxford University, which the author modestly claimed was an improvement on the original in certain characters, and which had the comic singer, Mrs. Vincent, in the chief *rôle*. For six nights Hawkins's adaptation was given, and then disappeared forever from the theatre.

Of the Shakespearian revival of 1744 we know little, except what Mrs. Charke, the daughter of Colley Cibber and the impersonator of many male characters, tells us. Her brother Theophilus, she says, would have succeeded at the Haymarket, "in particular by the run of 'Cymbeline,'" had not the Lord Chancellor stopped his management. This mandatory action, she adds, "was occasioned by his jealousy of his having a likelihood of a great run of the last-mentioned play, and which would, of course, have been detrimental in some measure to the other houses."

Two years later Covent Garden had the play for the first time on its stage. That "inimitably charming" Rosalind and Beatrice, Mrs. Pritchard, was the original Covent Garden Imogen; and though her figure was not genteel, and though she was known to be a coarse, illiterate woman off the stage, yet her strange power to put on the semblance of gentility, like a "property" cloak, made of her, doubtless, a royal princess, as well as a warm-hearted wife. She may, indeed, have over-acted the scenes of grief, for so high an authority as Garrick informed Tate Wilkinson that Mrs. Pritchard was apt to blubber out her sorrows on the stage; but this queen of mimic life could not have been insufficient for the *rôle* as a whole. Her untarnished reputation well became an Imogen.

Fifteen years later Davy Garrick altered the Shakespearian play, with judicious omissions and transpositions; but the fame of the earliest Imogen of Drury Lane, Miss Bride, was short. Churchill sang of her charms in his "Rosciad," dilating on her "person finely turned" and her other physical allurements: but the future never echoed the praise. As for Garrick's Posthumus, the dramatic censor declared that his "astonishing talents were never more happily exerted." Most interesting of all, however, in this production was the affliction of poor Tom Davies, the gossiping historian and mouthing actor. He played Cymbeline, and did not do it well. The reason he explained in this touching note to Garrick: "I had the misfortune to disconcert you in one scene, for which I did immediately beg your pardon, and did attribute it to my accidentally seeing Mr. Churchill in the pit! with great truth it rendered me confused and unmindful of my business." Churchill, indeed, attacked the wretched player with slashing pen when he wrote:—

> "With him came mighty Davies: (on my life
> That Davies has a very pretty wife!)
> Statesman all over, in plots famous grown,
> He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone!"

This and more lines like it were finally too much for Davies. Though he and his wife were earning five hundred pounds a year on the stage, he would no longer stay to suffer under the satirist's bitter lash, but retired, to the great disgust of Johnson, and to the sorrow of the pretty wife, who at last, worn with affliction, meets her death in a workhouse.

And now appear players of whom many an entertaining anecdote is told. The dignified, haughty Mrs. Yates, who never could satisfactorily act the tender *rôles*, however well she could picture the majestic creatures of the stage, must have made little of sweet Imogen, in spite of her rich beauty of face. Her own husband was the brutal lover of the play, the stupid Cloten, while her stage husband was the impassioned Powell. Two years later Powell died; a few months after that his bosom friend, Holland, was laid in the grave. Holland had a presentiment that he should not long outlive his boon companion, so 'tis said: and the singular part of their friendship was, that the first time the two met, the one played Posthumus to the other's Iachimo, in a spouting club exhibition; the first time they both appeared on the professional stage and the last time they ever played together they had these same parts to act: while, to cap all, when Holland told this odd coincidence to the relator, Dibdin, he was then dressed for Iachimo — and a few days later died.

On the very night Powell and Mrs. Yates were first acting in "Cymbeline" in London, Dec. 28, 1767, Miss Cheer was representing the first Imogen of the American stage. Three years later two women with most romantic careers were essaying the *rôle* of the noble heroine in London. The first picturesque stage princess of 1770 was Mrs. Barry, who now lies in Westminster Abbey by the side of Spranger Barry, once the admired of all stage lovers. In her seventeenth year this amorous daughter of a wealthy apothecary had been jilted by a ne'er-do-weel. Her parents thought her like to die of a consumption, when, presto, on the scene dashes actor Dancer, and this delicately beautiful Miss Stead, the belle of Bath, in spite of parental advice, marries the captivating player. Dancer dies; and then she marries handsome Barry, and gains the supremacy of the stage. But, alas, Barry passes away; and his widow, turning to the embrace of ill-natured Crawford, finds a brute for a third husband, and a home life of desperate suffering. This, however, was several years after she had for the first time played Imogen at Drury Lane to Reddish's Posthumus.

Of Reddish's Posthumus a strange tale is told. Going to the theatre to assume the character, he was met by congratulating friends. "Yes," said he, to their bewilderment, "and in the garden scene I shall astonish you." So he pushed on, reciting to himself the text of Romeo. Even in the green-room he insisted that Romeo was his *rôle*, and a dire calamity was expected by his fellow-players when they hurried him on the stage. But the instant he saw the audience his memory returned, and his real part of Posthumus he acted "much better," as we are told by Ireland, "than I had ever seen him." Yet when off the stage the Romeo delusion returned again: and so it continued until the end of the play, appearing behind the scenes, disappearing in the sight of the audience. As for Reddish's future, "after passing through a variety of disgraceful escapades," said Bell, "he became diseased in the brain, appeared for the last time in 1779, as Posthumus, was thrown upon the Fund for support, and lingered out the remnant of his wretched life as a maniac in the York asylum."

The second interpreter of the chaste Imogen, in 1770, was the licentious, abandoned Mrs. Baddeley: she who was celebrated for her voluptuous face, her large, melting dark eyes and full, rosy lips, and who led a career amid infatuated dukes and lords and rough colonels, ending with degradation in which a footman figured. Yet her manner was delicate, her utterance dovelike, and in Imogen, we are told, "her beautiful countenance used to excite the greatest interest." Wicked Mrs. Baddeley's flirtation with the Holland who had played Iachimo so often, nearly broke the heart of poor, kind-hearted Miss

Pope. In her old age the benevolent lady, with tears in her eyes, told of her trip to Strawberry Hill, when she chanced to see dear Mr. Holland rowing on the river with "the notorious Mrs. Baddeley." Since this episode broke the matrimonial engagement of the proud Miss Pope and the rakish actor, we can judge how highly was regarded the personal character of that lovely interpreter of the pure, sweet wife of Posthumus.

Another strange Imogen was now to follow — an amiable, virtuous creature! Her amours were so notorious as to lead even an audience of that day to hiss her: and her temper was so hot as to lead her, unabashed, to bid that audience mind its own affairs and let hers alone. With cheery little Dodd, the clever stage fop, Mrs. Bulkley lived willingly, but not always harmoniously. Once, indeed, so terrific a tumult was heard in their room that the landlord, mindful of his property, rushed to the scene. Chairs and dishes, broken and unbroken, were in confusion everywhere. But little Dodd was equal to the emergency.

"How dare you," he cried — "how dare you interrupt our rehearsal?"

"Rehearsal?" stammered the landlord.

"Yes, sir! rehearsal, I said. Don't you know we play Katherine and Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" to-night, and are now rehearsing the supper scene? Go, look to the theatre bill."

The landlord did look to the bill — and he also looked to his own bill for damaged furniture. Dodd paid the piper. His gentle companion it was who could sweetly counterfeit Imogen on the stage.

An unblemished character was the fortune of the Imogen of two years later date. Miss Younge, afterwards Mrs. Pope, was the renowned possessor of most finely proportioned shoulders and neck, to judge by the praises sung by her admirers, who could not, however, honestly allow her features to be more than "fair." She was the Cordelia to Garrick's last Lear when, on the night before the actor's final appearance on the stage, he gave a most theatrical blessing to all his friends in the green-room, and especially to her. "God bless you," he cried in a faltering voice, as she knelt at his feet, still clad in the robes of Lear's daughter. Mrs. Pope died in 1796, leaving her younger husband to take for his second wife a less accomplished actress, who in the year 1800 was to essay Imogen with Mr. Pope as Iachimo.

Now comes romping Dora Jordan, who bewitched the general public, enchanted Sir Joshua Reynolds, fascinated actor Mathews, and won a maintenance from the Duke of Clarence. She was "Mrs." Jordan, not because she was ever wedded to a husband of that name, but because the name came to her in jest when she crossed the theatrical Jordan, and afterwards served by its matrimonial prefix to keep "frivolous suitors at bay" — frivolous in this case meaning uncongenial. The public never liked her Imogen in woman's garb. In the male attire of the later scenes she caught their favor; but in the robes of the princess she lacked natural dignity, and when called upon to conquer the insolent Iachimo "she could not wear the lightnings of scorn in her countenance." Kemble, who played Posthumus, was equal to his part. "It was quite a learned, judicious, and, in the fine burst upon Iachimo at the close, a most powerful effort," wrote Boaden.

In 1787 Kemble played Posthumus to the Imogen of his sister, Mrs. Siddons, when that greatest of actresses assumed the character for the first time. She was "peculiarly happy" in the part, we are told. Her triumph was supreme. Rivalry with captivating Mrs. Jordan spurred the original of the Tragic Muse to her best efforts; and, without diminishing the gentleness of the loving Imogen, she gave to her the rightful majesty of character. But where the reckless Dora Jordan had delighted in Fidele's scenes, Mrs. Siddons shrank from the ordeal of exposure. Her boy's clothes were awkward and bulky, designed, by her own wish, "to conceal the person as much as possible." She, who was later to dress her Rosalind as prudishly as her Imogen, desired "to assume as little of the man as was possible;" so that our old acquaintance, Boaden, is forced to write that "a figure nearer to that of a boy would, by increasing the visible probability, have heightened her effect with her brothers in the cave."

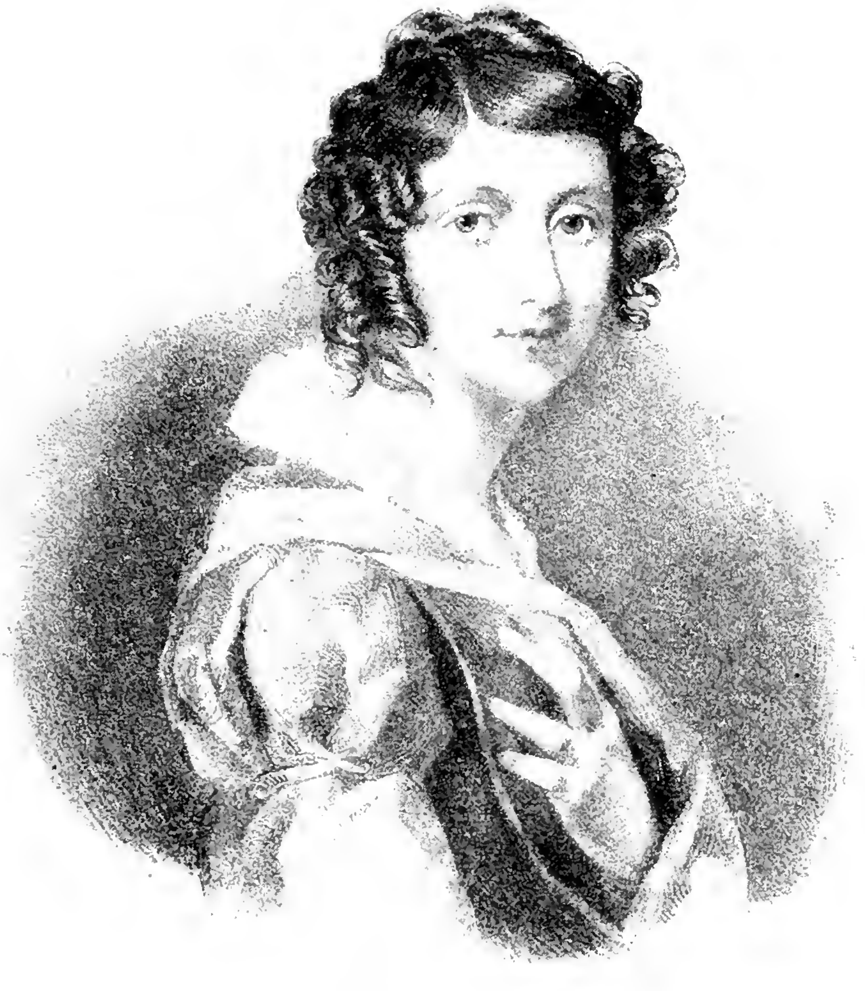
For a number of years Kemble kept the play known to the stage. In his Covent Garden revivals he played Posthumus to the Imogen of Miss Smith, who afterwards, as Mrs. Bartley, visited America, and to the Imogens of Mrs. H. Johnston and Miss Stephens; while Charles Kemble, who was afterwards to succeed to his more able brother's part in Cymbeline, when Miss Foote played Imogen in 1825, was in the earlier productions of this century the Guiderius (Polydore). When J. P. Kemble "first exhibited his most manly and noble delineation of Posthumus," says a chronicler of his day, "he used to observe that one of the most pleasing representations he ever saw upon the stage was the elegant rusticity of the two boys, Guiderius and Arviragus.

played by C. Kemble and young Decamp, who looked really of the same family."

Of Miss Stephens it is said that, though pure in character as the genuine Imogen, she had fifty lovers in her train, including Lord Milton and the Duke of Devonshire. Her graces were peculiar. The critics of old called her figure pleasing but not elegant, her countenance fascinating but not handsome. Ultimately she became the Countess of Essex.

The girl, who was first educated for the operatic stage, but later changed her inclinations, played a mad prank upon one admirer during her days of pupilage. He was a music-teacher, and naturally fell in love with the sweet voice of the charming balladist, as well as with her animated face and sparkling dark eyes. But, while the relatives of Miss Stephens accepted his attentions, unfortunately for his aspirations the girl declined to regard him with favor.

Finally, after much urging, she was induced to accept his hand. The wedding-day was set, the guests assembled at the church, and the bride and groom began their pilgrimage up the long aisle. Then suddenly this strange creature glanced in an odd, exasperating way into the face of her lover, and, with an inexplainable laugh, broke from his arm and ran at full speed to her own home, never again to return to his embrace.



MISS STEPHENS (Countess of Essex)
Painted by G. H. Harlow. Engraved by H. Meyer

Sorrow for the bridegroom need not be wasted, however, as he afterwards consoled himself for the loss of this vocalist by marrying another singer, who remained by his side until death.

That, too, was a freakish action on the part of Miss Stephens when, in her impersonation of Ophelia, to the astonishment of the audience she interpolated, into the saddest scene of the tragedy, a modern song of the day, entitled "Mad Bess." The playgoers, possessed of more good taste than the actress, hissed her into silence that night.

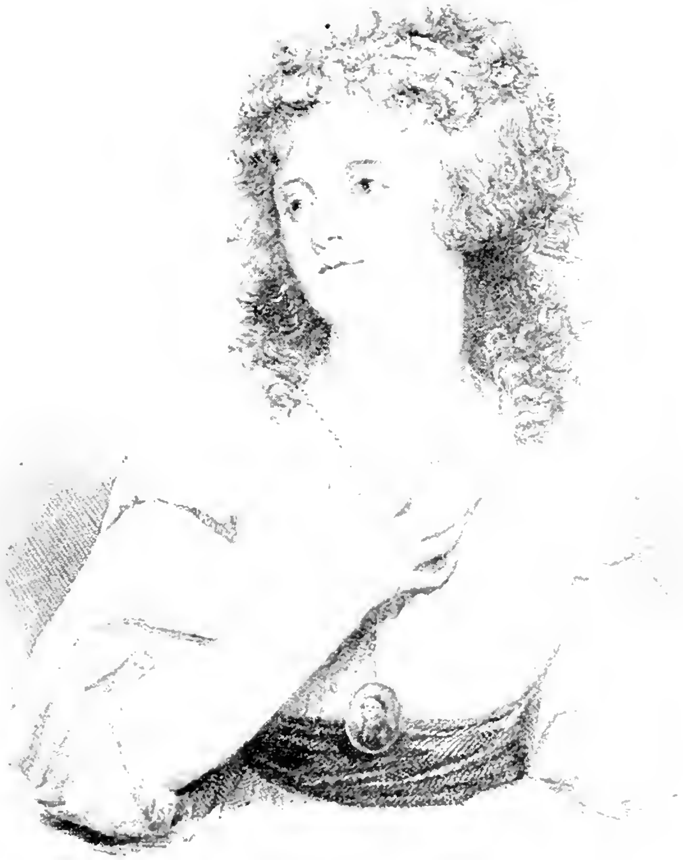
Not till she had reached the fat and forty period of life did Miss Stephens accept the widowed Earl of Essex, although he had patiently waited years for her to make up her mind. Then she marked her really affectionate nature and generous disposition by settling upon her mother and sister all the property — a goodly amount — accumulated during her career on the stage; to which Lord Essex handsomely responded, on the day of the wedding, by settling a jointure on his bride.

On the night when the rival tragedians, Edmund Kean and Charles Mayne Young, had been induced with much difficulty to play Posthumus and Iachimo together, Mrs. W. West, a woman exquisitely charming in face and beautifully moulded in form, was the

Imogen. Her expression of the divine passion was never "the fiery feeling of the wanton, but the chaster emotion of tenderness," so they said: and in her love scenes she was lavish with display of clinging adoration. From this description we can easily picture her Imogen, especially when we know that harshness was not akin to her nature, but that amiability ruled her pure heart.

When Young, a few years later, was tempted to take up the part of Posthumus to Cooper's Iachimo, Miss Phillips played Imogen. This was the Miss Phillips whom John P. Kemble so gallantly escorted through a crowd of turbulent Irish admirers when, in their roughly zealous way, they swore, every one of them, to see her home from the theatre. She afterwards became Mrs. Crouch.

And now one of the loveliest of Imogens was to step upon the stage — Miss Helen Faucit, the daughter of a noted actor and a prominent actress: the sister of an early player on the American stage, and later the wife of Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B. Tenderness and grace were in all her movements, said one who saw her act the part. Trained in the school of the Kembles, she was careful to make every gesture of Imogen an embodiment of thought — too careful sometimes, as when, after the cry,



MRS. CROUCH

"What ho, Pisanio!" she remained with upraised arm throughout half the speech of Iachimo that begins, "O happy Leonatus!" Acting the character of the youthful wife when less than twenty years of age, and only four years after she had gone upon the stage, Miss Faucit was also at the age of forty-six to present the *rôle* upon the London stage again, and to receive on both occasions equal commendation for delicacy of conception and power of execution. In the production of 1866 Walter Montgomery was the Posthumus. In the earlier productions Macready played the part.

Macready, it seems, liked to alternate the characters of Posthumus and Iachimo. The first he played as early as 1811, when he was but eighteen years old. In 1833, when he played the part again, he declared in his diary, "Acted with freedom, energy, and truth, but there must have been observable an absence of all finish." Four years later he wrote, "Acted Posthumus in a most discreditable manner: undigested, unstudied. Oh, it was most culpable to hazard so my reputation! I was ashamed of myself: I trust I shall never so commit myself again. The audience applauded, but they knew not what they did: they called for me with Miss Faucit. I refused to go on, until I found it necessary to go in order to hand on the lady." Of his Iachimo of 1820 he said, "To Iachimo I gave no prominence; but in subsequent years I entered with glowing ardor into the wanton mischief of the dissolute, crafty Italian."

In Phelps's glorious revivals at Sadler's Wells, when all but six of Shakespeare's plays were produced, "Cymbeline" often found place. One of the Imogens was Laura Addison, a graceful, easy actress, whose chief deficiency was lack of physical power. Her Imogen was much admired, for in the display of womanly tenderness and affection she had great capability. Another Imogen of Sadler's Wells was Mrs. Charles Young, afterward Mrs. Hermann Vezin. She had been on the London stage only a few days when she ventured the *rôle* of Cymbeline's daughter. Four years later, when Edwin Booth made his *début* at the Haymarket Theatre, Mrs. Young was the Portia to his Shylock.

A long period of somnolence for "Cymbeline" was relieved by the revival of 1866, with Miss Faucit as Imogen, and by the revival of 1872, with Miss Henrietta Hodson as the heroine. But this last production met with such ill success as to discourage thoughts of more revivals, so that the English stage of late has seen even less of "Cymbeline" than has the American stage.

ROSALIND.

(AS YOU LIKE IT.)

THE comedy quickly changed to tragedy. Joyful mimic life became on the instant sad real life.

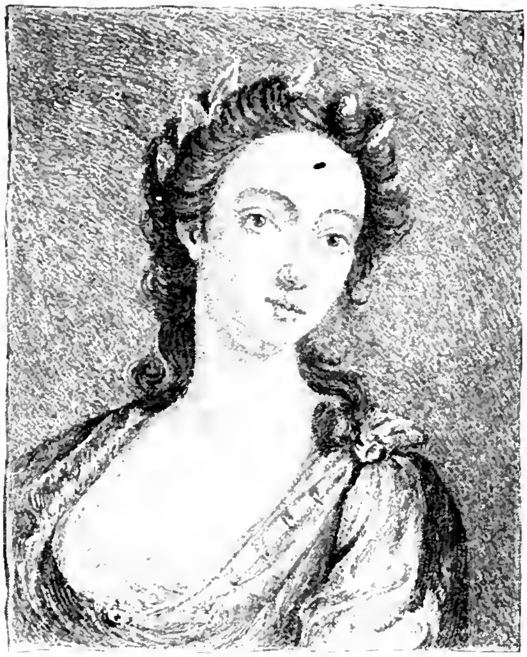
It was natural Covent Garden Theatre should be crowded that night; for were not Anderson, Wigall, and Madame Gondeau enjoying their benefit performance? and was not glorious Peg Woffington, the pet of the town, appearing in that *rôle* which she so admirably acted, — sparkling Rosalind, the heroine of the Forest of Arden? Mistress Woffington, to be sure, though she had not then reached her fortieth year, had shown signs of fading beauty and weakening strength; and the young blades of London had begun to look curiously at one another with suggestive glance, as if to intimate that some day — perhaps not to-morrow, or the next day, but yet before long — the gay, jovial, dashing Woffington would have to yield her leading place to a new star in the sky of popular favor. But who could have anticipated the outcome of that fatal night, the 3d of May, 1757?

Rosalind had changed her flowing gown for the doublet and hose, and with the devoted Celia, in whom the play-goers recognized Mrs. Vincent, had made Orlando swear eternal love in the old, old, captivating way by which the fair lady in actual life had drawn so many gallants, high and low. With delight the spectators fed their eyes on that still lingering charm of face, heightened now by the powders of the dressing-room, while the unpleasantly rasping voice was forgotten in the fascination of roguish action. But Peg, poor woman, had already felt a premonition of ill. Valiantly did she resist the distressing faintness; and none in the audience noticed aught was wrong until, clothed in her bridal gown, Rosalind entered for the last act of all in "As You Like It," and the last act of Woffington in her career upon the stage.

Through the text the actress struggled bravely until the epilogue was reached; and then, with something of her old fervor and coquetry, she began: —

"If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue" —

And then she faltered. One last effort brought her strength to offer Rosalind's charge to the women



PEG WOFFINGTON.
Painted by Eccard

and to the men; but as she uttered the succeeding lines, —

"If I were among you, I would kiss as many of you as has beards that pleased me" —

Her voice faded away, her eyes grew dim, her limbs trembled, and then, with the wild, despairing cry, "O God! O God!" Peg Woffington, glorious Peg Woffington, the idol of the stage, fell into a companion's arms, stricken with paralysis. Her last words upon the stage had been uttered, her last *rôle* had been acted. Life itself hung in the balance for days; and though partial recovery followed, yet the three remaining years of her life were the sad, hopeless, declining years of a doomed woman.

Woffington, thus appearing for the last time as Rosalind in 1757, had first essayed the character in 1742, and but one actress is known to have preceded her in this part.

The handsome boy who, in the time of Shakespeare, first sustained the lagging form of Celia in the Forest of Arden, is not immortalized by recording history. Rosalind, Celia, Jacques, Orlando, Touchstone, — all the pretty lads in women's garb or masquerading doubtlet and hose, and the stalwart men who interpreted the goodly people of "As You Like It," in the initial performances of that ever-enduring comedy, before the applauding audience in the rude playhouse, are "out of the cast" to-day. We know the actors: we do not know the parts assigned them, save, indeed, the part assumed by the creator of all the characters, Shakespeare himself. From the lips of the brother of the master-poet has been handed down the tradition that, in one of his own comedies, Shakespeare appeared as a decrepit old man, with long beard, who, fainting and weak, was borne by another actor to the table around which men were eating, the while one sang for the pleasure of all. Who else could this be but faithful old Adam?

For a hundred years and more after Shakespeare's day the delightful comedy slept: though one reckless "adapter," at least, did venture to put forward an "improved" comedy founded on the lines of the masterpiece. He called it "Love in a Forest:" and summarily he swept Audrey, Phebe, Touchstone, William, and Corin off the stage, while, to fill the hiatus, he interpolated various scenes from other plays. But in 1740 the genuine version reappeared when, at Drury Lane Theatre, the "inimitably charming" Rosalind, Mrs. Pritchard, made love to Milward, then in the last year of his life. She was not handsome, this large-formed, hard-featured Mrs. Pritchard, nor with her coarse expressions and thoughts was she, by nature, gifted with the intellectual beauty of Rosalind, yet she was sincere and earnest, and she achieved success.

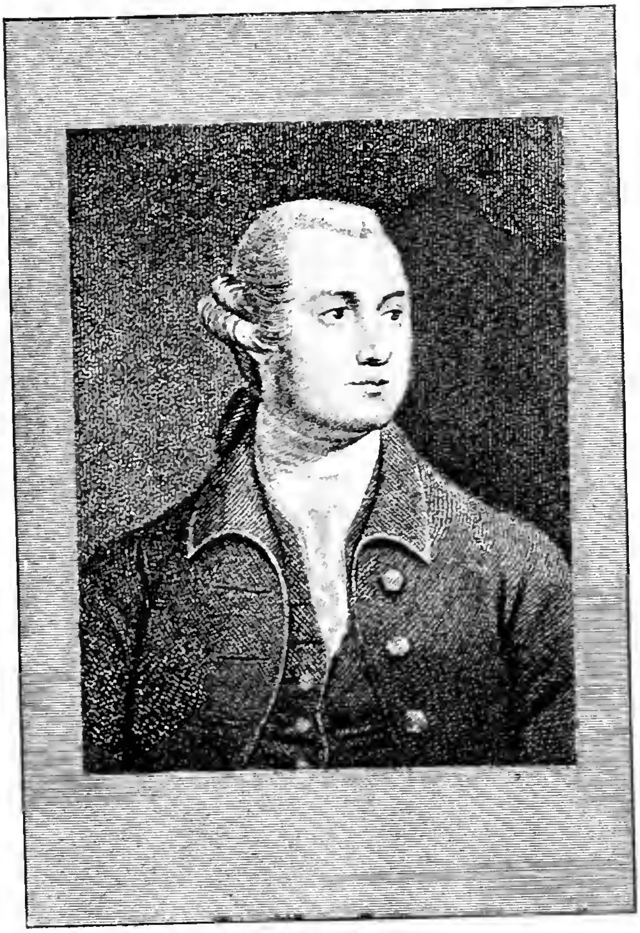
But a greater Rosalind followed, a Rosalind whose lovely face would have captured the world, even had it not been set off by a bewitching roguishness of manner and dashing vivacity of action — the Rosalind of Peg Woffington, whose solemn last impersonation has been described. Her parentage was humble, as we have seen: but as the sparkling impersonator of Sir Harry Wildair and of other "breeches parts," of which she was so fond, this Peg Woffington, of fragile virtue but wonderful histrionic skill, was long the favorite of the town.

And next comes the erstwhile belle of Bath, the unfortunate lady who, jilted by one lover, took up with another, and after his death with another, and after his death with still another. Mrs. Dancer, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Crawford, — all the names belong to her, and under the first two in turn she played fair Rosalind: on the one occasion she was thirty-three years of age, on the other forty. "The most perfect representation of the character I ever witnessed," says old John Taylor. "It was tender, animated, and playful to the highest degree." She was a modest appearing lady, in spite of her amorous temperament, and was graceful and attractive.

It was Spranger Barry's second appearance as Jaques on that night when his wife, in a costume that defied archaeology, first played the dashing, roguish sweetheart of Orlando in Covent Garden. Mrs. Mattocks was the Celia, and from her lips the audience, with some curiosity, heard the words of the Cuckoo Song:

"When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men: for thus sings he,
Cuckoo:
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!"

The listeners wondered why Mrs. Barry did not sing the song. They knew that the sprightly, even if coarse ditty, set to music by Dr. Arne, had been stolen from "Love's Labor's Lost" twenty-seven years before, by impetuous Kitty Clive, and interpolated by her, as Celia, for the first time in "As You Like It:" but they also knew that Mrs. Dancer, in the Drury Lane production seven years before, had taken the song from Celia to herself. Now, why did she let it leave her lips? Did she realize its inaptness in following Rosalind's merry, yet in-



SPRANGER BARRY.

nocent banter — for it was introduced after the lines, "Oh, that woman that cannot make her fault her husband's occasion, let her never nurse her child herself, for she will breed it like a fool" — or was she losing the music in her voice? We of a century later do not know. We do know, though, that other Rosalinds afterwards retained the song in their lines.

In Dublin, as well as in London, Mrs. Barry acted Rosalind; but the unpropitious gods of the theatre brought the Dublin essay to disaster, so that handsome, silver-tongued Spranger and his wife, departing the Irish shores, left behind, according to the catalogue of goods, such things as "battlements torn," "elephant very bad," and eighty-three thunderbolts, besides "a pair of shepherd's breeches" which, Boaden is sure, belonged "to the dear woman's own Rosalind."

There were several minor Rosalinds now bounding on the stage — for one, that strangely prudish Miss Macklin, whose delight in masquerading as the boy upon the stage has been described, together with her strange modesty in refusing to allow a surgeon to remove a tumor from below her knee after tight-gartering had brought that affliction upon her; for another, Mrs. Bulkley, the original of Miss Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer" and of Julia in "The Rivals:" and yet another, Miss Younge, who ten years later, as Mrs. Pope, was to repeat the character. Then, too, there was vulgar "Tripe" Hamilton.

How this woman could assume the high-bred bearing of Rosalind would be difficult to surmise, when one recalls the way she won that title of "Tripe." Her admirers always filled the gallery, but never the boxes; and when a rival actress threw out innuendoes about the cheap character of her followers, Mrs. Hamilton took revenge by failing to appear for that rival's benefit. Of course, the disappointed audience hissed her when next she did come forward: but the Queen of Spain (for in that majestic character she appeared, with her gem-bedecked head, according to Colley Cibber, resembling a furze-bush stuck round with glow-worms) resented the disapprobation with a speech more befitting a scullion maid than a Queen, and well suited to win her kitchen title. "Gentlemen and ladies," declared the actress of women of quality, "I suppose as how you hiss me because I did not play at Mrs. Bellamy's benefit. I would have performed: but she said as how my audience were all tripe people, and made the house smell." Up rose the pit to cry at once, "Well said, *Tripe!*" and "Tripe" Hamilton she became from that day.

There may have been applause in 1783, when a young actress of theatrical family, Miss Frodsham by name, made her first appearance in London, playing Rosalind at the Haymarket; but it was as snapping crackers to cannons' roar compared with the plaudits showered upon her more famous father, the York Roscius so called, when in response to a call, after a certain performance, he dashed upon the stage bearing his wife upon his back. It was the custom in those days for a husband never to appear without his lady whenever the gallery rained down commands for a curtain call; and Frodsham, with eccentric ingenuity, brought his better half forward as a Queen upon a human chariot. The daughter of this pair made her metropolitan *début* the 30th of April, 1783, and then — did little else worthy of record on the London stage.

While this same fair Miss Frodsham was endeavoring to make the town accept her impersonation as ideal, an actress destined to be greater than she ever was, greater than all who preceded her, was anxiously yet happily finishing her first successful season on the boards of Old Drury. A few years before, Mrs. Siddons had passed a preliminary season in

London: and though it was her Rosalind that, in the provinces, had won over Garrick's ambassador, and so secured for her the London engagement, yet she was obliged to stand in the wings, idle and envious, while Miss Younge, whom she was afterwards so gloriously to supplant, acted the part. We may imagine the feelings of the two — the older actress calmly indifferent of the insignificant young lady lately from the country; the younger actress confident of her powers, pleased with Mr. Garrick's kindness and attention, and wishing for a single chance to drive these unrecognizing rivals from the centre of the stage.

The desired chance came at last, and Mrs. Siddons reigned. Yet not with Rosalind did this magnificent actress, with her classic beauty and her brilliancy of action, exert her full influence. And little the wonder, considering that eccentric prudery she had regarding all *rôles* where women must masquerade as boys. For Ganymede's doublet and hose she constructed a dress indicative neither of male nor of female, but designed, as she herself admitted, as a screen to curious eyes. This costume the critics ridiculed, nor did they find that Mrs. Siddons laid aside sufficiently her tragic air when essaying the playful Rosalind.

"For the first time," said Anne Seward, "I saw the justly celebrated Mrs. Siddons in comedy in Rosalind: but though her smile is as enchanting as her frown is majestic, as her tears are irresistible, yet the playful scintillations of colloquial wit which most strongly mark the character suit not the dignity of the Siddonian form and countenance. Then, her dress was injudicious. The scrupulous prudery of decency produced an ambiguous vestment that seemed neither male nor female."

Miss Seward, however, found some points to favor in the impersonation, declaring that when Mrs. Siddons first came on as the Princess, nothing could be more charming: and praising also the scene where the actress resumed her original character and exchanged comic spirit for dignified tenderness. So, too, others praise the beauty of the Siddons's elocution, pointing particularly to her delivery of the lines, "My pride fell with my fortunes," and, "Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown more than your enemies." But, altogether, there was too much of the tragic in her constitution to meet the playful wit and sportive fancy of roguish Rosalind, while that prudery with the boy's dress was denounced even by Boaden, her biographer. It demonstrated, he thought, "the struggle of modesty to save all unnecessary exposure:" but yet it "more strongly reminded the spectators of the sex which she had laid down, than that which she had taken up." Mrs. Siddons had no idea of hiding her motive in designing her new costume. She wrote plainly to Hamilton, the artist, asking "if he would be so good as to make her a slight sketch for a boy's dress to conceal the person as much as possible."

Young affirmed, indeed, that "her Rosalind wanted neither playfulness nor feminine softness, but it was totally without archness — not because she could not properly conceive it, but how could such a countenance be arch?" It was a bitter disappointment, we may well believe, to be scolded by the critics in this *rôle*; for, as Mrs. Abington years afterwards remarked to Crabb Robinson, "Early in life Mrs. Siddons was anxious to succeed in comedy, and played Rosalind before I retired." To which quotation Mr. Robinson adds, "Mrs. Siddons she praised, though not with the warmth of a genuine admirer."

Very rarely did the great Siddons repeat her Rosalind. Perhaps from the stage she saw in the auditorium such strange scenes, during the comedy, as Croker pictures in his "Familiar Epistles on the Irish Stage" when a lady wept plentifully throughout the whole of "As You Like It," while Mrs. Siddons was playing Rosalind, from an unhappy impression that it was the character of Jane Shore in the tragedy of that name. "I am glad to relate the anecdote," he adds, with dry humor, "that so much good tears should not go for nothing."

Mrs. Siddons was twenty-nine when she first played Rosalind. Mrs. Jordan was twenty-five when she first frolicked in the Forest of Arden; and after Dora Jordan embraced the character, the Siddons shrank from its arms. Mrs. Jordan was not the most beautiful of Rosalinds, by any means; but her merry vivacity, her rollicking spirit, and her fine figure carried the town by storm. For many a year after that there was no Rosalind like Jordan's. "There never was, there never will be, there never can be" her equal in the part, declared one enthusiastic writer.

For this reason it was natural that expectations should run high when Mrs. Alsop first essayed the *rôle* of Rosalind, for Mrs. Alsop was the daughter of Dora Jordan. But, alas! neither a physical nor a mental resemblance to the noted mother was detected. "The truth is," said Hazlitt, speaking of her Rosalind, "Mrs. Alsop is a very nice little woman who acts her part very sensibly and cleverly, and with a certain degree of arch humor, but is no more like her mother than we are to Hercules. Her voice is clear and articulate, but not rich or flowing. In person she is small, and her face is not prepossessing. Her delivery of the speeches was correct and excellent as far as it went, but without much richness or power."

Mrs. Alsop had lived in Wales on an allowance from her mother before taking up the stage; and, as Mrs. Jordan lived for a year after the daughter's essay with Rosalind, the latter probably continued a pensioner even after she started upon a theatrical career. Her husband was a worthless fellow. He it was, who, dissolute and unscrupulous, had not hesitated to raise the blank checks generously given him by his mother-in-law to sums entirely unexpected by her, and then, overwhelmed by debts, to quit his wife and country. He had been a clerk in the Ordinance office before marrying Frances, the daughter of Dora Jordan and Magistrate Ford. Mrs. Alsop herself came to America as a "star," and died May 2, 1821, in Charleston, S.C.

Now comes Miss Duncan, a bright maid, an excellent actress, and a woman who spent her years from childhood till death in the service of her Muse, fair Comedy. It was Miss Duncan who created the *rôle* of Juliana when "The Honeymoon" was first brought out; and Elliston, her first Orlando, was the original Duke Aranza in Tobin's still surviving play. "The Little Wonder" was the title given our Rosalind by her predecessor in high comedy, Miss Farren; and both as maiden and as wife Mrs. Duncan-Davison satisfied the eulogy.

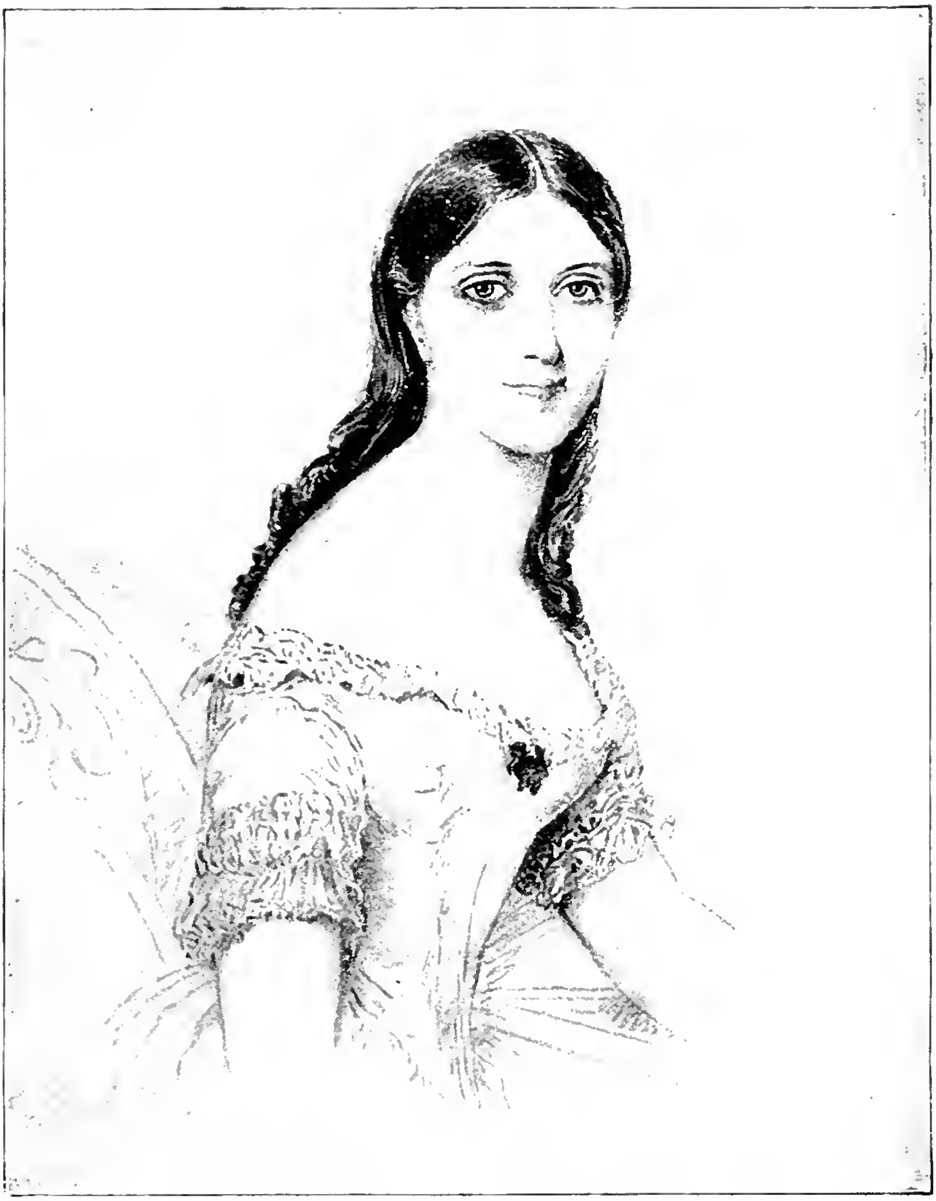
There, too, were Miss Wallis; Mrs. Bartley, afterwards the first Hermione of "The Winter's Tale" that America ever saw; Miss Boyle; slender, elegant Mrs. Yates; Mrs. Henry Siddons, daughter-in-law of the great Siddons; Mrs. Sterling; and Miss Brunton. As to Mrs. Henry Siddons, she appears to have been superior to her husband on the stage, though he was the son of the great Siddons. The Stranger was the only *rôle* in which he achieved any degree of success; while she, as Miss Murray and as Mrs. Henry Siddons, had the grace and charming manner of a perfect lady, as well as histrionic ability.

Miss Taylor, whom Leigh Hunt so enthusiastically praised, and lovely Miss Foote, who afterwards became the Countess of Harrington, now followed; but let them pass, for the days of Nisbett and of Faucit are at hand.

The tall, supple, buoyant daughter of Captain

Macnamara, the original of Miss Fotheringay in "Pendennis," was a beautiful woman; and though in the eyes of Macready she was unequal to the part of Rosalind when played to his Jaques, yet Samuel Phelps, a warm lover of Shakespeare's work, made of Nisbett's Rosalind an idol. Listen to the experienced manager of Sadler's Wells: "Not having seen her, you don't know what beauty is. Her voice was liquid music. Her laugh — there never was such a laugh! Her eyes, living crystals, lamps lit with light divine! Her gorgeous neck and shoulders — her superbly symmetrical limbs, her grace, her taste, her nameless but irresistible charm." It was as Rosalind that the handsome Mrs. Nisbett was last seen upon the stage, appearing then under Anderson's management at Drury Lane with the manager as Orlando, Vandenhoff as Jaques, and Cooper as Adam. Under the low forehead of this Rosalind shone brilliant eyes that lighted up the clear oval face, over which tossed a crown of wavy dark hair, making an ideal heroine in portraiture as well as in action. Little wonder she gained rank off the stage as well as on.

Mrs. Louisa Nisbett became Lady Boothby; Miss Helen Faucit became Lady Theodore Martin. To Miss Faucit's Rosalind, Macready gave glowing com-



HELEN FAUCIT (Lady Martin.)

Painted by Mrs. Murgrave (*née* Heapny). Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

mendation. Her noble figure, lovely face, gentle voice, and expressive action enabled her to enter into the soul of Orlando's tantalizing sweetheart. In 1845 Miss Faucit played the character; and again in 1879 she acted the part — a Rosalind at twenty-five, a Rosalind at fifty-nine. It was her final *rôle* upon the stage, as it had been the last of Mrs. Nisbett.

To Phelps's Jaques, when that actor-manager carried out his splendid revival of Shakespeare at Sadler's Wells, Mrs. Charles Young, afterwards Mrs. Hermann Vezin, was a sweet and vivacious, but rather monotonous Rosalind; while to Charles Kean's Jaques, in his noticeable revivals at the Princess's, Ellen Tree (Mrs. Charles Kean) was a splendidly successful heroine. Her sister, Maria Tree, also tried the part, but with only moderate success.

How they troop upon the stage, these Rosalinds of later days — Mme. Vestris, Fanny Cooper, and that noblest of Cleopatras, Isabel Glyn-Dallas; Millicent Palmer and Carlotta Leclerq, with whom Fechter in America was associated; the lovely Mrs. Rousby, the beautiful Mrs. Scott-Siddons, great granddaughter of Mrs. Siddons of old, Sarah J. Woolgar, and Mary Provost; Amy Sedgewick, who at the age of twenty-four tried the *rôle* without much success, and

Margaret Robertson, whom the present generation admires as Mrs. Kendal; Alice Marriott, a Hamlet as well as a Rosalind and a Lady Macbeth of the stage; and Jean Davenport, to-day, as Mrs. Lander, claimed as an American; Mrs. Langtry, the elegant if not handsome Marie Litton, the second Miss Wallis, now better known as Mrs. Lancaster-Wallis, Marie De Grey, Ada Cavendish, — no, why mention the names? Of all the later Rosalinds one alone stands pre-eminent, Adelaide Neilson.

A lovely, fascinating Rosalind was Miss Neilson. Her arch smile, as she looked back at her friends in the mystic forest, said one admirer, describing the scene, made her face seem half divine, and the tones of her voice were as a suffusion of sweet sounds, ranging high and ranging low. Her utterance of the simple words, "woo me! woo me!" to Orlando, as her cheek was laid upon his shoulder and her arm stole coyly about his neck, was sweet as a blackbird's call to its mate. And again in saying to her lover, "Ay, go your ways! go your ways! . . . 'Tis but one cast away, and so, come, death," the low, thrilling cadences filled the house with such mournful music, such despairing sweetness, as were never heard there. The effect upon the audience was almost miraculous; for a stillness fell upon it.

broken only by some sobbing women in the boxes, who, in the next moment, were startled from their delicious tears by the actress's sudden change to the most jubilant laughter, evoked by her triumphant befooling of her lover.

Lilian Adelaide Neilson — or, if we were to use her little known real name, Elizabeth Ann (Brown) Lee — was in her twenty-third year when these praises were sung, shortly after her first appearance as Rosalind in America; but she had originally played the part four years before that (Sept. 25, 1868) at the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, and on the 18th of December, 1871, had acted Rosalind at Drury Lane, London. The beautiful girl, with romantic Spanish blood in her veins, at the age of fourteen had run away from home, and after sundry escapades as a bar-maid, had secured a place upon the stage where, at the age of seventeen, she was to make her *début* in a part afterwards the most famous in her *répertoire*, though then giving her little success, that of Juliet. Shortly after her Edinburgh performance of Rosalind, an influential critic, Mr. Joseph Knight, of the London *Athenæum*, saw her play a melodramatic *rôle*, and declared that "practice and care are alone required to secure for Miss Neilson a high and enduring reputation." It was that criticism, as the actress understood, which started her reputation upon the high road of popularity; and so much did she appreciate the effect that, in her will, she left to Mr. Knight five thousand dollars.

The romantic, poetic drama was essentially Miss Neilson's *forte*, while her splendid figure gave additional appropriateness to her selection of Rosalind as one of her chief characters. Though somewhat slight in form, she had a royal bearing; and her small, shapely head was set off by large, voluptuous eyes and ruddy-brown hair. That she studied Rosalind carefully is illustrated by an incident narrated some years ago by L. Clarke Davis: in a well-thumbed pocket volume of "As You Like It," lying on her table, were found scraps of paper, torn note sheets, and fragments, all written over in her clear, bold hand, with such conclusions as she had evolved from almost every passage in the part of Rosalind. It is of her first Rosalind in America that the same writer says: "From the rising of the curtain to the fall there was nothing more apparent than that the actress was in exquisite sympathy with the part. So much was this the case that when in the fourth act she was told of her lover's hurt, and she seemed to affect such counterfeit distress, her eyes were swimming in real tears, and her bosom heaved with sorrow that was not counterfeit. It was not alone the glamour of youth, beauty, and classic grace which filled the spectator's mind with pleasurable emotion, but, adding to the charm of the character and the completeness of the artist's triumph, were the intelligence to recognize the subtle wit, the delicate refinement, and the masterful power to portray them all. In the more tender and emotional passages of the play her quiet pathos appealed irresistibly to every heart; for, underlying all she did, there was a wondrous sweetness of womanly dignity and an adherence to nature which rendered the performance altogether worthy of her fame."

Neilson twice afterwards visited America, playing Beatrice, Isabella, Viola, and Imogen. In 1877 she was divorced from her husband, Philip Lee, an English clergyman's son; and on May 24, 1880, at Booth's Theatre, she gave her farewell performance. The following August she was dead in Paris. It is an interesting fact to notice, — a point which comes to mind as I hold the scattered memoranda of dates before me, — that while Neilson, the chief of later Rosalinds, first essayed the character in 1868 at Edinburgh, in the same city Helen Faucit, the chief of all Rosalinds back to the days of Macready, a year later made her last appearance at the Scottish capital (always very friendly to her) in that same character.

Westland Marston — the veteran English playwright who died but recently, and who had written for Miss Neilson that play of "Life for Life," in which she so happily attracted the critical attention of Mr. Knight — was wont to regard Miss Neilson's Rosalind as best in its humorous side. He thought she failed in the poetry of the character, but excelled in an almost wanton, hoidenish frolicsomeness that captured the audience.

Here in America Rosalind had originally sprung into existence the year after Mrs. Siddons had first shown her super-modest Ganymede to London town. Indeed, America's first Rosalind may have seen the great Siddons in the *rôle*, for three months before Mrs. Kenna delighted our forefathers with the picture of the frolicsome lady of Arden that actress was in England. She had been drawn to the New World as an addition to the little colony of play-actors here settled; and on the 14th of July, 1786, in the rough, gaudy-colored John Street Theatre in New York, she impersonated the "heavenly Rosalind."

The Quaker City, some six years later, saw the

ADELAIDE NEILSON.

second Rosalind in the chubby-faced, sprightly little Mrs. Marshall. She, too, had come from England, but her departure from the mother-land was under less honorable conditions than those of the preceding Rosalind: there she was known as Mrs. Webb, but, as one wit of the day said, — alluding to the actor, Mr. Marshall, — "A son of sock became entangled with a dramatic Webb," and hence the two emigrated across the water.

In Boston the first Rosalind (1794), but nineteen years of age, was a bride of only a few months. The obnoxious legislative act of 1750, prohibiting theatrical performances, had at last, in 1793, been repealed, and a theatre was quickly erected at the corner of Federal and Franklin Streets. It was opened Feb. 3, 1794, with Charles Stuart Powell as manager. The season was not very successful; but better results were anticipated when, on the 15th of December, 1794, the second season opened with "As You Like It," and Mrs. Brook's "Rosina."

In those days there came forward the first professional dramatic critic in America, Thomas Paine, the son of Robert Treat Paine, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Paine — who afterwards changed his name to Robert Treat Paine, Jr., because he wanted "a Christian name," and who married Miss Baker, of the theatre, only afterwards to pay too much attention, for family harmony, to other ladies of the *corps dramatique* — was a young man finely educated and gifted with poetic tastes. He pronounced Mr. Taylor, as Orlando, a valuable acquisition to the company, declaring that he eclipsed every competitor. Celia and Rosalind were two sisters, the one, Miss Harrison, with "neither face, nor voice, nor form, nor action," the other, Mrs. Snelling Powell, who displayed as the heroine "more than her usual excellence."

The tall, elegant, and beautiful Mrs. Johnson, whose life was a model of propriety, and whose grace and taste set the fashion for the fine ladies of New York a hundred years ago, soon took up the captivating *rôle*, and on one occasion to her there bowed, with foppish elaboration, a Le Beau whom the world of to-day must regard with as warm a favor as did the world of yesterday — for has he not given to us, through his son, that most perfect of dramatic idealists, Joseph Jefferson? In the first month of the year 1798, "As You Like It," with Mrs. Johnson as Rosalind, opened the Park Theatre in New York.

A rather curious fact in the history of Mrs. Duff, the noted tragic actress of the early part of this century, lay in the fact that she acted Rosalind but once in her entire career. That was on the 1st of April, 1822, when she and her husband were members of the Boston Theatre Company. The sparkling eyes that lighted up her handsome face, the trim, well-formed figure, and the musical voice accredited to this actress in her youth, might well make her, at the age of twenty-eight, an excellent Rosalind in appearance; but her bent was toward tragedy, and "As You Like It" never more appeared in her *répertoire*.

As Rosalind, Ellen Tree made her American *début*, Dec. 12, 1836. On Jan. 29, 1842, after playing in "The Honeymoon" at Dublin with Charles Kean, she was privately married to that capable son of a remarkable actor; and on April 4th of that year, the names of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean appeared for the first time together in London, at the Haymarket, in "As You Like It" and a few other standard plays. Three years later Mr. Kean for the third time visited America; and while the lady repeated her Rosalind here, with other parts (and impressed her spectators with having lost her earlier beauty and fascination), Mr. Kean then gave his first interpretation of Jaques in this country. From 1850 to 1859 Kean made the Princess's Theatre famous for its Shakespearian revivals. "As You Like It" being brought out there in 1851. But Kean's bronchial trouble turned his bard's own words against him. His performance of Jaques was summed up by a critic in this paraphrase of lines from "As You Like It." "How does this Charles?" "He cannot speak, my lord." "Take him away!"

When Charlotte Cushman returned from her successes in Europe, she gave "As You Like It" during her first engagement in New York. She had been tempted to England by the encouragement of Macready; and there in the spring of 1845, when she was in her twenty-ninth year, she won a recognition that naturally set her heart in a flutter. "Mrs. Nisbett's Rosalind," exclaimed one enthusiast, "was a sweet bit of acting, full of honey; Madame Vestris's Rosalind is all grace and coquetry; Miss Helen Faucit's (by far the best of them) is full of wit, mirth, and beauty; but Miss Cushman *is Rosalind*." Yet other English critics — and American critics later — found the great tragedienne too heavy for the character, lacking the proper buoyancy and exuberance. When Miss Cushman first played the character after her return to America, in October, 1849, the Jaques of the cast was C. W. Couldock, then making his *début* in this country, but now known from one end of the land to the other as the original Dunstan Kirke in "Hazel Kirke."

Many a fair Rosalind is to be recalled by those play-goers with whom the memory of former years still clings. In fact, then, as now, almost every leading actress sought the bright and captivating *rôle*. But from the long list may be selected a number whose performances are of especial interest.

There was the beautiful Mrs. Barrett, wife of "Gentleman George," whose own sad habits were her worst enemies. There, too, was Charlotte Crampton, petite and fascinating actress of sad career, whose delight for robust *rôles* led her to essay not only the spectacular Mazeppa, but also Hamlet, Shylock, and Richard. Laura Addison, one of the Sadler's Wells group of actresses, coming to America in 1851, played Rosalind here, but her death a year after her American *début* limited the acquaintance Americans had with her acting. Mrs. Anderson, *née* Ophelia Pelby, well known to Boston play-goers: Mrs. Cramer: Mrs. Thomas Barry, an actress of celebrity, and the wife of an actor-manager of note: the graceful Mrs. W. Humphrey Bland, sister of Helen Faucit of the English stage, and herself the first interpreter in America of Shakespeare's Cleopatra: Mrs. W. H. Smith, long a favorite in Boston: and Mrs. J. W.

Wallack, Jr., one of the famous family in the annals of America's stage — were all heroines of Arden.

Before undue weight brought listlessness to Josephine Clifton, her beauty of face and neatness of person made her an attractive Rosalind to look upon. She had not passed her fourth decade when death suddenly came. In 1831 she made her *début*; four years later she played in London, having the distinction (so it is claimed) of being the first American-born actress to visit England as a star; two years after that she received from N. P. Willis the manuscript of the tragedy "Bianca Visconti," which he had written for her. A little more than a year before her death, which occurred in 1847, she married Robert Place, a New Orleans manager.

A more sterling, intellectual interpreter of Rosalind was found in Mrs. Jean Davenport Lander, who in "Medea," "Queen Elizabeth," and "Marie Stuart," courted rivalry with Ristori, and whose noble work for the soldiers in the Rebellion, after she had become the wife of a Union officer, added to that personal fame she had won by her excellent acting. Mrs. Bannister, another Rosalind, was the Cassy in the first production in New York (1853) of Aikens's version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the version which was afterwards to hold the stage for years. Mrs. Anna

Cruise-Cowell, who played Juliet to Charlotte Cushman's Romeo, was a Ganymede in her younger days, making her Boston *début* in that character at the old National Theatre in the season of 1847–1848.

An admirable Rosalind of a little later date was Mrs. E. L. Davenport, who has but recently passed away, and whose husband was a Jaques worthy of fame. Among the other Rosalinds to Davenport's Jaques was Miss Rose Evans. Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt, author as well as player; Mrs. W. M. Fleming and Mrs. Thomas Flynn; Mrs. John Drew, who began her stage career in America, sixty-eight years ago, as the Duke of York to the Richard III. of Junius Brutus Booth, and who is still living, an unexcelled Mrs. Malaprop; and Eliza Logan, whose mobile face and attractive voice, so it is said, won a Georgia planter to such enthusiasm that, on the spur of the moment, he presented her with a negro slave, instead of the customary floral offering — these were Rosalinds well worth remembering.

Miss Kimberly, the lady who would play heavy tragedy, comedy, drama, and farce in the same engagement with her "As You Like It" production, and who would even essay the character of Hamlet, appeared in Rosalind before Laura Keene took up the *rôle*. The latter, whose experience was filled with so many ups and downs, played Rosalind during her first appearances on the American stage at Wallack's Lyceum, New York, with the elder Wallack as Jaques, and "J. Lester," the name that then disguised the afterwards famous Lester Wallack, as the sighing Orlando. This production marked the closing of the first season of Wallack's management of the theatre. Miss Keene opened her new theatre, Nov. 18, 1856, with "As You Like It," and then acted Rosalind "with great archness and vigor," making "a remarkable escape from the coarser temptations in which the character abounds."

The beautiful Mrs. Julia Bennett Barrow, who, though English born and the daughter of an English player, adopted the American stage after the honeymoon of her marriage had passed, became a favorite in this land, and delighted many with her brilliant Rosalind.

Mrs. Mary F. Scott-Siddons, the classic beauty and highly cultured lady of the English stage, — though never so successful behind the footlights as she was upon the reading platform, in spite of her histrionic name, — held Rosalind as a favorite in her *répertoire*, and on one occasion alternated with Clara Jennings the part of Rosalind with that of Celia.

Her London *début* was made as Rosalind, and her American *début* was made as Rosalind. It was of Mrs. Scott-Siddons that Fanny Kemble said, "Her exquisite features present the most perfect living miniature of her great-grandmother's majestic beauty." Born a Siddons, and married to a gentleman by the name of Canter, she became a Scott-Siddons through her husband's adopting the maiden name of his mother, and uniting that with the patronymic of his wife, because his father had put forth most strenuous objections to having his honored name go upon the programs of the play-house. Mrs. Scott-Siddons was twenty-five when she first played Rosalind.

Other heroines of Arden crowd the scene, — it were impossible to mention every ambitious actress, or would-be actress, who has essayed this favorite *rôle*, — and play-goers with more or less vividness recall as Rosalind, Fanny Davenport, who now apparently has deserted comedy for nerve-tingling tragedy: Louise Howard: Rose Coghlan, who had the distinction of acting Rosalind in the first open-air performance in America (at Manchester, Mass., Aug. 8, 1887): Mrs. Louise Pomeroy: Agnes Booth: Annie Clark, for so many years the favorite leading lady at the Boston Museum: and Mary Anderson, who appeared as Rosalind for the first time at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, Aug. 29, 1885, six weeks or more before her appearance in the character on the American stage.

We all know how the later Rosalind of Miss Anderson was regarded. Let us see what an expert critic thought of the young American's first attempt with the character. This was what William Archer, the London writer, said at that time: "Her Rosalind was girlish rather than womanly: but it was so brightly, frankly, healthily girlish that to have quarrelled with it would have been sheer captiousness." Her reproving speech to the Duke in the first act, he held, was too loud and unpolished, "invective rather than self-restrained sarcasm:" but in the forest scene her success was assured. "A cleverly designed costume, modest without prudery, combined with her lithe, well-knit, and in no way redundant figure to make her a perfect embodiment of the saucy lackey. Her claret-colored mantle, exquisitely handled, gave her the means for much significant by-play through which she prevented the audience forgetting her sex, without in any way suggesting it to Orlando. Her tastefulness was, perhaps, the great charm of her Rosalind."

After Mary Anderson we saw Adele Belgarde, a

ADA REHAN.

young Mississippi lady, who made her experimental *début* as Romeo in 1879, and her professional *début* as Rosalind the same year in New York: Adelaide Moore, the comely, graceful actress drawn to the stage, as she claimed, through the fascination of the earlier Rosalind, Adelaide Neilson; Ada Rehan, Julia Marlowe, Margaret Mather, and Minna Gale, whose impersonations are so familiar.

Rehan's glorious regality of form and bearing has made audiences bow before the imperiousness of her proudly uplifted head, her dashing figure, and her purring voice. Marlowe's beautiful, deep eyes, modest demeanor, and winsome maidenliness have wound a web of equal fascination around admirers who can praise Minerva while they bend before Juno. Rehan has conquered in Rosalind: Marlowe has charmed. Against the ardent, exultant Ganymede of Mr. Daly's leading actress but one small criticism is expressed — and that a smile at the odd little shriek of the lady of the supposed "swashing outside" when she discovers Orlando, a nervous shriek for all the world like a school-girl discovering a mouse.

A lithe, supple Rosalind, with a merry sparkle in the eye and a jovial brightness in the tone, is Julia Marlowe's portrait of our heroine. Clad in brown from top to toe, — doublet and hose, hat and cloak, wallet and gloves all one color, — and with the proper, high-strapped boots to serve as protectors in the briery wood; this is the framing for the pretty, mobile face of Mrs. Marlowe-Taber. She looks Orlando straight in the eye; she claps Sylvius sturdily on the shoulder; she manfully chides the amorous Phebe; and she describes, with true sense of humor, the chance meeting with her father when he knew not his daughter. In short, her Rosalind is a girl of spirit who enjoys the masquerade.

Miss Mather's costuming of the character (it is needless to say much of her acting, since by giving a sweet, lovable Rosalind, with nothing of the roguish and assumed martial air, she misses the key-note of the part) is a good illustration of the inaccuracy too often found upon the stage. Her Ganymede wanders through the brambles in low lace boots that must themselves suffer severely in the bush, and cause more suffering to the tender, unprotected flesh of Rosalind; while the meeting of the characters in the final act is emphasized in somewhat startling manner — unless we assume a Worth to have lived in the enchanted forest — by the display of fashionable, elaborate dresses suddenly brought to light.

Rose Coghlan, picturesque and accurate in costume, with her noble-toned voice, her crystal enunciation, and her dashing bearing, gives to Rosalind a robust style and an incessant animation that last in the memory.

Modjeska's Rosalind is chiefly to be criticised as being too dainty and over-refined: to which criticism, however, the actress answers that those who think Rosalind should be rough and boisterous should recall the words of the Duke in the first act: "Her smoothness, her very silence, and her patience speak to the people, and they pity her."

Ada Cavendish, the English actress already mentioned, first assumed the garb of Ganymede while on a tour of this country: and Carlotta Leclercq, pronounced too heavy, sensuous, and demonstrative in the *rôle*. Mrs. Rousby, Amy Sedgwick, who gave the part such a lugubrious tone as to rob it of its vivacity and archness, and Mrs. Langtry, are among the English actresses, other than those already mentioned, who have given in the United States their impersonations of Rosalind.

All our early actresses, naturally, were English born, and for many years the most noted stars on the American stage were visitors from the British theatre. But now reciprocity is recognized: and while the English players appear in this land, the American players carry their interpretations to the home of their cousins. Yet, it must be admitted, preponderance in number still favors the people of the tight little isle. It may be different in years to come. Let us hope so.

CLEOPATRA.

(ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.)

THE long wooden pathway was crowded with people. Its rough covering served to keep off the drizzling rain of the late April evening; and though the play-goers of the day, a century and a quarter ago, were more accustomed to the discomforts of life than are the modern theatre patrons, yet from the ill-kept streets they gladly sought refuge within the dingy wooden theatre, whose bright red decoration was its chief noticeable feature.

In the manager's little office Douglass was anxiously considering the prospects of the evening, reckoning up the chances of this first New York production of Dryden's "All for Love" filling the house to its full capacity of eight hundred dollars, and hoping that his Cleopatra would uphold the popularity she had won as Juliet and Imogen, as Ophelia and Cordelia. Perhaps he felt a little pricking of conscience for his exhibition of Dryden's picture of the "Serpent of the Nile" instead of the great master poet's dramatic portrait: but he was merely following the precedent then ruling in the English theatres. The American stage was in its infancy: and plays, players, and ideas regarding plays and players, naturally were all borrowed from the mother land. Moreover, the precedent of giving Dryden's adaptation was already established by a Philadelphia production of March 9, 1767, when Miss Cheer, with other members of this same original American company, performed the play for one night only.

The actors down in the green-room under the stage of this newly built John Street Theatre, of the town of New York, shivered in the damp air, and wondered why the curtain was not raised. In the easiest chair — though not by any means an easy-chair — sat the popular Miss Cheer, reflecting on a new triumph imminent in Cleopatra, but not foreseeing the great disaster of later years, when with beauty lost through advancing age, and with a married name to take away the impressionable charm of maidenhood, she was to return to the stage, after the Revolution, only to be received with dissatisfied silence and to be relegated to minor characters.

A more romantic horoscope would have flashed before the eyes of pretty Maria Storer, the child of Mark Antony, had that little maid possessed the gift of clairvoyance. Happy for her and for her sister, the Octavia of the evening, that she was not so gifted. Else, indeed, they would not have sat so long in the dim light of the open fire with hands warmly clasped. This little "fairy," as the historians of the time called her, this beautiful, talented, petite Maria, when years went by, was to marry the handsome actor Henry, while her own sister, his deserted or deserting wife, but not his divorced wife, was still living, and while still another sister, an earlier wife of Henry, was but a few years in her grave beneath the ocean's waters. Her husband's sudden death, her own loss of reason, and her death in mental oblivion, were all inscribed upon the tablets of life of that spirited little player.

In three hours, however, this benefit performance of April 28, 1768, passed into history, and then Cleopatra disappeared from the stage for almost precisely seventy-eight years. On April 27, 1846, she reappeared, but now as Shakespeare's heroine in the first production in America of "Antony and Cleopatra." It was at the Park Theatre in New York that the hundred lights in the three great chandeliers shone down upon an audience whose pleased faces were made the more noticeable by this brilliant illumination. Who could withstand the beauty of those classic features, the grace of that shapely figure, or the charm of that sweet voice with which the *débutante* of that season, the fair Mrs. Bland, was blessed? The buzz of admiration went its rounds as this sister of Macready's leading lady, Helen Faucit, and daughter of a Cleopatra of the English stage, Mrs. Faucit, made her impressive entrance in queenly pride with queenly retinue. Alas! the lovely empress of that night, the ruler of hearts for a time in the cities of New York and Boston, was to enjoy but two more short years of life. Her husband, the Enobarbus in this initial cast of America, was, on the other hand, destined to a good old age.

Stiff, ungraceful, but earnestly sympathetic Dyott pictured the Octavius Caesar before that audience of forty and more years ago, while Vandenhoff, an adept with such dashing, martial characters as Antony, showed the Roman lover in all his amorous passion. Of Octavia those play-goers of 1846 knew little, save that a few months before she had made her *début* in the "Child of Nature." To-day such of them as are living recall the fact that the Mrs. D. P. Bowers, whose experience still warrants her acting as a star in Shakesperian characters, is identical with the Miss Crocker who then essayed the *rôle* of Cæsar's sister.

But the curtain fell, and the lights went out, and royal Cleopatra slept again in the archives of the theatrical library, not to be awakened until called to speak the farewell upon the stage of the old Broadway thirteen years after her first appearance with Shakespeare's historical people around her. As before, it was an English-born woman who appeared, but, unlike the earlier Cleopatra, one destined to become by adoption a thoroughly American actress, and one who was until recently an active member of the theatrical fraternity, Mme. Ponisi. Nine years before, she had come to this country alone and a stranger to all, with but two seasons of experience within the theatre to serve as her recommendation. Here she has remained to make her name indissolubly connected with the splendid history of Wallack's Theatre, and to enjoy the distinction of being the last Mrs. Hardcastle, as John Gilbert was the last Mr. Hardcastle, to which Lester Wallack's Young Marlow (his final character upon the stage) was to play.

One of the Jeffersons was with her in this classical production of 1859, Mrs. G. C. Germon, the Charmian of the cast, the clever actress who seven years before had created the *rôles* of Cassy and Eliza in the original production of that version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which was destined to hold the stage to the present day, and perhaps forever. With her, too, as Iras, was Ada Clare, the "Queen of Bohemia," then but twenty-three years of age and little dreaming of her future picturesque life, to be closed by a sad and terrible death, in madness born of hydrophobia.

A month passed by. Mr. Manager Eddy, transferring his company of actors from the Broadway to Niblo's for a summer season, now tempts the playgoers with a new Cleopatra, the delicate, refined, once captivating Julia Dean. The south had rapturously accepted this graceful New York actress, had named race-horses and steamboats in her honor, had gloriously illustrated the truth of Phœbe Cary's warm-hearted praise to this "mistress of a thousand hearts," and had given her in marriage the son of its greatest orator, the opponent of Webster. Its last offering, however, it might better have withheld: for the romantic attachment which was first made known to the parental eye by the appearance of the graceful actress hand in hand with the young Doctor Hayne on a certain Sunday afternoon in the year 1855, when Dean *père* was quietly and happily smoking his cigar on the sheltering piazza of a Texan hotel, totally

MRS. JULIA DEAN-HAYNE

ignorant of the sudden shock to be administered to him — this attachment, so curiously announced, was to be followed by discontent, dislike, and divorce.

But on the occasion of Cleopatra's appearance at Niblo's, the young matron of nine and twenty was but four years a bride, and she could portray the amorous glow of the Egyptian siren with full realization of its warmth, and perhaps dream — under the impulse of her golden-lined trip to the western Eldorado of that day — that the opulence of the historic heroine might yet be hers as well.

How sad the other side of the picture! The graceful actress, whose intelligence and exquisite reading "lent a charm to her performances which soon carried her to a point of popularity rarely exceeded," returned from California to find herself a queen dethroned. "There was hardly a sentence of pure English in the text, or a scene that was not marred by mannerisms or affectations: she mouthed and strutted, sawed the air with her hands, tore her passion to tatters," — all this said of the Mrs. Hayne who had developed from the charming Julia Dean. Her *début* had been made at the age of sixteen, thirteen years before our Cleopatra appearance; her death occurred in 1868, at the age of thirty-eight. "Throw open the window; I want air," she had cried in her sickness, one year after her second marriage, to James E. Cooper; but before the nurse could obey, Julia Hayne-Cooper gave one gasp, and died.

Nearly a score of years rolled by before the metropolis again tempted a Cleopatra to the stage, though her neighbor, old Puritan Boston, listened to the wily tones of the seductive, regal wanton twice in the interval. Bostonians first heard the lines of Shakespeare's Cleopatra read in 1870 by Isabel Glyn-Dallas, one of England's greatest Cleopatras, then past the age for acting, but yet a favorite upon the platform. On the 26th of December of that same year Agnes Booth assumed the *rôle* during a star engagement of Walter Montgomery (as Mark Antony) at the Boston Theatre; and six years later she played the same part at Niblo's, New York, to Joseph Wheelock's Antony.

The next Cleopatra, and the last before Mrs. James Brown Potter's recent revival of the character, was Rose Eytinge, who, seven months after Mrs. Booth's essay, gave what has been called her finest impersonation at the Broadway Theatre, formerly Wood's Museum, now Daly's Theatre, in New York. Her Antony was Frederick Warde. J. B. Waldron, who played Enobarbus, ought to be mentioned because of the simile his performance called forth from

ROSE EYTINGE

William Winter, who likened Waldron's description of the barge to "an Irishman describing a canal-boat."

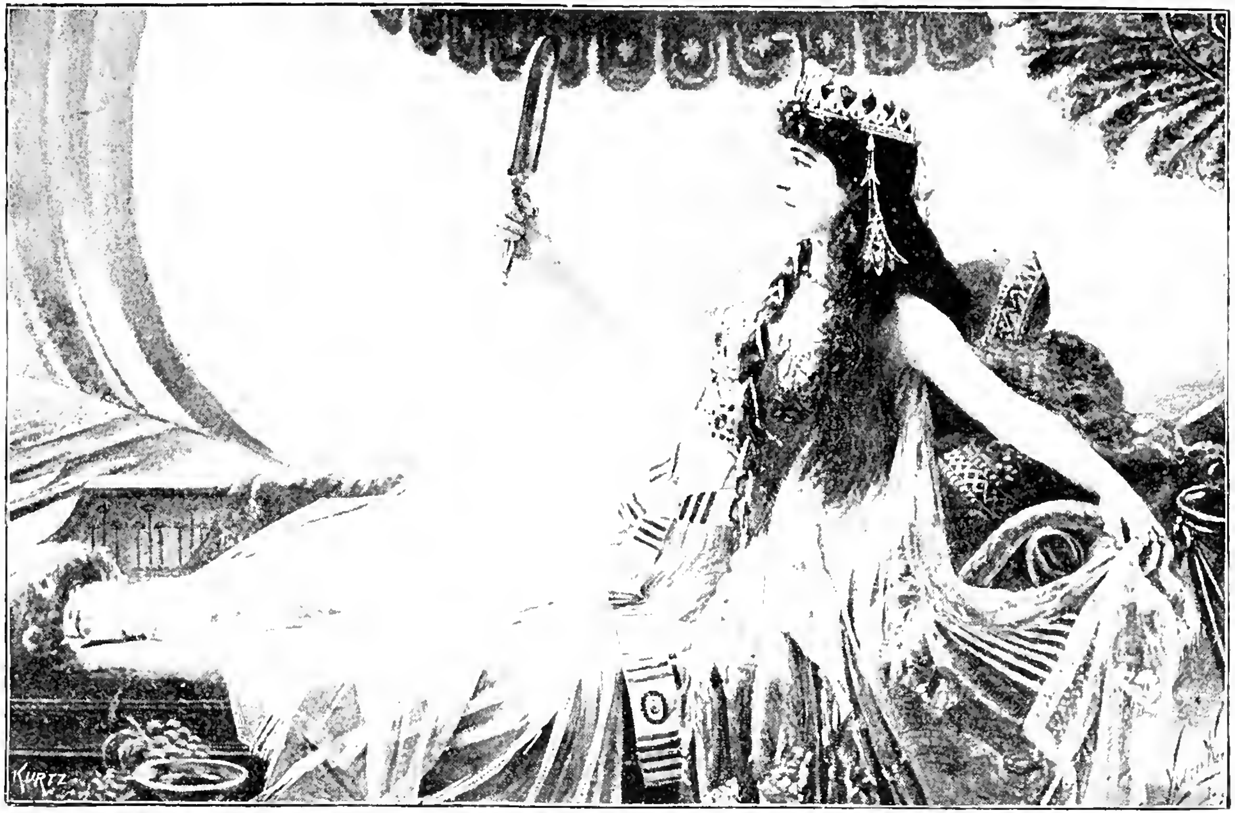
Miss Eytinge had gained historical success as the leading lady at Wallack's Theatre, and had acted successfully Beatrice, Lady Gay Spanker, Nancy Sykes, and Mrs. Sternhold, as well as Rose Michel and Felicia in the two dramas bearing those names. Her first marriage with David Barnes, an editor and theatre manager of Albany, had been unhappy: so in after years she married George Butler, the nephew of Gen. B. F. Butler. When the young man, through the influence of his uncle, was appointed consul-general to Egypt, his wife accompanied him there: and in the land of the Nile planned her portrayal of the Egyptian Queen, even seeking there the fabrics from which the costumes of the Ptolemies' daughter were to be made. The second marriage, like the first, ended in divorce, and Miss Eytinge became the wife of the English actor, Cyril Searle.

When Rose Eytinge played Cleopatra, she was forty-two years of age, Mrs. Dean-Hayne was twenty-nine when she first played the part, and Mrs. Booth was twenty-seven; so that players, at least, have illustrated the fact that Cleopatran fascination is dependent neither on youthful bloom nor on mature experience.

Other actresses have dreamed of playing the part. Adelaide Neilson began the study of Cleopatra before she died. Madame Modjeska thought of assuming the character. But the courage to undertake the complex *rôle* at short notice belonged to Mrs. Cora Urquhart Potter, who first donned the robes of Egypt's Queen in 1889. She had then been upon the professional stage but two years, having graduated from amateur theatricals to make her *début* as a New York "society actress." Her Cleopatra, like her other characters, was vigorously condemned; but yet it attracted audiences wonderfully, partly from sensational (and overdrawn) descriptions of the gauzy garments of the Egyptian Queen. Her Antony was Kyrle Bellew.

Madame Bernhardt and Miss Fanny Davenport have taken Sardou's conception of Cleopatra into their *répertoire*, while in England Mrs. Langtry has been the last to revive the Shakespearian character.

On the 18th of November, 1890, the lovely "Jersey Lily," as the world then called the English "society actress," appeared at the Princess's Theatre in the gorgeous pageant, that, with its ballet dances and grand processions of soldiery, made a spectacle rather than a drama of "Antony and Cleopatra." With her fair complexion uncolored, and her own



MRS LANGTRY AS CLEOPATRA

beautiful hair hanging over her shoulders, the Queen of the night was a picture to look upon; but her languid and pettish manner, and her undisciplined force combined to make the impersonation weak. With her as Antony was Charles Coghlan; and as Proculeius there was the same Henry Loraine who, twenty-three years before, had acted Antony to Miss Glyn's Cleopatra.

Few were the rivals Mrs. Langtry could find lingering in the recollections of even the oldest play-goers, for few are the Cleopatras that have graced the stage of England at any time. A curious fact it is that the first recorded production of a play on the subject of Antony and Cleopatra was not the production of Shakespeare's tragedy; and it is also noticeable that Shakespeare's play was not seen after the Restoration until 1759, and that it then disappeared again for nearly a century. Dryden's "All for Love, or the World Well Lost" ruled the stage. In 1677, the year before Dryden's play was brought out, Charles Sedley's rhymed tragedy was heard at Dorset Garden; but that versified dramatization told merely of Antony's jealousy over Cleopatra's honoring reception to Cæsar's messenger, Thyreus, and so neither Shakespeare's nor Dryden's admirers needed to dread the popularity of this little affair. The Cleopatra of Sedley's play was Mrs. Mary Lee, a lady who leaped into society four years later, when she became Lady Slingsby, and leaped with equal celerity into oblivion, when she retired forever from the stage four years after her union with the Yorkshire baronet.

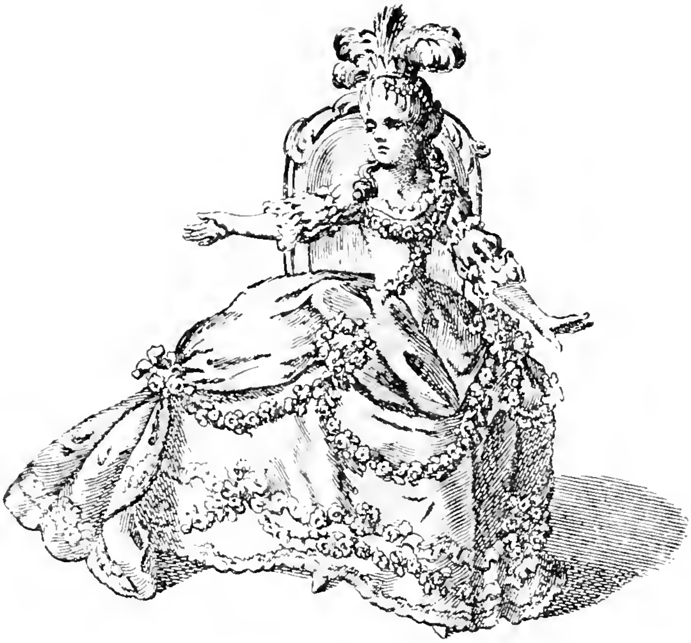
But Dryden's play, first given in 1678 with Mrs. Boutell as Cleopatra, and produced even as late as 1818 with Miss Somerville as the heroine, drove every other version of "Antony and Cleopatra," including Shakespeare's, from the theatre. It was the author's favorite work, the only one which, as he declares, he wrote for himself, the others being given to please the people; and it was a work of which Dr. Johnson could say: "It is by universal consent accounted the work in which he [Dryden] has admitted the fewest improprieties of style or character." "But," continues the same critic, "it has one fault equal to many, though rather moral than critical, that by admitting the romantic omnipotence of love, he has recommended as laudable and worthy of imitation that conduct which, through all ages, the good have censured as vicious and the bad despised as foolish."

The lady who created Dryden's heroine was a favorite of the town, and was of reputation less fair than her model complexion. Little Mrs. Boutell, with her childish look and weak voice, would hardly be considered fitting for the Queen of Caesar and of Antony; but as she "generally acted the young, innocent lady whom all the heroes are mad in love with," she apparently possessed a considerable degree of allurement in her action.

Elizabeth Barry, whom Dryden pronounced the best actress he had ever seen, and who, although disfigured by a crooked mouth and plain features, could captivate my Lord Rochester, and could secure from James II.'s Queen, as a present, her majesty's wedding and coronation robes, was Mrs. Boutell's successor; and she, in turn, was followed by the tall, handsome Mrs. Oldfield, with the benevolent heart and the "speaking eyes," the lady who enjoyed the protection of the brother of the Duke of Marlborough, and who would play Cleopatra when she was thirty-five.

The jovial though demure-faced Peg Woffington, who excelled in Cleopatra, first tried the character when she was twenty-nine. The delicate and lovely Mrs. Hartley, whose features served as the model for many of Sir Joshua Reynold's pictures, was but twenty-two when she took up the part. Miss Younge, the lifelike copy of George III.'s idol, the beautiful Lady Sarah Lennox, was older by a decade, while Mrs. Siddons, who appears to have played the *rôle* but once, was one year older still.

A curious adventure befell the lovely and wicked George Anne Bellamy in the play, an adventure in which a rival actress, with truly womanly revenge, drove the "Soul's Idol" of Garrick nearly frantic. Sheridan, the manager in Dublin, in order to dress our Queen in genuine royal garments — a bit of realism that might be the better appreciated if the strange disregard of archaeology could be forgotten — bought for the young Cleopatra an elegant dress that had been worn by the Princess of Wales upon her birthday. The Octavia of that evening was Mrs. Furnival, the player who had incurred Bellamy's jealousy by securing the professional favoritism of Garrick, and had subsequently, by the influence of a prominent society lady of the Irish capital, been unceremoniously deposed from that position. Revenge was sweet; and the older actress, seeing through the open door of her enemy's dressing-room the unguarded gown, seized not only that, but also the superb diamonds loaned to pretty Cleopatra by her social patron saint. Mrs. Bellamy's maid discovered the loss, and immediately fell, tooth and nail, upon the despoiler, until the much scratched



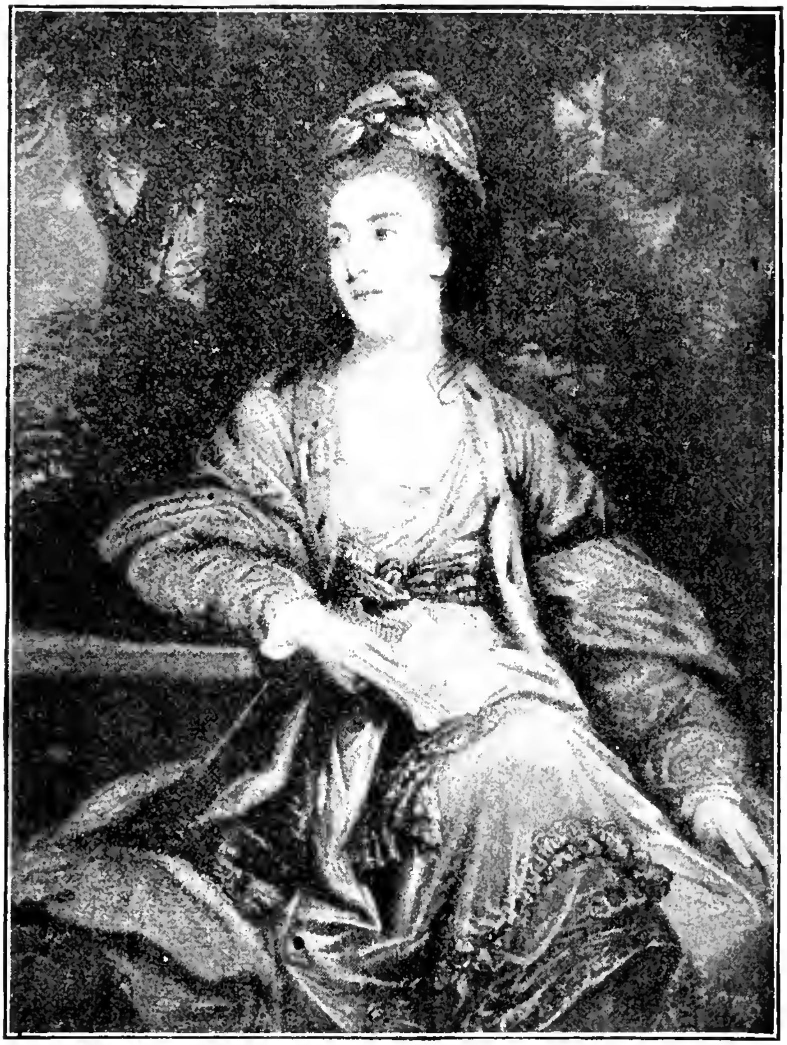
MRS. HARTLEY AS CLEOPATRA.
From an Old Print.

lady, with her terrified and angry screams, brought assistance. Through it all, however, she retained her hold on the spoils of war, and when the curtain rose, marched on in all the glory of silk and jewels, to the great mortification of the handsome Cleopatra, who could wear, perforce, only the dingy, discarded dress of Antony's wife.

Mrs. Bellamy's costume illustrates well one feature of theatrical preparation in the days when Cibber was a leader of the stage. Every actress then, who played any heroine in any play, supposed it necessary to have a long, sweeping train carried by a page. As Addison in the *Spectator* said, it must have made "a very odd spectacle to see a Queen venting her passion in a disordered motion, and a little boy taking care all the while that they do not ruffle the trail of her gown." Miss Younge, for example, did not for one moment imagine that any one would find fault (and, in fact, no one did complain) when, as Cleopatra, she wore a tremendous big hoop covered by a heavily-embroidered petticoat, and swept the stage with a long court train, while over her head she flounced a mass of lace and feathers. Nor was Mrs. Hartley's costume much different.

Haughty and majestic by nature was that Cleopatra whose name was to be handed down to future generations as the first impersonator of Shakespeare's own heroine since the time when the master's work was originally exhibited. "To Mrs. Yates I leave all my humility," wrote the impudent Weston in his will: not, however, falsely slandering the lady, if we may believe the descriptions of her proud bearing. She had a good person, but haughty features, writes a chronicler of her day: and he marks the fact that these, combined with a powerful voice, carried her well through rage and disdain. Her lack of tender feeling and of pathos may have made the amorous hours of Cleopatra and the dying moments less effectual than her regal scenes, especially as at this time, when she first essayed the character — it was Jan. 3, 1759 — "Mrs. Yates had not displayed abilities equal to the representation of Shakespeare's best female characters, Lady Macbeth excepted."

This lady's development on the stage was odd. Starting in Dublin, when she was Mrs. Graham, young, fat, and weak-voiced, as one ungallant pen-painter pictures her, she failed completely. Subsequent trials proved but little better until Richard Yates, the best of Shakespeare's clowns, married and instructed her, and so brought her to the point that



MRS YATES.

a Siddons was necessary to displace her fame. Even then, however, spiteful Kitty Clive must declare, in language more forcible than elegant, that there was "too much stumping about and too much flumping about" in this sister actress's playing.

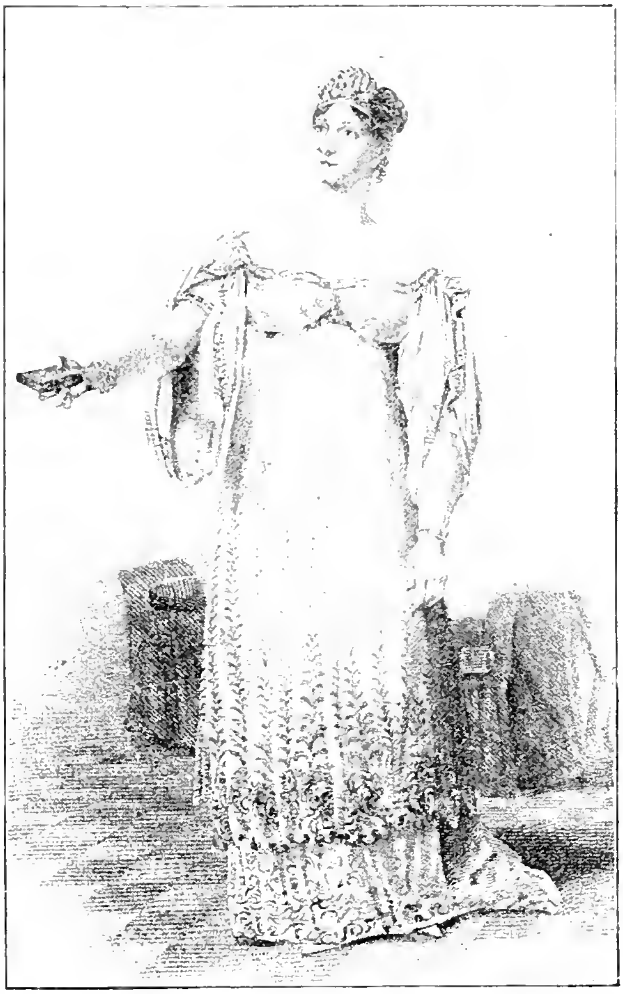
She made her appearance in David Garrick's ambitious attempt to oust Dryden's play with Shakespeare's own. Garrick provided the fine new scenery, the brave new costumes, and the elaborate new decorations, while Edward Capell, by abridging the original tragedy and transposing the text, provided the new version. One may imagine that the play-goers of the day were on the tiptoe of excitement at all these preparations; but they descended from their elevation in just six days, compelling poor Davy to withdraw the work from which he had expected so much. To add to his mortification the critics — and the whole town was free to criticise then — declared that he himself was too little in figure to portray the robust Antony.

Nor was the attempt to revive "Antony and Cleopatra" five and fifty years later to gain more success than its predecessor. John Philip Kemble's version of 1813 was a curiously jumbled mixture of selected scenes from both Shakespeare and Dryden, thrown promiscuously together after being cut and slashed in a fashion worthy of the most pugnacious Roman or barbarous Egyptian. The public eye was sought with an actual representation of the battle of Actium and a grand funeral pageant as the last curtain fell. The Cleopatra was Mrs. Faucit. In vain had Kemble, time and again, besought his sister to take the part.

"No," replied Mrs. Siddons to every entreaty; "if I should play the part as it should be played, I should ever after hate myself."

And yet she had not scrupled to play the Cleopatra whom Dryden drew, though that was years before, when she was but thirty-three.

The fascinating, though not actually handsome, Mrs. Faucit, with grandly voluptuous figure, above the ordinary height of woman, might well show the royal bearing of the Empress of the Nile; while, if we are to credit the alluring power with which she was said to be possessed as equal to her grandeur, she might well look the seductive Queen. "What a magnificent creature she appeared!" cried an auditor who saw her as Cleopatra, and put his impression down on paper. Yet she was then but four years beyond her second decade, a woman born a year after the great Mrs. Siddons had played the Dryden Cleopatra. When, however, a maiden appears upon the



MRS. FAUCIT.
Painted by Partridge Engraved by J. Thomson.

stage at the age of fifteen, and marries before she has escaped her teens, she may be supposed to be matured beyond her years.

Macready, our next Antony of the stage, although a careful, conscientious student, was once, at least, compelled to forego any deep consideration of his very important character until five days before the performance.

Returning from Drury Lane on the 16th of November, 1833, he jotted down in his diary: "Went to the theatre about my dress for Antony, which I persisted, after evasion and delay, in seeing. Was disgusted with the impertinence of Mr. —— informing me that 'because he studied his parts at so short a notice, I might also do the same.' Read Plutarch's 'Life of Antony,' and then gave a careful reading to the part itself, which is long and, I fear, not effective."

This costume, about which the actor grumbled, should have been new, according to his ideas; but instead the management provided only a new cloak. Manager Bunn and actor Macready never could seem to get along together: and it was only a year or two after this "Cleopatra" production that the tragedian, angry at being obliged to play as an afterpiece the first three acts of "Richard III." (wherein he was not seen at his best), and doubly incensed at the irritating laughter coming from the manager's room, punched that manager's head so vigorously as to lead to a heavy suit for damages later on. In this "Antony and Cleopatra" of Nov. 21, 1833, Miss Somerville (Mrs. Bunn) was Iras, and Miss Phillips, whom Macready thought the possessor of great beauty and modesty, was Cleopatra. Miss Somerville had been a Dryden Cleopatra at Bath fifteen years before, but her commanding figure was never destined to become the form of a Shakespeare Cleopatra.

Macready was indignant at the niggardliness of the management, dissatisfied with his part, and sick as well, though Mr. Bunn refused to think the actor either ill or hoarse. On the night before the performance, Antony rehearsed his lines at home the entire evening, and found, at that late moment, that he had "just got an insight into the general effect, but had no power of furnishing a correct picture or of making any strong hits." The next evening, "still rather hoarse," as he says, "not quite free from pain at the heart, and generally depressed and weak," he acted his part as best he could, and woke up the next morning to find, to his gratification, that the newspapers were "very liberal in their strictures on Antony." Two days later, Macready, in utter disgust at the management's treatment of himself, tendered his resignation, even offering a premium to secure its being accepted: but shrewd Mr. Bunn took up a most friendly tone, —for the time being, — and passed the matter over. "Antony and Cleopatra," however, was at once removed from the stage.

This was not the first difficult situation that had faced Macready while playing the Roman general. In his novitiate, when a lad of only nineteen, making his first appearance in the character at Newcastle, on the 9th of April, 1813, he found an audience likely to be prejudiced strongly against him. On the very morning of the performance some anonymous slanderer had stuck upon the box-office door a placard accusing "Mr. William," as they called him there, of having "shamefully misused" and even kicked Miss Sullivan, the pretty little actress who was cast for Cleopatra. Macready, cool and diplomatic, said not a word to his fair companion until the curtain was rung up. Then, bringing her down to the footlights, he put to her the direct question: —

"Have I been guilty of any injustice of any kind to you since you have been in the theatre?"

"No, sir," she replied at once.

"Have I ever behaved to you in an ungentlemanlike manner?" he persisted.

"No, sir."

"Have I ever kicked you?"

"Oh, no, sir!" was her cry; and the hearty laughter and long-continued applause that met this final answer showed how thoroughly the youth had won over his audience.

After Macready came Phelps, the painstaking actor-manager, whose devotion to the bard led to those remarkably brilliant revivals, at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, of all but six of Shakespeare's plays. "Antony and Cleopatra," for the first time in entirety since Shakespeare's day, was set down for the night of Oct. 22, 1849, and the Egyptian siren of that evening was Miss Isabel Glyn, then just twenty-six years of age. Again, at the age of thirty-two, she was to play the same character, and then again at the age of forty-four. Years could not alter her power to look the Queen of Egypt, and they improved her power of acting. When the young Scotch leading lady, who had been on the stage but two years, first essayed the *rôle*, little wonder it was regarded as the most arduous of her attempts. But with her grand, finely proportioned figure, her expressive, noble face, crowned with an intellectual forehead, she possessed rare advantages of person for the assumption of majesty, while her brunette complexion and large dark eyes admirably fitted the character of the Egyptian queen.

"With a daring which does the management infinite credit," writes a contemporary recorder of the production, "Shakespeare's marvellous tragedy of 'Antony and Cleopatra' was produced with costly decorations and careful rehearsal. The representation of Cleopatra herself has been reckoned one of the impossibilities of the histrionic art. Miss Glyn, however, with her characteristic energy, grappled with its difficulties and succeeded to admiration. She aimed at the infinite variety of the heroine's character, and impersonated it in some respects to a marvel. Her death-scene with the asp at her bosom was quoted as being equal to Pasta: the glory that irradiated her countenance at the glad thought that she should meet her 'curled Antony' in the shades was strikingly sublime." Miss Glyn, or, as she was afterward known, Mrs. Glyn-Dallas, was of the classical, dignified school; and her readings in her later days never departed from the majestic method. With her Mrs. James Brown Potter (*née* Cora Urquhart) studied the character of Cleopatra before attempting it in America.

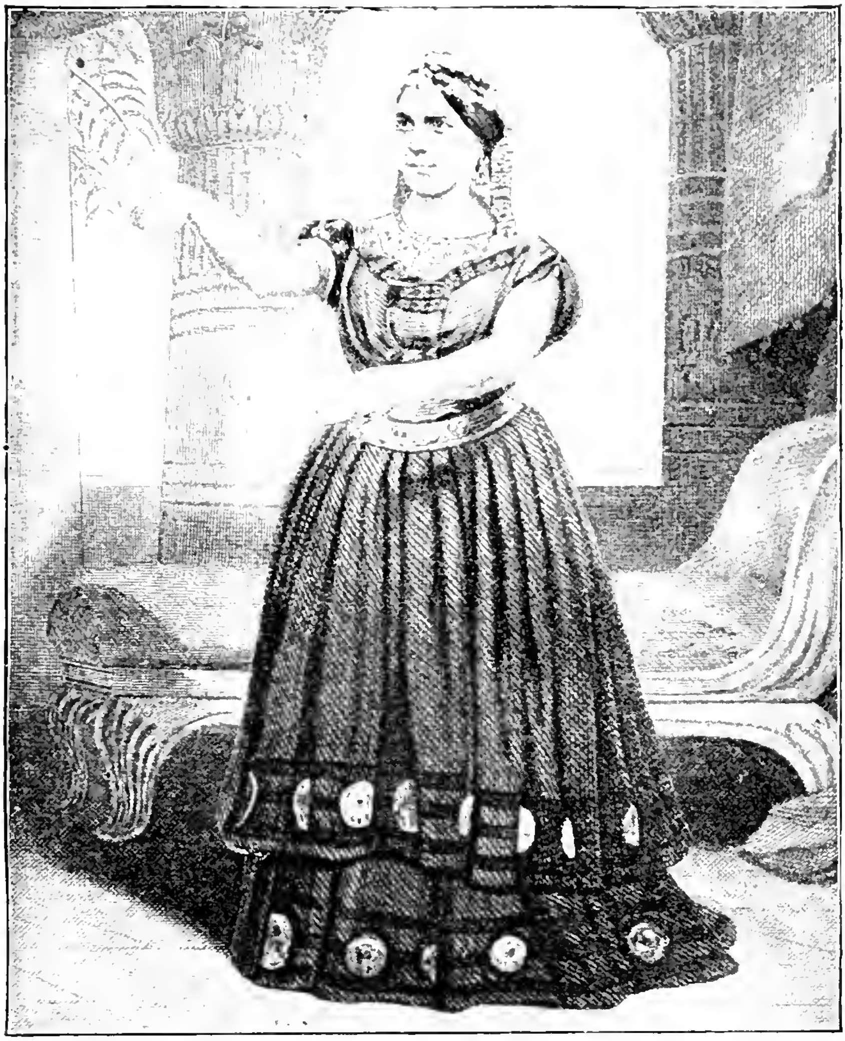
The last Cleopatra on the English stage, prior to Mrs. Langtry's recent revival, was Miss Ellen

Wallis, or, as she is better known now, Mrs. Lancaster-Wallis. When she ventured Cleopatra she had been upon the stage but a twelve month, and was only seventeen years of age. To this girlish Cleopatra of Drury Lane, in 1873, played an Antony of fifty-four years, James R. Anderson, who a third of a century before had acted with Macready, and who enjoyed the histrionic distinction of having created the characters of De Mauprat in "Richelieu," and Claude Melnotte in the "Lady of Lyons."

It was seventeen years, Nov. 18, 1890, before Mrs. Langtry, the latest Cleopatra on the English stage, placed the tragedy again before the London public; though in the provinces Miss Reinhardt appeared in Charles Calvert's revival, with Walter Montgomery, an Antony of the American stage, in the *rôle* of the Roman general.

Before Shakespeare's play was entered on the register, there had been seen Daniel's "Cleopatra" and Garnier's "Antony." Immediately after Shakespeare's play was printed, Thomas May's "Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt," was brought out: and in 1778 Henry Brooke's "Antony and Cleopatra" was published.

But none of these works of olden day has won a



ISABEL GLYN DALLAS AS CLEOPATRA

Tallis Print. Engraved by Hollis from a Daguerrotype by Paine of Islington.

place similar to that of the original play of Shakespeare, the Dryden tragedy, or the latest dramatization of the lives of the two famous lovers, Sardou's "Cleopatra." This latter work has thus far seen but two representatives of the titular *rôle*, Madame Bernhardt, who appeared in the original production at the Porte Saint Martin in Paris, the 23d of October 1890, with Garnier as Antony, and in New York in February, 1891; and Miss Fanny Davenport, who gave the tragedy its first American production in New York, Dec. 23, 1890, with her husband, Melbourne McDowell, acting the Roman lover.

LADY MACBETH.

(Macbeth.)

"What," cried old Quin, astonishment and anger flashing in his eye; "pray, sir, haven't I been playing Macbeth as Shakespeare wrote it?"

And Garrick, better versed in the history of the theatre than the hot-tempered but honest hero of a hundred stage fights, replied that Mr. Quin all these years had been playing Davenant's mongrel mutilation of the original.

"Well," declared the unyielding old fellow to a friend, attempting to place Garrick in the minority as regards method of acting as well as arrangement of play, — but really emphasizing the originality of the new star, — "if that young fellow is right, I and the rest of the players have all been wrong."

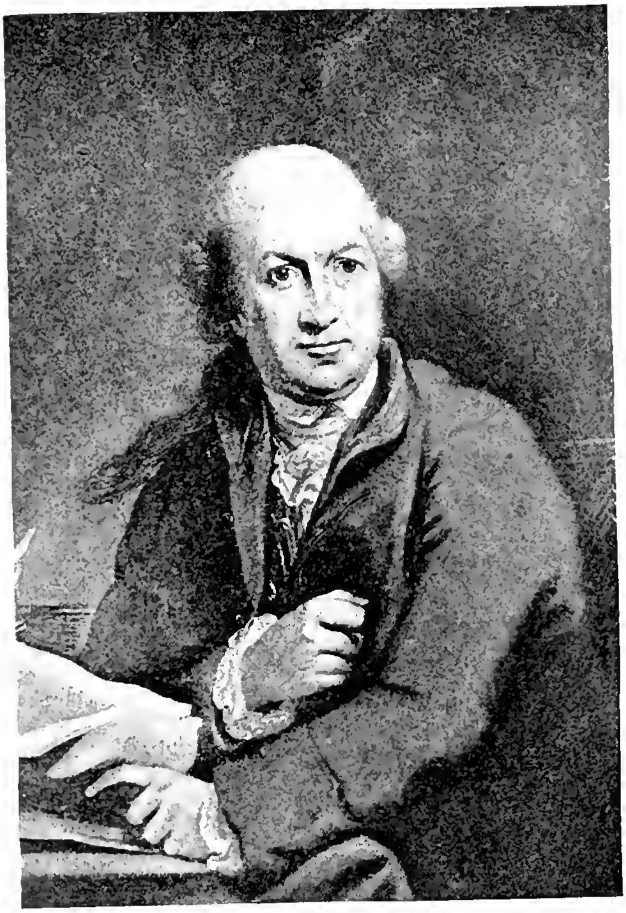
James Quin and the other players of the earlier generation had acted in the formal, declamatory style; Garrick, the "Whitefield of the stage," founded a new school of activity and naturalness. At the same time Garrick restored much of Shakespeare to the theatre.

Can we wonder, though, that Quin knew so little of his character's author when Mrs. Pritchard, one of the greatest of Lady Macbeths, is found to have been totally ignorant of the play except as she had heard it acted under the glare of the footlights, never having read a line beyond the text of her own part on the leaves given her by the prompter?

Mrs. Siddons could not believe this of her famous predecessor until it was affirmed by Dr. Johnson in his own ponderous way. "Madam," said he to the Siddons, "Mrs. Pritchard was a vulgar idiot; she used to speak of her *gownd*, and she never read any part except her own in any play in which she acted."

Yet Mrs. Pritchard was upright and pure in character (a rare quality in those days), even if she was coarse and illiterate; and she possessed soul-stirring power as Lady Macbeth, even if she did not understand the full significance of the play. She was good in comedy too,—at least until she grew too portly,—and could share with Mrs. Abington the honor of being chosen to represent the Comic Muse.

When Pritchard played Lady Macbeth, the utterance of the words, "Give *me* the daggers!" is said



DAVID GARRICK.

to have sent such a thrill through the audience as no one else could produce, while in the sleep-walking scene the horror of her sigh was such as to make the young remember it with trembling. In this character she played her farewell the 24th of April, 1768, to Garrick's last Macbeth.

Little Davy's Macbeth must have been wonderful when, as Grimm tells us, in a drawing-room without any stage illusion, the actor, in his ordinary dress, could recite the dagger scene so grandly, following with his eyes in such intense earnestness the air-drawn weapon, that the whole gathering broke forth into a general cry of admiration.

For the matter of costume, however, it does not seem as if the presence of it could have heightened the illusion, when we recall that Garrick, with all his enthusiasm for the great bard, dressed his Macbeth in the scarlet coat, gold-laced waistcoat, and powdered wig of an officer of the actor's own day, and, moreover, gave the Thane, after he became King, an immense flowing wig as large as that worn by the Barons of Exchequer.

Mrs. Pritchard, in her character, wore long stays and hooped petticoats, and dressed her powdered hair high upon her head, costuming Lady Macbeth in the same way that Cleopatra and other heroines were clothed. It was Mrs. Siddons who first of all had the sense and courage to wear flowing draperies with a very short waist, and to braid her hair close to her head.

There were several actresses of note in the part before Mrs. Siddons came forward. There were Mrs. Betterton and Mrs. Barry, both pronounced great Lady Macbeths; there were Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Yates; and there was Peg Woffington. But all these players yielded, at last, to the glory of Mrs. Pritchard and of Mrs. Siddons. Lord Harcourt maintained that Siddons lacked the dignity, compass, and melody of Pritchard. Then, again, they made their points differently. When Macbeth, urged by his wife to the murder, queried, "If we should fail?" Mrs. Pritchard's reply came in daring, scornful accents, "*We* fail! But screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll *not fail*." Mrs. Siddons, in a subdued voice, read the lines, "We fail! But screw your courage to the sticking place, and we'll *not* fail."

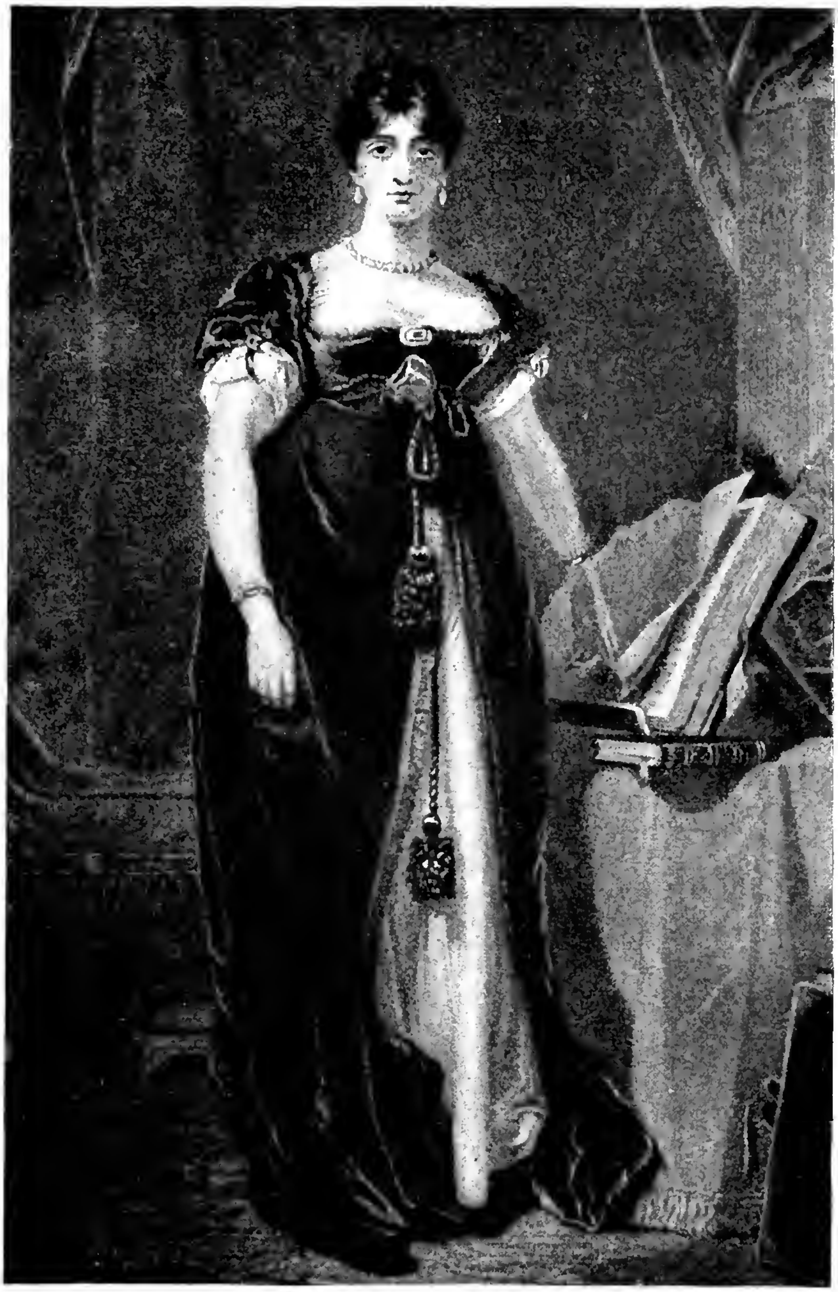
The skill of the earlier actress in the banquet scene is described by Davies. Mrs. Pritchard, he declares, showed admirable art in endeavoring to hide Macbeth's frenzy from the observation of the guests, by drawing their attention to conviviality.

She smiled on one, whispered to another, and distantly saluted a third. Her reproving and angry looks, which glanced towards Macbeth at the same time, — as we are told by the old chronicler, — were mixed with marks of inward vexation and uneasiness. At last, with a look of anger and indignation that could not be surpassed, she rose from her seat, as if unable to restrain her feelings longer, and seizing her trembling husband by the arm, half whispered in terror and contempt, "Are you a man?" That action carried the house to a whirlwind of applause.

But Siddons had magnificent physical advantages, a majestic form, a powerful voice, and a grand manner — so grand, indeed, that Sheridan, when joked about the report of his making love to the actress, cried out, "Make love to the Siddons! I should as soon think of making love to the Archbishop of Canterbury!" And Siddons, with these exterior gifts combined a genius that could make her seem actually possessed of the character. Even according to the taste of the supercritical Horace Walpole, "she was handsome enough, though neither nose nor chin is according to the Greek standard, beyond which both advance a good deal." "Her hair is either red, or she has no objection to its being thought so, and has used red powder," was Walpole's further comment, in 1782, when he saw her for the first time.

How rapt she could become in Lady Macbeth is illustrated by a story she herself once told, when describing her first study of the part. After every one in the house except herself had gone to sleep the young actress — she had not then made her London *début* — locked herself in her room, took out her little copy of Shakespeare, and began to commit the words to memory. With tolerable composure she went on into the silence of the night until she reached the assassination scene. Then the terrors of that fearful picture rose before her in all their gloom and supernatural horror: and before she could collect her senses she had snatched up the candle in a paroxysm of fear, and had rushed from the room. The rustling of her silk dress as she fled up the stairs in the darkness, heightened by the faint, shaking glimmer of the flickering candle, made it seem to her disturbed imagination as if a spectre was pursuing her: with courage utterly gone she dashed open the door of the room where her husband lay peacefully sleeping, threw the candlestick upon the table, and plunged into bed without even removing her clothes.

At that time she was twenty years of age. Six



MRS. SIDDONS.
From an Old Painting

years later, on the 2d of February, 1785, Mrs. Siddons, then a metropolitan actress, chose Lady Macbeth as the part to act for her second benefit of the season.

She dreaded her first night in the character, with its necessary comparisons with Mrs. Pritchard, but yet did not hesitate to change the routine conception where her judgment led her to change. In spite of the protests of Manager Sheridan, who insisted that Pritchard had never let the candle leave her hands in the sleep-walking scene, the determined Siddons declared that it was utterly impracticable to think of a woman washing out that "damned spot" without laying down the lighted taper. After the play, when the audience had signified their approbation of the novelty, Mr. Sheridan congratulated the actress on her obstinacy!

The fright that the player gave the innocent shopman when, unconsciously using her most tragic tones, she asked, regarding the cloth she was buying, "Will it wash?" — the sudden fierceness of her utterance surprising him off his feet — was equalled by the astonishment she created in the mind of her dresser when preparing for Lady Macbeth. Without thinking of her assistant, Mrs. Siddons, running over her part in her mind, suddenly uttered aloud, with full force of intonation and with appropriate gesture, the words, "Here's the smell of blood still!" whereat the startled dresser cried, "I protest and vow, ma'am, you're hysterical. It's not blood, but rose-pink and water. I saw the property man mix it up with my own eyes."

One of the most exciting episodes in Mrs. Siddons's life was her experience with the mob attacking Covent Garden Theatre while she was acting Lady Macbeth on the stage. The new playhouse, opened Sept. 18, 1809, saw the O. P. riots, caused by playgoers demanding the "old prices" again.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when the crowd began to collect, and at six the auditorium was completely filled: while outside the doors three times as many people were clamoring for admittance. On came Mr. Kemble, only to be greeted by catcalls and hissing. In vain he implored permission to speak: the mob drowned every word. As Mrs. Siddons advanced, in her costume of Lady Macbeth, she seemed disturbed by the clamor, but yet with wonderful composure proceeded to act out her part in pantomime. Kemble, too, kept valiantly on, so that,—as one spectator said,—"a finer dumb show was never witnessed."

"Surely," cried Mrs. Siddons to her friend, Mrs.

Fitzhugh, after the riot had thus continued for weeks, "nothing ever equalled the domineering of the mob in these days. It is to me inconceivable how the public at large submits to be thus dictated to, against their better judgment, by a handful of imperious and intoxicated men." Even Kemble's nerves were shaken by this trial; while his wife, poor thing, lived with ladders at her windows, prepared to escape through the garden in case of an attack upon her house.

Lady Macbeth was Mrs. Siddons's farewell *rôle* upon the stage. On the 29th of June, 1812, the mighty audience, rising on the benches immediately after the sleep-walking scene, in this farewell performance, demanded that there the play of the evening should end. And end it did. A few minutes later, however, the curtain rose to show, not the player, but the woman. Clad in simple white, Mrs. Siddons was discovered sitting by a table. In response to the renewed cheers she rose, and, with modest dignity, delivered an address written for the occasion by her nephew, Horace Twiss. Later on, for a few benefit performances, Mrs. Siddons returned to the stage; but this was her formal farewell. She was fifty-six years of age when her professional career ended, but her life continued in happy lines nineteen years more.

When at her best, strong men wept at the Siddons's tragic action, and women were carried fainting from the house. The King himself had yielded to his emotion at her betrayal of sorrow: though the Queen, with her back sullenly turned towards the stage, declared the acting "too disagreeable."

There could happen, however, laughable incidents to relieve this terrible solemnity. On one night, for instance, when the weather was extremely hot, our goddess of tragedy (mortal then, as the rest of the world) despatched a boy to bring to her at once a glass of beer. The lad did exactly as he was bid; for, returning from the inn with the foaming pitcher, he calmly and innocently walked directly out upon the stage while Lady Macbeth was performing the most absorbing part of the sleep-walking scene, and, with a total unconsciousness of impropriety, exclaimed, "Here's your beer, ma'am." The audience was convulsed, and roared the louder when the boy was dragged off the scene: but the Siddons never lost her composure through it all.

There was another occasion, of a different character, when the lady's self-command was equally apparent. It was in Brighthelmstone, in 1809, when her brother Charles was her Macbeth. In the banquet scene he threw the cup from him so violently as to shatter the glass chandelier standing on the table, scattering its broken pieces dangerously near his sister's face. Yet she sat as if made of marble.

What discussions and what tumults they had in those days over the tragedy! Garrick, as we have seen, dressed Macbeth in a modern garb; while his Lady wore a costume that, had she wished, she might with equal propriety have worn the next day to a court reception. Macklin, always burning to revolutionize all things, when essaying the character of the Thane, at the age of seventy, chose for his garb the Rob Roy tartan of a Highland chieftain. Though the gallery laughed at his appearance, which they declared was more like a Scotch piper than a general and a prince of the blood, as he stumped down the stage at the head of his army, yet his example was so powerful that tartan was thenceforth adopted as the regular dress for the part, — until some learned antiquary discovered, some forty odd years ago, that in Macbeth's time tartan had not been invented. Phelps, in 1847, showed for the first time Macbeth clad in the rude armor, conical helmet, and tunic of the barbaric warrior of the days of the Norsemen and Anglo-Saxons. Then, six years later, Charles Kean put on the red and blue tunic covered by the hauberk of iron rings sewed upon leather.

Mrs. Siddons and her brother tried to banish Banquo's ghost from the stage, but the public would not allow the change. Back the spectre had to come. In the same imperious manner a Bristol audience, as late as 1803, compelled Kemble to restore the absurd scene of the witches, in their conical caps and high-heeled shoes, jumping over broomsticks. In fact, there was almost a riot in the theatre until the demand of the play-goers was met.

With Macready's entrance we have reached the "delicate and refined fiend" of Helen Faucit, for so it was once characterized. To witness her sleep-walking scene, they said fifty years ago, was worth a thousand homilies against murder. "It made me shudder from head to foot, and my very hair stand up on my head," cried William Carleton, as he described the fearful expression of the eyes, the frightful reality of horror, the terrible revelation of remorse, and the ineffectual struggles to wash away, not the blood from the corpse-like hands, but the blood from the tortured soul.

A beautiful woman was Miss Faucit, of noble yet graceful figure, possessed of a wonderfully expressive and lovely face, and gifted with a fascinatingly silvery voice. A combination of Mrs. Siddons and

Miss O'Neill, cried one admirer of her charms, claiming that she had the majestic air and lofty thoughts of the former, and as great pathetic power; and was gifted with no less winning grace and far greater variety than the latter. Her Juliet, Portia, Imogen, Beatrice, Rosalind, and Lady Constance, as well as her Lady Macbeth, all aroused admiration.

George Fletcher, moved by her awful despair as Constance of Bretagne, in the stately historical play, thought it wonderful that shortly afterwards she could "infuse into the part of Rosalind all the tender though lively grace which the poet has made its principal attribute and most exquisite attraction —breathing the soul of elegance, wit, and feeling through that noble forest pastoral." She was only twenty-four years of age when she assumed the *rôle* of Lady Macbeth; seven years later she married the author whose work in connection with "The Life of the Prince Consort," and Bon Gaultier's "Ballads," entitle him to distinction. In October, 1879, she made her last appearance on the stage, playing Rosalind at Manchester for the benefit of the widow of Charles Calvert, and now (1895) at the age of seventy-five, she lives honored and beloved in her native England.

Fanny Kemble had taken Lady Macbeth into her *répertoire* at an earlier age even than Miss Faucit, being but twenty-one when she first essayed the part, and having passed through but one season upon the stage. Miss Kemble's lack of physical size militated against her thorough success in the character. Yet one able critic, noting her skill as well as her comparatively diminutive features and figure, said of her acting, "it was like looking at Mrs. Siddons through the wrong end of an opera glass." That statement recalls what Sir Thomas Lawrence, the famous artist, said to Miss Kemble when he was painting her picture, the last work he ever completed.

"These are the eyes of Mrs. Siddons," he exclaimed to the fair niece of the great Tragedy Queen.

"You mean like those of Mrs. Siddons," she declared.

"No," he replied, "they are the same eyes; the construction is the same, and to draw them is the same thing."

Mrs. Bunn was Macready's first Lady Macbeth at Drury Lane, in 1823; Mrs. Warner was his last Lady Macbeth at that memorable performance of Feb. 26, 1851, when Old Drury was filled with a stamping, shouting, hat-waving throng of friends bidding the actor farewell. It was Mrs. Warner, also, who, a year before, had acted Portia in "Julius Cæsar" at the Windsor Castle theatricals, when for the first time Macready, playing Brutus, and Charles Kean, playing Antony, consented to appear together on the same stage. Which actor loved the other least is hard to say, but certainly after this performance before royalty Brutus was less the honorable man. A message of courtesy from Kean, brought to Macready's dressing-room, elicited the curt rejoinder, "If Mr. Kean has anything to say to me, let him say it through my solicitor." No wonder, when Kean afterwards lost the diamond ring given to him for his share in the Windsor Castle performance, the wags asserted that it had been found "sticking in Macready's gizzard."

Later, in the person of Samuel Phelps, comes "a rude, impulsive soldier," as Macbeth, to the dignified, traditional Lady, in the person of Mrs. Warner. As joint managers of the renovated Sadler's Wells Theatre, on May 27, 1844, they began with "Macbeth" the long and noble series of Shakespearian productions that marked the new career of that house. Following Mrs. Warner is seen the natural born actress, Isabel Glyn, tall, dark-eyed, and dark-featured.

In the Kean revivals of a subsequent date, Mrs. Kean was too gentle and womanly to stand the test of comparison with the great players before her.

As for Neilson, she told Eben Plympton, the actor, that she had studied Lady Macbeth, but should not attempt the part until she was forty: she died at the age of thirty-two. Kate Bateman (Mrs. Crowe), one of the child prodigies of 1851, played the part in 1873 to Henry Irving's Macbeth, and then, with the interlude of Genevieve Ward, came Ellen Terry to a later Macbeth of Irving,—later in date but not in conception: for Irving, in spite of hot criticism, has clung to his humanized character.

So interesting is the story of Genevieve Ward, and so famous in America was her acting in "Forget-Me-Not," that it is worth while to pause a moment and speak of her career.

Miss Ward was the granddaughter of Samuel Ward, a Bostonian, who married Miss Lee, the daughter of Gideon Lee, also a native Bostonian, though his greatest fame came as Mayor of New York. Miss Lee, just before her marriage, was indirectly the cause of a royal Duke and future King of England getting himself "knocked out in one round," as the ring parlance would have it. She

GENEVIEVE WARD AS LADY MACBETH

was walking with her brother through the streets of Halifax when His Grace, the Duke of Clarence (afterward William IV.), then in command of a royal frigate in the harbor, met the two, and, having indulged in spirituous liquors to a degree that carried away his sense of decorum, expressed his admiration of Miss Lee's beauty in terms evidently sincere, but not strictly conventional. Whereat the independent American brother let out with his sturdy right arm, and knocked the scion of nobility to the ground.

Miss Ward inherited a great deal of this spirit and independence in her own character. Had she not, it might have been that that sad romance of her early days would have resulted still more sadly. The beautiful American maiden, still in her teens, had sorrow enough facing her when she found that Count Guerbel, although married legally to her by American law, was seeking to evade the Greek rites that alone would be binding upon him in his native land of Russia. With pluck and energy the wife sought the Tsar, and through him secured the solemnization of the marriage in full form.

How vivid is the picture, to all who have heard the story, of that young girl, dressed in deepest black as though it were a funeral instead of a marriage, standing before the altar while her rights were accorded her: how more vividly impressive the whirling away out of Russia before the bridegroom could fully realize his situation. She had vindicated her name, and that was all she desired.

But Mme. Guerbel soon became Mme. Guerrabella, not by another marriage, not by legal process, but simply through the twisting that people of one nationality give to names of another nation — just as Modjeska was evolved out of Modrzejewska. The Italians found Guerrabella much more natural for their flowing language than hard-sounding Guerbel.

And here was this American girl, barely twenty years of age, passing through all the vicissitudes of life, and rising above them so as to become widely known, even at that time, as a cantatrice. She sought commendation solely through her merits. Her friends tell the story of the masquerade before Lamperti. The famous teacher, one day, saw enter his apartments a poorly dressed girl, with features disguised by great green goggles. She wanted to sing to him. He bade her go on; and the moment she had finished her last note he brusquely declared, "You can sing: I'll teach you." It was Mme. Guerbel seeking in this way an unprejudiced and correct opinion of her voice.

After her successes in opera, what an affliction it was suddenly to lose her voice in the midst of a season in Cuba! And this to come, too, at the time when her father was out of health and suffering from reverses of fortune. But the dramatic stage was open to the artist — open, but hard to attain. In her own native land she could obtain no chance to appear. In England it took a hard struggle and the influence of powerful friends to gain a hearing; but once on the stage she was secure.

On that night when Miss Ward made her *début* as an actress, in Manchester, England, Oct. 1, 1873, a trick was attempted to thwart her in the sleep-walking scene. An envious stage associate, just before the act began, removed the table on which the candle was to be placed.

"What shall I do?" cried the *débutante* as she discovered the loss.

"You can drop the candle," was the taunting rejoinder.

But Miss Ward was too resourceful for that. Seizing a three-legged stool, she hastily thrust it upon the scene, escaping into the wings just in time to avoid being seen by the audience as the curtain rose.

Gifted with a magnificent figure and classic features, the actress who in six months could prepare to act fourteen characters, of which five were Shakespeare's, certainly had natural advantages of physique and mind for laborious parts. "In her murderous exhortations to Macbeth," cried a critic who saw her first performance in the play, "she was savage and soothing by turns, and thus, as it were, made the one manner serve to show the other in stronger relief. Her hissing whispers, again, in the scene following the murder, made a similarly effective contrast with the full-toned horror of Macbeth's, 'I have done the deed.'"

Ellen Terry, coming later, attempted to revolutionize the remorseless, terrible woman of previous impersonators. She believed Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth was essentially feminine, and based one argument, to clinch that plea, upon the woman's fainting after the murder, when triumph is apparently at hand. Mrs. Siddons, with others, omitted that effect as inconsistent with their conception of the character. With Terry, soft smiles preceded and followed terrible utterances; in Macbeth's arms she rested in gentlest womanhood; in the manner of a dove she described the murderous act of a demon. Human even to charming, modern and womanly, Terry's Lady Macbeth was regarded as more of a curious novelty than an accurate impersonation.

While this new Lady Macbeth, in place of the raven locks of tradition, displayed hair of a reddish tint with two long braids reaching to the ground, and showed a blithe, companionable woman, her Macbeth, as pictured by Mr. Irving, was an irresolute, craven self-lover. Beardless, with a little flaming red mustache projecting only beyond the corners of the lips, Irving was pictured by one critic as "a Macbeth with a restless eye, a Macbeth with a spare, nervous frame, a Macbeth with the face of a hungry gray wolf." With rare consistency, the actor has kept his delineation of the character unchanged, in spite of the criticism that had attacked his first presentation some years before the later grand revival.

By a sad coincidence, on the very night Ellen Terry for the first time essayed Lady Macbeth, Isabel Glyn-Dallas, the most noted Lady Macbeth surviving at that time, lay on her death-bed.

Last of all, on the English stage, came Mrs. Langtry, a Lady Macbeth so coquettish as to creep into the embrace of her vacillating husband and nestle there, as for a kiss, while she urged him to the terrible deed: amiable and gentle in her dismissal of the guests before she covers up the crouching Macbeth to hide his grovelling from the servants: feeble, faltering, ghost-like in the candle scene, "winning pity, tears, forgiveness, instead of exciting horror," as even a friendly critic described her.

But one native-born American has ever become famous in Lady Macbeth. The world knows her name, — Charlotte Cushman. Mrs. Duff and Mme. Janauschek, however, became so identified with the American stage that their names should, in justice, follow that of the great Boston actress.

A group of lesser, and yet not minor, Lady Macbeths can be collected before speaking of these three. Mrs. Douglass (formerly Mrs. Hallam) was the first actress in the *rôle* on our stage, playing the part in Philadelphia, Dec. 1, 1759, with her son, the younger Lewis Hallam, as the first Macbeth of America, just as he had also been, ten weeks before, the first Hamlet.

Following the next Ladies, Miss Cheer and Mrs. Ryan, and preceding Mrs. Whitlock, Mrs. Henderson, and Boston's first Lady Macbeth, of Dec. 21, 1795, Mrs. Snelling Powell, came Mrs. Melmorth, a respectable English farmer's daughter, who, while at boarding-school, lost her heart to young Pratt, otherwise known as Courtney Melmorth, and eloped with the theatrical gentleman. They both acted in London; but the lady, in spite of her shapely form and sweet voice, failed to make an impression in the metropolis. The Scottish and Irish capitals recognized her talents, and even welcomed her in opera; but, after twenty years' experience up-hill and down-hill, the Melmorths, in 1793, came to our shores. Here, in their very first season, the wife acted in "Macbeth."

The once shapely figure of the lady had now developed into such generous proportions as nearly to wreck her *début* in New York, through one of those unlucky misapplications of the text of the play. "Strike here," she cried, as Euphrasia in the "Grecian Daughter," when bidding Dionysius kill her rather than her beloved father, "Strike here: here's *blood enough*." The audience forgot the point of the dagger in the point of the words, and roared so heartily as utterly to disconcert the players. Never again did Mrs. Melmorth utter those words, "Here's blood enough," when she acted Euphrasia.

Mme. Ponisi and Mrs. D. P. Bowers, both of whom we have found interestingly connected with the early productions of "Antony and Cleopatra" in America, and both of whom survive to-day, the one with a record of forty-five years upon the stage, the other with nearly half a century of experience, were Lady Macbeths in the former generation. Mme. Ponisi acted to the Thane of Edwin Forrest shortly after the great Astor Place riot, when Macready was practically stoned from New York by the assault of the mob on the playhouse while the Englishman was trying to act Macbeth.

And here it may be mentioned that the English-born Lady Macbeth of that unfortunate night of May 10, 1849, was Mrs. Coleman-Pope, a beautiful and queenly looking woman, who, when the stones crashed through the windows, and the rattle of musketry without showed that blood was being shed, stood without flinching by the side of Macbeth, displaying undaunted mettle. She was at that time forty years of age.

Mrs. Bowers, whose *début* dates back to 1846, is still an active figure on the stage. The daughter of an Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. William A. Crocker, of Stamford, Conn., she was born in 1830. Probably her most noted characters have been Lady Audley, in "Lady Audley's Secret," and Elizabeth.

With Mrs. E. L. Davenport our heroine has an interesting connection, from being the last character that excellent actress played upon the stage. On the 7th of April, 1890, a benefit to commemorate the memory of Mrs. Vincent, the noted "old woman" of the Boston Museum stage, was held at the Globe Theatre in Boston. Joseph Proctor, the famous Nick of the Woods of other years, and to-day, at the age of seventy-nine, one of the last survivors of the past generation of actors, volunteered to play Macbeth, while Mrs. Davenport, though then in her sixty-fifth year, repeated the lines of his Lady.

Born in Bath, England, in 1826, Fanny Vining Davenport died in Canton, Penn., July 20, 1891. Her father, Frederick Vining, was a light comedian; her mother, Miss Bew, was the daughter of John Johnston, a famous delineator of Irish characters, and was also the sister of Mrs. James W. Wallack, Sr. The children of Mr. and Mrs. Davenport adopted the stage; and one, Fanny, is counted among the Beatrices, Imogens, and Rosalinds of Shakespeare. The first marriage of Fanny Vining was unhappy; but with Mr. Davenport her union was congenial and fortunate, the two acting together through the greater part of their married life. It was on the 2d of March, 1855, that Mrs. Davenport made her American *début;* so that her last appearance was not until thirty-five years afterwards. From Mrs. Micawber to Lady Macbeth was her range of parts.

A criticism of Miss Avonia Jones's first appearance as Lady Macbeth lies before me. It commends the actress for her pains, and thus describes her interpretation of two scenes: "Just previous to the re-entry of Macbeth from the chamber of Duncan, the terrible words, 'That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold,' etc., were pronounced in a loud whisper, which was continued during nearly the entire scene that followed, and produced, combined with the fine acting of both principals, an almost appalling effect. In the banquet scene Miss Jones acts the whole time: she watches Macbeth with a restless glance of anxious dread, when she observes his perturbation, and, at the same time, fulfils the courtesies of her 'state' with grace and dignity. The words, 'This is the very painting of your fear,' were uttered in the ear of her husband with a scornful emphasis, though in a tone to be heard by him alone. All this was worked up with great art."

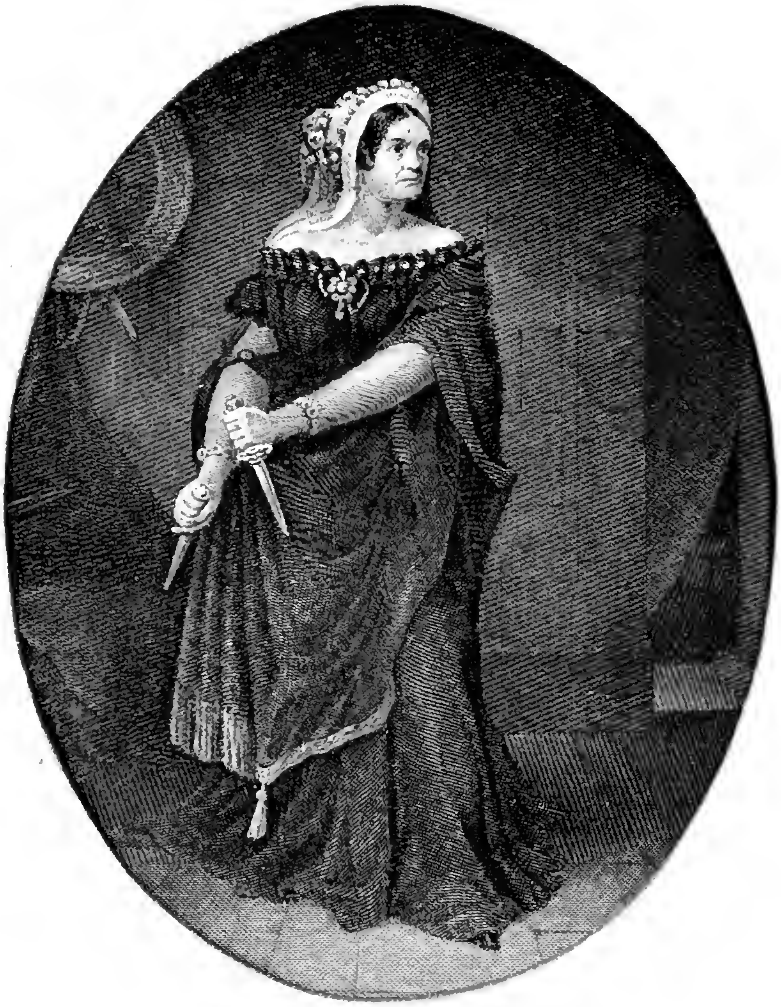
Miss Jones came of parentage curiously noted. Her mother, Mrs. Melinda Jones, of majestic figure and powerful voice, who often played Romeo to the daughter's Juliet, was known in the West, according to Stone, as the "Man-Flogger," from her frequent cowhiding of actors and editors. Her father was "George, the Count Joannes," whose strange acts on and off the stage led to many scenes of bedlam in the theatre, and much ridiculing comment without. Avonia was born in New York, July 12, 1839, and there died, Oct. 5, 1867, eight years before her mother's death, and twelve years before her father's death. She was the wife of Gustavus Brooke, the tragedian, whose death in shipwreck at sea is one of the sad but heroic pictures of life.

One of the Lady Macbeths to Edwin Booth, some years ago, was Charlotte Crampton, the pretty, hot-headed, eccentric, wild-living Mazeppa, who, in the scant stage-costume of that character, could dare leap on her horse's back, on a bitter cold night, and dash through the streets of Boston, followed by a howling rabble. Matilda Heron, whom we associate now chiefly with Camille, made her first appearance on the New York stage (Aug. 23, 1852) at the Bowery as Lady Macbeth to Hamblin's Macbeth, and made her last appearance in the character at Booth's, on Christmas Day, 1874, to Vandenhoff's Macbeth; she played other parts later.

A Camille of to-day, also, Clara Morris, once tried ineffectually the part of our heroine, gaining only the criticism of being "a lachrymose and emotional

Lady Macbeth." But Mrs. Jean Davenport Lander, as well as Mrs. Farren, won honors in the part.

And now to look at the great Lady Macbeths. Above them all towers Charlotte Cushman. Macready said of her impersonation, when describing it to Edward L. Davenport, that it was a most consummate piece of art: so powerful in its nature, so subtile in its conception, as to make him feel, when on the stage with her, that he was less than a creature of secondary consideration, — in truth, a mere thing of naught. Mr. W. T. W. Ball, to whom this word of praise was repeated by Mr. Davenport, says of Cushman, that in Lady Macbeth she appeared almost in her own proper person, so far as appearance was concerned, being grand and imposing, with no vestige of what was fair, feminine, or fragile. "There was one little touch in Miss Cushman's embodiment of the character," he says, "that, so far as my experience goes, was entirely overlooked by other actresses. This was in the only interview (Act I. Scene 6) the lady has with 'the gracious Duncan.' All the other Lady Macbeths that I have seen invariably met the King in a fawning and cringing manner. Miss Cushman alone, while paying due homage to Duncan as her sovereign, still preserved the dignity of her standing:



CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN AS LADY MACBETH.
From an Old Print.

and, though playing the hostess to perfection, she never for a moment permitted the audience to lose sight of the fact that socially and by birth she was the peer of the King."

Vandenhoff, who took rather a different view of Miss Cushman, gives in his Note-Book a graphic description of one scene. "She bullies Macbeth," he writes: "gets him into a corner of the stage, and, as I heard a man with more force than elegance express it, she 'pitches into him.' In fact, as one sees her large, clinched hand and muscular arm threatening him, in alarming proximity, one feels that if other arguments fail with her husband, she will have recourse to blows."

Lawrence Barrett used to say that Miss Cushman supported her picturing of reckless carelessness in the Macbeths' actions by maintaining that both the Thane and his wife, through the more important scenes, were under the influence of wine.

When the American *tragédienne* first essayed the great character, a ludicrous complication occurred. Beginning her career as a singer at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, in 1835, at the age of nineteen, she accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Maeder that same season to New Orleans, where, having decided to abandon music for acting, she arranged to start with Lady

Macbeth. But then it was found that she was destitute of the proper costumes. A note, asking the loan of clothes, was rushed by the manager to Mme. Closel, of the French Theatre; and Miss Cushman also went to see the lady.

"I was a tall, thin, lanky girl at the time," she writes, "and the French woman was a short, fat person of not more than four feet, ten inches, 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 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 of all the members of the company."

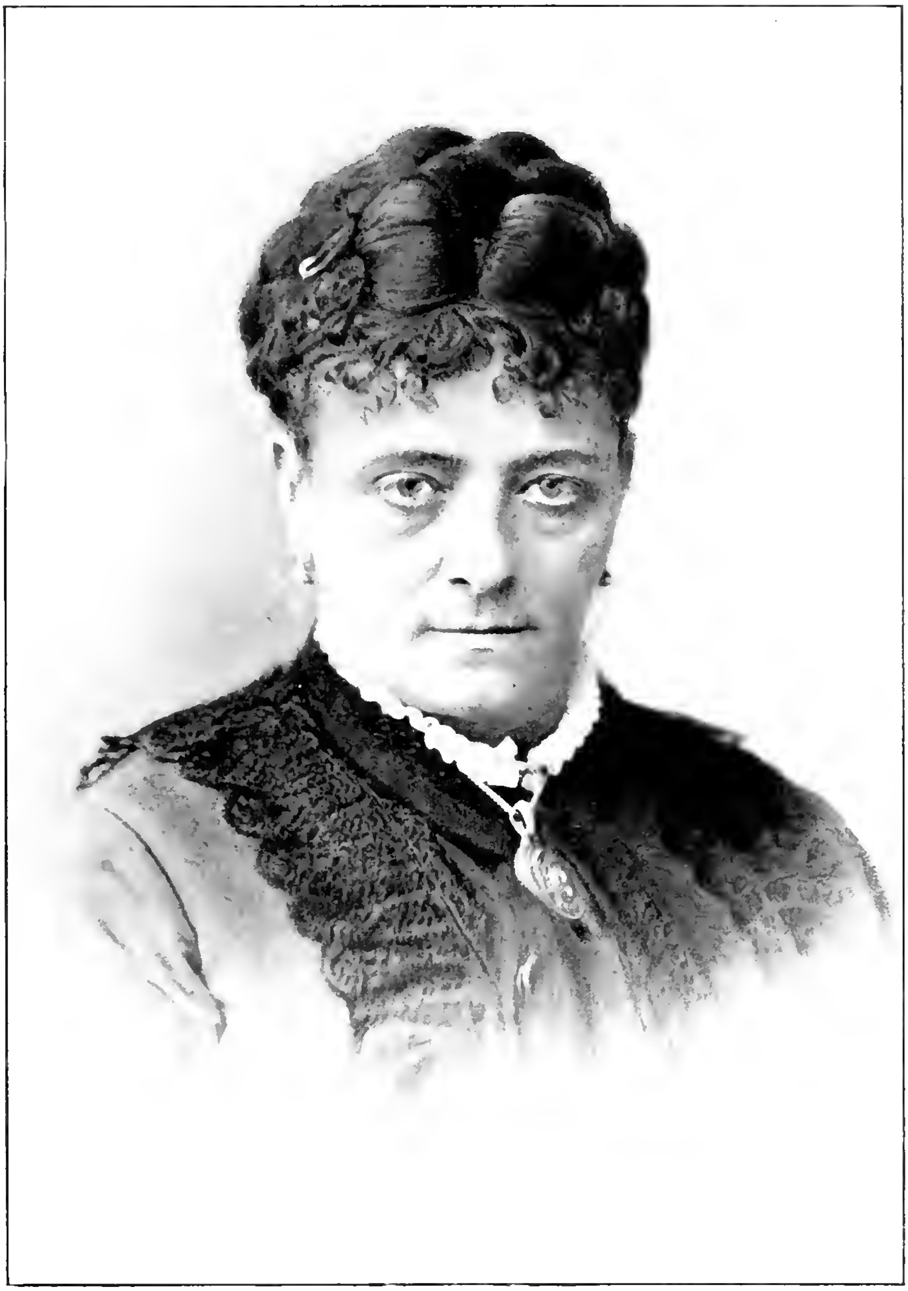
With Lady Macbeth, seven years later, Miss Cushman so interested Macready that he advised her to try the English stage, and gave to the young player the helping hand that brought her first into prominence. After London had applauded her she returned to America, to become the leading actress of our stage.

Cushman's later days were a battle against an insidious disease; but all the depressions of such a fate failed to dim the earnestness of her life. She went to her death with heart unhardened and faculties undimmed. On the 7th of November, 1874, at Booth's Theatre, she bade farewell to New York in her favorite character, George Vandenhoff acting Macbeth. A grand testimonial was the outpouring of noted men and women on that occasion, and the subsequent reception, when twenty thousand people crowded about her hotel to greet her. A round of the other cities followed; and then, on May 15, 1875, her Lady Macbeth to D. W. Waller's Macbeth, at the Globe Theatre, Boston, closed her career. Nine months later, Feb. 18, 1876, in her sixtieth year, Charlotte Cushman died in her native city.

Twelve years before Cushman made her *début*, there had appeared a Lady Macbeth who, according to the later judgment of Horace Greeley, had never been equalled. The first time Mary Ann Duff played the character was in the fall of 1823, when, having acquired the reputation of being "the darling of the Boston boards," she accepted an engagement to play at the Park Theatre, in New York, and made her courtesy there on the 5th of September. Cooper was Macbeth.

New Yorkers then looked askant at a Boston stock actress presuming to "star" in their town, and refused to welcome her with numbers; the few that did attend her performances, however, admitted her talent. Later years were to bring all to her feet. Her impersonation nine years afterwards, for example, called forth these words from Mr. Greeley, in his "Recollections of a Busy Life:" "At Richmond Hill I saw Mrs. Duff personate Lady Macbeth better than it has since been done in this city, though she played for thirty dollars per week, and others have since received ten times that amount for a single night. I doubt that any woman has since played in our city — and I am thinking of Fanny Kemble — who was the superior of Mrs. Duff in a wide range of tragic characters."

Apropos of the lady's remuneration, it may be said that, six years before the date mentioned by Greeley, both she and her husband together received only fifty-five dollars a week (and the profits of a benefit), during a ten weeks' engagement at the Lafayette Theatre, New York. Mrs. Pelby and W. R. Blake received but twenty-five dollars; Mrs. Wal-



MME. JANAUSCHEK.

stein, a capable "old woman," only fifteen dollars; and Maywood, then a star, thirty-five dollars.

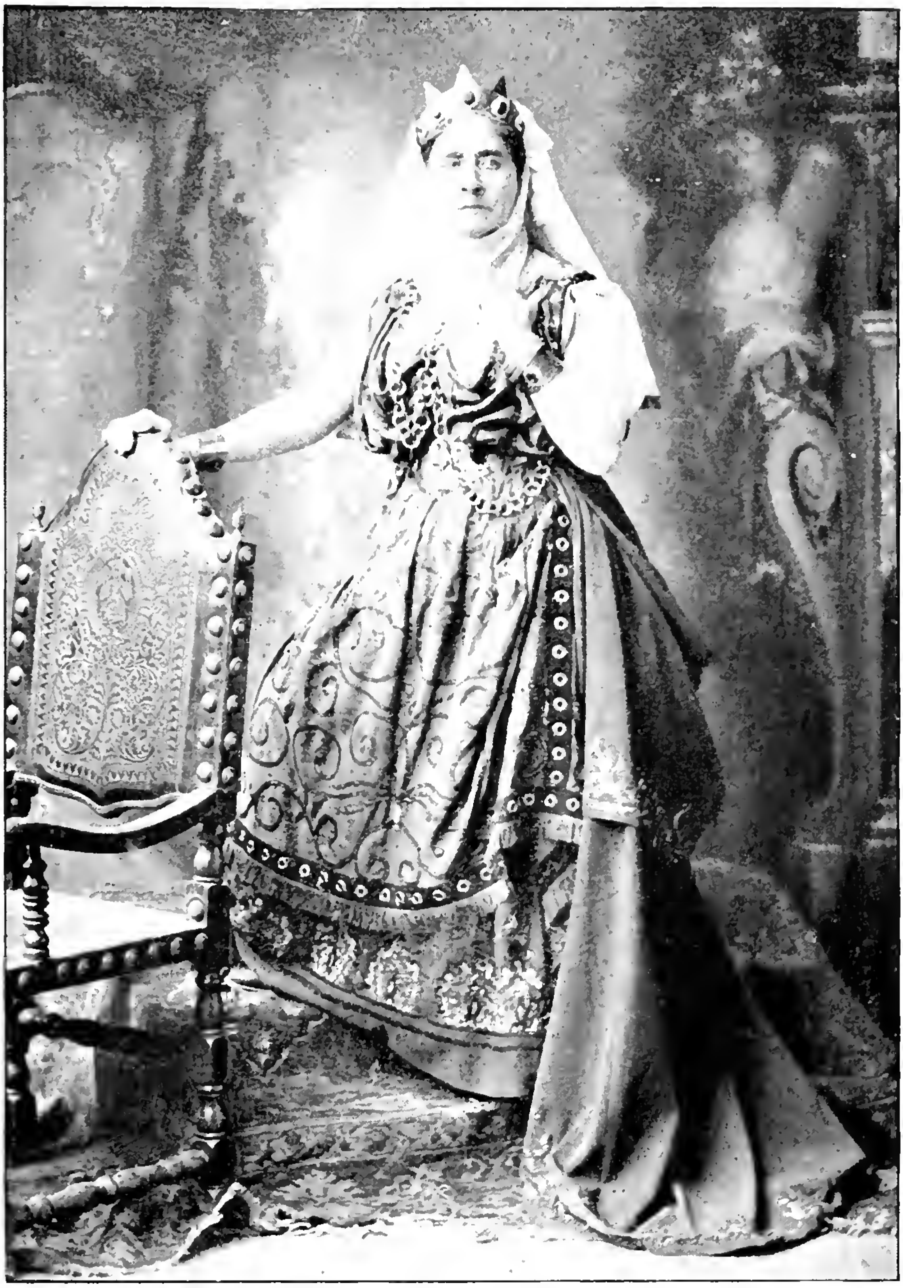
Mme. Janauschek's impersonation of Lady Macbeth is marked by its direct force, its determined character, and its unrelenting terribleness. In that scene, especially, where she discovers that Macbeth has brought away the bloody dagger from the death-chamber, and then herself ends the deed he had begun, the fierceness of anger at what she regards as his negligence, and the strength of resolution in the execution of the act, are almost leonine.

It is now nearly fifty years since this talented Austrian artist began her professional career. Intended in early life as a musician, she was drawn away from that profession by a slight circumstance, —a temporary injury to the hand that prevented piano practice; and then, at the age of twenty, stepped upon the stage of the theatre in Prague, her native town, to inaugurate a successful dramatic career.

Mme. Janauschek has not at all times been fortunate. A third of a million of dollars has been swept away by reverses, and with the money disappeared the magnificent jewels that were formerly the envy of all ladies. But personal friends stood by her in time of trouble: and through their help she weathered the storms of an adverse fortune, to start again, with energy and pluck, upon her life-work.

Her artistic career has always been successful. With natural genius and long experience she has combined unceasing industry. In nine months she mastered the English language so as to be able to write it and use it on the stage; while her acquaintance with French, German, Bohemian, and Italian illustrates her studious mind. Nor is this the only characteristic in which she differs from the actresses of the past century. What, for instance, would Mrs. Pritchard have thought of a Lady Macbeth who, as I was once told by a member of Mme. Janauschek's company, knew every part as well as she did her own, and would coach leaders and supernumeraries in little points of gesture, facial expression, and tone of voice, not only by description, but also by action.

With Modjeska's name the list of Lady Macbeths must close, until a new star shall appear in the theatrical firmament. On the 18th of November, 1889, at the Broadway Theatre, New York, she first played the character; up to that time, it is said, she had never seen a performance of the tragedy on any stage. This was the season when Edwin Booth and



RISTORI AS LADY MACBETH.

Mme. Modjeska were starring together, under the management of Lawrence Barrett.

Twenty-nine years before this, March 21, 1860, Booth and Cushman acted the Thane and his wife in one benefit performance at the Academy of Music, New York. Booth also acted to the Lady Macbeth of Ristori: and with a few words about this great visiting *tragédienne* we may drop the curtain on "Macbeth."

Born of humble parentage, near Venice, and placed upon the stage at the age of four to assist her strolling play-actor parents, Ristori twice left the stage in somewhat romantic manner. Her first desertion was her elopement, at the age of twenty-four, with a marquis's son. Her second departure was in order to serve in the Revolution of 1848 as a Sister of Charity. Even in this religious vocation, however, the theatre must have remained in the mind of the born actress: for we hear of her crying out with grim humor, when the shells from the French batteries struck her apartments while she was reciting, for recreation, passages from "Medea," "Ah, the enemy are throwing bouquets to me." After the war Ristori returned to the stage to become famous the world over. In 1866 she first visited America. Ristori's Lady Macbeth, as steadfastly held by her in argument and in action, was animated less by affection for her husband than by excessive ambition to share the throne. Her performance was admired for its consistent strength and naturalness. Her reading of the lines, "But screw your courage to the sticking-point, and we'll not fail," made them form an indignant exclamation, as though failure were an impossibility; while her sleep-walking scene was pronounced by an able critic, "a sermon," a sad, solemn, retributive vision of a broken-hearted woman on her way to the grave.

QUEEN KATHARINE.

(HENRY VIII.)

PRETTY Miss Saunderson played Queen Katharine in the pageant that Sir William Davenant brought out on New Year's Day at Lincoln's Inn Fields, fifty years after the old Globe Theatre had burned to the ground during a performance of an adaptation of Shakespeare's "Henry VIII." That very year, 1663, marked the marriage of our Queen and her King, stately Betterton. Their married life continued pleasantly for forty-seven years; and then Betterton passed away, to be followed in eighteen months by his devoted, grief-stricken wife.

The later Katharines were, for the most part, actresses who also essayed Lady Macbeth, so that a glance at their impersonations will be sufficient. The stately Mrs. Porter, by her admirable delivery of the text, invariably won the audience to applause with her very first speech to the King, energetically conveying in its utterance the prime duties of the kingly office: —

> "That you would love yourself, and in that love
> Not unconsidered leave your honor, nor
> The dignity of your office, is the point
> Of my petition."

"Her conduct in the whole scene was a mixture of graceful elocution and dignified behavior," is the description given of her acting by a writer who also says, "the dignity and grace of a queen were never, perhaps, more happily set off than by Mrs. Porter. There was an elevated consequence in the manner of that actress which was in vain sought for in her successors."

In spite of her harsh, tremulous voice, Mrs. Porter held the audiences intent by her very force. She had courage off the stage as well as on. When a highwayman, one summer's night, stopped her chaise and demanded her money, she presented him instead with the glimmer of a pistol, holding it at his head until the fellow, in trembling fear, explained that it was dire necessity, not wickedness, that led him thus to relieve his starving family. Thereat our kind-hearted Queen dropped her pistol, and thrust her purse into his hand. With joy the fellow rushed away; but Mrs. Porter, whipping up her horse too suddenly, was thrown from the carriage, and for the rest of her life was lamed by this catastrophe. Yet, forgetful of herself, on the very day after the accident, she had the truthfulness of the man's story ascertained, and for his needs raised a purse of sixty pounds among her friends. Her own pecuniary rewards were not great: for when she died in 1762, at an advanced age, she was dependent upon the honest benevolence of Lord Cornbury.

Mrs. Pritchard was absolute perfection as Katharine, and as Queen Gertrude in "Hamlet." Her acting of the trial scene in "Henry VIII." won especial renown.

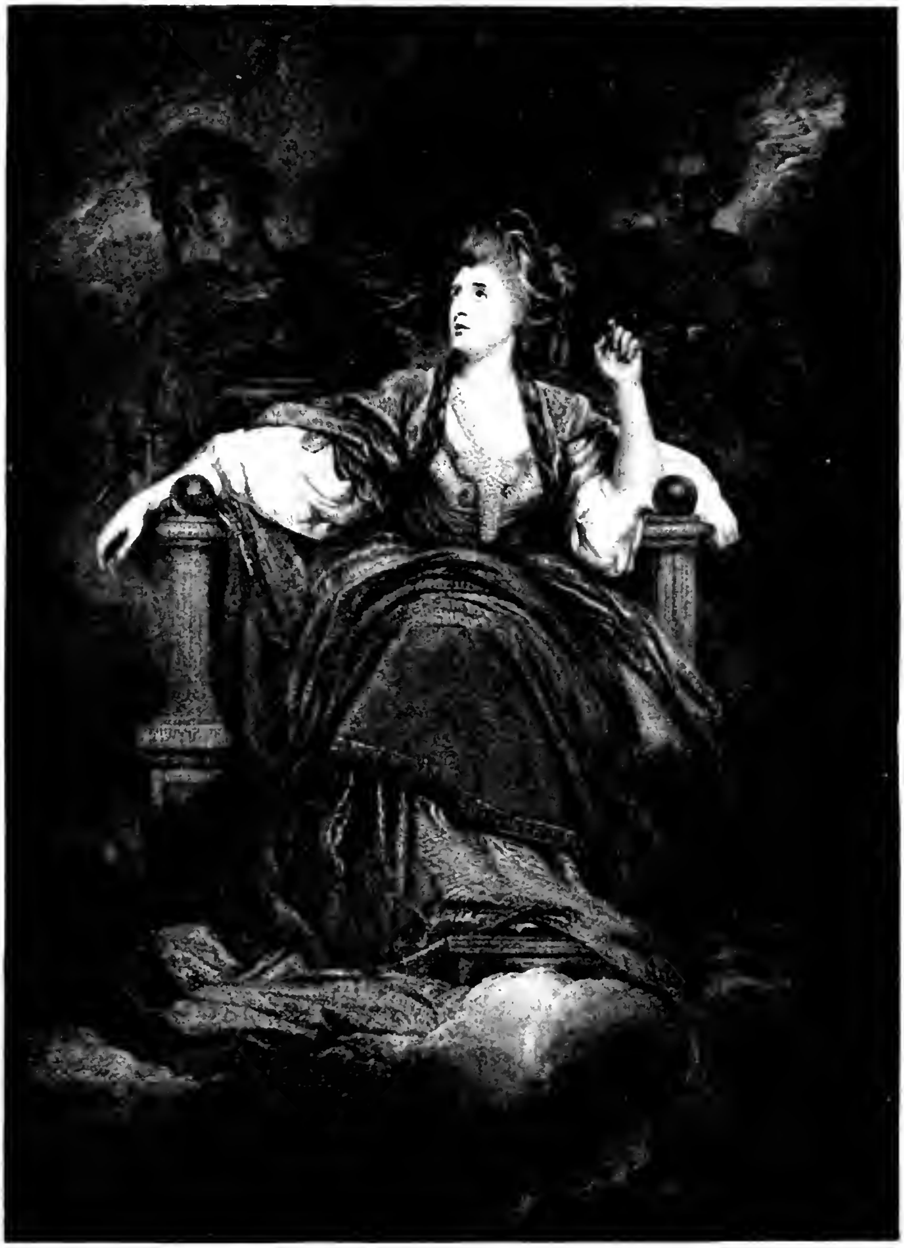
Miss Younge (Mrs. Pope) "could play Katharine well, but not equal to Mrs. Siddons," said Boaden; and his words bring us to the Queen of Tragedy. Let us stop for a moment, however, to speak of the origin of that famous painting of the Tragic Muse, by which Sir Joshua Reynolds has handed down to future generations the noble features of Mrs. Siddons.

"I had frequently the honor of dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds, in Leicester Square," the actress says in her autobiography. "At his house assembled all the good, the wise, the talented, the rank and fashion, of the age. About this time he produced his picture of me in the character of the Tragic Muse. In justice to his genius, I cannot but remark his instantaneous decision of the attitude and expression of the picture. It was, in fact, decided within the twinkling of an eye. When I attended him for the sitting, after more gratifying encomiums than I can now repeat, he took me by the hand, saying, 'Ascend your undisputed throne, and graciously bestow upon me some good idea of the Tragic Muse.' I walked up the steps, and instantly seated myself in the attitude in which the Tragic Muse now appears. This idea satisfied him so well that without one moment's hesitation he determined not to alter it."

At the close of his work Sir Joshua gallantly remarked, after declaring that the color would remain unfaded as long as the canvas held together: "To confirm my opinion here is my name: for I have resolved to go down to posterity on the hem of your garment."

Accordingly his name appears on the border of the drapery.

In the closing days of the year 1788, after Shakespeare's "Henry VIII." had slept for half a century, the Drury Lane stage saw a magnificent production of the play, with the Siddons as Katharine, her



MRS. SIDDONS AS THE TRAGIC MUSE
Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

brother John Kemble as Cromwell, Palmer as King Henry, and Bensley as Cardinal Wolsey.

Old Sam Johnson was not there to enjoy the grand performance. "Dr. Johnson's favorite female character in Shakespeare," wrote Mrs. Siddons, "was Katharine, in 'Henry VIII.' He was most desirous of seeing me in that play, but said, 'I am too deaf and too blind to see or hear at a greater distance than the stage-box, and have little taste for making myself a public gaze in so distinguished a situation.' I assured him that nothing would gratify me so much as to have him for an auditor, and that I could procure for him an easy-chair at the stage-door, where he would both see and hear, and be perfectly concealed. He appeared greatly pleased with this arrangement; but, unhappily for me, he did not live to fulfil our mutual wishes. Some weeks before he died I made him some morning visits. He was extremely, though formally, polite; always apologized for being unable to attend me to my carriage; conducted me to the head of the stairs, kissed my hand, and bowing, said, 'Dear Madam, I am your most humble servant:' and these were always repeated without the smallest variation."

No wonder the spectators watched with fascinated eyes the scornful majesty, the contempt, the anger, and the terrific pride of innocence which Campbell pointed out, when the actress, turning to Wolsey, exclaimed, "To you I speak!" Her form seemed to expand, and her eyes to burn with fire beyond human, cried the chronicler of old. "There were none who did not feel the agonies of sympathy when they saw her efforts to suppress the grief to which her woman's nature was yielding; who did not acknowledge, in her manner, the truth of her assertion of royalty; and who did not experience a portion of that awe which Wolsey might be supposed to feel, when her sparks of fire darted through her drops of tears."

Even the actors were affected. One night, in the provinces, the player who was carrying out the character of the unjust Surveyor was actually overcome by the vehement rebuke of the Siddons's Katharine, when she exclaimed,—

> "You were the Duke's Surveyor, and lost your office
> On the complaint o' the tenants: take good heed
> You charge not in your spleen a noble person,
> And spoil your nobler soul: I say, take heed!"

Overwhelmed by the force of Sarah Siddons's elocution, the actor fairly sweated with agitation as he left the stage.

"Why, my dear fellow," cried a brother player, "what is the matter with you?"

"Matter," responded the shaking Surveyor, "that woman plays as if the thing were in earnest. She looked on me so through and through with her black eyes, that I would not for the world meet her on the stage again."

The death scene of Siddons's Queen was original in her day, and almost faultless in its truth to nature. Instead of following the old idea of languor and monotonous action, her Katharine was fretful and restless, changing her pillows hither and thither, leaning her hands upon her knees, to hold her enfeebled frame, and playing uneasily with her drapery, — thus illustrating vividly the struggle of the woman seeking relief from the irritability of sickness.

No other English actress has equalled the glory of Siddons in the character. No American actress has eclipsed the glory of Charlotte Cushman as the Queen. Mrs. Duff, Ellen Tree (Mrs. Charles Kean), Mrs. Warner, Miss Glyn, Genevieve Ward, Mme. Janauschek, Ellen Terry, and Mme. Modjeska are names the most prominent in the secondary list. Miss Terry's Katharine was first seen in London, Jan. 5, 1892, in Henry Irving's pageant production, at the Lyceum Theatre, where Irving's Wolsey was picturesque in its cold, formal, steel-like drawing, and Terry's Katharine was always the Emperor's daughter as well as the King's wife, strong in her own realization of greatness, though kind and gracious to her friends.

America did not see the play at all until the present century, for Hallam's company never took "Henry VIII." into its *répertoire*. Of Katharines of whom we have record in this country, Mary Ann Duff is the first in date of appearance.

In plaintive tenderness of tone, in majestic dignity of demeanor, and in forceful grace of action, Mrs. Duff's Katharine is said to have excelled. That same tenderness which she exhibited upon the stage had in earlier days, when the maiden was a Dublin dancer, by its exhibition in private life, won the affection of Tom Moore. But the girl of fifteen years capriciously refused the hand of the Irish poet, thus causing the production of the well-known song: —

"Mary, I believed thee true,
  And I was blest in so believing;
But now I mourn that e'er I knew
  A girl so fair and so deceiving!"

Fortunately for his peace of mind, the poet afterwards found that Mary's sister Elizabeth had equal charms, and to her he was happily married. To compensate, perhaps, for the earlier verses, he gave his second love this tribute: —

"Fly from the world, O Bessy, to me,
Thou wilt never find any sincerer;
I'll give up the world, O Bessy, for thee,
I can never meet any that's dearer.
Then tell me no more with a tear and a sigh
That our loves will be censured by many;
All, all have their follies, and who will deny
That ours is the sweetest of any?"

Charlotte Cushman first played Queen Katharine on the English stage with Macready; then she offered her impersonation to her fellow-people of America. Honors fell thick upon her. When, during her later years, she had returned to the character at Booth's Theatre, New York, after an enforced absence from the stage, her remarkable strength and energy in action were still so manifest as to arouse the audience to the wildest enthusiasm. Cheers called her to the footlights as the first curtain fell. No sooner had she retired to the wings than another emphatic "call" resounded through the house. Her eyes flashing with excitement, her form quivering from head to foot, the lover of her profession, throwing up both arms, exclaimed in passionate ecstasy, "Oh, how have I ever lived without this through all these years!"

Miss Cushman's last Katharine, acted during her farewell engagement in Boston, her native city, in

May, 1875, was seen by the scholarly critic, Mr. H. A. Clapp, who thus described the impersonation: "In Miss Cushman's present assumption we see little variation from her former performance, except that she now emphasizes the queenly and majestic side of the character a little more than before, and thus makes its pathetic aspect somewhat less conspicuous. A good illustration of this appears in Miss Cushman's delivery of her last lines in the trial scene; the words, —

> 'I will not tarry: no, nor evermore,
> Upon this business, my appearance make
> In any of their courts,' —

which Miss Cushman used to give with a burst of anguish, as if the overfraught heart could bear its weight no longer, she now declaims with fiery, passionate intensity. Miss Cushman also dwells more than used to be her wont upon the physical horrors of her sick scene, with a gain to its sensational effect, but with a slight loss, as we think, to the beauty and serenity which should be its most marked qualities. But the whole of this last scene is, as ever, most touching in its naturalness, and most noble in its moral grandeur and sweetness."

PORTIA.

(MERCHANT OF VENICE.)

GOOD-HUMORED Kitty Clive, clad in the robes of Portia, must have looked with astonishment upon the Shylock of that notable evening of Feb. 14, 1741, when Macklin completely transformed the character of the Jew.

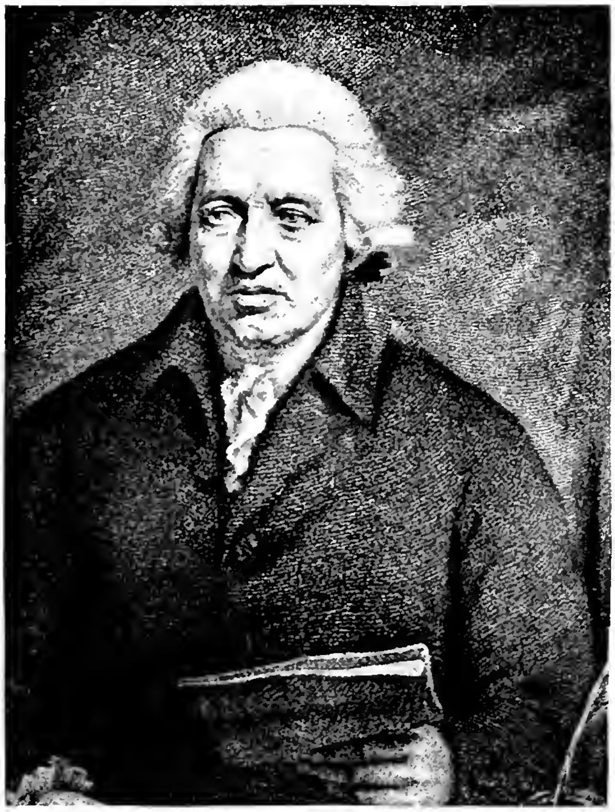
The jovial actress, with her delight for fun-making, had found pleasure in giving to Portia a coarse and even flippant character, transforming the trial scene into buffoonery by mimicking the great lawyer Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield; while all Shylocks before this day, with their laughter-provoking ennunciation and gesture, had made the whole tone of the play farcical, especially arousing roars of laughter at the "comicality" of the scene with Tubal, now made so pathetic.

But Charles Macklin, whose name had been abbreviated from M'Laughlin, had studied deeper into the character. He was sure that the part, as acted by the lively little comedian Dogget, — "the famous Mr. Thomas Dogget" Steele called him in *The Tatler*, — was fundamentally wrong in its conception, and had therefore formed a noble plan, not only to drive from the stage that alteration by George Granville (Viscount Lansdowne) which, under the title "The Jew of Venice," had taken the place of Shakespeare's text, but also to crush the burlesque Shylock with it.

It was a tremendous undertaking. The actor did not dare tell his plan to fellow-players or to manager: during the rehearsals he merely walked through the part. But his scheme leaked out. As a result, Drury Lane Theatre was filled with an audience, one-half of which, at least, was ready to cry down such a bold innovation.

"The wild Irishman 'll be hissed from the stage for his folly," exclaimed old Quin, the Antonio of the cast, the leading representative of the old school of actors, and the bully whom Macklin had recently soundly thrashed.

But yet Quin himself, unintentionally, paid a compliment, when he declared, on seeing Macklin ready for the part, that if ever Heaven had written villain on a brow, it was on that fellow's. Shylock's costume, too, was a novelty. For the first time the



MR. MACKLIN.

character was dressed in appropriate clothes, such as the stage now sees, even to the red hat, which, as Macklin afterwards told Pope, he had learned in an old history was a compulsory badge of the Jews of Venice, according to the law of the time.

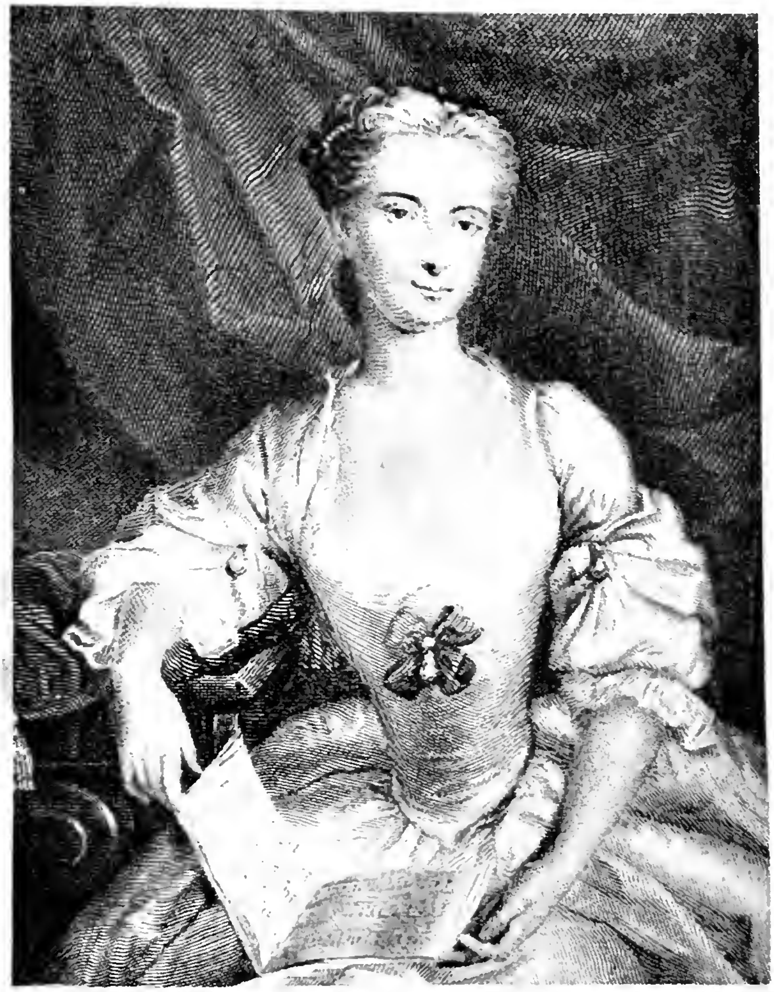
"This is the Jew
That Shakespeare drew,"

sang Pope, after seeing that triumphantly malignant knife scene of the trial act: and George the Second, nervously impressed by the performance at a later date, confessed he could not sleep at all that night. Indeed, the next day, when Sir Robert Walpole chanced to remark that he wished there was some way of frightening the House of Commons into doing as he wished, the still impressed monarch exclaimed, "Send them to the theatre to see that Irishman act."

"I'm not worth fifty pounds in the world," was the word of honest, blunt, excitable Macklin, when congratulations poured in upon him, "but to-night I'm Charles the Great."

As for Kitty Clive — well, she was thirty years of age when she played Portia, but had changed none of the vivacious, froliesome style that marked her characters ever since her *début* of twelve years before, and that was to mark them until her retirement after forty years of service in the theatre. With her, as she once intimated in a letter to Garrick, age signified nothing. "They had rather see *the* Garrick and *the* Clive at one hundred and four years than any of the moderns," she declared, adding wittily, "The ancients, you know, have always been admired." But though unthinking playgoers liked her Portia, no student of the day could have admired it. Indeed, the frank old *Dramatic Censor* declared, "The applause she received in Portia was disgraceful both to herself and to the audience. She murdered the blank verse with a harsh, dissonant voice, and always turned the last scene into burlesque. Much of her spite against Garrick was probably due to his objecting to her making herself absurd in such unsuitable characters." Davy, however, never had the courage to compel sharp-tongued Kitty to abandon her popular mimicry: he lived in too much fear of her biting sarcasm.

More remarkable, however, than Clive's career was that of the Shylock of that evening of 1741: for this robust, earnest, and excellent actor was to play the part after he had reached nearly the century point, making it his final character upon the stage, as he had already made it his most famous. The night



KITTY CLIVE.

of May 7, 1789, the Portia was Mrs. Pope. Kitty Clive, the Portia of forty-eight years previous, had then been dead nearly four years; and yet here was the same Shylock, dressed and ready for the play.

But the once strong, steady brain faltered at the post of duty. For the first time old Macklin's Shylock failed. The actors, to their dismay, had noticed the beginning of the trouble in the green-room, when Shylock, turning to Mrs. Pope, inquired in earnest words, "Is there a play to-night?"

"A play?" exclaimed Portia. "What, sir, is the matter? 'T is the 'Merchant of Venice,' you know."

"Then who, pray, is the Shylock?" quoth Macklin.

Whereat Mrs. Pope in dismay cried out, "Why, sir, you to be sure: are you not dressed for the part?"

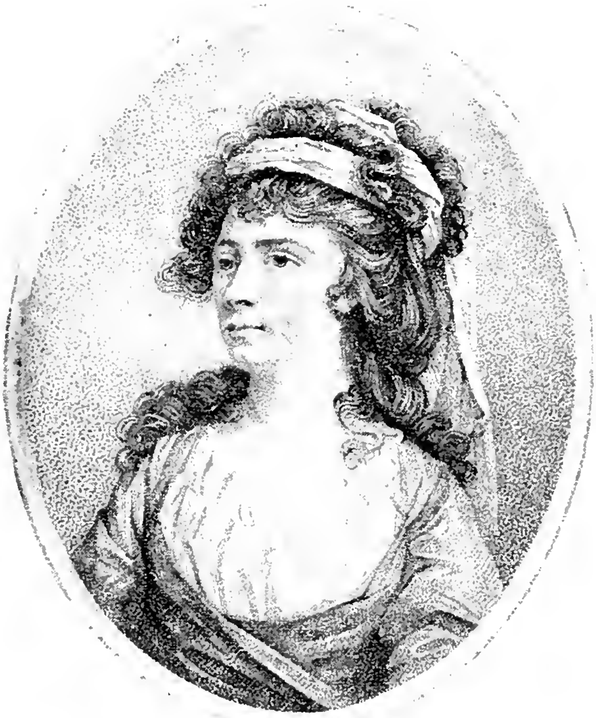
Putting his hand to his head the old man, in pathetic recollection, cried, "God help me! my memory, I fear, has left me."

They knew not whether the play could proceed: but, by dint of frequent promptings from Portia, the actor dragged along for a while, till, finally realizing his condition, he mumbled a few words of apology to the audience and was led from the stage.

never again to tread the boards. Outliving his first wife, his son, and his daughter, he died in 1797, at the age of one hundred and seven some say, or ninety-seven according to the testimony of others. His coffin-plate was inscribed ninety-seven.

Our Portia at the mournful Covent Garden performance had possessed, as a maiden (Miss Younge), a face that was, at least, agreeable: but as a matron, her features, never vivaciously beautiful like Peg Woffington's, or classically grand like Mrs. Siddons's, were called plain. For forty years Mrs. Pope played upon the stage of Drury Lane, earning a comfortable fortune, and never, in the earning of it, tarnishing her good name and fame. They told her she resembled the lovely Lady Sarah Lennox whom George the Third worshipped: but it must have been in expressiveness of features rather than in beauty of face, even though the King himself, years afterwards, dwelling with affection on the thoughts of the past, declared to his Queen in the box of Drury Lane, "She is like Lady Sarah still."

A star over all would this well-trained actress have been but for the appearance of a sun in the theatrical sky. In the glory of Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Pope's shining talents were dimmed. Yet the great Siddons could not show her the dignified respect due



MISS YOUNGE (Mrs. Pope.)
Engraved by Ridley from an original by Mr. Pope.

to such a worthy player; but she needs must write to Dr. Whalley, after the ceremony that made the bride the wife, "Miss Younge is married to Mr. Pope, a very boy, and the only one she will have by her marriage." A second wife, far less accomplished than the first, was afterwards to take the place of this lady in the affections of her youthful husband.

Before Macklin's day the players on the stage wore anything they desired, and usually dressed their ancient characters all alike, in costumes of the actors' own day. Macklin, who tried to reform nearly everything in theatrical matters, made some attempt at bettering costume, but he does not seem to have had much effect on his brother or sister players. Mrs. Pope, for instance, playing Portia to his Shylock, at that memorable last performance, wore the regular wig and robes of an English lawyer, while the Duke of Venice pictured in every way an English judge; the other actors posed in street costumes of the gentlemen of their times.

In the very year that the swords of the British soldiers and the American colonists were clashing in dread arbitrament, and after the Declaration of American Independence, Macklin acted Shylock as successfully as he had five and thirty years before, the Portia of that night being none other than his daughter Maria, a somewhat indifferent, but yet intelligent, actress, then acting the *rôle* for the first time. She enjoyed the trial scene, without doubt: for it was with her the greatest pleasure to impersonate women masquerading as men. If Bernard is to be believed, the strained relations that for some time existed between father and daughter were the result of a dispute over one of Portia's lines. Obstinate old Macklin maintained that the line should be read, "Mercy was mightiest *in* the mightiest," and because Maria would persist in giving it, "Mercy was mightiest in the *mightiest*," showed her no mercy, but renounced her as his daughter.

Hot tempers they both must have had. And yet the father was more kind than the daughter. He spent twelve hundred pounds to educate her in the fine arts, and taught her diligently the tricks of her profession: though, it must be admitted, that his demanding pay and travelling expenses whenever he appeared at her benefits was not indicative of remarkable generosity, especially as she had to hide her gold watch whenever he thus came to town, for fear he would insist upon having it. Yet, on the other hand, this plain-faced, but elegant, easy-mannered lady, on her death-bed, the 3d of July, 1781, when in the forty-eighth year of her age, left all her wealth, which was not inconsiderable, away from her father. And the tragedy-scarred veteran, weighed down by fourscore years, was then struggling against ill fortune.

Before Macklin's day the handsome and discreet Mrs. Bracegirdle, as well as Mrs. Bradshaw, the successor of Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Hallam, had played in that adaptation by George Granville which first came to the stage in 1701. No record exists of any earlier Portias. In fact, Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" seems to have been completely forgotten for a number of years after its production in the author's day, as it did not reappear even when the theatres were opened after the Civil War.

This Mrs. Bracegirdle, the first Portia of whom any trace can be found, was the beautiful actress whose sparkling black eyes snapped with anger on a certain night when, walking to the theatre, she was suddenly seized by the amorous Captain Hill, while the half-dozen soldiers he had hired to help him attacked the lady's escort, and the captain himself, with a noble friend, Lord Mohun, attempted to force her into a coach near by. It was the plan of the love-lorn officer to drive his lady to the nearest parson, and compel her to marry him: but her screams collected such a crowd of sympathizers that the brave captain sulkily relinquished his prey and disappeared.

The night Peg Woffington played Portia the audience had a hearty laugh at her expense. Though graceful in gesture and animated in action, Peggy in voice had such limited power that, whenever a tragic speech was reached, and the actress tried to make it more effective by vocal strength, the result was disastrous. So, when Lorenzo exclaimed that night, "This is the voice, or I am much deceived, of Portia," and Portia replied, "He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo, by the bad voice," the impolite audience laughed heartily at this unintentionally accurate description. Peg was good-humored, however, and joined merrily in the fun. Yet Woffington by her fine figure, elegant deportment, and bubbling spirits, energy, and archness (according to the *Dramatic Censor* of 1770), was accounted the best of Portias up to that date.

We must leave her now: leave, too, Abington, Barry, and Yates. Another Portia is waiting to make her bow. It is her veritable bow upon the stage; and though ill health has made her incapable of doing justice to the *rôle* at this time, yet the future is to pronounce her the greatest actress of the age — perhaps of all ages.

The date is December, four days after Christmas, 1775, and the scene the old Drury Lane Theatre. King, who goes down into history as the original Sir Peter Teazle, is the Shylock, slow in action, but gifted with a pleasing voice and with great power of vocal expression. The Portia is "a young lady, her first appearance." Four days later we look upon the playbills again, and find her identity revealed in the words, "Mrs. Siddons, her second appearance."

Alas, the temporary troubles of this matron of but twenty years! Her brief opening season in the great metropolis proves a dismal failure, driving her back again into the provinces until, rediscovered, she can return to "Old Drury," there to win a fame that will never die.

"I was merely tolerated," she herself admits, referring to that first night in Portia: and inasmuch as Garrick was liberally giving her, a beginner, five pounds a week, while his star actresses, Mrs. Abington and Mrs. Yates, were getting only ten pounds, he naturally would expect more from her than "toleration."

See how the critics of the day viewed her: "On before us tottered, rather than walked, a very pretty, delicate, fragile-looking young creature, dressed in a most unbecoming manner in a faded salmon-colored sack and coat, and uncertain whereabouts to fix either her eyes or her feet. She spoke in a broken, tremulous tone, and at the close of a sentence her words generally lapsed into a horrid whisper that was absolutely inaudible. After her first exit the buzzing comment went round the pit generally, 'She certainly is very pretty, but then how awkward; and what a shocking dresser!'"

She improved in the famous trial scene, nearly recovering her self-control, and delivering the great speech to Shylock with critical propriety; but her voice was thin and weak, so that a part of the time it was lost to the audience.

And this was the record against an actress who, as we have seen in the story of her Lady Macbeth, was destined to outstrip every player upon the stage, and to drive these same writers to their wits' ends in finding adjectives enough to praise her. To be sure, Parson Bate in his paper had a good word for the *débutante;* but then he had been instrumental in getting her the engagement, having seen her Rosalind in the provinces. It was worth while having his vindictive pen softened in its criticisms, but the actress had to pay for his appreciation a little later.

On the production of Bate's play, "The Black-a-Moor Whitewashed," a mob determined to condemn it without a hearing, by the amiable and convincing method of oranges hurled at Garrick, and lighted candles flung at King. They were overcome only through the muscular logic of a gang of prize-fighters hired by the Parson, and, being thus defeated, took their revenge the next day by declaring in the press, with other abuse of Julia, the heroine, that "Mrs. Siddons, having no comedy in her nature, rendered that ridiculous which the author evidently intended to be pleasant." And the poor lady, throughout the entire performance, had not had a chance of making herself heard above the uproar in the pit!

Very soon came her notice of dismissal, "a stunning and cruel blow," she wrote in her autobiography: "it was very near destroying me. My blighted prospects, indeed, induced a state of mind that preyed upon my health, and for a year and a half I was supposed to be hastening to a decline."

A different ending goes with the story of her appearance twenty-seven years later (1803), when the actress, then in her forty-eighth year, could form one of a remarkably strong cast, including her brother John Kemble as Antonio, Charles Kemble as Bassanio, and George Frederick Cooke, one of the greatest of Shylocks, as the Jew. The house rose to the actors all. Horace Walpole, to be sure, never liked anything in Mrs. Siddons's playing except her tragedy, and, when she named Portia as the part she would most wish him to see her act, begged to be excused. The reason he gave, besides the desire to see her in a play where her scorn could be exerted, was that, with all his enthusiasm for Shakespeare, he liked the "Merchant of Venice" the least, regarding the story of the caskets as silly, and no character except that of Shylock "beyond the attainment of a mortal."

Meanwhile, a notable Shylock has faced the footlights, the great John Henderson, who, in spite of a costume that was so shabby as to raise the suspicion of its having been borrowed from a pawnbroker, was commended by old Macklin for the spirit he threw into Shylock, his first character on the London stage. One of his Portias was Miss Younge, who acted at Macklin's pathetic and unexpected farewell; another was Miss Farren (later Countess of Derby).

It was not often that John Kemble had the chance of playing Shylock, as that character, by the traditional rules of the theatre, fell to King; and when he did act the *rôle*, there was little glory in it for him. His first appearance as the Jew, in 1784, was to the Portia of his sister, Elizabeth Kemble. Originally apprenticed by her father to a mantua-maker in Leominster, this lady followed the example of the other children, and took to the theatre, achieving, however, but fair success. She married the worthy actor, Charles Whitlock, and became an actress on the early American stage. Her sister Frances, after a stage career, wedded Mr. Twiss; another sister, Mrs. Curtis, is known as "Anne (Hatton) of Swansea," the novelist, and is also notorious for her vicious character. Their fat brother Stephen tried Shylock in 1813; but the critics joked the managers then, as at other times, on their securing the *big* instead of the *great* Kemble. Thus John and Sarah were the two to carry the family to real glory, allowing only a moderate share to their brother Charles, to Charles's daughter Frances, and to Mrs. Siddons's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Scott-Siddons, of our day, the last of the name upon the stage.

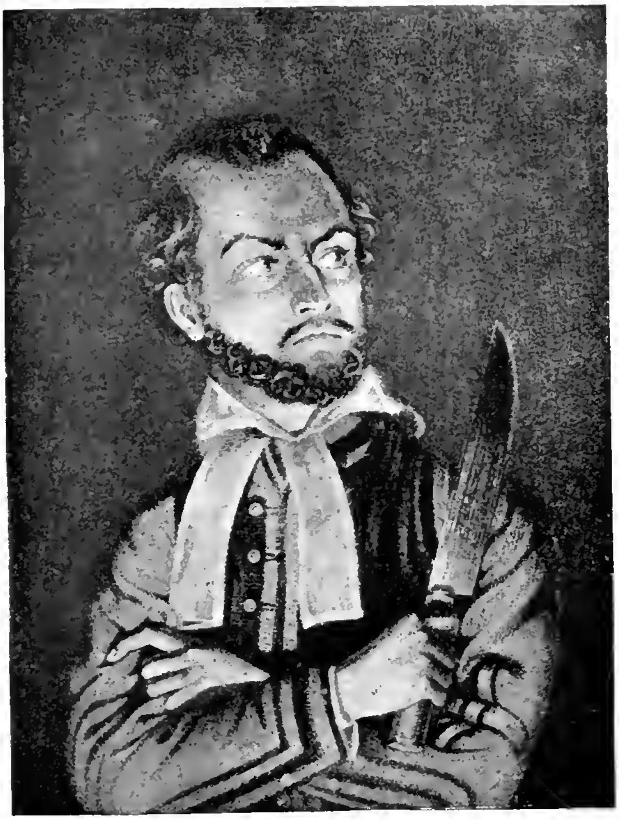
In passing, it may be said, that the criticism against Stephen Kemble could never have been applied to William Farren's Shylock. Like many another comedian, he always had a great desire to act tragic Shylock's character: but his resemblance to Pharaoh's lean kine was so marked, that one night when, as Shylock, he exclaimed:—

> "The pound of flesh that I demand is mine:
> 'T is dearly bought, and I will have it,"

a fellow in the gallery called out, "Oh, let old Skinny have the pound of flesh; he needs it bad enough!"

Handsome Mrs. Glover, she of the noble figure—albeit that figure in later years was destined to grow too portly for beauty—was one of Charles Young's Portias; but I doubt if the lady then made such a sensation as she did that warm night in June, 1822, when for her benefit, before an immense audience, she essayed the *rôle* of Hamlet. In a stage box, showering her with applause, sat a slight, swarthy man, with sharp, piercing eyes and a resonant voice, exclaiming at every strong scene, "Excellent, excellent:" until the actress, meeting him behind the scenes, had to respond in appropriate quotation, "Away, you flatterer! you come in mockery to scorn and scoff at our solemnity." This was a Shylock before whom the glory of all Portias pale. It was Edmund Kean.

"Shylock or nothing!" he had cried, when the



EDMUND KEAN AS SHYLOCK.
Painted by W. H. Watt.

managers of Drury Lane, doubting his ability to act the character, fain would have him make his bow to London as Richard III.

And Shylock it was, on the 26th of January, 1814, when the enthusiastic actor, half-starved until that day, trudged from Cecil Street through the slush of a foggy night to the theatre, carrying in a red handkerchief his meagre costume. His wig was black, and all the actors shrugged their shoulders at this wanton departure from tradition, for hitherto the hair of Shylock had invariably been red: and the traditions of Drury Lane were like unto the laws of the Medes and the Persians, — they altered not. But there were other traditions to be broken that night, as was soon discovered. The terrible energy and magnificent force of this little actor, then but twenty-six years of age, swept all before him.

"The pit rose at me, Mary," he cried, rushing home to his poor, anxious, poverty-stricken wife; "you shall ride in your carriage yet. And Charles — Charles shall go to Eton."

Happy man. By his own pluck and genius he had stormed and carried the citadel of fame, and London was at his feet. Five hundred dollars was the amount of that Shylock night. Three thousand dollars was soon the treasury count.

But the Portia of the evening, noble in face and melodious in voice though she was, did little to help immortalize the performance. With the other ladies of the company she sat in the green-room, smiling sarcastically at the idea of this little, impetuous man, coming up to London to try to overthrow the idols of the past. At that time she was known as Miss Smith; and, with her nine years' experience on the London stage, she might well think she could smile at this new-comer. Besides, was not she his senior by four years? Young Portia, thirty years of age: old Shylock, twenty-six — an interesting illustration of how little actual age counts in stage impersonations. We find Miss Smith later as Mrs. George Bartley, adding to her fame on the American stage of an early day.

Pass we now rapidly on, for no Portias and few Shylocks are great after this time until Ellen Terry and Henry Irving show the characters in brilliant light upon the stage of the Lyceum Theatre. Macready was dissatisfied with his own acting of the Jew; Charles Kean could imitate but could not equal the conception of his father; and Phelps, making his first appearance in London in the *rôle* in 1837, was pronounced correct, but not striking.

Helen Faucit acted the character well, to be sure, and Isabel Glyn and Laura Addison played Portia acceptably to Phelps's Shylock at Sadler's Wells. Mrs. Ogilvie, on the 15th of May, 1823, was the Portia to Macready's first Shylock: while Mrs. Charles Young, two years before her marriage to the veteran actor, Hermann Vezin, had the distinction of acting the heroine to the Shylock of Edwin Booth when the distinguished American made his London *début* at the Haymarket Theatre, on Sept. 30, 1861. But the curtain of Nov. 1, 1879, is waiting to rise, and the fascinating Portia of Ellen Terry must be ushered in.

This performance, with Henry Irving as Shylock, though it marked the first notable appearance of Miss Terry as the masquerading lawyer of Padua, did not mark her initial impersonation of the character. Four years before, she had been praised for her rare skill in depicting the bold innocence, lively wit, quick intelligence, as well as the grace and elegance of manner, and all the youth and freshness of the character, though her performance was hampered then by a poor supporting company, headed by the tame, colloquial Jew of Charles Coghlan.

Now, in 1879, the spectators noted with delight the general excellence of the acting; and they spoke with especial praise of Terry's assumption to Nerissa of a bragging youth's manner, and of the play of emotions that changed so rapidly from a just and overwhelming wrath to a ladylike playfulness. We saw her in America, arrayed in the flowing gold costume of the comedy scenes, and in the scarlet velvet of the trial scenes; and we applauded liberally this noble, yet at the same time vivacious Portia.

Apropos of Miss Terry's costume, it may be mentioned that when Fanny Kemble played Portia she wore for the trial scene a learned doctor's black gown, with a curious little authentic velvet hat. As she put the hat upon her head, the spectators were so struck with its taking effect that they applauded and applauded again, so vociferously, indeed, as to make the actress smile over the sensation such a little thing created. This was at the time when accuracy in costuming was beginning to attract popular favor.

With the American stage the "Merchant of Venice" has an interesting connection, since it was the first play to be performed in this country by that company of players (Hallam's) which gave the impetus to the theatre on this soil. For a long time it was held that the "Merchant" production at Williamsburg, on the 5th of September, 1752, was the first performance of any play in America, except

ELLEN TERRY AS PORTIA.
Used by Arrangement with Window and Grove, London.

possibly by amateurs or strollers; but patient investigation has shown that three years before that time Philadelphians saw Addison's "Cato," followed by other plays, acted by professionals.

The Williamsburg production, however, was by the first theatrical company ever organized in England to play in America. There was no orchestra, unless Mr. Pelham, the music-teacher of the town, who played the harpsichord that evening, could be so designated. The Shylock was Mr. Malone, who also has the distinction of being the first Lear on the American stage. The Portia was Mrs. Hallam, wife of Lewis Hallam, the first manager of this first regularly organized American company, and sister-in-law of William Hallam, the first "backer" of a theatrical company in America. The Hallams had ventured from England with a troupe of players to try their fortunes in America. Here, after the death of her husband, Mrs. Hallam married Mr. Douglass, the next manager of the company, and continued acting leading *rôles*, with her son as her stage lover and the hero of the plays. In 1774, after a record of twenty-two years on the American stage, she died in Philadelphia from the results of an injury received in the theatre.

Not for fourteen years do we again hear of a performance of the "Merchant:" then, in Philadelphia, Miss Cheer was the Portia, Mrs. Hallam having gradually yielded up her great parts to the younger actress. All these players mentioned so far were members of the American Company, so called; and that organization was for years without any formidable rival save the Virginia Comedians, and the New American Company formed by actors from both the old companies, with recruits from over the water.

In 1769, at Annapolis, "The Merchant of Venice" was produced by the New American Company, with Mrs. Osborne, the heavy tragedy actress, as the heroine. The curtain rang up at six P. M. in the "new" play-house. Gentlemen who desired to pay but five shillings sat, perforce, in the pit or upper boxes; those who could afford seven shillings sixpence chose the more fashionable lower boxes. Some of the cheaper seats were not easy of access, if we may judge by this advertisement in the paper of the day: "Upper boxes are now preparing, the passage to which must be from the stage; it is therefore hoped such ladies and gentlemen as choose to fix on *them* seats will come before the play begins, as it is not possible they can be admitted after the curtain is drawn up."

As for the cost of going to the theatre in the New

York play-house at this time, that ran lower: gallery seats there sold for two shillings each, pit seats for four shillings, and the boxes, of which there were ten, for five shillings. These prices, however, might be thought very moderate (whether they were New York shillings or sterling shillings), compared with the prices at the Philadelphia Theatre in 1780, when fifteen dollars was charged for the admission of a child, twenty dollars for a gallery seat, thirty dollars for admission to the pit, and forty dollars for a box: did we not recall that these latter prices were in Continental money!

In the old company, in 1772, Mrs. Morris comes to the character of Portia at the Philadelphia theatre, while Mr. Hallam temporarily steps down from Shylock to Antonio, giving the greater *rôle* to that Mr. Henry whose matrimonial escapades have been narrated in another chapter. Mrs. Morris lived into the second quarter of the present century, surviving all the players who were on the American stage before the Revolution. To her death she was the stately, old-fashioned lady, affecting all the styles of the last century, including the short-waisted, long-trained gowns, the full head-dress, and the white neck-cravat.

When Shakespeare played Launcelot, Mrs. Ryan was the Portia. This was in Baltimore, in 1782, and Mr. Shakespeare was an amateur of magnificent name, but a now lost record. Mrs. Ryan, coming from Ireland with her husband, had just made her *début* in this country, and here was to achieve no further fame than that of being the original Lady Teazle of America.

The last record of Mr. Henry's appearance as Shylock was in 1793, when his wife played Portia. A year later the curtain had fallen forever on his earthly career, and Mrs. Henry, never recovering from the shock, on the 28th of April, 1795, died, a raving maniac, at her home in the rear of the Philadelphia theatre.

A Philadelphia Portia of this same season of 1793–1794 comes of a noted family, being no other than Mrs. Eliza Whitlock, the sister of Mrs. Siddons and of the Kembles. In England, at the age of twenty-two, she had made her London *début* as the heroine of the "Merchant" on the 22d of February, 1783; and though somewhat masculine in face and figure, yet displayed so animated a countenance and so graceful a bearing as to win a moderate degree of favor. A few years after coming to this land, she enjoyed the distinction of playing the first "star" engagement on the American stage, being engaged, for four hundred and fifty dollars and a benefit, to play at the Boston Theatre in October, 1796. There she repeated her Portia, contending with the remembrance of Mrs. Powell's impersonation of a previous season. She also had the honor of playing before George Washington in Philadelphia.

A glance now at that first Boston production of the play at the Federal Street Theatre, in its second season. On June 17, 1795, "The Merchant of Venice" was given for the benefit of Mr. Hipworth, a new recruit to the company, and the Shylock of the cast. Portia fell to the bride of the manager's brother, Mrs. Snelling Powell. The year before this performance Miss Elizabeth Harrison, at the age of twenty, had come from England to play before the Boston audiences. In her native land she had played second to Mrs. Siddons, and, by command, had appeared before George the Third. Here, after her marriage, she attained high rank as a Shakespearian actress. And yet the salary that fell to her was less than ordinary players receive to-day. Forty-two dollars a week, for each player, were paid to Mr. and Mrs. Snelling Powell and Miss Harrison, sister of Mrs. Powell, by Manager Hodgkinson at the Haymarket Theatre in 1797, the highest salary of the company being fifty dollars.

The second Portia of Boston was Mrs. Giles Leonard Barrett, who played the *rôle* to her husband's Shylock at the Haymarket Theatre. In England, where she was formerly known as Mrs. Belfield, she had made her *début* as a pupil of old Macklin, playing Portia to his Shylock. Barrett, deserting his first wife, the daughter of an alderman of Norwich, came to America with our heroine to join the original company at the new theatre that was opened, in 1796, in Boston, at the corner of Tremont and Boylston Streets, close by the farmers' haymarket, from which it derived its name. On the 2d of January, 1797, the actress made her American *début*, and on the 27th of the same month acted Portia. Thirty-five years later Mrs. Barrett died in the same city.

In 1796 Charleston had seen a Mrs. Henderson in the character, and with her name the list of Portias in America, up to the present century, is completed.

Of our later actresses Mrs. Duff played Portia but little. Charlotte Cushman, though admirable in the trial scene and other declamatory portions, was otherwise not great in the *rôle*. Forrest early discarded Shylock; but James W. Wallack the elder, Brooke, Davenport, J. W. Wallack, Jr., Edwin Booth, and Lawrence Barrett have acted the character. Their supports included good actresses as Portia. Mrs. Hoey was with the elder Wallack when the "Merchant" had a run of thirty-three nights, the longest Shakespearian success chronicled up to that time: Mrs. Barrow played Portia with captivating grace: Mme. Ponisi and Mrs. Mowatt won honors in the character.

The last Portia of all, Mme. Modjeska, with her ever young face surmounted by a wealth of short but not close-cut wavy hair of golden brown, made an enticing figure for the love scenes of the play when she acted the part for the first time in America, in 1889, on the occasion of her professional union with Edwin Booth. That her impersonation made no marked impression is certain, but yet in the comedy elements it had attractive qualities. The trial scene illustrated well her plan of refining nature. Clad in a cloak of black, that only in part concealed the youth's suit of jet beneath, Portia, resting her hand on the shoulder of the Jew, delivered the great mercy plea, not as an essay for the audience, or as an oration for the court to hear, but as a soft, touching request, uttered in a thoughtful and appealing tone to Shylock himself.

Our Portias, for the most part, have proved either ordinary in the *rôle*, and thus best to be forgotten; or, having extraordinary abilities, have left the part in order to take up characters that gave more opportunity for acquiring fame.

KATHARINA.

(The Taming of the Shrew.)

One night when Edwin Booth, in "Catherine and Petruchio," was playing the all-conquering husband to the shrew of Jean Hosmer, he threw the audience into a paroxysm of laughter, and the actress into embarrassed perplexity, by turning the lady's fair face into a zebra countenance, with alternate black and white stripes. This he did by having secretly laid heavy lamp-black over his mustache before he fervently kissed his unsuspecting theatrical wife in the scene upon the stage.

Apparently it was a stock joke in former days; for I find that John Wilkes Booth played the same trick on Josephine Orton, and that other actors did not hesitate thus to increase the applause.

But "Catherine and Petruchio" is not "The Taming of the Shrew," although the Garrick farce may boast the dubious glory of having usurped the place of the Shakespearian comedy. Twice only in the records of the English stage, and once only in American annals, do we find the original work presented in its entirety.

Nearly a century and a half ago, Garrick set aside the clumsy Lacy adaptation called "Sawney the Scot: or, The Taming of a Shrew," in which Margaret, as our heroine was then called, was subdued only by attempts on the part of her husband to bury her alive: and Garrick also cast away both Bullock's and Johnson's farces bearing the same name, "The Cobbler of Preston." In their stead he gave an abridgment of Shakespeare's work, making it simply a three-act farcical afterpiece. Several scenes, including the Induction and the love episodes of Hortensio and Bianca, were omitted entirely, and other scenes were transposed.

On the 18th of March, 1754, Davy brought out his version at Drury Lane, with awkward Mrs. Pritchard as Catherine, and graceful Woodward as an extravagant, fantastical Petruchio, while the famous harlequin Yates acted Grumio. Poor Yorick! One day, when Yates was in his ninety-seventh year, he fell into such a furious passion because his housekeeper failed to have his favorite dish of eels for breakfast, that he dropped dead in his room.

Then came saucy-tongued Kitty Clive, undoubtedly delighting in the fiery snappishness of her character. She showed the spectators a very realistic bit of acting one night, when the vengeful Woodward, seeking to pay off an old-time grudge on spiteful Kitty, thrust his fork into Catherine's finger, as they sat quarrelling in the supper scene, and then, in pushing her off the stage according to the directions, exceeded those directions by throwing her down in earnest on the floor. Up rose the hot-tempered actress, now thoroughly enraged, and with talons and tongue gave the reckless Petruchio a genuine taste of what a shrew could do when treated brutally.

Ever since Garrick's day, actors who have aimed at displaying versatility have presented the light afterpiece as a contrast to the tragic drama with which they opened the bill. That actresses, too, have not scorned to show their skill at varied impersonations was illustrated in 1757, when eloquent Mrs. Fitzhenry (or, as she was sometimes known, Mrs. Gregory) first passed through the agonies of a Lady Macbeth, and then, in the same evening, fumed and fretted as Catherine in the afterpiece.

Seventeen years later the droll Mrs. Hippesley-Green, of whom we have heard as Hermione, was a Catherine to lively Lewis's Petruchio; and then came Mrs. Crawford (formerly Mrs. Spranger Barry), trying in vain to lift her worthless ex-lawyer husband, the last in her threefold list, into prominence as a Petruchio.

Stately Mrs. Siddons acted in the farce with spirit, but, as might be expected, without seeming at home in the character. Boaden thought the little piece well enough played "if you could get over the conviction that such a physiognomy as that of the actress never could belong to a termagant. Of a petulant, spoiled girl the transformation might be expected. The incidents are farcical, and the whip and the crockery make noise enough for the joke's sake, but there never could be an atom of farce in Mrs. Siddons."

John Kemble was the Petruchio not only to his great sister, but also to his lesser sister-in-law, the black-eyed enchantress, Mrs. Charles Kemble (*née* Decamp).

We know of the "big Mr. Kemble" (Stephen), who could play Falstaff without stuffing, but his wife, another heroine of the farce, was of a different build from her husband. She was pretty, even if not lovely, had a musical, silvery voice, and was possessed of talent. In Katharina, said a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* sixty years ago, "We have more than once been delighted to see her play the devil: to her it was not every man, we can assure you, that was able to be a Petruchio." This latter statement may well be believed when one recollects that on a certain night, while uttering the sweetly maternal words of Lady Randolph, "My beautiful, my brave," as she bent over young Norval, she deliberately, out of pure spite, proceeded to nip a piece out of her fellow-actor's shoulder with her own sharp, white teeth.

In 1828 "The Taming of the Shrew" had some of its stolen text restored: but as there were added songs and musical accompaniments enough to make the production operatic, the four performances it received were undoubtedly all that the mixed-up version deserved. To the Petruchio of Wallack there appeared as Catherine, in this May performance, the young lady whose songs had but recently won applause at the Italian Opera House, Miss Fanny Ayrton.

A half-century ago Benjamin Webster, managing the Haymarket Theatre in London, thought to catch the public eye with the first production, since Shakespeare's day, of the entire original play. He even went farther than a mere reproduction of text. The method of the old Blackfriars' Theatre was adopted by making one scene do duty for every act, and that scene showing simply a wall hung with tapestry. At the intervals in the play a servant would enter to fasten upon the screens the placards, labelled in turn, "A Bedchamber in the London House," "A Room in Baptista's House," and "Padua; a Public Place." Charming Mrs. Nisbett has the honor of going upon record as the first Kate the Curst of whom the world can ever know: while the Petruchio in this 1844 production was Webster; the Grumio was waggish John Baldwin Buckstone.

Characters full of animal spirits were always Mrs. Nisbett's favorites, as sprightliness in action and exhilaration in humor came to her naturally. In her time she was almost as great a favorite as Mme. Vestris, and to the mind of the late Westland Marston, the noted playwright, was on the whole a finer actress, possessing keener perception of character and consistency, and displaying more naturalness than the Olympic player. "Her forehead," said Marston, "though rather low, was wide: her eyes brilliant and expressive: the oval of her face was relieved and thrown out by a waving wreath of dark hair. Her neck was long and stately, her form lithe and elastic, and her stature tall. She had even more animation than Vestris, but not the insinuating languor with which the latter sometimes contrasted it. Mrs.

Nisbett had a laugh which swept away and charmed one by its freshness and fulness, by its music, and by its union of refinement with abandon."

The story is told that, in the Haymarket production, the part of Christopher Sly, the cozened tinker of the Induction, was offered to Strickland, a great favorite in those days with the pit, and that he accepted it on condition of having his hot drinks, during the performance, real brandy-and-water. But so often did he have his glass filled that the horrified manager found the bill for brandy for a single evening amounting to eleven shillings sixpence, and worse than that, found Strickland in such a speechless state of drunkenness when "The Shrew" was over that he could not possibly appear in the afterpiece for which he was cast. In fact, Sly's brandy-and-water killed poor Strickland: for he rolled home one night after the play, then rolled out of bed with his head downward, and was found the next morning dead, the result of apoplexy.

In Webster's production the tinker was on the stage through the entire five acts, watching the mimic play. The custom in Shakespeare's day, when a play was acted within a play, as in this case, was to erect at the rear of the stage a gallery whence the supposed spectators could watch the mimic actors on the stage below them, thus not impeding the view of the real audience.

Samuel Phelps, at Sadler's Wells, on the 15th of November, 1856, contrasted his production of the entire comedy with Webster's revival by giving "The Shrew" a liberal equipment of scenery and costumes. The manager himself had several times played Petruchio in the Garrick farce: but for this great performance, — making the twenty-ninth Shakespeare play revived by the conscientious student, at the renovated East End theatre, — he relinquished the leading *rôle* to Marston, and himself played Christopher Sly. Yes, the actor who had impersonated Hamlet and Brutus and kindred parts, for the sake of his art essayed now the *rôle* of the drunken boor. As Prof. Henry Morley points out, he did it admirably, by giving to the face of the tinker an utter lack of intelligence, and by imbuing him simply with an animal nature.

To the manly, humorous Petruchio of Marston appeared a shrew depicted by Miss Atkinson with great force, though perhaps somewhat in excess. Her gradual submission and final speech were gracefully and admirably rendered. This lady was the last of the leaders in the famous Sadler's Wells casts. Three years before the production of "The

Taming of the Shrew." Phelps had opened his season without a heavy tragedy lady, being unable to find a player to suit him. As he wanted to produce several tragedies in which such an actress was indispensable, the manager was in a quandary until he heard from his prompter of a certain Dublin actress who, though young, had a fine figure for the stage, and was full of talent. On the strength of this report Phelps engaged Miss Atkinson, and set down the Queen in "Hamlet" for her opening *rôle*.

"She was very like her predecessor, Miss Glyn," writes Mr. Frederic Robinson, formerly her associate at Sadler's Wells, but now an actor of America, answering the inquiries of the writer regarding this actress, of whom the printed records say so little, "but she had a smaller nose and a more massive chin. She was entirely without education, but was very apt and made great progress." In one respect she must have resembled our famous friend Mrs. Pritchard, whom Dr. Johnson so vigorously scolded, inasmuch as she often had to seek out Mr. Robinson, before playing a part, in order to correct her orthoepical defects. But, as he says, she very seldom had to be told anything more than once. After a year or two under Phelps's tutelage she became very successful in the heavy Shakespearian characters, playing nearly all of them at Sadler's Wells for the first time in her career. "She was the best Emilia in 'Othello' that I ever saw," says Mr. Robinson, "and made quite a hit in the part, in 1859, at the Friedrich Wilhelmstadt Theatre, in Berlin;" to which may be added that the Berlin papers also highly praised Mr. Robinson's Iago. Miss Atkinson remained with Phelps until he gave up Sadler's Wells.

A word to record the appearances of Helen Faucit and of Ellen Tree in the Garrick farce, and a mention of the fact that Ellen Terry marked her first appearance with Henry Irving by playing Katharina to his Petruchio — then we leave the English stage.

Here in America, the beginning — and, so far, the end — of the history of "The Taming of the Shrew" dates with Mr. Augustin Daly's revival of the comedy, first seen at Daly's Theatre, New York, on the 18th of January, 1887. Marie Seebach, to be sure, appeared in a German four-act version, without the Induction, given in America in 1870, under the title of "Die Widerspenstige;" but all else is the history of the farce "Catherine and Petruchio."

The first Katharina of America was Miss Cheer. It was rather curious that this lady, destined to become the leading actress of her day, should have chosen a farce in which to make her *début* in the Colonies, but such was the case. On the opening night, Nov. 21, 1766, of the first permanent playhouse in America, the ugly brick Southwark Theatre of Philadelphia, our rival of Mrs. Douglass played Kate, in the afterpiece, to the Petruchio of Hallam: the chief play of the evening being "Douglas," with Mrs. Douglass as Lady Randolph.

Strangely enough, an interesting romance in the life of this Miss Cheer lay buried for years, until the indefatigable George O. Seilhamer, in his researches into the history of the American theatre before the Revolution, discovered from a chance bit of newspaper record what may be a solution of her hitherto unexplained retirement from the stage.

In the year 1768 a handsome young lord, the son and heir of the sixth Earl of Northesk, was in Philadelphia, enjoying the social honors of the best society. A regular auditor at the Southwark Theatre, like many another youth of his day, he fell in love with the dashing Katharina of the stage, and, either with or without the consent of the father, a doughty admiral of the British navy as well as a peer, wedded the player. "Last week was married in Maryland, the Right Honourable Lord Rosehill to Miss Margaret Cheer, a young lady much admired for her theatrical performances." So reads the record in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* of Aug. 28, 1768. The groom was then but nineteen years old: the bride was several years his senior.

Here ends the story. The complications of the future are a mystery. In Burke's "Peerage" it is stated that Lord Rosehill married Catherine Cameron in 1768; therefore Cameron was the real name of our heroine. Her husband died, without issue, just twenty years after the marriage and while his father was still living, so Lady Rosehill missed the coronet of a countess. For a few months after the marriage she continued on the stage, and then disappeared from sight, only to return after the Revolution for a single unapplauded performance. On this latter occasion she was billed as Mrs. Long. Of the cause of the change of name, or the episodes of her life between her two stage careers, we know practically nothing. It is, indeed, possible that Lady Rosehill did not go to England on account of an earlier scandal, rumor having it that she had previously eloped with her father's coachman.

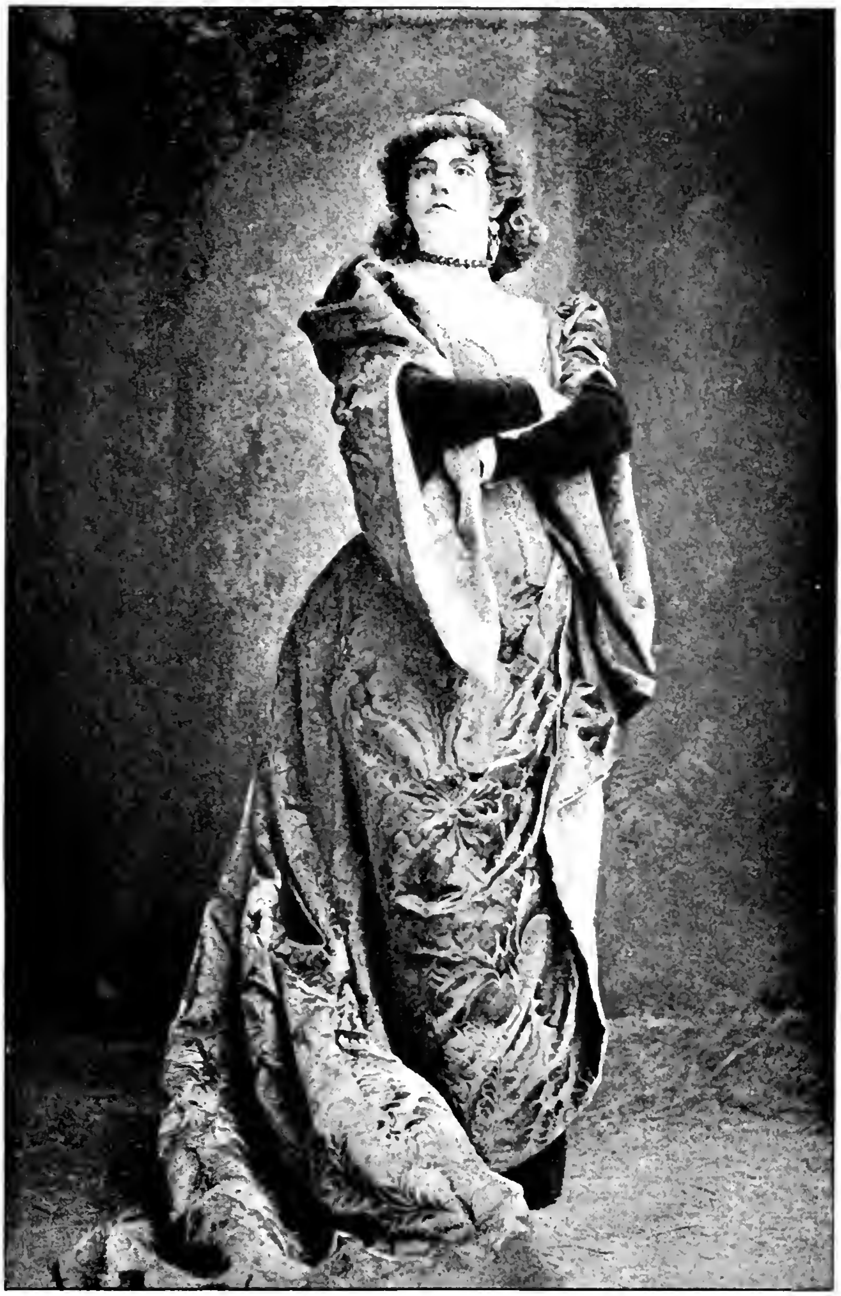
But whatever her history, Margaret Cheer was certainly possessed of education and culture, and was blessed with industrious habits. The latter characteristic is apparent when we count the number of characters she played on the American stage during her short experience as a leading lady — exactly fifty, including Juliet, Ophelia, Lady Constance, Cordelia, Cleopatra, Imogen, Hermione, Lady Macbeth, Portia, Desdemona, Queen Elizabeth, Lady Anne, and Katharina the Shrew. That she could win the affection of her associates was shown by the legacy from Mrs. Harman, whose Ophelia, the first on the American stage, is recorded in another chapter.

But we must return to our Katharinas.

Mrs. Walker and Mr. Verling in 1769; Mrs. Morris and Mr. Goodman in 1773; Mrs. Ryan and Mr. Ryan in 1783; Mrs. Allen and Mr. Hallam (and later Mr. Allen), Mrs. Kidd and Mr. Godwin, in 1785; Mrs. Rankin and Mr. Harper in 1792; Mrs. Long and Mr. Hodgkinson, Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Martin, Mrs. Morris and Mr. Chalmers, in 1794; Mrs. Rowson (and later, Mrs. Francis) and Mr. Chalmers in 1796; Mrs. Snelling Powell and Mr. Hipworth (the first Shrew and the first Petruchio in Boston) in 1795; Mrs. Hogg and an unrecorded actor, Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Hodgkinson, in 1796 — this makes a complete record, so far as it is obtainable from all sources, of the Katharinas and Petruchios on our stage up to 1800.

Among other impersonators of the two characters in the farce have been: Mrs. Mason and Cooper in 1814; Mrs. Duff as Katharina in 1822; Mrs. Darley and Macready in 1827; Fanny Kemble and Charles Kemble, at the Park Theatre entertainment in New York in honor of John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," on the occasion of his return to his native land, Nov. 29, 1832; Mrs. Charles Kean as Katharina in 1836; Mrs. Sharpe and W. B. Wood in 1839; Miss Vandenhoff and her father in 1839; Mrs. Mowatt as Katharina in 1845; Mrs. James Wallack, Jr., and Hamblin. Mrs. Hoey and Couldock (both of whom are now living), in 1850; Laura Addison and Hamblin at Niblo's Garden, New York, in an entertainment that included, among other attractions, the appearance of Adelina Patti, then eight years of age, on Dec. 3, 1851; Ada Clifton and Edwin Booth in 1862.

Then came Fanny Davenport to the Petruchio of Edwin Booth, Clara Morris to the Petruchio of Louis James, Agnes Booth to the Petruchio of Mr. Wheelock, and — but it is useless to record the list further. These were all participants in the productions of the farce. The true Shakesperian Katharina has appeared but once; she was Ada Rehan, the fiery Shrew of the Daly production. Miss Rehan's



ADA REHAN AS KATHARINA
Used by Courtesy of Augustin Daly.

haughty bearing, sharp action, and quick, nervous gesture: her compressed lips and piercing glances, — all befitted the *rôle*, while her interpretation of the character was as graceful as it was vigorous. The change of spirit, during the taming and after, was manifested in such natural manner as to make one easily imagine the submission actually carried out, without too great a contradiction of characteristics.

Mr. Daly approached the work in rightful spirit. The length of the piece, including the Induction, necessitated some cutting; but this was done carefully and without impairing, to any grievous extent, the sequence of incidents retained. The original text called for revision in parts where touches of coarseness that might have been tolerated in a past age are now to be condemned: but the Induction, as was intimated, was given practically complete. The chief portion of the play, the true "Taming of the Shrew," as supposedly acted before the pseudo-noblemen, was presented by Mr. Daly's company with all the secondary as well as primary plots detailed. The artifices of the rival lovers for Bianca's hand, the rather unfilial act of Lucentio in assenting to the scheme of the old pedant usurping the place of the absent father, and the final test of submission of the three wives, were presented, in addition to the scenes that embrace the truly Shakesperian manoeuvres of Petruchio, Katharina and the serving-man Grumio. The chief situations of the latter trio, the scenes wherein the taming of Katharina is made complete, were put into one scene in the Daly arrangement.

So unique was this performance that a mention of all the principals in the cast will not be amiss. There was John Drew, rightfully conceiving the character of Petruchio, in that he preserved at all times behind the assumed roughness the signs of admiration for the woman and of genuine pleasure in the pointed joke that he was so successfully playing. There, too, were James Lewis, comical and quaint as Grumio, and Mrs. G. H. Gilbert, cleverly acting Curtis. Charles Fisher read the lines of Baptista in such a way as to bring out with fidelity the true meaning at all times; while Otis Skinner as Lucentio, Joseph Holland as Hortensio, Charles Le Clerq as Gremio, were well in keeping with their characters. Frederick Bond presented a merry-hearted, bright Tranio; Miss Virginia Dreher gave, by her personality, an attractive picture of Bianca, the sweet sister of the Shrew. In the Induction William Gilbert's delineation of perplexity in the bed-chamber, and his subsequent vain-glorious assumption of lordship, made Christopher Sly productive of humorous enjoyment to the audience, although the impersonation too often bordered on the edge of caricature.

Mr. Daly has several times repeated "The Taming of the Shrew" in New York and in other cities of this country, and has also presented the play in London; but no new Katharina has yet appeared to contest the honors with Miss Rehan.

OPHELIA.

(HAMLET.)

AN Ophelia actually mad, chanting her pathetic song, and uttering her sad words, with all the realism of genuine insanity!

It was a weird sight, and one that chilled the blood of the spectators, as they gazed in silence upon the uncanny scene.

They all recognized the actress, and realized the situation. Poor Susan Mountfort, the former bright actress of Lincoln's Inn Fields, in her insanity had escaped from her custodian, and, with the recollections of her former career teeming through her distracted brain, had made straight for the playhouse. There, with all the cunning of an insane person, the woman had hidden for a time behind the wings, while her former associates carried on the play of "Hamlet." But just at the moment the Ophelia of the evening was to enter for the mad scene, Susan Mountfort, seizing her by the arm to push her back from the entrance, sprang forward in her place, and with wild eyes and wavering motion rushed upon the stage uttering the words: —

"They bore him barefaced to the bier:
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny."

For a moment the spectators were amazed. As they began to realize the situation, a murmur ran through the house: and then came the strained silence of wonderment and perplexity.

Magnificent was the acting. In her sane days Susan Mountfort had been a good Ophelia, and now she threw into the part such intensity of action and such terrible mental effort as to render the character overwhelmingly vivid. But it was a mercy when friends gently led her away from the footlights. Her vitality was entirely exhausted by the effort, and her death was hastened.

As the actress was conducted meekly from the theatre, the voices of the gallants in the boxes were heard commenting on this strange finale to a series of sad incidents in the career of Susan Mountfort's family. They recalled the day when her mother, the dainty, lovely Mrs. Mountfort, in tears over the news that her Jacobite father, Mr. Perceval, had just been condemned to death for treason against King William, was stricken with a double grief by the sudden announcement, in the same hour, of the murder of her husband.

Poor Will Mountfort, as handsome, graceful, winning an actor as ever lived! His death forms the conclusion of a story already begun in the tale of the Portias. When the good and beautiful Mrs. Bracegirdle had reached home, after that disgraceful attempt on the part of Captain Richard Hill and Lord Mohun to carry her off by a midnight attack of hired soldiers, she heard the two gentlemanly reprobates, outside the house, swearing dire threats against her respected friend, Mountfort. To warn her neighbor she despatched a messenger to Mrs. Mountfort. But brave Will, instead of avoiding his adversaries, sought them out for a courteous word of explanation to Lord Mohun, and for a good round curse to the villain Hill. Hot words ensued: the captain's sword was drawn; and before the light-hearted play-actor could effectively resist, the blade had passed through his body, and life was over.

The peers tried My Lord Mohun; but, though fourteen pronounced their associate guilty, more than sixty acquitted him, thus leaving the gentleman, with the Earl of Warwick as assistant, to commit another murder, and also, later, to try another duel, in which he and his adversary, the Duke of Hamilton, cut each other to horrible death. Hill fled the city and was never captured.

All this Susan Mountfort had in her memory when she went upon the stage; and all this her friends now recalled. They spoke, too, of her own peculiar life. To be sure, they did not criticise; for in those days the household alliance of the actress with a fellow-actor, the great Barton Booth, had too many precedents in the theatrical profession — and out of it, as well — to cause comment. But they gossipped over the magnanimous way in which Booth had refused to trouble the lady, when she selfishly declined to share the £5,000 won in a lottery by a ticket they had owned together; and they talked, again, of the honest way in which the dignified original of Addison's famous Cato paid over to Susan, when they broke up housekeeping in 1718, the £3,200 she had intrusted to his care; and then they had their contemptuous sneer for her later friend, Mr. Minshull, who had squandered all that this luckless young woman brought to him.

This was the sad story of one Ophelia. To describe all the Ophelias of the stage would be unnecessary, even if possible, since the *rôle* has never been regarded by any actress as her ultimate goal. It has either served as an intermediary, while players were winning their way to fame in the support of eminent Hamlets, or it has been awarded to actresses who were found wanting and quickly fell into obscurity. If you please, therefore, we will simply glance at some of the Ophelia incidents in the careers of those players whom we know so well.

There was a pretty picture at the little theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, on the cold December night of 1661, when charming Mistress Saunderson, as Ophelia, expressed her love in earnest to the ambitious young Hamlet of the night, the eloquent Betterton. She was beautiful and she was pure; he was handsome and he was upright. We may be sure their mutual adoration was not forgotten in the talk of the pit between the acts, as the orange girls ran hither and thither to receive with a smile the tappings under the chin while their wares were bought, and as the fine ladies in the boxes welcomed the amorous glances of ardent swains around them.

Miss Saunderson, through Davenant, had received the traditions of Ophelia's impersonations by the boy-actresses before the Revolution; but never, before her day, had a woman essayed the *rôle*. The absurdity of masculine actresses, even if a common and accepted sight, must sometimes have caused a gay laugh when odd situations were created. Imagine, if possible, merry Charles II. keeping a sober face when, after he had become impatient over the delay in beginning "Hamlet," and had sent the Earl of Rochester behind the scenes to ascertain the reason, he was solemnly informed that "the Queen was not quite shaved."

"Odsfish!" cried the King, appreciating the point; "I beg her majesty's pardon. We'll wait till her barber has done with her."

As this first Hamlet after the Restoration really loved his Ophelia, so the second great Hamlet, Barton Booth, appeared with an Ophelia whose winning behavior made him a slave of love, and whose wise conduct broke him from the slavery of Bacchus. A beautiful woman was Mrs. Booth, according to the discriminating verdict of the younger Cibber; lovely in countenance, delicate in form, and, moreover, pleasing as an actress. In early life she had been a dancer, and a good dancer.

Next to Mrs. Booth came Mrs. Theophilus Cibber, "charming in every part she undertook, but identified with Ophelia," the creator of the feminine ideal of the part. "Her features, figure, and singing made her appear the best Ophelia that ever appeared either before or since," cried old Tate Wilkinson in ecstasy: while in further testimony it was declared that eloquence could not paint her distressed look in the mad scene. We know now that, in her own sad experience with a miserable husband, she had affliction enough to have wrecked her senses, like those of poor Ophelia: but, fortunately, this calamity was spared her. Her tenderness upon the stage, it is said, was so real that she wept genuine tears in the sad scenes; while under the rouge her face turned pale with the force of her assumed agitation. Her method of reciting was peculiar to some players of her day, — a sort of demi-chant, by which the words, uttered in a high-pitched key, came forth in monotonous sing-song.

In no such way did the lively Peg Woffington declaim her speeches. Her enthusiastic temperament and love of naturalness would never have permitted such dawdling over the lines. With glorious Peg, the *rôle* of Ophelia bears relation from its having been the first character she ever essayed. On the 12th of February, 1734, when the precocious girl was in her sixteenth year, she "came out" as the associate of Hamlet at the Theatre Royal, in Dublin. Radiant intelligence, sparkling repartee, exquisite grace, delightful archness, loveliness of face, — these are the charms set down for merry Margaret.

The daughter of a bricklayer and a washerwoman, this pretty Irish maiden early in life had attracted the eye of a rope-dancer, had become her assistant, and had made her *début* in public high enough, to be sure, though scarcely in touch with the spectators, since she hung, on that occasion, from the feet of her teacher, who balanced upon the tight-rope over the heads of the crowd. When, at last, she obtained a safer footing on the regular stage, and, after acting Ophelia, dashed through the *rôle* of Sir Harry Wildair, in Farquhar's "Constant Couple," she won the favor of the town. Her fine figure and graceful vivacity made of her an adorable youth. One young lady, indeed, would not believe but that this selfsame gallant Sir Harry was a man, and forwarded to the impersonator a glowing proposal of marriage. The imitation of all high-born ladies, women of dash, or spirited young men, came easily within the Woffington's powers.

As for her notorious infidelities, "Forgive her one female error," says Murphy; "and it might fairly be said of her that she was adorned with every virtue: honor, truth, benevolence, charity, were her distinguishing qualities." The blood of her family spread into many grand households of Britain through the marriage of her sister to the second son of Earl Cholmondeley. The story is told that the Earl, highly indignant at this *mésalliance*, visited pretty Margaret to free his mind upon the subject, but was so conquered by her gentle, winning ways as to declare, at last, that he was really happy over his son's choice, "my dear Mrs. Woffington," though he had been "so very much offended previously."

"Offended previously!" exclaimed quick-tongued Peggy, nettled at the haughty suggestion. "Indeed! I have most cause to be offended now."

"How so, my dear lady?" queried the Earl.

"Because," sharply responded Mistress Peg, "whereas I had one beggar to support before, now I have two!"

This same spirit Mistress Woffington displayed when her famous quarrel with George Anne Bellamy became the talk of the town. Miss Bellamy was determined to out-do her brilliant rival in one respect, at least, when the two played the rival Queens upon the same stage, and so, from Paris, secured two very elegant costumes. Poor Peggy's pale straw suit, though it had once belonged to the Princess Dowager of Wales, looked faded and dingy beside Miss Bellamy's robes of yellow and purple; and tempestuous Peggy's jealousy thereat gave way. With the Queen's dagger in her hand she rushed upon her terrified rival, and, but for the interposition of a certain Count who chanced to be in the green-room, would have spoiled forever Miss Bellamy's personal beauty, as well as her Parisian dress.

Yet this same high-spirited woman died with benevolence in her heart, bequeathing her wealth to the poor, and leaving a memory which even now claims admirers, who would gloss her character with her many virtues.

When Peg Woffington first came to London and met Manager Rich, surrounded by his score of cats, that gentleman found her as majestic as Juno, as beautiful as Venus, and as modest as Hebe. Yet she was frolicsome as well: and the day one lover, playing her false, gave his attentions to another lady, she did not hesitate to disguise herself in masculine apparel, dance with her faithless lover's mistress at the nuptial ball, and whisper in her ear burning insinuations of the gentleman's earlier attentions to a certain gay actress, Peg Woffington — a little bit of diplomacy that broke off the match.

Though Kitty Clive had the distinction of being the Ophelia to Garrick's first Hamlet in London (Nov. 16, 1742), yet the very next season Woffington gave Englishmen their first opportunity of seeing her impersonation. Later on came a quarrelsome bit of housekeeping with Davy. Gaze at the counterfeit of that placid, pale face, so beautiful in its outline, and so modest in its gentleness, and realize, if you can, that this good-natured, generous Peg Woffington was not only the best of hoydens on the stage, but also one of the liveliest of matrons off the stage. Garrick wanted to marry her, but he found their tastes dissimilar in more than one sense; he with niggard hand furnished the table when they shared the housekeeping between them; she with generous hand distributed the sugar for the tea so liberally as to set both members of the temporary household at odds-ends with each other. So it finally became "Aut Cæsar, aut Nullus," as smart Lord Tyrawley said when she took up with Colonel Cæsar, a few months after her dramatic farewell of the stage.

When Garrick and Woffington united their domestic gods, Margaret was getting £7 10s. a week, or the equivalent to-day of $100, besides a benefit and £50 a year for costumes; Garrick was receiving £1000 a year. Afterward, when Mistress Woffington had reached the height of her career, she received £800 a year, Manager Sheridan, with remarkable generosity, having voluntarily doubled her pay after her success was assured. Peggy lived in luxury. She did not care much for the society of women, —

they could talk only of silks and scandal, she said; but her delight in men's company often set the bitter tongue of this selfsame scandal against her. When she died she left a fortune which to-day would be valued at $100,000.

One of her children carried the Woffington blood into a noble Irish family, while another became maid of honor to the Princess of Wales (Princess Caroline), and was killed, in 1806, by the upsetting of a carriage. This was not the only favor of the actress to aristocracy. Kind-hearted Peggy, to help the pretty Gunning sisters when they desired to attend a grand reception at Dublin Castle, loaned them two of her costumes, so that they might appear in state. One of these sisters afterward became the Countess of Covington, the other the Duchess of Hamilton; and the latter, we are told, was married so hastily to the Duke that her lover was forced to use a curtain ring instead of the usual circlet of gold. Thus the former street girl of Ireland was able to furnish the first full dress outfits for two of the peeresses of England.

But, in this long chat about the famous Peggy of olden days, we must not forget the strange career of another young lady (Mrs. Baddeley) who made her *début* as Ophelia. At least, it is believed that she was the anonymous actress described as "a young gentlewoman," who played the mad daughter of Polonius, Sept. 27, 1764.

A curious gentlewoman, however, she was. It is true that this daughter of a King's sergeant-trumpeter, Miss Sophia Snow, had received a fair education: but her character was atrocious from the very year she eloped with Robert Baddeley, the actor, after a three weeks' love affair, until her death in poverty and disgrace, twenty-two years later. In fact, she became so notorious that finally Baddeley himself, in disgust, would have nothing to do with her. But though they quarrelled vigorously and lived apart, yet on the stage they made love to each other and talked of each other's charms in most endearing terms. Of course everybody in the audience knew the facts, and even George the Third and his consort laughed heartily when the two players recited passages from the play that suggested scenes in their private life.

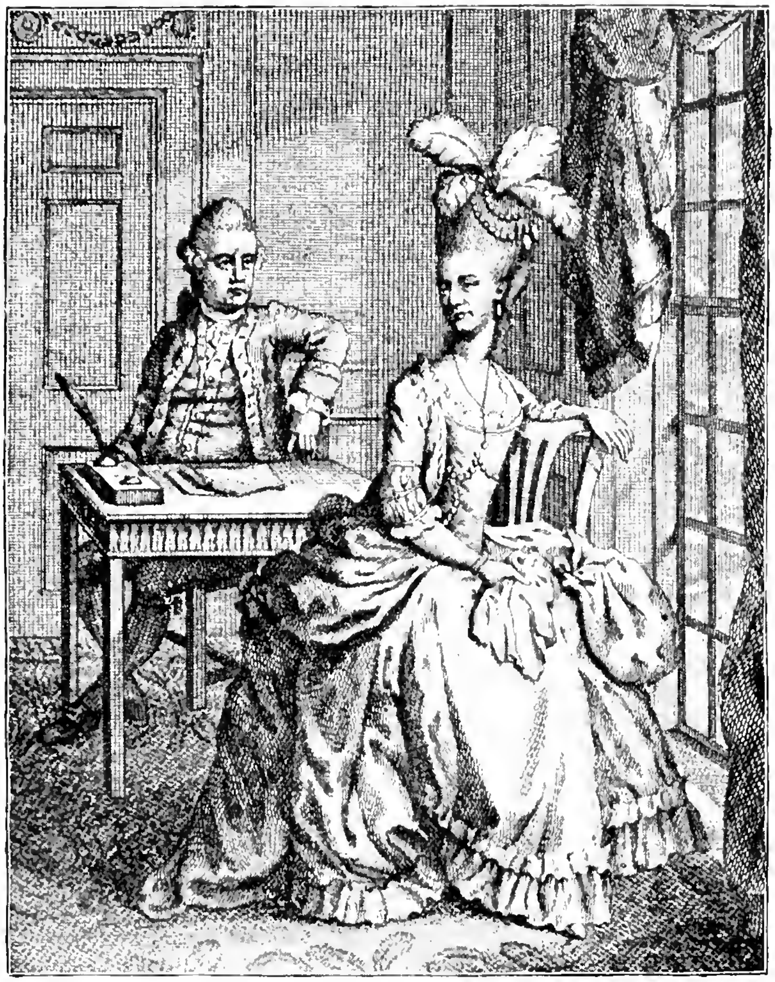
That Mrs. Baddeley was an acknowledged beauty is shown by the compliments showered upon her by Foote, in 1771, when she, as a spectator, saw his comedy, "The Maid of Bath."

"Not the beauty of the nine Muses nor even of the divine Baddeley herself, who is sitting there, could exceed that of the Maid of Bath," exclaimed the actor on the stage, pointing straight to the box wherein the siren sat.

How the audience applauded. So heartily, so continuously, did they keep it up that the player was obliged to repeat his words once, twice, and thrice. Then Mrs. Baddeley, blushing violently, — for, in truth, we are told that she discarded the practice of other beauties, and never used rouge off the stage, — rose from her seat, and for a full quarter of an hour courtesied, and courtesied, and courtesied in response to the call.

But the very next year the managers of the masquerades at the Pantheon decided that Mrs. Baddeley and other "doubtful" people should not be admitted, as they wanted only people of quality and good repute. Instantly the friends of the noted actress were literally in arms; for fifty noblemen, drawing their swords, surrounded her chair, and escorted her to the Pantheon. There they compelled the constables on guard to open the doors to the lady. More than that, at the point of the sword, they compelled the managers to beg the pardon of Mrs. Baddeley and to rescind their order.

But all this was to end. Before long, debts and difficulties of all kinds came upon her, so that she



MRS BADDELEY.

was compelled to leave the country or be imprisoned. When she returned in 1773, although then but thirty-eight years of age, Sophia Baddeley was another woman entirely. As Tate Wilkinson says, describing her benefit performance at York, "She was very lame, and to make that worse was so stupidly intoxicated with laudanum that it was with great difficulty she finished the performance." Through illness, laziness, and inebriety, it was never certain whether Mrs. Baddeley's performance would come off or not. Finally she sank into neglect and contempt, to die at last in beggary.

Davies sums up the Ophelias, from the first down to Mrs. Baddeley's day, in these words: "Till the sweet character of Ophelia was impersonated by Mrs. Cibber, it was not well understood; at least, for these last sixty years. Mrs. Betterton, says Colley Cibber, was much celebrated for action in Shakespeare's plays; and Sir William Davenant gave her such an idea of it as he could catch from the boy-Ophelias he had seen before the Civil Wars. Mrs. Booth's figure, voice, and deportment in this part, raised in the minds of the spectators an amiable picture of an innocent, unhappy maid; but she went no farther. Of Mrs. Clive's Ophelia I shall only say that I regret that the first comic actress in the world should so far mistake her talents as to undertake it. No eloquence can paint the distressed and distracted look of Mrs. Cibber while she uttered the sentence, 'Lord, we know what we are.' No actress has hitherto revived the idea of Mrs. Cibber's Ophelia except Mrs. Baddeley, whose pleasing sensibility, melodious voice, and correspondent action made us less regret the great actress in this part."

The great Mrs. Siddons made the character of Ophelia deeply affecting, not only to the public, but also, if we may believe tradition, to her fellow-players: for are we not told that the lady who played the Queen on that night of May 15, 1785, when Mrs. Siddons first essayed the character in London, was so electrified by Ophelia's gleaming eyes and tragic face, as the Siddons seized her arm, that she completely forgot her words and her appointed action. The Hamlet of that production was Siddons's brother, John Kemble.

Possibly to Mrs. Siddons's mind, two years later, there may have come a sad thought of the cause of Ophelia's madness, in seeing the end of poor Brereton, the sighing lover to her heroines in other Shakespearian plays. Playgoers in those days guessed that the beautiful daughter of the itinerant Kembles, though enjoying a happy marriage since her nineteenth year to another handsome, youthful player, was too ardently admired by the Orlando of the "As You Like It" production in which she played Rosalind, a short time before her appearance as Ophelia.

"It is said she was beautiful, even lovely, and won men's hearts as Rosalind," said John Wilson, describing Siddons's younger days. Boaden draws her picture with more detailed color. "Her height is above the middle size," writes this chronicler, carefully measuring the figure in his mind's eye, "but not at all inclined to the *embonpoint ;* there is, notwithstanding, nothing sharp or irregular in her frame : there is sufficient muscle to bestow a roundness upon the limbs, and her attitudes are, therefore, distinguished equally by energy and grace. The symmetry of her person is exact and captivating ; her face is peculiarly happy, the features being finely formed, though strong, and never for an instant seeming overlarged, like the Italian faces, nor coarse or unfeminine under whatever impulse. On the contrary, it is so thoroughly harmonized when quiescent, and so expressive when impassioned, that most people think her more beautiful than she is."

Brereton, who had been a poor actor until he met Mrs. Siddons, and then, by the inspiration of her acting, had become a good player, fell in love with the iceberg. The Queen of the Drama, however, would not listen to his pleadings, and so her reputation never really suffered. Yet we know that the kind friends of Mr. and Mrs. Brereton tried to help along the family peace of that household by hinting to the lady how much her husband thought of the beautiful "other woman" to whom he sighed lover's sweet nothings upon the stage. And when the actor's later insanity compelled him to retire from the stage, and when that same mental affliction ended his life, two years after this "Hamlet" performance of 1785, these same friends whispered to one another that all this madness was due to a quarrel with "a great tragic actress of whom he is said to be very fond."

Only a few weeks before Mrs. Siddons undertook the *rôle* of the suffering Ophelia, the actress wrote her friend Dr. Whalley, alluding undoubtedly to these same rumors which associated her stage lover with her fascinating charms, "I have been very unhappy. Now 't is over, I will venture to tell you, so that you may not lose the dues of rejoicing. Envy, malice, detraction, all the fiends of hell, have compassed me round to destroy me; but blessed be God who hath given me the victory, etc. I have been charged with almost everything bad, except incontinence: and it is attributed to me as thinking a woman may be guilty of every crime, provided she retain her chastity. God help them, and forgive them; they know but little of me."

Curious it is to notice that the widow of Brereton (a lady worthy of fame as the original Maria in the "School for Scandal") on a wintry evening less than a year after her husband had sighed away his life in a mad-house, married the brother of Mrs. Siddons, in spite of that lady's protests: and then, on the marriage eve, went off to Drury Lane with Jack Bannister, to play in the "West Indian," while Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Bannister kept house until the two returned. This early separation, however, was only the expected contingency of an actor's life: it did not interfere with their wedded happiness.

Of our later English friends there are two with whom Ophelia holds intimate connection. One, Mrs. Kendal, has not often added her name to a character of Shakespeare, devoting her talents chiefly to modern home comedy. But at the beginning of her career she played Ophelia. If one must speak strictly by the board, her very first appearance on the stage was not in Shakespeare, since, when a child of three years, she had appeared as the Blind Child in the "Seven Poor Travellers:" and at the age of six had played Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." But her first appearance in London after her childhood was as Ophelia to the Hamlet of Walter Montgomery. This was at the Haymarket Theatre, on the 29th of July, 1865, when Madge Robertson was sixteen years of age.

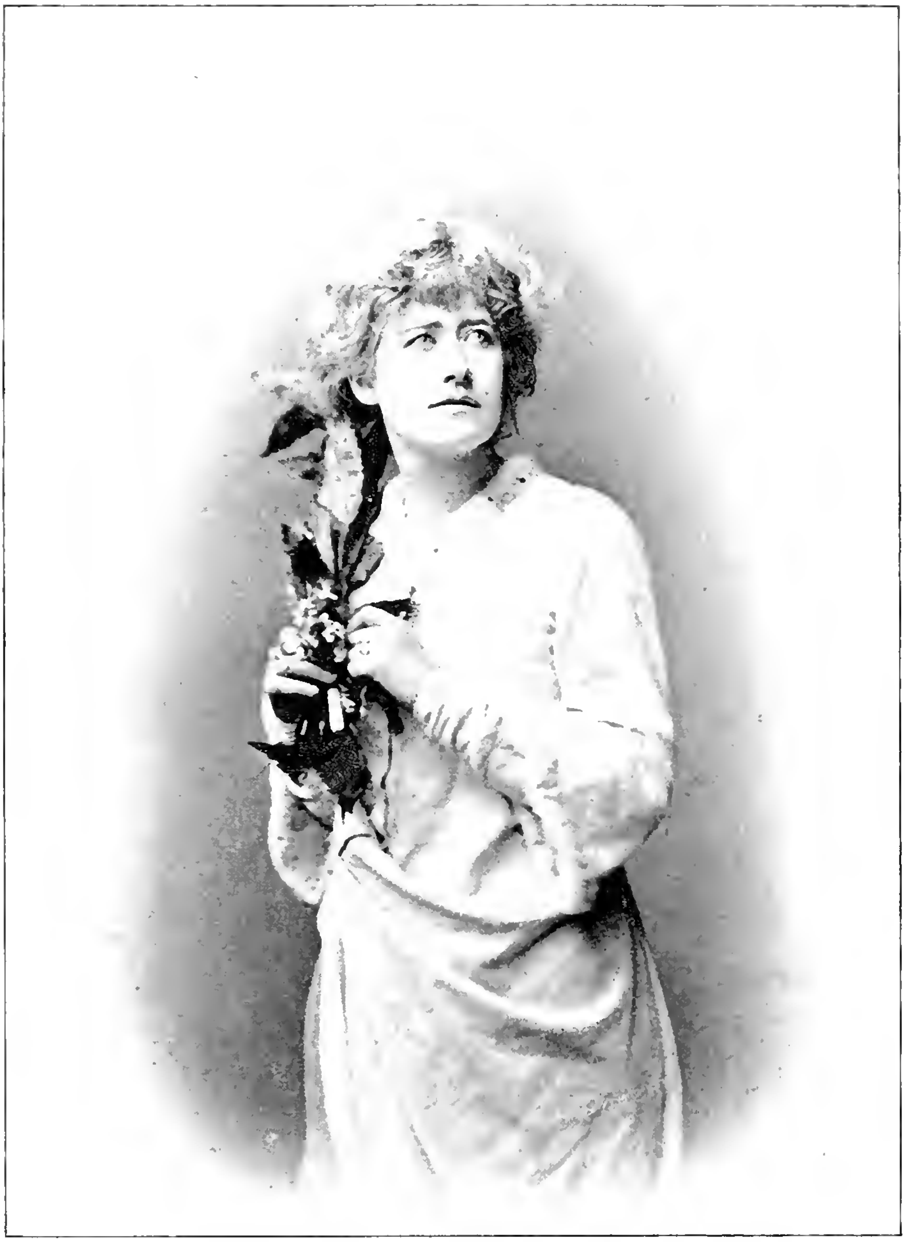
A few weeks later, at Hull, we find Miss Robertson playing, one night, the lady-in-wings in burlesque, ending her performance with a dance, and on another night acting Lady Macbeth to Samuel Phelps's Thane. At first the choice of actress for the tragedy-heroine lay between the girl and a very old lady; but as the elderly matron was finally judged incapable, Miss Robertson, in spite of her protests, found herself thrust into a long dress of her mother's, and bidden act the *rôle*. "I went on," she says, "and was received tremendously; and, having been taught by my father, I suppose I got through it somehow, and was vociferously cheered. It shows how, if anybody, however incompetent, pleases an audience, they will sweep art, experience, and knowledge out of the whole thing, and give the inexperienced a hearing. I was called over and over again. Mr. Phelps did not take me before the curtain. Why should he? When he went on again, he was greeted with cries of, 'Bring her out!' As my father was standing at the wings, he was sent for: and a young man out of the gallery, of enormous size, came round, and said to him, 'Ay, Mr. Robertson, if thou say'st t' word, I'll duck him in t' Humber. He's not brought on our Madge.' My father had to take Mr. Phelps out of the front door, to avoid the gallery boys throwing him in t' Humber. A greater insult to a 'genius'—for this time we apply the word in its right place—a greater insult than a chit attempting to stand upon the same stage with this man, who was, as all the world will acknowledge, a really great actor, I have never experienced. But so kind, so generous, was Mr. Phelps, that when I came to London he paid me the compliment of sending for me to play Lady Teazle at his benefit at the Standard Theatre."

Mrs. Kendal afterwards acted Juliet, Rosalind, and Viola; but the every-day, unidealized character of the modern comedy is more essentially her forte.

As with Mrs. Kendal, so with Ellen Terry, Ophelia was not absolutely her first character; but it was the first part Miss Terry played at the Lyceum Theatre when she began that engagement with Mr. Irving's company which has continued until to-day, and has been so fruitful of artistic impulses to the theatres of England and of America.

Miss Terry was born at Coventry, Feb. 27, 1848. Her first appearance was as the child Mamilius in the "Winter's Tale," when produced by Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre. In 1867 she first played on the stage with Mr. Irving, the two appearing in "Catherine and Petruchio;" and it is said that even then the actor declared he had found a stage companion to whom he could turn when he had attained his ambition of conducting a theatre. After her elder sister Kate had left the stage, in 1867, Ellen Terry retired for six years; and then, on returning, played at various theatres, until her pronounced success in "Olivia" (Mr. W. G. Wills's stage arrangement of the "Vicar of Wakefield") brought her into prominence. Mr. Irving immediately engaged her, to take the place of Miss Isabel Bateman; and two days before the closing of the year 1878 Ellen Terry captivated the London world with her poetic and intellectual Ophelia.

Oscar Wilde has pictured the Lyceum Ophelia in an interesting way. "Of all the parts which Miss Terry has acted in her brilliant career," he wrote in 1885, "there is none in which her infinite powers of pathos, and her imaginative and creative faculty are



ELLEN TERRY AS OPHELIA.
Used by Arrangement with Window and Grove, London.

more shown than in her Ophelia. Miss Terry is one of those rare artists who use for their dramatic efforts no elaborate dialogue, and for whom the simplest words are sufficient. 'I loved you not,' says Hamlet; and all that Ophelia answers is, 'I was the more deceived.' These are not very grand words to read, but as Miss Terry gave them in acting they seemed to be the highest possible expression of Ophelia's character. Beautiful, too, was the quick remorse she conveyed by her face and gesture the moment she had lied to Hamlet and told him her father was at home. This I thought a masterpiece of good acting, and her mad scene was wonderful beyond all description."

Miss Terry herself, describing the other side of the shield, tells in graphic language her experiences while acting Ophelia on that night of Dec. 30, 1878. "I shall never forget it," she says. "Dear old Mrs. Rumball was waiting for me in my dressing-room. I finished my part at the end of the fourth act: I couldn't wait to see the fifth. I rushed up-stairs to my room and threw myself into her arms.

"'I've failed! I've failed!' I cried, in despair.

"'No, no,' responded the good soul.

"'But I have, I have! Come along;' and we hurried from the theatre, I in my Ophelia dress with a big cloak thrown around me, and drove up and down the Embankment a dozen times before I dared go home."

The next day, when the papers all praised the actress with unstinting words, her misgivings disappeared. Then she was happy.

In America the first impersonator of Ophelia was the benevolent Catherine Maria Harman, granddaughter of the celebrated Colley Cibber, the old actor and poet-laureate of England. For seven years the American Company of actors had been in existence, but under the management of Hallam had never essayed "Hamlet." Now, in 1759, the players, headed by Douglass as successor of Hallam (both as the second manager of the theatrical troupe, and as the second husband of the widow of the earlier manager), coming to Philadelphia from New York, brought out Shakespeare's masterpiece on the 27th of July. The leading *rôles* no longer belonged to Mrs. Douglass: she now was content to play the Queen, thus appearing as the mother of her actual son, Lewis Hallam the younger, who had been rapidly pushed forward to the chief *rôles*. A dangerous experiment was this, to give Hamlet to a youth of nineteen. The Ghost was Mr. Douglass. Mr. Harman acted Polonius.

Nevermore after this season do we hear of Mr. Harman. Whether he retired or died the next year is unknown. But an obituary of Mrs. Harman, published in *Rivington's Gazette*, New York, on June 3, 1773, not only gives the date of her death (May 27), but also has the curiosity attached to it of being the first obituary of an actress ever printed in an American newspaper. Only by this brief obituary is her relationship with Cibber established: for her mother, the notorious Charlotte Charke, in her memoirs, took good care to avoid mentioning the name of her daughter's husband. "Though I had no fortune to give her," wrote this strong-minded nomadic actress of old, "without any partiality I look on her as a more advantageous match for a discreet man, than a woman who might bring one and confound it in unnecessary expenses, which, I am certain, Kitty never will do: and had she met with as sober and respectable a creature as herself, in the few years they have had a company might have been worth a considerable sum of money, to have set them up in some creditable business that might have redounded more to their credit and reputation."

After a brief career as a strolling player in the provinces of England, Mrs. Harman sailed for

America. She was then seven and twenty years of age: at her death she was forty-two. "She was a just actress," says the modest obituary which gives all we have of her record, "possessed much merit in low comedy, and dressed all her characters with infinite propriety: but her figure prevented her from succeeding in tragedy and genteel comedy. In private life she was sensible, humane, and benevolent." And then the paragraph adds, in quaint expression, "Her obsequies were on Saturday night attended by a very genteel procession to the cemetery of the old English church." One other reference in the notice shows an interesting connection with the original Imogen and Catherine of America. "Her little fortune she has left to Miss Cheer," it reads. Miss Cheer, therefore, was at this time living in New York.

The first Ophelia that ever chanted her sad melody upon the stage of a regularly established Boston theatre, was the Miss Baker who created such consternation in the noted family of Paines. She had come from England, with her father and mother, to assist in dedicating the Federal-street Theatre of the Puritanical city, opened six years before the present century began. On that night of February 3, Thomas Paine, the winner of the gold medal offered for the best preliminary address, listened to the reading of his pedantic verse by actor Powell in the character of Apollo: at the same time our poet cast admiring eyes towards the amiable, modest, and elegant Miss Baker. In February, 1795, when the lady was only seventeen years of age, the two were married.

But the father, the dignified Robert Treat Paine, Sr., whose name attached to the Declaration of Independence has served as a lasting memorial to his honor, refused to recognize the bride, and forbade the couple his house. Not until three years had passed would he allow a reconciliation. Miss Baker never returned to the stage. Her husband, unfortunately, turned his attention to other actresses after his marriage. The lady's Ophelia in the "Hamlet" performance of April 18, 1794, was not much admired. Bostonians said the part should, by rights, have gone to Miss Harrison or to Mrs. Abbot, just as they also insisted that Mrs. Powell, and not Mrs. Baker, should have had the *rôle* of the Queen.

Notable casts of "Hamlet" have appeared on American playbills during the past century, but none more notable than that of the famous testimonial to Lester Wallack, on the 21st of May, 1888. It is true that in 1856, at Burton's Theatre, E. L. Davenport was the Hamlet, Mrs. Davenport the Ophelia, Mark Smith the Polonius, Charles Fisher the Ghost, Messrs. Burton and Placide the Grave-diggers: and that in 1861, at Niblo's Garden, Mr. Davenport was the Hamlet, Mrs. Barrow the Ophelia, James W. Wallack, Jr., the Ghost, Mrs. Wallack the Queen, William Wheatley the Laertes, and Thomas Placide the first Grave-digger. But the Wallack testimonial leads all in importance. Edwin Booth was then the Hamlet. Just thirty-one years before, in May, 1857, he had shown his Dane for the first time to New York audiences, at the Metropolitan Theatre, then managed by Burton. Mr. Booth at that time was but four and twenty: Hamlet continued his until he was fifty-eight. His first Ophelia in New York was Sarah Stevens. After her followed, to this one Hamlet, Ada Clifton, Mrs. Barrow, Mrs. Frank Chanfrau (his Ophelia during the famous hundred nights' production at the Winter Garden in 1864–1865), Effie Germon, Mme. Scheller, Blanche De Bar, Bella Pateman, Miss Jeffreys-Lewis, Eleanor Carey, Mrs. Alexina Fisher Baker, Clara Jennings, Mme. Modjeska, Minna Gale.

At the Wallack benefit, on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, in New York, Booth's

Ophelia was Mme. Modjeska — and thereby hangs a tale.

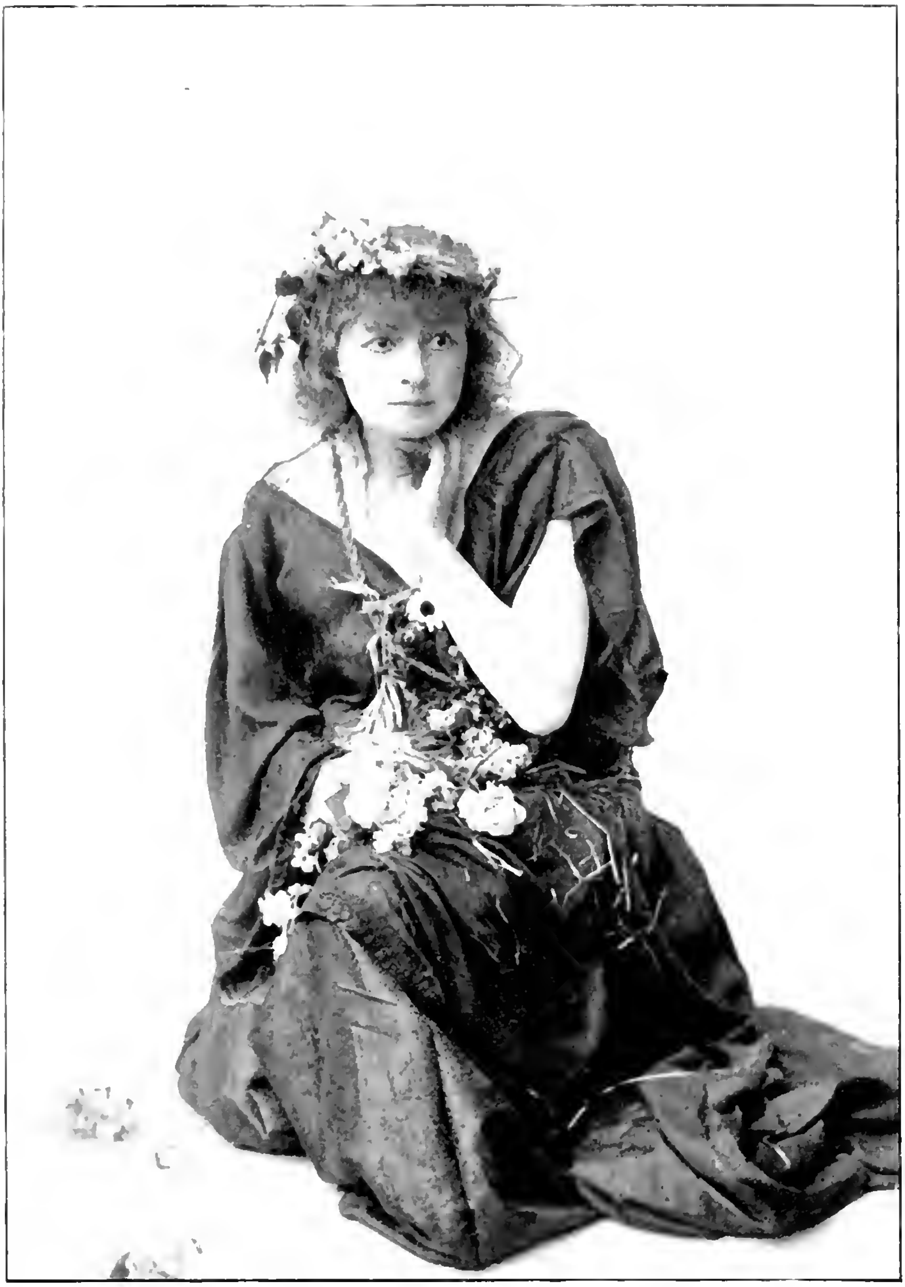
In Modjeska's life the character of Ophelia has played a curious part. It was the first Shakespearian heroine she ever saw upon the stage. When a little girl in Cracow, longing to become an actress, or an author, or a nun, she saw Fritz Devrient play Hamlet, and was so captivated by the play that she went home to commit the entire tragedy to memory, and from that hour to discard Schiller for a new idol, Shakespeare.

It was the first Shakespearian character she ever acted on the stage. Just at the beginning of her career, after a few *rôles* in Polish plays, she was given Ophelia, in 1866, and soon followed that with Portia and Beatrice.

It was the first Shakespearian character she acted on the American stage, and the first of Shakespeare's heroines whose words she gave in the English tongue. That was in 1887, when Modjeska, after a long struggle against poverty in an attempt at farming, determined to try the stage again. Without the knowledge of her husband, she sought an engagement at the San Francisco theatre. That engagement was slow in coming. The manager, to her great indignation, regarded her as a society amateur, politely addressed her by her genuine title, "Countess," and declined to believe that she could really act. This, after she had been accredited in Warsaw as the leading actress of Poland! She insisted on his hearing her recite. He did, and she conquered.

How curiously some things come about! Mme. Modjeska's ambition, even in those early days, before she could speak the English language well, was to act with Edwin Booth; but that hope, saving the single notable instance of the Wallack tribute, was never realized until the season of 1889–1890, when Lawrence Barrett managed the tour of Booth and Modjeska.

In 1877 Mr. Barrett was in the supporting company of Booth at the California Theatre, in San Francisco, when Modjeska made her application to play Ophelia in French to Booth's Hamlet. Modjeska's request led to an interview, the first meeting of the three later associates; and the Polish actress, to show her ability, read in French a scene from "Camille," and a recitation from "Adrienne Lecouvreur;" declaimed in German a portion of Schiller's "Robbers," and in the Polish language recited a poem, "Hagar in the Wilderness." But as she could not speak the English language, all present,



MME. MODJESKA AS OPHELIA.

Mr. Booth, John McCullough, then manager of the theatre, Barton Hill, and others of the company, while praising her talents, yet united in advising the actress to study for the English-speaking stage before attempting to make her *début* in America.

Modjeska began work at once upon our perplexing language, conquered it in nine months of close study, and made her first appearance at the California Theatre as Adrienne. Her success was at once proclaimed. On Saturday night of the same week, John McCullough took his benefit, and chose "Hamlet." Then Modjeska played Ophelia in English: or, rather, played the greater part of it in English, since lack of time to study the original text compelled her to give the mad scene in Polish, while all the rest was in the words of the author. Juliet followed in the second week.

But the lady's ambition to play with Booth was not to be gratified until eleven years later. Then another curious result wrought itself out: for her first appearance in union with Booth was made in the very character that she had originally asked to essay with him, Ophelia, and it was then the first time she read all the lines of the part in the English tongue. That memorable occasion was the Wallack benefit, when this notable cast appeared:

HAMLET	EDWIN BOOTH.
GHOST	LAWRENCE BARRETT.
KING CLAUDIUS	FRANK MAYO.
POLONIUS	JOHN GILBERT.
LAERTES	EBEN PLYMPTON.
HORATIO	JOHN A. LANE.
ROSENCRANTZ	CHARLES HANFORD.
GUILDENSTERN	LAWRENCE HANLEY.
OSRIC	CHARLES KOEHLER.
MARCELLUS	EDWIN H. VANDERFELT.
BERNARDO	HERBERT KELCEY.
FRANCISCO	FRANK MORDAUNT.
FIRST ACTOR.	JOSEPH WHEELOCK.
SECOND ACTOR	MILNES LEVICK.
FIRST GRAVE-DIGGER . .	JOSEPH JEFFERSON.
SECOND GRAVE-DIGGER. .	W. J. FLORENCE.
PRIEST	HARRY EDWARDS.
OPHELIA	HELENA MODJESKA.
QUEEN GERTRUDE . . .	GERTRUDE KELLOGG.
THE PLAYER QUEEN. . .	ROSE COGHLAN.

Had Modjeska been accorded her wish in 1877, she would have appeared with Barrett, Tom Keene, Harry Edwards, Barton Hill, William Mestayer, Effie Wilton, and Alice Harrison, as well as Booth, for they were all in the California Theatre company at that time.

Around the author's portrait of Ophelia, Mme. Modjeska places the fine framing of her own attractive personality, and with the gilding of sweetness and tenderness adds charm to the picture The mad scene is presented with chaste and refined tonings.

deeply pathetic in its soft, appealing method of action, more touching and musically effective in its sad chanting than is the rule with Ophelias of to-day, and harmonious to the gentle character, with only one rough, uncanny touch, the sudden, sharp, resonant laugh at the first exit from the scene. Modjeska's costuming of the latter scene departs from the traditional white dress, showing in its stead a pale green gown, partially loosened at the throat, and exposing one bare arm as the dishevelled accompaniment for the disordered mind.

The last Ophelia of the American stage was the last Ophelia to Edwin Booth's Hamlet; for no prominent actor since Booth's death has ventured to assume regularly the character of the princely Dane. This Ophelia was Minna Gale. A New York girl, the first of her family to seek representation in theatrical ranks, Miss Gale worked throughout the hot summer of 1885 as impersonator of nearly every kind of character in Bandmann's company, all for the experience, without a dollar of salary. But this was the means of securing an engagement with Lawrence Barrett's company that fall; and when Marie Wainwright started forth to star with Louis James, Miss Gale was promoted to the place of leading lady. Then, when Barrett and Booth combined, the young player became the Ophelia to the greater tragedian. On Saturday afternoon, April 4, 1891, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, her Ophelia accompanied the final Hamlet of America's most scholarly actor. On the preceding 20th of March, Mr. Barrett had died; and his friend and associate, as soon as possible, closed his own theatrical career. Two years later, June 8, 1893, Edwin Booth was dead.

DESDEMONA.

(OTHELLO.)

DESDEMONA was the first character ever acted by an English woman on the English stage.

From the great host of fair Venetians, then, who have lived, suffered, and died behind the footlights, let us select the originals of the character in England and in America, leaving the rest, for the most part, to pass from their Desdemona *rôles* either to fame or to oblivion, as the Fates have decreed.

The actors of the Elizabethan era were gifted and earnest men, notwithstanding some erroneous ideas to the contrary. They were, as boys, regularly bound over to the profession. Each principal was said to have been allowed an apprentice, who played young and female parts, for which he received a moderate sum; and having the guidance and example of great types constantly before him, the boy generally grew to prominence in his interesting but difficult art. The actor of that period lived well, in a fine city or suburban mansion, signed himself "gentleman," found his society sought and enjoyed by the leading men of the times and, if ordinarily prudent, had the possibility and probability of living wealthy and dying honored.

Just before the Puritan Revolution, there were five complete companies in London,—the King's Servants, so-called, at the Blackfriars in winter, and at the Globe in summer; the Prince's Servants at Salisbury Court; the Queen's Servants at the Cockpit, in Drury Lane; and the actors of the two cheap theatres, the Fortune and the Red Bull.

In 1629 an attempt was made to introduce women upon the stage, a French company of actors and actresses coming across the channel to try their fortune at Blackfriars. "Monsters," Puritan Prynne called them, "unwomanly and graceless" creatures. "All virtuous and well-disposed persons in this town" were "justly offended" by their presence, declared Thomas Brand, adding, "Glad am I to say they were hissed, hooted, and pippin-pelted from the stage, so that I do not think they will soon be ready to try the same again."

But the great Civil War brought disaster to all theatres and to all players. In 1647 an imperative order was issued by the authorities to close the playhouses, and every one who disobeyed was threatened with imprisonment. Harsher measures were soon to follow. An edict appeared pronouncing all players to be rogues and vagabonds, authorizing justices to demolish all galleries and seats of theatres, and commanding that any actor found guilty of exercising his vocation should be whipped for the first offence, and for the second be treated as an habitual criminal; while all spectators of plays, when caught red-handed, were to be fined five shillings.

These harsh orders, however, could not wholly suppress public amusements; and frequently—secretly, but with peril—the law was evaded. Most of the actors, finding "Othello's occupation gone," joined the army, and fought for Royal Charles against the great forces of Parliament. The stern but powerful rule of Oliver Cromwell frowned upon theatres and players with unrelenting visage; and not until the Restoration did actors come fully to their own again, although in 1656 Davenant, supposed to have been Shakespeare's natural son, obtained permission to open a theatre at Rutland House, Charterhouse Yard, when and where he brought out an opera, "The Siege of Rhodes." The Red Bull opened in 1659; and when the "King came to his own again," there was much rejoicing among Thespians, for they felt with prophetic certainty that a glorious morning of a new era had dawned after a long and stormy night. They were right: for the new day was to bring to the London stage one of the greatest of actors, one whose name and fame will live while dramatic history is written. His name was Thomas Betterton.

The Blackfriars and Globe Theatres ended their famous dramatic lives in 1647. The Fortune was abandoned in 1661; the Cockpit and Red Bull in 1663. By special grant two new theatres were begun in 1660, one in Vere Street, Clare Market, under Killigrew's management, and the other in Salisbury Court, governed by Davenant; and these were the two playhouses to which the immortal Samuel Pepys went so often to relax his mind and to enjoy his favorite actors.

At Killigrew's house appeared those players who had been famous as boy actresses, Hart, — the grandson of Shakespeare's sister Joan, — Kynaston, Clun, and Burt. At Killigrew's also appeared Mrs. Hughes, who, we may with all probability assume, was the first female Desdemona of the stage, the first woman impersonator of a Shakespearian heroine, and the first English woman to act in any character whatever.

On Nov. 8, 1660, the King's Company began its performances at the theatre in Vere Street. Exactly one month later, Dec. 8, "Othello" was brought out for the first time that season; and to the performance of the tragedy was added "a Prologue, to introduce the first woman that came to act on the stage." Thomas Jordan was the author of the prologue and these are the lines in which he speaks of the novelty of the night: —

> "I come, unknown to any of the rest,
> To tell you news: I saw the lady drest:
> The woman plays to-day: mistake me not,
> No man in gown, nor page in petticoat:
> A woman to my knowledge: yet I can't,
> If I should die, make affidavit on 't.
>
> . . . .
>
> In this reforming age
> We have intents to civilize the stage.
> Our women are defective, and so siz'd,
> You'd think they were some of the guard disguis'd:
> For, to speak truth, men act, that are between
> Forty and fifty, wenches of fifteen;
> With bone so large, and nerve so incompliant,
> When you call *Desdemona*, enter *Giant*."

Not all the female characters were at once given to women. Pepys, who failed to see the "Othello" production, attended the theatre on the subsequent 3d of January, and saw the "Beggar's Bush" "well done:" and for the first time in his experience saw women come upon the stage. The very next night, Jan. 4, he saw the "Scornful Lady" acted with a man as the heroine. But the change had begun, and rapidly grew in favor.

Some have thought that Anne Marshall, the disreputable daughter of the Presbyterian clergyman, Stephen Marshall, might have been the original Desdemona; but the greater probability points to Prince Rupert's mistress, the beautiful Margaret Hughes.

"A mighty pretty woman," declared Pepys, who had not hesitated to kiss her in the theatre's green-room, "a mighty pretty woman, who seems, but is not, modest." In truth she was not. First, Dame Gossip associated her name with Sir Charles Sedley, the atrocious libertine and popular playwright. Then, eight years after her appearance as the pure Desdemona, Mrs. Hughes drew Prince Rupert from his laboratory, accepted the home he provided for her, and swept away nearly all his fortune except the £20,000 worth of jewels that, at his death, simply served to pay his debts. What little was left to the woman disappeared at the gaming-tables she frequented.

The daughter of this Desdemona and of the Prince married Gen. E. S. Howe; the granddaughter became the maid of honor of Caroline, Princess of Wales. The blood of the noble and of the actress flows to-day in the family of Sir Edward Bromley.

Probably Mrs. Hughes was the Desdemona at that later performance when Burt acted the Moor in such vivid way that the pretty lady, sitting beside Mr. Pepys, "called out to see Desdemona smothered."

Many an actor since that day, to give tremendous force to his Othello, has made poor Desdemona suffer. Of John Wilkes Booth in the character, Kate Reignolds-Winslow tells this story: "In 'Othello,' when, with fiery remorse, he rushed to the bed of Desdemona after the murder, I used to gather myself together and hold my breath, lest the bang his cimeter gave when he threw himself at me should force me back to life with a shriek. The sharp dagger seemed so dangerous an implement in the hands of such a desperado that I lent him my own — a spring dagger, with a blunt edge, which is forced back into its handle if it is actually struck against an object."

Mrs. Kendal, too, has an interesting story to relate regarding her experiences as a child Desdemona to the Moor of the noted negro tragedian, Ira Aldridge. In the last act, she says, he used to take Desdemona out of bed by her hair, and drag her around the stage before he smothered her. "You had to wear sandals and toed stockings to produce the effect of being undressed," are Mrs. Kendal's words: "I remember very distinctly this dragging Desdemona about by the hair was considered so brutal that it was loudly hissed."

That was in 1865 when Mrs. Kendal, or as she is known in private life, Mrs. Grimston, was practically beginning her career. Alluding further to her Desdemona she says, "Mr. Aldridge was a man who, being black, always picked out the fairest woman he could to play Desdemona with him, not because she was capable of acting the part, but because she had a fair head. One of the great bits of 'business' that he used to do was where, in one of the scenes, he had to say, 'Your hand, Desdemona.' He made a very great point of opening his hand and making you place yours in it: and the audience used to see the contrast. He always made a point of it, and got a round of applause: how, I do not know. It always struck me that he had got some species of — well, I will not say 'genius,' because I dislike the word as used nowadays, but gleams of great intelligence. Although a genuine black, he was quite *preux chevalier* in his manners to women.

The fairer you were, the more obsequious he was to you."

Macready, masterly as Iago, but not remarkable as Othello, when he played the Moor at Paris, removed the scene of the murder of his Desdemona (Helen Faucit) from the eyes of the spectators, by having drapery conceal the alcove wherein lay the bed. Then, as Emilia called to him, he thrust his dark face through the curtains, giving the spectators a shock of emotional surprise by the sudden contrast of color against the light drapery background, and a sensational thrill by the despairing expression upon the swarthy face.

Salvini followed out the same idea, because, as he maintained, it was in better taste not to show the brutal scene to the spectators. But we all remember, after Miss Marie Wainwright was thus left to the fate of Desdemona, a more sensational and blood-curdling picture than a smothering scene, presented by the enraged Moor seizing his bloody cimeter in both hands, as he stood before the curtains of the bed, and swiftly drawing it across his throat, to right to left, to left to right, until, apparently, the throat was horribly cut, and death made certain.

Fechter brought forward Desdemona's bed upon a dais, and then, having driven his victim round and round the stage, while his drawn blade flashed above his head, dragged her to the bed, and piling pillow after pillow upon her face, finally knelt upon the murderous instruments of down until, according to the prompt-book, "she dies." Perhaps the actress often thought that the stage directions were to be literally followed out.

An odd little story is told of Desdemona's experience on the French stage when Ducis adapted Shakespeare's tragedy for Parisian audiences. The first night they killed the sweet lady, according to stage directions. But at that scene tender-hearted women in the audience fainted, and perfume-scented gentlemen cried down its roughness. Therefore, the complaisant adapter slashed out the catastrophe, and gave a happy ending to the play. But Talma, artist that he was, could not endure such mutilation.

"I will kill her," he muttered, as he strode in anger one night around the wings. "The pit do not want it, they say? Well, they shall see it and endure it. She shall be killed."

In vain Ducis, overhearing these threats, protested. Talma was obstinate: that night Desdemona died. The magnificent acting of the great player was too much for the prejudices of the audience, and thereafter the original catastrophe remained in the play.

Mrs. Siddons once nearly met actual death on the death-bed of Othello's bride. Some one had neglected to look carefully to the couch, leaving it so damp that, from lying upon it, Mrs. Siddons contracted an almost fatal rheumatic fever.

As for Mrs. Siddons's Desdemona — no wonder Campbell, unable to identify the players for the lack of a playbill, exclaimed, as he saw the character acted with exquisite tenderness, "This soft, sweet creature cannot be Siddons!" Boaden declared that, in her acting of Desdemona, so softened was the part as to make the very stature of the mighty actress seem to be lowered; while Mrs. Siddons herself wrote, in a letter to a friend, "You have no idea how the innocence and playful simplicity of my Desdemona have laid hold on the hearts of the people. I am very much flattered by this, as nobody has ever done anything with that character before." When our heroine played Desdemona in London, in 1785, with her brother, John Kemble, acting the Moor, in a British general's uniform, she was getting ten guineas a week; two years later her salary was more than doubled.

A little less than four years before Sarah Kemble was born, and nearly a century after the first female Desdemona appeared on the English stage, America saw its first heroine of "Othello." That production of the great tragedy of jealousy in New York, Dec. 26, 1751, by Mr. and Mrs. Upton and their supporters, but for the earlier performance of "Richard III.," would have been the introduction of Shakespeare to this country.

The American stage was in its infancy at that time. Two years before, in August, 1749, Addison's "Cato" had been played in Philadelphia, marking then the beginning of theatrical history on this side of the Atlantic. There had been plays given in New York in 1732, but they may have been performed by amateurs, for aught we know to the contrary, while it is certain that their production gave no impetus to play-acting here. "Cato" may be assumed as the starting-point in our stage history.

The Philadelphia company, headed by Thomas Kean, a writer as well as an actor, came to New York in 1750, and in that city, on the 5th of March, opened its season with "Richard III.," Kean playing the crook-backed monarch. A year later the troupe disbanded.

Then comes to these shores the first advance agent that American history knows, Robert Upton. He was a treacherous fellow. Sent here by Hallam to prepare the road for the proposed American Company of that enterprising manager, suave Upton pocketed the money intrusted to him for the building of a theatre, and, neglecting the interests of his employer, inaugurated in New York a dramatic season with himself and wife as stars. "Othello" was the first play brought out, cast with Upton as Othello, John Tremain as Iago, and Mrs. Upton as Desdemona. The season closed in a few weeks, and our first Othello and Desdemona of America sailed back to England never to be heard of more.

Hallam's players came to the Colonies in the fall of that same year, 1752, opening at Williamsburg, Va., on the 5th of September, with the "Merchant of Venice." Strangely enough "Othello" is the only other play, during the Williamsburg season, of which even a line of record can be found. That tragedy is known to have been played, through the publication, in the *Maryland Gazette* of Nov. 17, 1752 of the following item of news: "The Emperor of the Cherokee nation, with his Empress and their son, the young Prince, attended by several of his warriors and great men and their ladies, were received at the palace by his honor the Governor, attended by such of the council as were in town on Thursday, the 9th inst., with all the marks of courtesy and friendship, and that evening were entertained at the theatre with the play, the tragedy of 'Othello,' and a pantomime performance, which gave them great surprise, as did the fighting with naked swords on the stage, which occasioned the Empress to order some about her to go and prevent them killing one another."

Mr. Malone was undoubtedly the dusky gentleman with the naked sword who thus helped alarm the "Empress" of the Indians, and Mr. Rigby was probably the other quarrelsome worthy, Iago; while Mrs. Hallam, a Desdemona of the English stage, was the original of that character in the first regularly organized American company.

Nine years later our heroine (then Mrs. Douglass) was compelled to yield Desdemona to Mrs. Morris, and to take in its stead the *rôle* of Emilia. The odd program of that date, June 10, 1761, is worth reprinting, since it illustrates the cunning ways to which the performers of those early days were often obliged to resort, in order to overcome a widespread sentiment, held by the goodly people of certain towns, against the wicked sin of play-acting. In some places the law prohibited acting, in others moral sentiment was equally effective. For one reason or another this production of "Othello" at Newport was thus disguised: —

KING'S ARMS TAVERN, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND.

On MONDAY, June 10th, at the PUBLIC ROOM of the ABOVE INN,
will be delivered a Series of

MORAL DIALOGUES,

IN FIVE PARTS,

Depicting the Evil Effects of Jealousy and Other Bad Passions, and Proving that Happiness can only
Spring from the Pursuit of Virtue.

MR. DOUGLASS will represent a noble and magnanimous Moor named Othello, who loves a young lady named Desdemona, and, after he has married her, harbours (as in too many cases) the dreadful passion of jealousy.

> Of Jealousy our being's bane,
> Mark the small cause and the most dreadful pain.

MR. ALLYN will depict the character of a specious villain in the regiment of Othello, who is so base as to hate his commander on mere suspicion, and to impose on his best friend. Of such characters, it is to be feared, there are thousands in the world, and the one in question may present to us a salutary warning.

> The man that wrongs his master and his friend,
> What can he come to but a shameful end?

MR. HALLAM will delineate a young and thoughtless officer, who is traduced by Mr. Allyn, and, getting drunk, loses his situation and his general's esteem. All young men, whatsoever, take example from Cassio.

> The ill effects of drinking would you see?
> Be warned and keep from evil company.

Mr. Morris will represent an old gentleman, the father of Desdemona, who is not cruel or covetous, but is foolish enough to dislike the noble Moor, his son-in-law, because his face is not white, forgetting that we all spring from one root. Such prejudices are very numerous and very wrong.

Fathers, beware what sense and love ye lack,
'Tis crime, not color, makes the being black.

Mr. Quelch will depict a fool who wishes to become a knave, and trusting one gets killed by him. Such is the friendship of rogues—take heed.

When fools would knaves become, how often you'll
Perceive the knave not wiser than the fool.

Mrs. Morris will represent a young and virtuous wife, who, being wrongfully suspected, gets smothered (in an adjoining room) by her husband.

Reader, attend: and ere thou goest hence,
Let fall a tear to hapless innocence.

Mrs. Douglass will be her faithful attendant, who will hold out a good example to all servants, male and female, and to all people in subjection.

Obedience and gratitude
Are things as rare as they are good.

VARIOUS OTHER DIALOGUES,

too numerous to mention here, will be delivered at night, all adapted for the improvement of the mind and manners. The whole will be repeated on Wednesday and Saturday. Tickets 6 shillings each, to be had within. Commencement at 7, conclusion at 10.30, in order that every spectator may go home at a sober hour and reflect upon what he has seen before he retires to rest.

God save the King,
And long may he sway,
East, north, and south,
And fair America.

Many and many a theatrical "young and virtuous wife" since that day has been smothered upon the stage, some like Mrs. Morris in "an adjoining room," but more in full sight of the audience. With these Desdemonas of later years, however, we will not concern ourselves. The glories of the play belong to Othello and to Iago.

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