AKESPEARE'S HEROINES ON THE STAGE

by C. E. L. WINGATE

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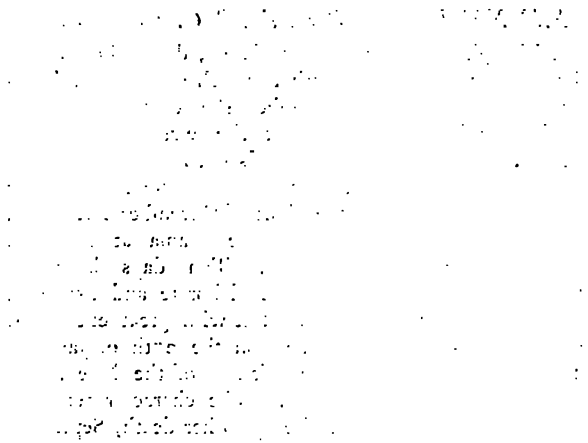
VOLUME TWO



FANNY DAVENPORT AS CLEOPATRA.

Although Fanny Davenport played, during her career, Lady Macbeth and Katharina as well as Beatrice, Rosalind, Imogen, Rosaline and Juliet, she never impersonated Shakespeare's Cleopatra. But she was the first impersonator in America of Sardou's Cleopatra in the play of that same name which the French dramatist wrote for Sarah Bernhardt. On the night of December 23, 1890, Miss Davenport brought out the drama at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York. Ten days later the theatre was in ashes and all the elaborate and expensive property of the play burned. But with great energy the actress prepared a revival and on the 27th of January, 1891, appeared again as the Mistress of the Nile at the Hollis Street Theatre, Boston. The character remained a strong one in her repertoire up to her death, September 26, 1898.

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BY

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WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS

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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 Cæsar 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 iden-

tical 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 Cæsar 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 archæology 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 Cleo-

patra 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 *gound*, 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 mar-

riage, 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 fea-

tures, 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 Mac-

beth 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 Lon-

don; 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 genera-

tion. 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 promi-

nence. 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 engage-

ment 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 enunciation 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, frolicsome style that marked her characters ever since her *début* of twelve years be-

fore, 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 per-

formance 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 hun-

dred 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., Ed-

win 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 charac-

ters, 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 num-

ber 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 manœuvres 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 as-

sumption 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 foot-lights. 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 ac-

cepted 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 self-same 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 nine-

teenth 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 play-

houses, 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 be-

came 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 Com-

pany 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 enter-

tained 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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