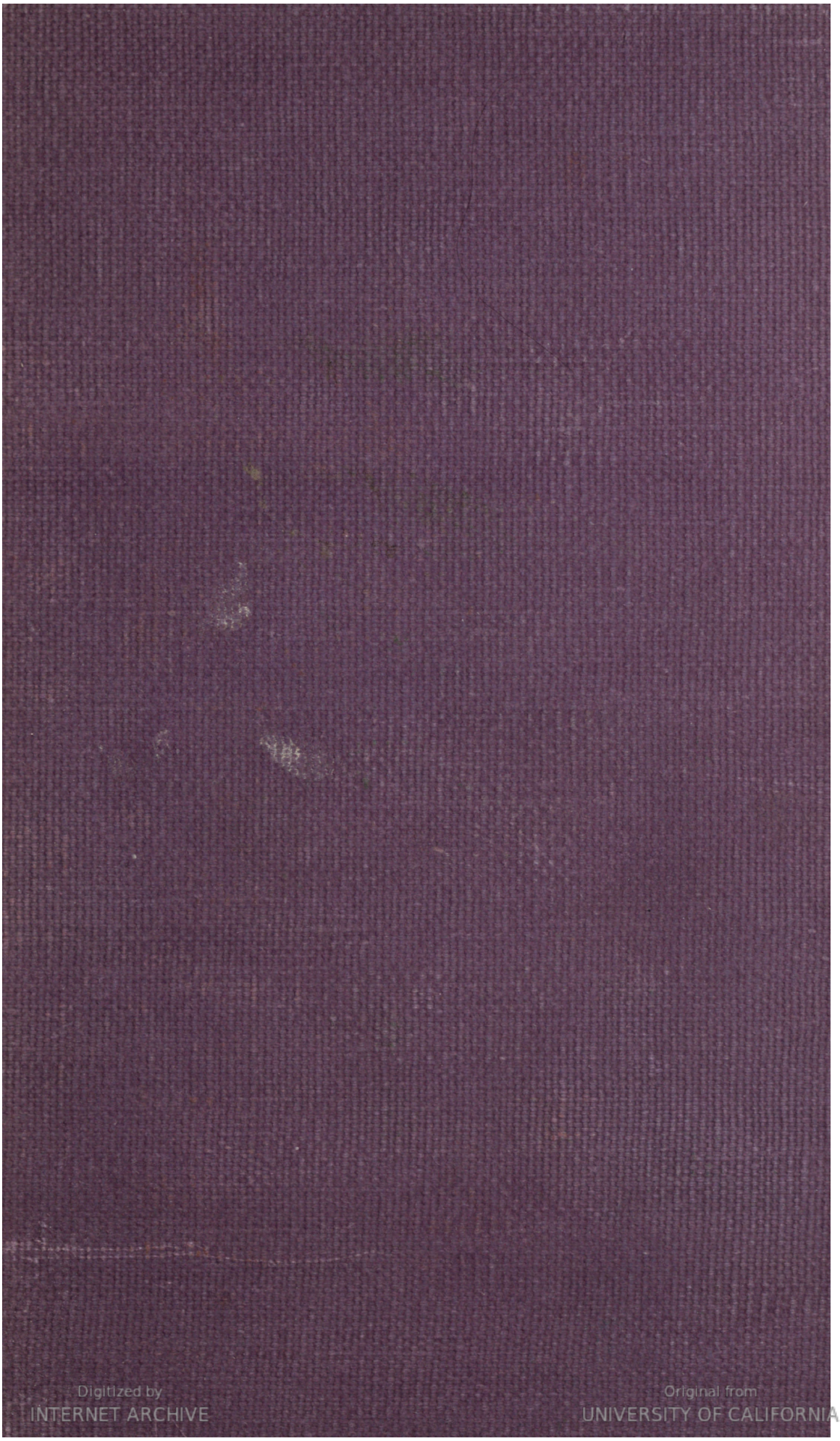

LEAVES

FROM

AN ACTOR'S NOTE-BOOK;

WITH

REMINISCENCES AND CHIT-CHAT

OF THE

GREEN-ROOM AND THE STAGE,

In England and America.

BY

GEORGE VANDENHOFF.

Decipit
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo.
PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

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THE United States, her institutions, people, government and wonderful progress, had been the subject of my eager inquiry and increasing interest, ever since I had been capable of understanding the philosophy of history, or of speculating on the theories of government. As secretary and solicitor to the Liverpool Reform Association—the first position in life which made me known in public—it had naturally fallen within the scope of my inquiries and speculations to examine the rise and advancement of that Greatest of Modern Republics; if, indeed, any ancient elective government may be compared with it. And it was therefore not merely with the ambition of an artist, but also with the ardent curiosity and interest of a theoretical republican in principle, that I walked the

deck of the fine ship THE GARRICK, which, under the guidance of

"Him who has the steerage of my course,"—

was to bear me to the land where the great experiment of self-government by the people was in full blast and full blow. It was my first long acquaintance with the sea, and I enjoyed it. I chose a sailing vessel in preference to steam, that I might see the ocean in its full swing and natural action, without any Watts'-bit or Fulton-curb upon it; but curveting, caracolling, rearing and plunging like a war-horse, with the ship for its rider. We had a delightful passage of thirty days; thirty days of calm, dreamy enjoyment. I have made the passage by steam many —about fifteen—times since; but for pleasure, for the free, rollicking, out-and-out sensation of being at sea, (I don't mean sea-sickness;—heaven forbid!) give me sails and wind, in preference to steam and coal-smoke. On a question of time merely, steam for ever, of course: but let him who loves the sea, trust to the winged bird that skims the wave lightly and easily like a swan, and in smooth water floats with unruffled plume upon its bosom. "But, how about calms, and head winds?" some one will say. "Well, in calms, lie lazily down on deck like a turtle in the sun, and dream of far-off lands and spicy groves; or loll under an awning, on a coil of rope, with a cigar in your mouth, and a good novel in your hand, and, "let the world wag";—you can "take your ease, (as) in your inn!" If it blow hard, and the wind be a-head, hold on to a belaying pin or a shroud, and listen to the whistling of the gale in the cordage, and watch

"the laboring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus high, and duck again as low
As hell 's from heaven;"

enjoy the storm, revel in its impotent fury, and rejoice to feel the good ship stanch and firm as a

"tower'd citadel or pendant rock,"

beneath your feet. If you have not nerve enough for this, or if, as *Trinculo* says,

"*your stomach be not constant,*"

why, e'en turn in, wrap yourself snugly up, and sleep in peace; with the happy consciousness that you are "in Heaven's hand, brother," and that there is no boiler to burst, no paddles to smash, no machinery to give way. When the storm has ceased, the wind is lulled, and the sea smooth again, jump up, forget your qualms and sorrows past, take a brisk, invigorating walk on deck, and go down to breakfast with the appetite of a shark: if it don't answer to the whip at once, touch it up with a thimbleful of cognac (mind it be the real), with not a drop of allaying Croton in it, and you'll be surprised what a fillip it will give nerves, brain and stomach.

This all pre-supposes that you are not in a hurry, and can afford the time: if time be an object, take a Cunarder, and do the trip in ten days.

I set foot ashore in New York, on the 14th September, 1842, and engaged rooms at the Old Clinton Hotel, in Beekman street, in the immediate neighborhood of the Park Theatre. The two brothers

Leland, the present proprietors of the Metropolitan Hotel, were clerks in the office, and were remarkable for attention to the guests. Let me say, that the *table d'hôte* set at that house—by no means a large one—far surpassed in excellence, and superabundance of good things, the tables which we now find, even at the best hotels; there was not so much attempt at extravagant display, but there was

"that which passeth *show*"—

a really good, ample, well-cooked dinner; and the price of board was about two-thirds of what it is now. I have lived, in turn, at nearly all the best hotels in the Union,—the Carlton, the New York, the Clarendon, in this city; Jones's, in Philadelphia; Barnum's, and the Eutaw House, in Baltimore; Pulaski, in Savannah; the principal hotels in Charleston, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Louisville, and the Old St. Charles, in New Orleans; and I don't scruple to say, that the *feeding* at the old hotels that have passed away, was better, more generous, and more satisfactory, than it now is at the splendid and fashionable caravanseries that have succeeded. I think the New York and Clarendon Hotels, in this city, are conducted in a most liberal style, and on admirable systems of management; and I always point them out to my friends as the resting-places for ladies and gentlemen who appreciate comfort, polite attention, and a well-cooked and well-served dinner. I must add, that it would be difficult to find anywhere, nowadays, such *tables d'hôte* as were set at the old Carlton House, in this city (kept by Henry Hodges, a

most liberal caterer); Jones's Hotel, Philadelphia (the glories of which have passed away with its excellent proprietor, a perfect gentleman of the old school, who has retired on an ample and well-earned fortune); or of Jones's (a colored man's) little snuggery in Charleston, where the finest gentlemen of the day were wont to meet at dinner, and where I have passed many delightful hours. The bill of fare at these three places was always *tout ce qu'il y avait de plus excellent;* not so *recherché* on paper, not so high-sounding, nor so remarkable for a long list of ill-spelt *entrées* of impossible French dishes,—but liberal, ample, substantial, appetizing, well-cooked dinners, to which you sat down with full intent to do justice, and from which you arose content, as from the performance of a good action. A man, too, dared drink half a bottle of wine, or a glass of brandy, in those days, and in those places, with the confidence that they *were* wine and brandy, and not some mysteriously-compounded, chemical combination of alcohol and narcotic, destructive to brain, stomach, and vital energy. The liquors of the present day might, in general, and ought, to be labelled, according to the degree of their potency for evil—

Dangerous,
Deadly,
Diabolical!

so that if we choose to drink down destruction, we may do it with our eyes open. The liquor-compounders of the day always remind me of Burke's description of the hypocritical tears, which he says

Warren Hastings shed whilst signing proscriptions, and giving orders for atrocious cruelties:—

"They convert the *healing balm* that nature gave for the *relief of wounded humanity*, into a rancorous and deadly *poison* to the race of man."

Under this terrible state of things,—for it is a fact that cannot be denied, that *adulteration* in liquors, nowadays, means *poison*,—the man who shall furnish a pure, *undrugged*, *unfortified*, juice of the grape (*vino puro é semplice*, as the Italians call the produce of their vine-clad hills), will merit the name of a public benefactor.

Men *will* seek some stimulus for their parched throats, and exhausted, jaded spirits; wisely, or unwisely, they will drink some liquor fermented, or distilled. Temperance apostles cannot eradicate what seems to be a natural craving of the human system. I have no doubt they do a great deal of good in diminishing the prevalence of intoxication, and its attendant ills; but, to a greater or less extent, *men will drink;* and neither water, tea, nor coffee seems to satisfy the desire. They must have stimulus; it is that which seems to inspire and to give zest to social converse, and the friendly interchange of hospitality, when the overtaxed mind unbends, and forgets its daily cares in the happy evening hour. Mind, I only state a fact; I do not advise or applaud the custom. But, as the fact is, as the custom exists, it behoves us to see that "the social glass" does not conceal "a rancorous and deadly poison!" Else, Bacchus, instead of being represented as the *rosy god*,

will have to be depicted as a hideous demon, with blear eyes and bloated cheeks, whose emblems shall be, not clusters of delicious grapes, but a death's head, and cross-bones, with a

> " baneful cup, whose poison
> The visage quite transforms of him who drinks,
> And the inglorious likeness of a beast
> Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
> Charàcter'd in the face."

These effects of *Comus's* magic cup, are the exact picture of the results of indulgence in the baneful concoctions of the present day; and, therefore, be all encouragement given to the *native grape*, and to those who express its sweet juice. *They* are the practical *Apostles of Temperance;* they furnish the antidote to the poisoned bowl. Wine-growing countries, it is well known, produce few drunkards; *delirium tremens* is unknown amongst them. In the recent public demonstrations and exultations at the prospect of regeneration from Austrian bondage, which have lighted up Italy, as with a general illumination, no fact is more pleasing or more significant, than that no drunkenness has been seen in street or public place; and that, among excited and freedom-maddened thousands, no other intoxication has been exhibited, but the heaven-born delirium of newly-acquired liberty!

Let *us* apply the lesson.

On the posting-bills on the walls, which were much more modest and less monstrous than they are now, I observed my name underlined, to appear

shortly, at the Park Theatre. One of my first calls, therefore, was on Mr. Simpson, the manager. I found him a plain-mannered, unpretending, rather reticent, man, meaning well, but slow, irresolute, and with no remarkable business capacity. Theatrical affairs, he told me, were at a very low ebb, and the prospects for the season, which had just commenced, were any thing but brilliant. I could not have come over at a worse time, he told me; trade was generally dull, money scarce, and every one felt flat, so that the theatre, of course, suffered. This was mighty pleasing intelligence to start with; however, I had to make the best of it.

It was arranged that I should commence my engagement on that day week, and we proceeded to discuss the plays in which I should appear. "Hamlet" was fixed on for my opening part. I proposed "Benedick" for the second night, and "Macbeth" for my third.

"Where is your Beatrice and your Lady Macbeth?" asked Simpson.

"Why," I answered, "I have certainly not brought them in my pocket; I expected to find them here. It cannot be that the Park Theatre is without a leading lady?"

"We have no one for those parts," curtly replied Simpson; "I tried to get Miss Cushman to play with you; but she 's at the Walnut, Philadelphia—stage manager there."

"Can we do 'Othello?'" I asked.

"Not well," he answered; "a difficulty about Emilia."

"Good heavens!" I said, in despair, "what *can* we do?"

"We can do 'Virginius,'" he replied.

"Very well," I said, (glad to find there was one play that could be done,) "Virginius be it."

So, "Virginius" was fixed for my second night; and the other nights' business was to be arranged hereafter.

The fact is, that the Park Company, though it contained some excellent names, was weak in spots that the public usually expect to be strong. There were Messrs. Abbott, Placide, Barry, Old Fisher (as he was called), Mrs. Vernon, Mrs. Wheatley; but the leading lady, a very amiable young lady, was quite a novice, unstudied and inexperienced; there was no heavy lady, for the Emilias and Lady Macbeths; and there was a great want of a good juvenile actor. The difficulties, therefore, in the way of casting a Shaksperean play, were considerable.

With the sole exception of General George P. Morris, the kind, the genial, the warm-hearted lyrist,—the *Beranger* of America,—I did not call on a single dignitary of the *Press*. I did not know any of them personally, and I have through life abstained from back-stairs courting of the *Press*, or from any side-winded influence being attempted upon their opinion, or the expression of it. General Morris had been mentioned to me, by my father, as a valued friend; as such, I presented myself to him, not in his character of the editor of the New York *Mirror:* I called on the gentleman, not on the *redacteur*. No editor, reporter, or city item-ist, was I introduced to, or did I meet, in any way, previous to my appearance.

Meanwhile, I amused myself in and about the City, and on Long Island; and of course made the acquaintance of many good friends, and of nearly all the thirst-provoking and palate-pricking drinks, for which the New York *Bar* is famous through the world.

How many hundred times was I greeted, immediately after the ceremony of an introduction had taken place, with the never-failing question of "Well, sir, how do you like our country?" and frequently the addition of "What do you think of our city?"—two very comprehensive questions, opening so enlarged a field as to render it amazingly difficult to epigrammatize an answer. The thing did not lie in a nutshell; it was a theme for a lecture, a discourse of at least half an hour, to answer it properly. However, one was obliged to dispose of it with a "glittering generality,"—if such a thing were at hand, and would answer to the call. New York was not then the magnificent city which she has grown now to be; there was no Fifth Avenue, with its princely residences, and adjacent streets filled with houses that in Europe would be described, and deservedly, as mansions. Broadway was a long, irregularly-built, straggling street, with low wooden shanties occasionally intermixed with the brick houses. None of the present splendid piles of stone at the Bowling-green, and no Stewart's, no Grace Church, no Union Square; so that the answer to the question, "How do you like our city?" was not then so spontaneously rapturous as it might be now. But now, the question is little asked; or if asked, is asked with a conscious feeling of pride, and an assured confidence as to the answer,

as a reigning *belle* might challenge a certain compliment to the set of her bonnet, the elegance of her *toilette*, and the perfection of her *tout-ensemble*. In those days it was different. People had been so abused, and be-Trolloped, and be-Dickensed, that they felt an uneasy restlessness as to the impression which they might make on educated strangers. So far from being annoyed by the appeal, a rational man would consider it an involuntary compliment.

In travelling in a strange country, it is easy to find subjects of ridicule; but neither courteous nor wise to indulge in it. If it must be admitted that the nationality of an American is rather thin-skinned, peculiarly and sensitively alive to any thing like slur or contempt for the institutions, productions, or customs of his own country, it must also be confessed that the Englishman is, perhaps, too prone to seek for grounds of complaint, to meet little annoyances in a carping spirit, to make invidious comparisons, to consider every thing new and strange to him or his habits, as vulgar, absurd, or disagreeable; and quite as ready to assert the superiority of every thing English over every thing foreign, (that is, when he is abroad; at home, John Bull abuses home-doings heartily!) especially every thing American, as the latter is to be morbidly sensitive to the impertinence. A little *retenue*, a little recollection of the demands and practice of courtesy, in social life, would be of great advantage in this international intercourse. When a man visits at a gentleman's house, the host does not call on him to admire his dwelling, to praise his furniture, to go into ecstasies about his dinner

or his wines; he gives him the best he has, and makes him welcome. The guest, on the other hand, does not find fault either with his room or its appointments, his fare, or his entertainment; he sees that the host has been anxious to please and make him comfortable, and he thanks him, and is content. Still less, if he be a gentleman, does he go away and ridicule and abuse his host behind his back: if he do so, he puts himself out of the pale of social courtesies. "Wit," as Sir Peter Teazle well observes, "is more nearly allied to good-nature than your ladyship imagines;" and satire and epigram cease to tickle when their aim is to wound; still more are they to be reprobated, when their point is tipped with the venom of malice, to corrode and fester where it strikes.

A man may surely express his opinion, if asked, without making it an insult. I have heard of one who, being asked, before a number of people in Philadelphia,—sillily enough perhaps,—"if the mutton in England was as good as in America," replied, with an assumption of mystery, and in a subdued whisper, to the interrogation—

"If you'll promise not to tar and feather me, I'll tell you!"

"Well?"

"Why, then," said the Englishman, "it is much better."

Now the implication involved in the condition against being tarred and feathered for candid-speaking, was clearly a volunteer impertinence; and was doubtlessly felt and remembered as such, in the account against the impertinent's countrymen.

For my part, I have always expressed my opinion, when invited, freely, but not in offensive terms; and I have travelled the country from Maine to New Orleans and St. Louis, several times over, and have never yet stood in fear of pistol or bowie-knife.

Revenons à nos moutons.

I made my first appearance at the Park Theatre, on Wednesday, 21st September, 1842, in Hamlet: Mr. PLACIDE (the best Polonius, and the best actor in his varied line in the country) was the Polonius; Mr. ABBOTT, the Ghost; Mr. BARRY, Horatio; Miss HILDRETH, Ophelia; Mr. FISHER, the Grave-digger.

Theatricals, as I have said, were at a very low ebb, trade in a stagnant state, and money very scarce. I could not and did not expect a great house: there were only about $400; but it was, I assure you, not a bad house for those times. The tragedy was, with one or two exceptions, generally well acted; not, I confess, as well as I had expected from the Old Drury of America; because the cast was weak in two important parts; but it went off smoothly; I was vehemently applauded; at some points the applause was long and enthusiastic, and I had reason to be proud of my reception by a New York audience. Of course, I was called for; but that supererogatory compliment, now staled even to disgust, did not, in those days, involve a speech; so, I was not under the necessity of ringing the changes on "honor," "kindness," "liberal support," "gratitude," "heart," "last moment of existence," and the other round of set

phrases that go to make up a before-the-curtain speech.

The press, all spoke in favorable terms of me; some of them, in those of the most encouraging and warmest approval. I was but a novice; it was only my third season on the stage, and I might naturally be somewhat anxious about the verdict of New York. I rose early the next morning, soon had every paper in my room, and had no reason to be dissatisfied with the general opinion. It had this great value to me, that it was spontaneous, unsolicited, and uninfluenced. May I, without boring the reader, make an extract, which I confess gratified me much, by its tone of candor, and the happiness of its expression? It is from poor *Porter's Spirit of the Times*, 24 September, 1842.

"THINGS THEATRICAL.—The principal event discussed in theatrical circles during the past week has been the appearance of GRORGE VANDENHOFF at the Park, on Wednesday evening, in Hamlet. In person Mr. Vandenhoff is tall and well-formed, with an open and manly countenance; his voice is of a strong and pleasing quality, and he treads the stage with grace and dignity; indeed, he is calculated, in all respects, to 'give the world assurance of a man.' His performance of this most difficult character—the test, so esteemed, of a tragedian's abilities, gave great satisfaction to the large audience assembled to welcome him. For ourselves we confess he far surpassed the expectations we had formed of him, both in power and style. His readings were remarkably correct, not only, but in good taste; and his manner of delivery, free and without effort, avoiding the affected and conceited style of the younger Kean, as well as the monotonous and tiresome one of * * * * * Taken as a whole, the character has not been more ably performed, in this city, for the last six years. Mr. V. has evidently been well educated, has

deeply studied the character, and understands it, and aims to impress the conception and beauties of the author upon his audience, rather than by 'tearing a passion to tatters,' to display his own strength of muscle and lungs. It may, with truth, be urged against him that he is young and comparatively inexperienced—that time and study will much improve him; but the greatest present drawback upon theatrical prosperity, both here and in Europe, is, that actors are generally too old, or comparatively broken down before they arrive to any great degree of excellence, thereby rendering their performances devoid of that truthfulness of appearance so necessary in keeping up the scenic effect. It must also be conceded that he lacks the genius that enabled the elder Kean to electrify his audience by startling effects, and hold them in breathless astonishment in admiration of his almost superhuman efforts to depict the stronger passions. To all who expect such a performance, and are determined to deny themselves the pleasure of seeing a tragedy until they can see it as personified by a Kean or a Kemble, we prescribe patience, mixed with strong hope and faith, and we only wish we may live long enough to enjoy the treat with them. But to those who are fond of tragedy, and are duly grateful for 'the gift the gods provide,' or, in more common parlance, are satisfied with 'the best the market affords,' we strongly commend Mr. Vandenhoff's performances as possessing more merit and developing more good sense and judgment than that of any other man recently among us."

The next night I played Virginius, the night after repeated Hamlet; Leon followed; a new play by Knowles, the "Rose of Arragon," (his last rose of the autumn of his dramatic fame,) was produced the next week; but it failed to attract; it was displaced for Macbeth, and a repetition of Hamlet; for my benefit I played Claude Melnotte, and Benedick, to about $400.

"The time was out of joint,

and the Theatre seemed in a state of compound fracture;

"No med'cine i' the world could do it good."

Mr. and Mrs. Brougham followed me, with very indifferent success; and the season was a most disastrous one. Full salaries were seldom, I believe, paid; and the fortunes of Old Drury kicked the beam.

PHILADELPHIA.—My next engagement was at the Walnut St. Theatre, Philadelphia; Marshall, manager, Miss Cushman, stage-manager. Among the company, were William Wheatley, Fredericks, Susan Cushman, Mrs. Maeder. In some respects, therefore, it was stronger than that of the Park Theatre at that time; but it had no Placide (the best comedian of his day and country); and no Fisher (that most quaint and useful actor); nor Mrs. Wheatley; nor was there so good an actor as Barry, in the heavy business.

I played six nights there. In addition to the badness of the times, it was Election week in October, which contributed to damage my business. I received only $180 for my share of the six nights; but the manager told me the houses had been better than he expected from the times; so you may guess what times they were. Mr. Forrest followed me the Monday after; I was present at his first night's performance, Macbeth; and his house was not, I think, at all better than my last. If *he* could not draw in Philadelphia, who could?

Charlotte Cushman, whom I met now, for the first time, was by no means, then, the actress which she

afterwards became. She displayed at that day, a rude, strong, uncultivated talent; it was not till after she had seen and acted with Mr. Macready,—which she did the next season,—that she really brought artistic study and finish to her performances. At this time, she was frequently careless in the text, and negligent of rehearsals. She played the Queen to me in Hamlet, and I recollect her shocking my ear, and very much disturbing my impression of the reality of the situation, by her saying to me in the closet-scene (Act III.),

"What wilt thou do? thou wilt not *kill* me?"

instead of

"What wilt thou do? thou wilt not *murder* me?"—

thus substituting a weak word for a strong one, diluting the force, and destroying the rhythm of the verse. She was much annoyed at her error when I told her of it; but confessed that she had always so read the line, unconscious of being wrong.

I played Rolla with her; and she was, even then, the best Elvira, I ever saw. The power of her scorn, and the terrible earnestness of her revenge, were immense. Her greatest part, fearfully natural, dreadfully intense, horribly real, was Nancy Sykes, in the dramatic version of Oliver Twist; it was too true; it was painful, this actual presentation of Dickens's poor abandoned, abused, murdered, outcast of the streets; a tigress, with a touch, and but one, of woman's almost deadened nature, blotted, and trampled under foot by man's cruelty and sin.

It is in darkly-shadowed, lurid-tinged, characters of a low order, like this and Meg Merrilies,—half human, half demon,—with the savage, animal reality of passion, and the weird fascination of crime, redeemed by fitful flashes of womanly feeling,—that she excels. I never admired her Lady Macbeth. It is too animal; it wants intellectual confidence, and relies too much on physical energy. Besides, she bullies Macbeth; 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, clenched 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. Meg Merrilies has been her great *fortune-teller* and fortune-*maker*.

Susan, her sister, was a pretty creature, but had not a spark of Charlotte's genius; she pleased "the fellows," however, and was the best walking-lady on the American Stage. (Walking-ladies, madam, are not pedestrians, necessarily; it is the English term for what they call on the French stage, *ingenues;* young ladies of no particular strength of character, whose business is to look pretty, to dress prettily, and to speak prettily; charmingly innocent, and deliciously insipid.)

When Charlotte took her leave of the New York public, previous to sailing, or steaming rather, for England, where she had resolved to try her fortune, I appeared, at the request of Mr. Simpson, as Benedick to her Beatrice, on her farewell night, at the Park Theatre (25th Oct., 1844). The house was by no

means full; and she played Beatrice, that night, carelessly or over-anxiously, I don't know which—the effect of either is much the same. I recollect particularly, that she ran part of one act into another in a scene with me, in a very perplexed and perplexing manner. When we came off, she exclaimed—

"For heaven's sake, what have I been doing?"

"Knocking the fourth and fifth acts together, extemporaneously," I replied.

The fact is, she was disappointed with the house; the result being, then, of some moment to her. That audience little dreamt with what an accession of reputation and fortune she would return amongst them!

Looking over my papers, I find a most characteristic note from her to me during the above engagement at Philadelphia, which—for it contains nothing confidential—I give my readers as a curiosity. It is written in a bold, masculine hand, something "like the hand that writ it." The italics mark the words which were underscored, heavily.

Wednesday night,
Half-past 2.

Mon Ami,

After a late supper, prepared for you (but no one could get a sight of you all the evening), and studying a long part—I have to request a great favor of you—viz.—to take the enclosed packet for me to Boston. I have to-day written some three or four letters, not of introduction (that might *offend* you), but calculated to do you some service—*to* Boston. I shall only be too proud if they are of any service to you—for without nonsense, I have scarcely ever seen one I should be more sincerely happy to serve than yourself—*and no humbug!* It is a matter of indifference to

me whether you believe this or not—*I feel it*—and so *God bless you!* till we meet again. You shall hear from me shortly, and believe me sincerely your friend,

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

P. S. Half asleep—a bad pen, no ink, no paper, and as low-spirited as a *fiend!* All *excuses sufficient.*

The manner in which she obtained her first engagement in London, is so characteristic of the spirit and *pluck* of the woman, that I cannot resist telling it, as it was related to me by Maddox, the manager of the Princess's Theatre (1845).

On her first introduction to him, Miss Cushman's personal gifts did not strike him as exactly those which go to make up a stage heroine, and he declined engaging her. Charlotte had certainly no great pretensions to beauty; but she had perseverance and energy, and knew that there was the right metal in her: so she went to Paris, with a view to finding an engagement there, with an English company. She failed, too, in that, and returned to England, more resolutely than ever, bent on finding employment there; because it was now more than ever necessary to her. It was a matter of life and death, almost. She armed herself, therefore, with letters (so Maddox told me) from persons who were likely to have weight with him, and again presented herself at the Princess's; but the little Hebrew was obdurate as Shylock, and still declined her proffered services. Repulsed, but not conquered, she rose to depart; but, as she reached the door, she turned and exclaimed: "I know I have enemies in this country; but—(and here she cast herself on her knees, raising her clenched hand aloft)

so help me ——! I'll defeat them!" She uttered this with the energy of Lady Macbeth, and the prophetic spirit of Meg Merrilies. "Helho!" said Maddox, to himself, "s' help me! she's got de shtuff in her!" and he gave her an appearance, and afterwards an engagement in his theatre.

She opened there with Mr. Forrest, in Macbeth; and carried away the honors of the night. It was on this occasion that those marks of disapprobation were showered on the great American actor, which so highly incensed him, and which were attributed by him, with great injustice, I believe, to Mr. Macready's influence, and were so fatally revenged in 1849, at the Astor Place Opera House; when Mr. Macready was driven from that stage, and compelled to fly, probably, for his life. Innocent victims fell outside the theatre on that dreadful night, who had no hand or part in the quarrel, perhaps scarcely a knowledge of its cause.

On his first visit to England (in 1835–6), Mr. Forrest received the most flattering applause from press and public; and, one thing is certain, that if the disapprobation manifested towards him, justly or unjustly, on his second visit, was a *got-up* thing, it was *not* done in an *anti-American* spirit: for Charlotte Cushman, on the same night, was vehemently applauded, and loudly called for. And, further, she afterwards played alone, at the same theatre: that is, without Mr. Forrest; and was always received with great favor. She never fails, I believe, to attribute her great after-success, and the harvest of fame and fortune which she afterwards reaped in her own coun-

try, to the instantaneous recognition of her talents in England.

Madame Pisaroni, the greatest *prima donna* of her day (1790 about), had so unfortunate a countenance, that when any *Impresario* proposed an engagement to her, she first sent him a miniature of herself, as she actually looked, painted to the life, without flattery. If this did not frighten him, she entered into the negotiation; and, when she sang, she kept her hands in motion before her face, to prevent the eye of the audience from dwelling on it, lest its disagreeable features might destroy the effect of her marvellous voice and execution.

Bowery Theatre.—Passing through New York, on my way from Philadelphia to Boston, I accepted an offer from Thos. Hamblin, and played six nights at the Bowery Theatre: Macbeth, Hamlet, Iago (twice), M. Antony, Faulconbridge: the great Tom himself was the Othello, Brutus, and King John. The business was not good: all the theatres in New York were at the lowest water mark; and even Mr. Forrest, at the old Chatham Theatre, was playing a wretched engagement. I was taken there by one of his greatest admirers, to see him in "Metamora," and was surprised to find the house more than three-fourths empty. He, however, acted with his accustomed vigor; and I freely acknowledge that, for power of destructive energy, I never heard any thing on the stage so tremendous in its sustained *crescendo* swell, and crashing force of utterance, as his defiance of the

Council, in that play. His voice surged and roared like the angry sea, lashed into fury by a storm; till, as it reached its boiling, seething climax, in which the serpent hiss of hate was heard, at intervals, amidst its louder, deeper, hoarser tones, it was like the falls of Niagara, in its tremendous down-sweeping cadence: it was a whirlwind, a tornado, a cataract of illimitable rage!

Boston.—I made my first appearance at the Tremont Theatre—now the Tremont Temple, and the scene of the Rev. —— Kellog's spiritual ministrations and manifestations—on 16th Nov., 1842, in Hamlet; and, with an interval of two nights' absence at Providence, played there, on re-engagements, altogether five weeks, during which I repeated Hamlet and Macbeth three times each, and appeared in Coriolanus and Hotspur, each for the first time. Dr. Jones, a fair and easy-going, good-natured, but not very enterprising man, was manager; and, I think, with the exception of that excellent, solid, sterling actor, John Gilbert, and his wife, the company was about as poor a one, as a whole, as was ever assembled in the walls of a respectable theatre.

I have to congratulate myself, however, that, in spite of the bad times, and the frightful depression of theatricals in the modern Athens—as Edmund Kean, I believe, baptized Boston, transferring to it the *sobriquét* of Edinburgh—I had the good fortune to play to some good houses, and to establish myself in the favor of that notional, capricious, and rather uncertain public—a favor which, I think, I may venture to flatter

myself, I have since rather increased than diminished, both in the Lecture-Room and the Theatre:—I have played in every theatre in Boston: Tremont, National (the old one under Pelby, and the last but one, which was burnt down during my engagement), and the Howard Athenæum. I spoke the first word in it that was ever spoken from the stage—the address on the opening night, 5th Oct., 1846. It was written by a clergyman, and was a lamentable specimen of clerical versification. At the Museum, I have played several highly advantageous engagements, as friend Moses will confess; and, finally, three engagements at the present over-large and *mal-acoustic* Boston Theatre, under the veteran Barry.

It is, however, an unfortunate fact, that, in spite of the proverbial literary taste of the City of Notions, the Drama, properly so called—I mean the Drama of Shakspere, Sheridan, Knowles, Bulwer, &c.—does not generally attract the Bostonians. Show and spectacle, glitter, blue flame and pantomimic extravagance, have infinitely greater charms for them. Hamlet, Macbeth, the School for Scandal, have no chance against the Ravels and pantomime; and, I have no doubt that Mr. Barry cleared more money for the stockholders last season, by the revival of the carcase of the old (one) horse-piece of the "Cataract of the Ganges," without a line of poetry—scarcely of common sense—in it, than he ever made in Boston by the most careful production of the highest Shaksperean Drama, or of the most elegant Comedy.

XIII.

SOUTHERN ENGAGEMENTS—New Orleans—At Sea—A Temperance Man—St. Charles Hotel—Amusements, Balls, Duels, &c.—A SOCIETY BALL—*Quadroon Almacks—Dingy Dowagers*—Contrasts in Life—New St. Charles Theatre—An Incident—Mr. Hackett: his Richard III.—MOBILE—New American Theatre, N. O.—Attempt at a Row—A Deputation—Smoke without Fire—BALTIMORE—MARYLAND *q* FAIRYLAND?—PHILADELPHIA: Walnut St.—CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN'S *Romeo*—Return to Park Theatre—Summary—HOME.

NEW ORLEANS.—I had always desired to visit New Orleans. Finding theatrical prospects for the winter very hazy, at the North, and, having received overtures from Mr. Caldwell, the proprietor of the old St. Charles Theatre, I resolved to try my fortune in the South. As I did not intend to stop on the way, I made up my mind to go by sea, as the easiest, as well as cheapest mode of travelling the distance through. I therefore engaged a state-room in the "Oswego," Capt. Oliver Eldridge; a sailing packet, of about 700 tons; laid in a few extra stores; and, with the addition of a case of most excellent sherry, sent on board for me by the kindness of a friend, I looked forward to getting through the passage, of it might be a fortnight, perhaps, with comfort, and even with pleasure. I found our captain as fine a fellow as ever walked a

deck, our ship an excellent sailer, our fare plain, substantial, and good. We had only four or five passengers, none of whom deserve particular mention, except, perhaps, a temperance-man, one M——, of Philadelphia; who, at the outset, inveighed strongly against the use of wine, spirits, or of any liquors fermented or distilled; but whom, after twenty-four hours' sea-sickness, I charitably persuaded to take a little grog, for the comfort of his stomach. He found the prescription so efficacious against *mal de mer*, that he stuck pretty steadily to it for the remainder of the passage: a fact, to which the grievous diminution of my stock fearfully bore witness. He grew particularly fond of a certain amalgamation of Jamaica rum, hot-water, lemon and sugar, in the chemical admixture of which I flattered myself I was an adept; and he acquired a singular taste for the delicate, pale sherry which I have before mentioned, as forming part of

"my little, but my precious store.

Whether good or bad, in general, these indulgences of the spirit brought up his flesh amazingly. He was a thin, lath-y, dyspeptic-looking fellow; but generous living made a new man of him. I never saw a fellow on whose conscience the total abandonment of his tee-total principles and practice sat so lightly; I should rather say, so heavily; for he increased in flesh the more he rejoiced in *spirit*. Whether, or no, he thought it for my health's sake, as being of rather a full habit and sanguine temperament, to remove temptation out of my reach, I know not: if so, his zeal in my cause was most self-sacrifising; for he attacked the enemy, *my* bottle, with the most unflinching devotion to my

service;—though I will do him the justice to say, that he so far carried out his principles strictly on this point, that he never drank any wine or spirits *of his own.* The steward had no account against *him;* no awful score; no "trim reckoning" could be thrown in *his* face. And the very last circumstances under which I saw him, the day after our arrival in port, when I went down to the ship to give orders about my baggage, were—seated in the saloon, with crackers and cheese, and a *bottle of my sherry, fresh opened, before him;* for he had a sublime contempt for the refinements of proprietary distinctions in the article of liquor: he was quite *Proudhommeish* in his views on that head. He seemed to think that, in these cases, (liquor-*cases*)"*la proprieté c'ést le vol*"—and he acted accordingly.

We made the passage in a little over nine days; and I congratulated myself that I had chosen the sea, instead of the, then, dreadfully tiresome land-conveyance.

On arriving in New Orleans, I found the old St. Charles Theatre—which is reported to have been one of the finest buildings, for dramatic purposes, in the world—burnt down; and the American Theatre—a new stand, opened by Mr. Caldwell, on the destruction of his property in Camp Street—just closed by him, for want of support; he had been able to keep it going only about a month, and that at considerable loss. The theatrical prospect was evidently refreshing—highly encouraging to a new arrival! However, I took up my quarters at the old St. Charles Hotel—and "lay back to see what would turn up."

Messrs. Smith (*Old Sol,* as he was called) and

Ludlow were already engaged in the erection of a new St. Charles Theatre; men were at work upon it night and day; it was to be completed and opened immediately.

Meanwhile, one Dinneford, appeared in the field, as the lessee of the American Theatre, and made proposals to me to appear on the night of its re-opening; a proposition which I declined; preferring to wait; and, in the mean time, enjoying the "varieties" of the multiform, multi-colored, multi-lingual, multi-ludal city, which is *levée* on the banks of the Mississippi.

Nor did the time hang heavy on my hands. The St. Charles Hotel was the High Change of news, conversation, politics, scandal; and, under the conduct of Messrs. Waters and Mudge was, in spite of the multitudinous throng that inhabited it, a most comfortable hostelrie. There you met strangers from all parts of the world; acquaintances from every country, or city that you had ever visited, were continually coming suddenly upon you, and hailing you with friendly and unexpected greeting.

Sometimes, the ordinary flow of life was ruffled by a squall or two, which troubled its surface, dashed a little spray around, and all was right again. Now and then, a *duel à l'outrance* would furnish a day's interest; sometimes, the immense bar-room, in which thousands assembled at a time, was the scene of a little excitement: high words would be heard at one end; a scuffle, perhaps; a general clearing took place for a moment, a pistol-shot or two were fired, a body was carried out, the lookers-on closed up again, and the matter was forgotten.

Or, the orderly current of a quadrille in a ball-room, or the mazy movements of the waltz, were broken by a quick and fatal stab, that left some much-coveted damsel *unpartnered* for a moment; but the music scarcely stops, the waters join, the half-uttered compliment is taken up again, the half-told anecdote is concluded, the interrupted laughter rings livelier, louder than before;

"On goes the dance, and joy is unconfined;"

eyes sparkle, feet twinkle, white shoulders shine beneath a thousand lamps, swelling bosoms heave, and pant, and sigh, as triumph, love, or envy moves them; and gay cavaliers flit about, pouring volleys of quick-winged compliments, or shooting feathered darts of passionate admiration, till the ears of the fair tingle again; and one is bewildered by the many-tongued accents, that make the ball-room a Babel of confused delight.

New Orleans life was a very different thing in 1842, from what it is now that the sober, calculating, Yankee element is so largely mingled with the glowing, impassioned, Southern and Creole nature.

It then, had a very mixed aspect: full of contrasts of color, language, manners, conditions; abounding in contradictions, anomalies, discords, and strange blendings of antagonistic elements.

One phase of its parti-colored life, particularly struck me. It was what were called—*Society-Balls.* They were got up by subscription, among men of wealth and fashion; by whom invitations were issued, and arrangements made that brought together,

on the evening of each ball, the most agreeable men, citizens, and strangers, a select party, and the most beautiful *quadroons* that New Orleans could boast.

By the kindness of an influential friend, I received a card for one of these *Re-unions*, and attended it with great curiosity and interest. On entering the *salle*, which was a large, handsome, well-lighted room, I found a company, consisting of about a hundred, or a hundred and twenty—male and female; the dancing was at its height; but as orderly, decent, and well-conducted as in the *salons* of Paris or New York. As far as propriety of behavior, and *reténue* went, it would have made *Mabille* blush for itself—if *Mabille* ever blushed! No liberties, no freedom of action, or words. There was a perfect blaze of warm, voluptuous beauty; an assemblage of as finely-formed, bright-eyed *houris*, as ever I looked on at one glance. None of them were strongly marked with the features, or betraying signs of their race; most of them would pass, in the glare of artificial light, as I saw them, for *brunettes*,—*bien prononcées*, it is true. Some of them showed no tinge of their descent at all; but could boast complexions—not *blondes*, certainly, but — of Anglo-American whiteness. Yet, all these girls had in their blood the fatal taint of Afric's sun; though, in some, it was diluted, by admixture, to an infinitesimal point, that required the nicest eye to detect it—if, indeed, it could be detected at all.

Around the room, ranged on divans, in solemn state, watchful as owls, and wrinkled as Hecate, sat the mothers of these Odalisques; vigilant she-dragons,

with Argus-eyes, keeping sentinel-watch over their daughters' charms. After all, they were only a burlesque on the dowagers and *chaperones* at Almack's, and other high-life subscription-balls; where the same watchfulness, and the same wrinkles, (both more artfully veiled and concealed; the one by smiles and affability, the other by *blanc* and *rouge!*) may be observed, directed to the same game, with this *nuance* of difference: that in one case, the marriage of her daughter to a desirable *parti* is the dowager-countess's end and aim; while, in the other, the *bien-placé-ing* of her girl in love's soft bondage with a rich protector—the graver bonds of matrimony not being of force, in this case—is the mark of the dowager-Quadroon! An *establishment* for her child is the object of both. And it amused me not a little to watch the keen, restless eyes of each dingy old beldame following the motions of her charge; especially on each change of partner; anxious and fidgetty lest she should commit herself with a *mauvais parti*,—some good fellow not quite up to her *figure*, in dollars. Exactly as one has seen an old countess sitting on thorns, and throwing out signals of distress and displeasure, when her *protegée*, the *Lady Honoria*, has been so indiscreet as to dance *twice* with a younger son, a dashing, penniless captain in the guards! Ha! ha! ha! Poor human nature! black or white, 'tis much the same, with only a shade or two of difference. The dowager-duchess bends all her arts against a *mes-alliance—as the law directs;* the dowager-Quadroon arrays her force against a *mauvais parti—as the law permits. Voilà la différence!* Life, in its extremes, is very

much alike when its littlenesses are uncovered, and its motives unveiled. Civilization only throws an elegant mantle over the naked limbs to hide the quivering of the muscles, and the passionate throbbings of the heart!

Vogue la galere!

St. Charles Theatre, 1843. The new St. Charles Theatre was completed in an incredibly short time, (sixty working days, I believe, altogether) and I was invited by Messrs. Ludlow and Smith, to appear there in the second week of its opening. I accepted, and commenced in Hamlet, on 9th February, 1843, playing Macbeth, and my usual list, and winding up, to the best house of the season, so far, with Claude Melnotte and Rob Roy, for my benefit.

The following brief notice, from the "Picayune," may show what they thought of me in New Orleans:

Vandenhoff.—*New St. Charles.*—Young Vandenhoff made his first appearance last evening, as Hamlet, before one of the fullest and most fashionable houses of the season, and was warmly received and enthusiastically applauded throughout the performance. His readings are exquisitely given, evincing much study as well as scholarship; his enunciation and gesticulation are good, and his general conception of the difficult character he sustained, gave full evidence that he had bestowed upon it much careful study, and that he well understands the wild yet subtle humors of the Dane. If we can find fault at all, it is with an excess of method in his attitude and action, and the too violent rendering of a few passages where a subdued manner would have been more effective. These faults were trivial, however, when placed in opposition to the general beauties of his performance, and we cannot but predict for Mr. Vandenhoff a highly creditable, and even brilliant career upon our boards.

But here, as well as in the North, the "bad times" most injuriously affected the Theatre. Mr. HACKETT played alternate nights with me, to indifferent houses; and as his comedies and farces did not draw, he betook himself to Tragedy and Richard III! This, I need not say, did not mend the matter. Strange, that so excellent an actor in certain character-parts, eccentric and comic, should have deceived himself into the belief that he could shine in tragedy, for which he has not, nor ever had, any qualification, except good sense and intelligence. When I say that his Kentuckian never ceases to amuse me by its hearty, audacious oddities; that I consider his Solomon Swap the most natural and unexaggerated Yankee I ever saw upon the stage; that I have alternately smiled and wept at his Rip Van Winkle, one of the most artistic and finished performances that the American Theatre ever produced,—he will, I know, not take it ill, that I could not discover the merit, or the design, if it had any, of his Richard III. An actor may have great intelligence; a perfect understanding, and even feeling of his author, and yet fall very far short in the execution, even of his own conception. The art and the power that can touch and delight us in the simple pathos of Rip Van Winkle and *Monsieur Mallét*, may be feeble to cope with the frenzy of Lear; and will crack and fall to pieces, in the vain attempt to master and to give expression to the complicated agony of his pride, his affection, and his rage; the ruin of down-trodden royalty, and the wreck of a confiding old father's heart. These are the highest triumphs of the tragic power: it is

not wonderful that Mr. Hackett, excellent comedian as he is, should fail to achieve them.

I must mention an incident which interrupted the Lady of Lyons, for a few moments, on my benefit night. Mrs. Farren, then the regular actress of the St. Charles Theatre, was the Pauline; and in the scene in the cottage where,—on Beauseant's producing a pistol, she falls fainting into Claude's arms,—as I carried the lady up the stage, to place her in a chair, a voice from the Pit cried out, in a very excited tone,

"Kiss her! by ——, kiss her!"

I felt my cheek tingle with indignation; and an involuntary shrinking of Pauline, on my arm, told me that she felt the affront, too. I placed her calmly on the chair; turned, walked slowly down to the foot-lights, and stood there in silence, casting my eye round the foremost seats of the parquet, with a view to detect the offender. The audience was still as death, for about half a minute; then, suddenly, like a flash of lightning, a thought seemed to strike them; I beheld a man seized, raised off his feet, and literally passed through the air, from hand to hand, across the parquet, till he was outside the door, before he could know whither he was going! The whole was the work of about ten seconds; and, after a hearty cheer, I went on with the text. The words which followed,

"There! we are strangers now,"—

spoken by Claude with reference to his position

thenceforth with Pauline, the house immediately applied to the stranger whom they had ejected, and greeted them with the most uproarious laughter, and another cheer!

Poor fellow, I dare say he meant no harm; his feelings overcame him; but then, you know, we must regulate our feelings; or at least, the inopportune expression of them!

I next played six nights at Mobile, of which I need only remark that the company was shockingly bad; and the manager having got into a snarl with the public by discharging a popular favorite, Mrs. Stuart, I had to suffer the penalty of his obstinacy; there being a very general league of absence from the theatre till she should be restored.

I then returned to New Orleans, and played a very satisfactory engagement of five nights at the New American Theatre, under a new management, producing, for my benefit, for the first time, the play of "Love's Sacrifice," which had recently been brought out for my father and sister, at Covent Garden Theatre.

Previous to my appearance at this theatre, a low attempt was made to get up a *row* against me on my opening night. It scarcely deserves to be mentioned; for it was defeated by the coolness and contempt with which I treated it in anticipation. An insolent carpenter of the theatre had refused me admittance at the stage door, although my name was underlined in the bills, and I had come for the purpose of speaking with the manager. I did not bandy words with him,

as I saw his insolence was planned; but pushed him aside, and walked in, desiring him to "keep his hands off me, or I would have him taught manners." He muttered some threat, to which I gave no heed, but passed on, had my interview with the manager, and left the theatre, and thought no more about the fellow.

The next day was Sunday; and, after church-time, several friends came to me to offer their services against the row which was to take place on my appearance to-morrow night.

"Row!" I exclaimed: "what about?"

"What about?" was the reply; "Don't you know? haven't you seen?"

With that, each produced a small, mean-looking scrap of paper, three inches by four, on which was printed the following "elegant compilation." I give it, with all its *false spellings* and *Malaprop-isms*, exactly as it stood:

G. VANDENHOFF.

GEORGE VANDENHOFF!!! This individual, who is subsisting on the generous disposition of the American people, has, in an unguarded moment, thrown off his disguise, and stands before them in all his naked deformity—denouncing them as "common people, and that it was impossible to learn them manners—contaminating him with their tuch" &c. &c.

The subject of a King, who, according to the laws of his own country, is a vagabond, a solicitor of charity; and like the reptile, would bite the hand that warmed him into existence. Can Amercans sit quietly down and hear themselves stigmatized by a foreign adventurer. while feeding him with generous munificence? No; but show this famious aristocratical hypocrite, that we appreciate his *noble* feelings and will take occasion to show it the first opportunity.

Some thousands of this manifesto, it appears, had been distributed; and I was advised to prepare myself for a storm. I smiled, and said, "Then, let's take a drink." I knew this was the usual Southern preparation for everything.

The next day, I received a call from the British Consul, with the offer of assistance, if I required it. I assured him it was needless, and that I had not the slightest apprehension of anything. In the afternoon, a deputation of butchers, from Lafayette, was announced, as having called to see me at the hotel. I received them, like a Secretary of State; and, having first invited them to "take a drink all round" (*pour applanir la route*), requested to know their pleasure.

They had called on me to learn the truth of the matter between me and that proclamation-izing Carpenter, with a view to their action in the matter, *pro* or *con*. I told it. They expressed themselves perfectly satisfied: "they should be thar, and they'd jest like to see the first feller move a finger."

Well, night came: "Othello" was the play; the house was well filled—all men; not a bonnet to be seen; this looked ominous. My friends of the deputation and their party, were *thar*, in omnibus loads. I had to go on in the first scene, as Iago; and I requested the gentleman who had to accompany me as Roderigo, if he perceived any eggs or harder missiles flying, not to wait, but to take the first shot for his *exit-cue*.

Up rose the curtain; on we went. There was a silence. I walked forward to the footlights, took off my hat, looked round the house with an enquiring

eye, as much as to say—"If any one has any thing to say against your humble servant, now is his time." Not a word, not a hiss, not a sound. I smiled, made a bow to the audience, put on my hat, and motioned with my hand to Roderigo to begin the scene. Then out burst the public voice, in a hearty cheer, in which, I fancy, my Lafayette volunteers were not slow. The play went on without disturbance; I received my due meed of applause; was called out, at the end, enthusiastically; and had a tremendous house for my benefit, four nights after. The manager wished to discharge the Carpenter; but, at my earnest request, (the rascal had a family,) he was retained.

Passing through Richmond, Va., on my way to New York, I encountered Mr. Hackett there; and we played one night together there: our half share of the gross proceeds amounted to $15 each; so that there were $60 in the house. Hard times, those!

I have since played, and read, too, in Richmond, myself, to very fine houses; and have received there the kindest attentions, which I am delighted to acknowledge.

Baltimore, *April*, 1843.—Played six nights at the Holiday Street Theatre, with only tolerable receipts. Theatricals were bad everywhere; but I passed an agreeable week, made some delightful acquaintances, and laid the foundation-stone of that favor and popularity which I have ever since enjoyed in that elegant and hospitable city. Being called on for an autograph,—it is singular, the rage some people have for

autographs,—(I estimate their value in a business view only, as they may be good or bad at the foot of a *cheque*,) I wrote:

> I've lived here a week on the daintiest fare,
> In this loveliest city of Maryland;
> Where the men are so frank, and the women so fair,
> That I vow I've been dwelling in *fairy-land!*

Passing through Philadelphia, played my second engagement, five nights, at the Walnut Street Theatre, and one night for Marshall's (manager) benefit; on which occasion Charlotte Cushman played Romeo, for the first time, I believe: I was the Mercutio. I lent her a hat, cloak, and sword, for the second dress, and believe I may take credit for having given her some useful fencing hints for the killing of Tybalt and Paris, which she executes in such masculine and effective style: the only good points in this *hybrid* performance of hers. She looks neither man nor woman in the part,—or both; and her passion is equally epicene in form. Whatever her talents in other parts, I never yet heard any human being, that had seen her Romeo, who did not speak of it with a painful expression of countenance, "more in sorrow than in anger."

Romeo requires a *man*, to feel his passion, and to express his despair. A woman, in attempting it, "unsexes" herself to no purpose, except to destroy all interest in the play, and all sympathy for the ill-fated pair: she *denaturalizes* the situations; and sets up a monstrous anomaly, in place of a consistent picture of ill-starred passion and martyr-love, faithful to death. There should be a law against such perversions: they

are high crimes and misdemeanors against truth, taste, and æsthetic principles of art, as well as offences against propriety, and desecrations of Shakspere. In his time women did not appear on the stage at all; now, they usurp men's parts, and "push us from our stools."

New York.—Early in May, I played my second engagement at the Park Theatre, in a series of comedies, assisted by Mrs. Brougham: Benedick (twice), Charles Surface, Jacques, and Ranger, in the "Suspicious Husband." Theatricals were still down in New York, and the business was *shy*.

Immediately following this, I accepted a five nights' engagement at Pelby's National Theatre, Boston—he paying me a certainty of $50 per night: and the engagement was renewed the week after, with the addition of the name of Mr. (*Count*) Tasistro to the bill, as Iago, Joseph Surface, Cassius, &c.

And with this ended my first season (1842–'3), in the United States: probably one of the worst theatrical seasons ever known. Certainly I have never seen the Drama at so low an ebb since, not even in the great crisis of '57. When I reviewed my accounts, I found that I had netted about the same amount as the salary offered me by Mr. Kemble, for Covent Garden Theatre, and the receipts of country engagements, in England, during vacation, would have amounted to. Still, I had made friends on this side of the water, and I made up my mind to remain in this country for the coming season, perhaps to make it my permanent home—which, indeed, it now is.

For what is home, but where the heart is?

"Domus et placens uxor,"—

a house and pleasing wife are the duality of possession that constitute the perfect idea of *home;* the two facts that grapple one to a soil with surest anchorage. Now, as I have not only acquired both these, here; but have raised a young offshoot, who drew his first breath beneath the starry banner of the Republic, my domicile is, I think, sufficiently well assured.

XIV.

MISCELLANEOUS LEAVES—United States, 1843 to 1852–'3—Preliminary—Mr. MACREADY—My First Meeting with him—Performances with him—His Characteristics—L'état c'est moi!—The Stage, that's I!—Incidents—Henry IV.—Werner—Argumentum ad hominem—Astor Place Opera House—Restorations—Shakspeare—Mutilation of School for Scandal—*Resumé*—His Retirement—Valeat!—Mr. BOOTH—Scene with him in Julius Cæsar, at the Park Theatre—Mr. SIMPSON, the Manager—KING JOHN, with the KEANS at the Park—Broadway Theatre—J. R. ANDERSON—*Sophocles'* ANTIGONE, with Mendelssohn's Music, at Palmo's Opera House—Grotesque Appearance of the *Chorus* of Greek Sages—Mrs. C. N. SINCLAIR (Mrs. Forrest)—Her *Débût*—Engagements with her, and Accounts—Result.

IN the following *miscellaneous leaves*, I preserve no order of date or arrangement; but merely give such sketches and reminiscences as occur in my note-book, from 1843 to 1852–'3: during which period I resided principally in New York, making frequent trips across the Atlantic, without any professional object, and playing only occasional engagements in the principal cities of the United States. During the intervals of these engagements, I devoted a portion of my time to public Readings of Shakspere, Sheridan, and the Poets. Already perceiving that this style of literary entertainment would take a great hold of the public mind, I began to give it conscientious study and earnest attention, as a means to enable me to quit the stage.

I have happily been enabled to carry out my intentions; and, in the calmer and more congenial arena of the Lecture-hall, I have reaped a success which entirely satisfies my ambition, and leaves me leisure to gratify my love of books and literary pursuits.

MR. MACREADY.

My first professional meeting with Mr. Macready was in Philadelphia, in October, 1843. I had been playing for three weeks at the Walnut Street Theatre; and was then engaged to appear with "the eminent" Tragedian, at the Chestnut Street Theatre, which was opened expressly for his performances. Othello, Werner, Richelieu, with repetitions, carried us through the fortnight. I played Othello, Ulric, De Mauprat.

The two points that struck me most, as characteristic of this leader of the English Stage, were his intense devotion to the work of his profession, as a business, and his equally intense *egoism*; which imperiously subjected, as far as he was able, every thing and every body, to the sole purpose of making himself the one mark for all eyes to look at, the one voice for all ears to listen to, the one name for all mouths to repeat and eulogize. It was *l'art de se faire valoir, sur la scéne*, pushed to its highest point.

To attain this sublime of self-magnifying, author and actor were to be sacrificed; or, at least, diluted and let down, where their "effects"—a word he was very fond of—could in any way pale his own lustre. Authors were lopped and pared down in speeches that

did not belong to *him;* and actors were expected, and, as far as in them lay, by his directions, were compelled to lose all thought of giving prominence to their own parts, when he was on the stage. They were, in the sight of his tyrannical self-aggrandizement, mere scaffoldings to support his artistic designs; mere machines to aid the working-out of his conceptions; lay figures for his pictures, his groupings, his *tableaux vivants.* As for any thing they might have to say, as far as it was necessary to be said, as a *cue* for his speech, or for the carrying out or explaining the plot in which *he* was concerned, let them say it; and say it in such a manner as will make best for his reply; otherwise, he would prefer them to be silent. He was a perfect verification of that description given by a *spirituel* French author of the present day, and applied by him to a certain notorious character occupying public attention at the time he wrote it:

"Semblable a ces grands acteurs, qui n'aiment pas les pieces d'ensemble, et voudraient jouer un monologue en cinq actes,——— n'avait pas l'air de soupçonner l'existence de ses complices, assis a côté de lui; il se tenait à distance; il s'isolait; il voulait être le centre a tous les regards et ne partager sa gloire avec aucun subalterne."

Whatever was his part for the night, whether he was Othello or Iago, Brutus or Cassius, Posthumus or Iachimo, that part must be *the* feature of the play: and this was to be effected not by his own towering and surpassing excellence in the character, but by such an arrangement of the scene, and such a position of every other person on the stage, as must make all

others subordinate, and put him on a pedestal, as it were, always the main figure in the group, the most prominent object in the action.

Thus, when he played Othello, Iago was to be *nowhere!* Othello was to be the *sole* consideration: the sole character to be evolved, the all-engrossing object to the eye and heart of the audience. Iago was a mere *stoker*, whose business it was to supply Othello's passion with fuel, and keep up his high-pressure.

The next night, perhaps, he took Iago; and lo! presto! every thing was changed. Othello was to become a mere puppet for Iago to play with; a pipe for Iago's master-skill to "sound from its lowest note to the top of its compass." Iago's intellect, his fiendish subtlety, his specious, calculating malignity, were to be the sole features of the play. Othello was to be a mere fly, a large *blue-bottle*, struggling in the meshes of the Italian spider. Even the writhings and convulsions of the victim were controlled and restrained with *arachnian* ingenuity, by invisible ligaments; lest some natural movement, or throb of agony, might rudely make a breach in the continuity, or destroy the artistic harmony of the elaborately-wrought web!

Thus, this great work, this terrible duel between brain and heart, the conflict of intellectual subtlety with all-triumphant love; this machiavellian victory of the base over the noble, in which Shakspere has divided his wonderful power of characterization on the emotional and passionate, yet confiding nature of the Moor; his tenderness, his magnanimity, his terrible revenge, roused like a tiger to glut itself with carnage: and, on the other hand, the profound, the dev-

ilish philosophy of Iago, a compound of self-love, envy, and malice, tracking their victim with the patient, steadfast, unwearied stanchness of a blood-hound; this great work of genius and of the highest art combined, was to be, in either case, a one-sided picture, "but half made-up," the interest varying and changing to that half in which Macready was dominant for the night, and on which alone light was to be thrown. If the Othello-side was in the ascendant, Iago stood all night with his back to the audience; his face unseen; his expression lost, sometimes even his words unheard. If the Iago-side was at the top, he occupied the centre of the stage, all the evening; while Othello gave the audience a rear-view, and played lacquey to his "ancient!" This "effect defective" was brought about in both cases, by "the eminent's" arbitrary direction of the stage.

As to his reverence for the author, Mr. Macready did not scruple to cut out a speech, or portion of a speech, however beautiful, in the part of another actor, if the retaining it would give that actor—especially a favorite actor—too much hold of the scene, too much apparent importance; or would keep "the eminent," in the attitude of a listener too long; in the view of his own overweening egoism. Macready, in fact, parodied the expression of Louis XIV., put by Bulwer into the mouth of Richelieu, *L'état c'est moi;* the "autocratic" manager and actor thought, and said in practice,

"The stage—that's I!"

He was to be the Alpha and Omega; the embodi-

ment and living impersonation of the Aristotelian theory of epic perfection; he was to be the *beginning*, the *middle*, and the *end* of every play.

Let me verify what I have said as to his loppings and parings of an author, Shakspere not excepted, by an example or two within my own experience.

He was very fond of playing the celebrated death-scene of the king, in the second part of Henry IV., for his benefit. At New Orleans, in 1849, I played the Prince for him in this scene, and was really desirous to give him every assistance in my power, not involving a positive surrender of my own common-sense, and an utter sacrifice of the part I was to fill. All went on smoothly enough, till I came to the Prince's beautiful justification of the act of taking the crown from—as he thought—his dead father's head. I spoke the text as Shakspere wrote it:—

> Coming to look on you, thinking you dead,
> (And dead almost, my liege, to think you were,)
> I spake unto the crown as having sense,
> And thus upbraided it:—"The care on thee depending,
> Hath fed upon the body of my father;
> Therefore, thou, best of gold, art worst of gold:
> [*Other, less fine in carat, is more precious*
> *Preserving life in med'cine potable:*
> *But thou, most fine, most honor'd, most renown'd,*
> *Hast eat thy bearer up.*] Thus, my most royal liege,
> Accusing it, I put it on my head," &c.

Now the four characteristic lines in italics between brackets,—illustrative of the virtues superstitiously ascribed in an early age to the *aurum potabile* or potable gold,—Mr. Macready insisted on cut-

ting out, because they added to the length of the speech. I insisted on retaining them, for three reasons: first, because Shakspere wrote them, and intended them to be delivered; second, because they were appropriate to the period and the speaker; third, because they were familiar to readers, and their omission might be attributed either to my ignorance of, or my want of appreciation of the text. As I was not one of those who felt it necessary to flatter "the eminent" by blind submission, the text was saved from mutilation, for that night.

Again, at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in Byron's Werner,—a character which Macready played to perfection, leaving nothing to be desired,—Werner, speaking of the favor shown to Ulric, by his enemy Stralenheim, says:

> "'Tis but a snare he winds about us both,
> To swoop the sire and son at once;"

to which Ulric, with the impetuous confidence of youth, replies,

> "I cannot
> Pause in each petty fear, and stumble at
> The doubts that rise like briars in our path,
> [*But must break through them, as an unarmed carle*
> *Would, though with naked limbs, were the wolf rustling*
> *In the same thicket where he hewed for bread.*"]

Surely, the italicised lines in brackets, apt, nervous, presenting a happy figure, forcibly illustrating the onward determination of youth, deserved to be spoken. Mr. Macready thought otherwise.

"I've cut those lines out," he said, at rehearsal.

"But," I replied, "as they occur in my part, I have restored them."

"No, no," he said, "omit them."

"Why?" I inquired.

"I feel they're useless; they burthen the text!"

"Pardon me," I said, "as it is *I* who have to speak them, if I disagree with you. I think them particularly apt, and characteristic."

"Besides," he continued, "they lengthen the scene, and I wish them out."

"Lewis," I said to the prompter, "will you be good enough to *time* my speaking of those three lines."

"O," said he, hastily, "that's too much! Speak them, speak them, if you will: but they're quite superfluous."

Of course I *did* speak them.

These are trifles, but they show the man and his mind; had these lines occurred in any part of his, they would not have been cut.

Thus, again, in this very rehearsal of Werner, after Gabor's relation of the murder by Ulric, when the Hungarian has retired into the turret, to await Werner's decision, and Ulric, after an angry scene with his father, says, before he leaves him:

> "Keep your own secret, keep a steady eye,
> Stir not, and speak not;—leave the rest to me!
> We must have no third babblers thrust between us:"—

implying of course that Gabor's mouth must be stopped as Stralenheim's had been; Mr. Macready requested me to go up the stage, and speak these

words from the extreme back of it, to him, as he stood in the very front of the footlights, with a face of anguish,—*the picture for the eye to rest on.*

"O no," I said, "I must whisper those words in your ear, surely; not call them out loud: that would be to defeat their very object, by risking their being overheard."

"But," he replied, "I have always had it done so, and I wish you to do it in that manner."

"But," I said, "it's an inconsistency. Shall I, in the great Hall of the Castle, outside of which are doubtless sentries, pages in waiting, courtiers and attendants passing and repassing,—shall I cry out aloud to you; '*this is a terrible secret which this man has revealed; it involves the honor and safety of our house; but keep still; leave it to me, and I'll silence the fellow's lips forever!*'—that seems to me not at all *vraisemblable.*"

"Then you refuse to do it?" he asked.

"I *could* not do it," I said; "it is too inconsistent."

"Then," said he, angrily, "you are the first Ulric who ever refused me on this point."

I was somewhat touched by this artful reproach, and I replied:

"Mr. Macready, if you will give me your honor, that if you were playing Ulric, you would act the scene in the way you direct me to do, I'll yield at once."

"Oh!" said he, with a peculiar inflection of voice, "*that's quite a different thing!*"

I thought so.

On his second visit to this country, in 1848, I played

with him at the Astor Place Opera House, New York, (his first engagement,) Othello, Edgar (K. Lear), and other parts. The following is the Herald's notice of our joint appearance in Julius Cæsar: the reader will perhaps pardon my quoting it.

NIBLO'S ASTOR PLACE THEATRE.—Mr. Macready appeared last night as Brutus, in "Julius Cæsar." It was a finished performance, elaborate, chaste, quiet, dignified, grand, and natural throughout. The great actor is apparent in Mr. Macready, by not only the occasional bursts of genius at particular passages, and the display of talent at certain special points, but more, still, by the tranquillity and quiet of his manner, and the almost careless ease of his speech, deportment, and bearing. We might say of Mr. Macready that his very finest hits, which produce the greatest impression, (especially upon those best able to judge,) are precisely those where he appears to make no effort at all, and where no energy, force, or violence, are perceptible. For this reason, he appears to vulgar minds not half so good an actor as a more tumultuous, riotous declaimer would seem to them to be. There were several fine points in the performance last night, especially the quarrel and reconciliation with Cassius; also, at the moment when the ghost of Cæsar leaves him, his recovery and effort to address the apparition was very fine. Mr. G. Vandenhoff particularly distinguished himself last night; his performance of Mark Antony was such as only could have been displayed by a man of extraordinary genius and scholarship, both of which Mr. V. unquestionably possesses in a very high degree. When, in his speech to the rabble, he suddenly dropped some of the vehemence of his action, and said in a natural, easy, tranquil tone of voice—"I speak that you do know"—the effect was admirable. Mr. V. will yet succeed in acting in such a manner as not to betray the theatre or the school in his voice, action, and manner, and then he will be one of the greatest, if not the greatest actor on the stage.—*New York Herald*, 18*th October*, 1848.

The Express thus spoke of the same performance:

Mr. MACREADY performed "Brutus" in "Julius Cæsar," on Monday evening, at this establishment.

We do not think it is one of the greatest personations of Mr. Macready. But he does nothing unartistically, and there were parts of this performance which were in his best manner. It was unequal, however. Thus, the conclusion of the quarrel scene with Cassius was far better than the principal portion of it, which he gave too much in the vein of Cassius himself. It was too impetuous. But the reconciliation was beautifully done. The scene with the ghost of Cæsar was as great as was that with the boy *Lucius*, asleep; but the farewell to Cassius was far less feeling than we had a right to expect, and we do not know that we ever heard the great address to the citizens, "Romans, countrymen, and lovers," less effectively given, by an actor of high pretensions.

Mr. Ryder's was a very good *Cassius;* impassioned, impetuous, well-conceived, and well read. Mr. Chippendale's *Casca* was all that could be made of the part, of course.

Mr. George Vandenhoff, as *Marcus Antonius*, in point of fact, carried off most of the laurels of the evening. Throughout, he looked, acted, and read the part with great care and effect. It was a very artist-like performance, and drew down well discriminated applause from the audience, from first to last. Through great difficulties of stage position, in the scene in the Capitol, he made it most telling and effective, and so great was the enthusiasm, at the fall of the curtain, after his grand scene in the Forum, that he was called before the curtain, at the end of the third act, an honor not accorded to the *star* of the occasion, the whole evening.

I also played with him, that same season, at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, the same characters, with the addition of M. Brutus to his Cassius. The latter was a great piece of acting; it was Cassius himself:

Impiger, iracundus inexorabilis, acer.

His Brutus, on the contrary, was an entire mistake: there was none of the philosophy of the Portico about it; no contrast to the impetuosity of Cassius: in fact, it was Cassius with a different "make-up;" the mental characteristics exhibited were the same. And thus, the light and shade so marvellously preserved by Shakspere in this great play, were destroyed.

For his benefit, at New Orleans, Mr. Macready produced (as an after-piece!) the "School for Scandal," in three acts! cutting out the great scandal-scene, the picture-scene, and several other scenes; so as to confine it, as much as possible, to the development of the "Plots of Joseph Surface," which character he played, (as far as he remembered the words—for he was very imperfect,) and which consequently became, of course, the feature; and as far as he could make it so—the only feature of the comedy. He insisted too, (to save himself trouble in dressing, I suppose,) on wearing his own modern clothes; black coat and pantaloons! I played Charles Surface; but of course did not follow his example in this gross anachronism of costume.

The truth is, Mr. Macready valued an author as far as the author served *him;* and he respected the text, as far as it answered his purpose. So that, his Shaksperean Revivals, which were got up with great care and attention, might have been designated, as far as integrity of text went, "Restorations of so much of Shakspere as suits *Mr. Macready.*"

To sum up his merits, fairly and impartially; as an actor, Mr. Macready excelled in executive power, and certainty of effect, rather than in imagination,

individualization of character, or poetic feeling. There was an angularity in his outlines, and a hardness in his style, that were only redeemed by the intensity with which he wrought out his design. His attitudes were stiff, and frequently ungainly; his rolling gait, with an alternate thrusting forward of each shoulder—which has been copied by the silly imitators (*servile pecus!*—)was any thing but graceful or manly; and gave to his Macbeth, on his first entrance, the air of a Lowland dancing-master in a kilt, rather than of a Highland chieftain in arms: and his over-distinct, *staccato*, equi-accented syllabification of utterance, was painful to the ear, and utterly destructive of the rhythm of English verse. The fact is, beauty and grace in art were not Macready's study, so much as exactitude; he had less a view to symmetry of form, than to proportion in measurement; the formal justness of a right angle would be more palpably satisfying to his eye, than the elegance of a curve; and his ear found more pleasure in accent than in melody. Thus, he seized salient points of character, and gave them strong emphasis, and relief; he was less competent to make harmonious combinations of parts into a consistent whole. His power lay in passionate outbursts, not in philosophical analysis; hence, his soliloquies were generally faulty, strained, violent, not toned down by the softening influence of thought. His Hamlet, therefore, had little melancholy, but much asperity in it; and his Othello was less the noble Moor,—

> "who loved,
> Not wisely, but too well; not easily jealous,
> But, being wrought, perplexed in the extreme,"—

than an enraged and desperate African, lashed into madness, and roused to thirst for blood by vindictive wrath, and implacable revenge.

On the other hand, he was, in every character he played, earnest, intense, energetic, passionate; had a voice of extraordinary range of compass; and brought to the study of his profession, scholarship, industry, and, lastly, an unwearied perseverance, that carried him to his high "eminence," and distanced all his competitors in the dramatic arena.

As a manager, he was the great *martinet* of histrionic drill-masters; as strict a disciplinarian, and as rigid a professional formalist, in *his* way, as Carlyle's *Friedrich Wilhelm* himself: and though there were wanting Potsdam, or other Giants,—no theatrical recruiting system supplying such prodigies,—yet every one who recollects Macready's managerial campaigns at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, will admit that he brought his forces into the field in the highest state of equipment, and general efficiency. He had, besides, the assistance of Talfourd, Bulwer, and other first-class writers, whose plays shed honor and rained guineas on his theatre, and were permanent additions to the literature of the Drama.

In his retirement on his well-earned fortune, honored by the honored, he devotes himself to the calm pursuits of literature, and to schemes of educational philanthropy in his own neighborhood; reaping, I sincerely trust, a full harvest of those delights of old age, so well described by the Roman orator, the friend of Roscius, and the advocate of the poet Archias. May he long enjoy them!

Mr. Booth (Lucius Junius!) I first met Booth (*père*) on occasion of Mr. Simpson's benefit, at the Park Theatre, in 1844, previous to his (S.'s) going to England in search of novelties; for which purpose it was hoped that this benefit would put him in funds. Poor Simpson! he was always at low-water mark; and the fortunes of the Park Theatre annually grew more desperate. On this occasion, a sort of *olla podrida* of acting and singing, etc., was got up. I was requested, and assented to play the second act of the "Lady of Lyons," and two scenes from "Julius Cæsar" with Booth, including the great quarrel-scene; in which he was to be Cassius, and I Brutus. Knowing Booth's irregularity in business, I did not go to the theatre for rehearsal, as it was pretty certain to be a lost labour. At night, he did not arrive till very late; some time after the hour at which our scene ought to have commenced; consequently, I did not see him till he rushed on to the stage to me, after the flourish of trumpets, which announces the arrival of Cassius. On he came, with a brusqueness quite in character, confronted me, stopped, gave his usual long sniff,—a sort of drawing-in of the breath through his nostrils, which was a habit with him,—made a dead halt, glared, and—said nothing! I supposed at first, never having encountered him professionally, that it was his usual mode of commencing this scene; and that the long pause was merely the herald of the coming storm—a lull before the thunder crash. I waited patiently; but not a sound, not a word! Booth still glared on me mysteriously, with blood-shot eye. At last, when I thought this pause threatened to

"stretch out to the crack of doom,"

I began to suspect the cause of the mystery; and, as gently as possible, suggested that we had waited long enough, by giving him "the word," in an under tone:

"Most noble brother, you have done me wrong!"

This recalled him to himself, and broke his abstraction; he gave another of his *sniffs*—said, *sotto voce*, to me, "Thank you!"—and coolly enough proceeded with his part—

"Most noble brother, you have done me wrong!"—

and so the scene went on.

Poor Simpson had but an indifferent house on this occasion; and there appeared little prospect of the Park Theatre *reviving* under his management. His *vis inertiæ* was impregnable; nothing could rouse him to enterprise or activity; he kept on, from year's end to year's end, in the same old, beaten, worn-out track, that led to the swamp of final stagnation. He was a man of good intentions, and honorable in business; but, in those wretched days of theatrical prostration, a man was wanted with readiness in emergencies, an enterprising, active, indomitable spirit, to fight against bad times, and to renovate the whole system of theatrical management. Simpson, poor fellow, succumbed under a weight that was too great for him, and died, oppressed by its responsibilities. I played but two engagements more at the Park under Simpson's management; one of a long duration, in 1846; during which, under Mr. Barry's *stage*-management, were revived for me, "Alexander the Great," "Antony and Cleopatra," "The Incon-

stant," and Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humor;" in which, for the first time, I played the arduous character of Kitely. The Park Theatre could boast, at that time, a really good company, especially for comedy, which we played with such good effect, that old De Begnis, the well-known *basso-buffo*, meeting me in Broadway, declared that comedies were then so well cast and played at the Park, that "*to see them was like sitting in Drury Lane Theatre, in old times.*"

For example, "Every Man in his Humor," was thus cast:—

PARK THEATRE, 1846.

Kitely,	G. Vandenhoff
Old Knowell,	Vache.
Young Knowell,	Dyott.
Wellbred,	Crocker.
Master Stephen,	Fisher.
Master Matthew,	De Walden.
Justice Clement,	G. Andrews.
Downright,	Barry.
Captain Bobadil,	G. Barrett.
Cash,	Pearson.
Formal,	Gallot.
Cob,	Povey.
Brainworm,	Bass.
Mrs. Kitely,	Mrs. Bland (H. Faucit.)
Bridget,	Mrs. Abbott.
Cob's Wife,	Mrs. Dyott.

My last engagement at the Park Theatre was the season after this, with the Keans, in their really great Shaksperean production of "King John," in November, 1846. The play was magnificently put upon the

stage, under the care of Mr. Charles Kean, at a very great expense—I know not how many thousand dollars—in scenery, dresses, armor, swords, battle-axes, properties and appointments, which were all new, and arranged with historic and pictorial fidelity. I give a copy of the first part of the Bill to show how it was *cast*, and to give an idea of how it was got up. Observe, too, that in those days box-prices were one dollar.

PARK THEATRE.

Boxes $1. Pit 50 Cents. Gallery 25 Cents.

THE GREAT SHAKSPEARIAN REVIVAL!!!

Third night of

MRS. CHARLES KEAN

AND

MR. CHARLES KEAN

IN SHAKSPEARE'S TRAGEDY OF

King John.

To give additional effect to this Play

MR. GEO. VANDENHOFF

Has been expressly engaged to represent the Character of FAULCONBRIDGE.

IN ANNOUNCING THIS

GREAT SHAKSPEARIAN REVIVAL!

The Manager begs respectfully to state, that no labor or expense has been spared in endeavoring to attain the UTMOST FIDELITY OF HISTORIC ILLUSTRATION!

☞ *In consequence of the enormous expense attending this performance, THE FREE LIST, with the single exception of the Public Press, must be suspended, and no orders can on any account be admitted.* ☜

Wednesday Evening, November 18, 1846, will be Performed SHAKSPEARE'S Historical Tragedy of

KING JOHN,

(Produced under the Immediate Direction and Superintendence of Mr. CHAS. KEAN, at a cost and with a degree of Correctness and Splendor, it is believed, hitherto not witnessed in any Theatre.)

THE SCENES painted on upwards of 15,000 square feet of Canvas, by Mr. HILLYARD, Mr. GRAIN, and Assistants.

THE COSTUMES, COSTLY ARMORS, 176 in number, DECORATIONS and APPOINTMENTS, from the Authorities named hereafter, by Mr. DEJONGE.

THE MACHINERY, by Mr. SPEYERS.

☞ The indulgence of the Audience is respectfully solicited between the first and second Acts, as the whole of the previous scene has to be removed for the purpose of exhibiting a Panoramic View of Angiers, the French Camp and Distant Country: the Stage thrown open to the Walls of the Theatre.

ENGLISH.

JOHN, KING OF ENGLAND.....**MR. CHARLES KEAN.**
Prince Henry, his son, afterwards King Henry III.....Mrs. Sutherland
Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, son of Jeffrey, late Duke of Bretagne, the elder brother of King John.....Miss Denny
William Mareshall, Earl of Pembroke.....Mr. A. Andrews
Geffrey Fitz Peter, Earl of Essex, Chief Justiciary of England.....Heath
William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury.....Chanfrau
Robert Bigot, Earl of Norfolk.....McDouall
Hubert De Burgh, Chamberlain to the King.....Dyott
Robert Faulconbridge, son of Sir Robert Faulconbridge.....Fisher
PHILIP FAULCONBRIDGE, his half Brother, Bastard Son to King Richard the First.....**MR. GEORGE VANDENHOFF.**
James Gurney, servant to Lady Faulconbridge.....Povey
First English Knight.....Gallot
Sheriff of Northamptonshire.....Milot
Herald.....Anderson
Peter, of Pomfret, a Prophet.....Matthews
Pages to King John.....Mrs. Gallot and Miss Flynn
Green Knight with Buckler and Martel De Fer, De Warrene, Oxford, Hereford, Arundel, Fitz Walter, De Percey, De Clare, De Ros. Knights, Esquires, Herald, Attendants on Herald, Trumpeters, Banner Bearers, Bretagne Knights, Bretagne Standard, &c., by Auxiliaries.

FRENCH.

Philip, King of France.....Mr. Barry
Lewis, the Dauphin.....Stark
Melun, a French Lord.....Bellamy
Chatillon, Ambassador from France to King John.....Sutherland
Herald.....Sprague
Citizen of Angiers.....G. Andrews

De Blois, D'Arras, St. Omer, De Bretel, De Roye, De Neuville, De Beaumont, Barons, Knights, Herald, Attendants on Herald, Trumpeters, Banner Bearers, Citizens of Angiers, Citizen Soldiers, &c., by Auxiliaries.

AUSTRIANS.

Leopold VII., Archduke of Austria, surnamed Lymoges.....Mr. S. Pearson
Austrian Knights and Standard Bearer of Austria, by Auxiliaries.

PRIESTS.

Cardinal Pandulph, Legate of the Pope.....Mr. Bass
Notarius Apostolicus, Grand Master of the Templars, Archbishop, six Bishops, two Mitred Abbots, Priests, Monks, Knights Templars, Knights, Hospitaller, Temple Banners, Host Banner, Trinity Banner, Italian Gentleman Attendant on Cardinal, &c., by Auxiliaries.

LADIES.

Elinor, the widow of King Henry II., and Mother of King John....Mrs. Abbott
CONSTANCE, Mother to Arthur.....**MRS. CHARLES KEAN**
Blanch, Daughter to Alphonso, King of Castile, and niece to King John.....Miss Kate Horn
Lady Faulconbridge, Mother to the Bastard and Robert Faulconbridge.....Miss Gordon
Attendant Ladies.....Mesdames Burrows, Milot, Misses Hall and Haydon

SCENE—sometimes in England, and sometimes in France.

Room of State, in John's Palace,
King John seated on Dais, centre—De Warren, with the Sword of State, right—the Archbishop of Canterbury on the left—Barons, Bishops, Knights, Heralds, &c.

The Walls of Angiers, with Panoramic View
Of the French Camp and distant country—Engines and Machines of War of that period.

Interior of the French King's Tent.
The Battle Field.
Battle Plain, with Distant View of Angiers.
French King's Tent.
Room in the Castle of Northampton.
Gothic Hall in Northampton Palace.
View before the Walls of Northampton Castle.
Interior of the Temple Church, Northampton.
Plain near St. Edmunds Bury.
Field of Battle near St. Edmunds Bury.
Another Portion of the Battle Field.
Gate of Swinstead Abbey (night).
Orchard of Swinstead, with **View of the Abbey** (moonlight).

Then followed

MR. CHAS. KEAN'S AUTHORITIES FOR THE COSTUME,

occupying about twice the above space.

Well, what was the result of all this preparation and outlay? The piece ran, with some difficulty, to moderate houses, the best of which did not reach $800, for three weeks; and then, to Mr. Kean's great mortifica-

tion and disgust, was superseded by the VIENNOISE CHILDREN, (*Enfans terribles!* in Kean's eyes,) who crammed the house to suffocation for the following month!

So much for Great Shaksperean Revivals! WILLIS thus spoke of it in the *Home Journal*, after giving an elaborate sketch of the historical features of the play:

> The *mise en scene* is perfect; perfect in costume, in scenery, in decorations, in banners, in arms, in *tout ensemble:* and the actors are all perfect in their parts. Miss Denny's *Arthur* is a charming performance; Mrs. Kean's *Constance* is a magnificent conception; Mr. Kean's *John* is highly characteristic of the dark and gloomy tyrant; and G. Vandenhoff's *Faulconbridge* is as dashing, manly, and spirited a representation of the gallant bastard, as we can conceive. We do not wish it, *in any thing*, other than it is: it is bold, humorous, intense, and, above all, *natural:* were he to do *less*, he would not be *up to the mark;* were he to do *more*, it would be *over-done:* "*omne tulit punctum*," and he well deserved the hearty applause which he received. Dyott's *Hubert* was respectable; and Mr. Barry's King, *was* a king. All did well: in fact, the play is the most perfect thing ever put on the Park stage.

This was my last engagement at the Park Theatre. In 1848, on Simpson's death, it fell into Hamblin's hands, who opened it with a Bowery Company (!); and, after struggling through part of a very bad season—worse, even, than poor Simpson ever had known—it was burnt on the night of 16th Dec. 1848. So fell the Park Theatre, the OLD DRURY of America; and with it fell the legitimate Drama in New York. When will it rise again?

The BROADWAY THEATRE, erected in 1847, was supposed to have succeeded to the honors of the Park;

and was opened with the express intention of putting an end to the *starring system*. I was engaged, and played there a portion of its first season; but, finding that the scheme on which it was avowedly to be carried on was utterly abandoned, and that not only was the starring system revived, but that *stars* were attempted to be made out of *rushlights*, I took the first opportunity of emancipating myself from the fetters of my engagement, the spirit of which had been violated. In point of fact, the date for which I was engaged, had actually expired; so that, though my *evasion* from the theatre was sudden, it was perfectly legal—my contract being at an end, by lapse of time.

Mr. J. R. Anderson played a very successful—I mean, profitable—engagement at this theatre, the first season of its existence: he drew well. I played Iago to his Othello, and Fulvius to his Gisippus; and the junction of our forces brought great houses.

Anderson and I were of old acquaintance. We had played together at Covent Garden Theatre in the season of 1839. I took his place there in 1841–2, on his joining Mr. Macready, at Drury Lane; and we had also played together, as *stars*, at the Liverpool and Manchester Theatres Royal. He is a good, frank, manly fellow, as a man, and an excellent, dashing actor. His style, it is true, was formed too exclusively in the Macready school, and bore, sometimes, too evident traces of the "master;" but he has a fine voice, a gallant bearing, and great knowledge of, and experience in all the practice and details of the stage: for he has been on it since he was a boy, has played and pushed his way up through all the gradations of

his profession, and merits great credit for the position which his own exertions have attained.

Mr. Macready introduced him to the London Stage in 1837, I think, at Covent Garden Theatre, in the part of Florizel, in Shakspere's "Winter's Tale." He at once made a favorable impression; every year improved his position. His performance of Huon (Love), at Covent Garden, in 1839, and of Fulvius (Gisippus), in 1842, at Drury Lane (original parts), did him great service with the public. He became lessee and manager of Drury Lane Theatre in 1849–50: a perilous experiment! in which, if he failed, it was perhaps more owing to the decline of the public taste for theatrical performances, than to any want of tact or exertion of his own. During his management of that immense concern, "Azael the Prodigal," and "Ingomar," were his most successful productions: he was the original hero in each. In this city, he was at one time a sure card. His first appearance at the Park Theatre did not attract great attention; but his second and subsequent engagements were greatly profitable, and for a time arrested the backward race of that falling house. He has visited the States many times; but, latterly, he has not been peculiarly fortunate in this city, where he last played, in 1852, at the Metropolitan Theatre. A temporary injury to his voice, which he has now quite recovered, was, perhaps, one cause of this waning attraction; or, his style may have palled on the public ear by familiarity; for there is no accounting for the fickleness of popular taste; the idol of to-day may be the martyr of to-morrow;—or worse, even, as less glorious, the neglected and broken

toy. Anderson is a dashing representative of some of the heavier comedy parts, requiring an admixture of tragic power,—the *mixed* drama, as it may be called: his "King of the Commons," for example, is by far the best personation of the part that has been seen in this country. He had, of course, had the advantage of seeing Mr. Macready in the character, and of availing himself of that great tactician's arrangement of the scene and business of the play; but I am inclined to believe that what Anderson's performances of this agreeable, and taking part, may have lacked in finish, as compared with his original, it gained in fire, fervor, and gallant bearing. These are the characteristics of Mr. Anderson's style; and, my opinion is, that if he had trusted to them, and to his natural impulses, more than to his reverence for Macready's fame, he would have attained a higher and more assured rank among the artists of the day. He will, I trust, receive these remarks in the spirit in which they are made—that of friendly candor, and honest good-will.

SOPHOCLES' ANTIGONE—(PALMO'S OPERA HOUSE), 1845.

Among these miscellaneous leaves, it may not be out of place to state that I was engaged for a fortnight at Palmo's Opera House (afterwards Burton's), in Chambers Street, to produce the English version of Sophocles' ANTIGONE, with Mendelsohn's Music, in the Spring of 1845. I did my best with the resources that were at my command; got a representation of the Old Greek Stage, with its λυχειον and θυμελη, and Altar to Bacchus, built on the stage proper;

as good a company, and as efficient a CHORUS were collected as could be found: Mr. GEO. LODER directed the Orchestra and the musical arrangements, which were fair; Miss CLARENDON's youth and classic features harmonized well with the *personnel* of Antigone; I did my best with the part of Creon; and we had the gratification of getting through the first night's performance of this novel and difficult style of play—an upraising of "the buried majesty of" SOPHOCLES,—without a single trip or *faux pas*.

Our efforts were rewarded by great applause, the approval and cordially-expressed thanks of artists and scholars, but with very indifferent houses! We repeated this *classic disentombment* twelve successive nights, and then "quietly inurned" the mighty Greek, to sleep in undisturbed and unprofaned repose. It was truly a beautiful and highly interesting tragedy, aided by grand music. In Berlin and London it drew crowded audiences; in New York it never paid its expenses.

Our Chorus, which amounted to about forty, representing Sages of Creon's Court, presented a very grotesque appearance; and one that, at first sight, nearly disturbed my gravity on the first night. OLD ALLEN had made the wigs and beards for these Grecian Sages, out of long white and grey *goat's hair;* and, as the whole set were, I presume, contracted for, no great artistic care had been expended upon them. Now, Mendelsohn's music was very difficult; and, on the last rehearsal, Mr. Loder found that his chorus, principally German, could get very well through their work, if they could have the *score* before them, not

otherwise. It was therefore arranged that the music should stand open before them: they themselves were to be ranged close to the footlights on the stage, between the second or *raised* stage (the stage of the Greek Theatre) and the actual Orchestra. Now, some of these gentlemen being short-sighted, had, in order to be able to read their score distinctly, put on their spectacles; and, I ask you to fancy my horror, mingled with a dreadful *envie de rire*, when I entered, at seeing a parcel of goat-headed, goat-bearded old fellows, in Grecian robes, with spectacles on nose, confronting me, within the proscenium, opening wide their mouths, and baa-a-ing at me, as it were, with all their might! They looked like an assemblage of the ghosts of defunct Welsh Bards, summoned to their goat-covered hills by the wand of Merlin; and the spectacles might have been mistaken, by a heated fancy, for the glaring of their spectral eyes!

Luckily, their backs were to the audience; the actors alone were fully conscious of the awful *travestie*.

Mrs. C. N. Sinclair, (Late Mrs. Forrest.)—In 1852 I played at what was then called Brougham's Lyceum, now Wallack's Theatre—(there is great merit in calling things by their right names!)—with Mrs. C. N. Sinclair; who had just resumed her paternal name in consequence of her divorce from her husband, the great American Tragedian. Trial by jury is a great *Alfred*-ian institution; "the palladium of our liberties," and all that; but, as my Uncle Toby says, "it is not till the great and general review of us

all, corporal, the day of judgment, that it will be known" *what verdicts will stand, and what will not!*

I was an utter stranger to Mrs. Forrest till I received, some time in 1851, a message, through the late GRANBY CALCRAFT, requesting me to call on her with a view of advising her as to her capabilities for the stage. I did so. I gave her my candid opinion that it was late in life for her to take such a step; although she had qualities which, had they been cultivated and improved in earlier youth, might, and would, have led her to distinction. She, however, represented that she would soon, in all probability, have to depend on her talents for the stage, whatever they might be, for her support; and that she wished me to give her instructions in three or four parts, to enable her to appear with some success.

I did not decide that evening, but called on her, by appointment, the following day; heard her read some passages of poetry to me, and consented to act as her instructor. I advised her immediately to study Lady Teazle, Beatrice, Margaret Elmore, Pauline, and Mabel, in the "Patrician's Daughter;" and it was understood that, as she had no present means of payment, I was, on condition of getting her "up" in these and other parts, and playing the opposite parts to her on her engagements, to receive half of the profits for our joint performances. I state this candidly, because there has been a great deal of misconception and misrepresentation about the matter. It stood simply thus: Mrs. Forrest wished to go on the stage; she needed preparation; she could not pay for it; but it was probable that public curiosity would render her

engagements highly profitable; and, in consideration of my instructions, and also of my performing with her, I was to be allowed an equal share of the profits which her temporary and factitious attraction would secure. I hope that is clearly stated.

Accordingly, I instructed her in the delivery, the action, the business, and the whole details of these several parts: to which Parthenia, in "Ingomar," was added, on my obtaining the manuscript copy—the first that had come to this country—from the translator, Mrs. Lovell, in England. In opening, after her divorce, in January, 1852, in Lady Teazle, she acted entirely under my advice, contrary to the suggestions of other parties, and even to her own view; other characters were proposed for her *début*. I was confined to my room, at the Clarendon Hotel, by severe illness, at the time, and she came up to see me before she made her final determination. I strongly insisted on Lady Teazle as *the* one of all others in which her appearance, style, and general capabilities would make the best impression; and exacted a promise from her, before leaving me, that no representation or persuasion of other parties should induce her to deviate from this choice. She adhered to Lady Teazle; and her great success in it fully justified my selection. It was the most *artistic* performance she ever achieved: the one in which her personal requisites and her education stood her in the best stead. She never played any other part as easily, as unaffectedly, or with as much success with the public.

During her first fortnight, I was not sufficiently recovered to perform with her; but, in her third

week, I joined her, commencing with the "Lady of Lyons."

I give the receipts of the first eight nights of our joint performance. The terms were to share, after $100; that is, to share with the manager, he first deducting for himself one hundred dollars.

The receipts of eight nights were:

1852., Feb. 16 to 23 inclusive, "Lady of Lyons," " " 24, "Love's Sacrifice,"	$4,119 50
Deduct on eight nights for the Manager,	800 00
	$3,319 50
Leaving as our joint share for eight nights,	$1,659 75
That is, for each,	$879 87½

Mrs. Sinclair was then taken ill, and did not resume her performances till the first of March.

For her third week, the receipts were $2,405 75; of which our joint share was $902 87½; that is, $451 43 each.

In her fourth week, we played only four nights, one of which we gave to Mr. Brougham for his benefit, and the joint share was $637 87½ or $368 93 each;—thus, on the seventeen nights, our joint share was $3,200 50, or $1,600 25 each.

On the 12th March, we were engaged to give a Reading, jointly, at the Tripler Hall, (now the Metropolitan Theatre,) at the sum of $300, which we shared equally. At this Reading, I had the honor to be *encored* in the recitation of "Young Lochinvar."

The course I adopted was, to settle in full with her on every engagement; stating the account of each night's receipts, paying her the amount, and taking her sig-

nature to the account and acknowledgment for her share of the proceeds, at the foot of such account, in my book. And I have her signature and discharge to every such account of every engagement which we ever played together.

The summary of those engagements, up to May 26, inclusive, was as follows:

1852.	Joint Shares.	Half Share, each.
Feb. 16 to March 10—New York, 17 nights.....	$3,200 50	$1,600 25
March 12—A Reading.....	300 00	150 00
" 22—Philadelphia, 14 nights, taking clear half of the gross receipts.....	2,412 12	1,206 06
April 19—Boston, 14 nights, do	2,291 75	1,145 87½
May 10—Portland, do	266 75	133 37½
" 17—Providence, 5 nights, do	499 85	249 97½
" 26—New Bedford,	163 75	86 87½
	$9,134 72	$4,567 36

To enable her to go to England, for the purpose of visiting her father, (since deceased,) I advanced her—besides having paid her the above half share, in full—over $2,500; which, with other sums advanced to her on her return, left her in my debt, for money lent, to the amount of over $2,800, on her going to California.

From California she remitted me to London, in 1853, on account, a draft on Peabody for £200 sterling, ($1,000), which leaves a balance due to me, at this day, of nearly $2,000, exclusive of interest, for money lent to her.

And this was the result of my engagements with Mrs. Sinclair: that I lost my time and my money, both, instead of having "put money in my purse," as

has been generally believed. My sole motive for publishing the above statement, is to show the true state of an affair which has been much misrepresented. It is an additional confirmation of the old proverb—

"All that glitters is not gold."

XV.

RETURN to England, 1853—Revival of Henry V. at Liverpool—A Word on Shaksperean Revivals—Incident—Manchester Theatre Royal—An Equestrian Excursion—How to do it—Its Pleasures—Amateur Hosts—Engaged at the Haymarket Theatre, London—Buckstone on Shakspere—A German Hamlet—Horseback Trip to St. Leonard's—The Isle of Wight—An Excursion mapped out—Sandrock Hotel—Victoria Claret—A Modern Cleopatra.

ILL health compelled me, in January, 1853, to desist from professional exertion; and, as change of air was recommended me, I quitted New York for Europe by the steamer Arabia, and arrived at Liverpool on the 6th February, considerably benefited by the sea voyage.

Almost immediately on my arrival, Mr. Copeland, manager of the two theatres there, stated to me his desire to produce Shakspere's historical play of Henry V. He had, he said, already prepared scenery and appointments for the piece, which he intended to produce with great care, and at a considerable expense; and he invited me to play the gallant Henry. Finding that he did not desire to bring it out for some weeks to come, I consented to the terms he proposed to me for five weeks, commencing on Easter Monday following.

Mr. Copeland asked me "how I would like to be announced" in the advertisements. Whether I would wish to be styled the "*eminent* Tragedian," or the "*distinguished* Tragedian," or the "*classical* Tragedian," or the "*highly popular* Tragedian," or the "*Shaksperean* Tragedian;" in fine, what terms of addition and self-glorification (*more histrionum*) I wished tacked on to my name. I said, "*None;* simply announce that Mr. G. Vandenhoff will make his first appearance in Hamlet; and let the audience find out what *degree* I am entitled to, in the *Dramatic College.*" As old Tobias says, "he was pleased with my answer."

This self-labelling is very absurd. In champagnes, we find that the best wine has the plainest and most unpretending label. A very highly-embellished device on the bottle, always suggests the idea of a domestic article, with a strong suspicion of the Jersey-apple about it—excellent for cider, but a swindle in champagne!

Accordingly, having quite re-established my health in the interval, I commenced at Liverpool with Hamlet, to a densely-crowded house, on Monday, 28th March, 1853, being my first appearance there since my departure for the United States, in '42. I played during the week Shylock, for the first time; Claude, in the "Lady of Lyons," twice; and repeated Hamlet, and played the Stranger, also, twice. The week's business produced great receipts.

The Monday following (4th April), I appeared, for the first time, as Henry Fifth; which was put upon the stage by Mr. Copeland with great care and atten-

tion to scenery, costume, and appointments. The play ran twenty-three successive nights, to excellent houses: though, I believe, they scarcely paid for the extraordinary expenses incurred by Mr. Copeland in his production of the piece—another proof that Shaksperean Revivals, when got up with new and appropriate scenery and appointments, never remunerate the management. It was so, I have shown in these leaves, at the Park Theatre, in the case of King John, in 1846: and Mr. C. Kean, in his valedictory address at the Princess's Theatre, London, has borne strong testimony to the general truth of the fact, by declaring that it was only *his own resources* that enabled him to gratify the pride and ambition he felt in producing Shakspere's Dramas, with that remarkable splendor and pictorial effect by which his administration has distinguished itself in theatrical annals. There is another drawback to these Shaksperean spectacles, and one very serious and prejudicial to the moral and intellectual effect of the Drama itself. I mean this: that the spirit and interest of the action is lost in the pictorial display; the text becomes of secondary importance to the audience; the eye of the spectator is entirely engrossed with the scenic effect, and pays little attention to the actor,

"thinking his prattle to be tedious,"

except as far as he serves as *cicerone* to the *raree show*, and becomes, as it were, a mere train-bearer to the glories of the scene-painter and costumer. This I take to be a powerful objection to the overlaying Shakspere's Drama with spectacular coloring, and profuseness of

pictorial illustration; that it is fatal to the interest of the play itself, and utterly distractive of the attention from the actor and the text. I have always seen Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, and other of the greatest tragedies, produce the most intense effect when the scenic illustrations and costumes have been appropriate and reasonably correct, without being elaborately minute, or extravagantly gorgeous. It is ruinous to the Poet to make him stand as the mere *letter-press* to the *tableaux*. If *spectacle* is to be the main feature of our theatres—if the public taste has become so pampered by indulgence, that it can only be tempted by show and glare, then, I say, give it *spectacle, pure et simple;* let the action and the dialogue be mere canvas-lines and clothes-pegs, and let them be chosen and arranged as such; but do not let us degrade the verse of him to whom Nature gave the "golden keys"

> "That can unlock the gates of joy,
> Of horror, woe, and thrilling fears,
> Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears,"—

do not let us make a *pack-horse* of *his* verse, to carry the scene-painter, the costumer, and the carpenter in triumph to the *gods!*

Pardon this little diversion, reader; the subject hurried me away.

A little incident happened to me during this engagement at Liverpool, that amused and pleased me. Desiring to get an early dinner, in a hurry, I walked into a well-known establishment, called the "Crooked-billet;" and, finding the large dining-room full, I entered a little side-room, where I found a plainly-

dressed country tradesman, as he appeared, waiting for his dinner. I ordered mine; and, after a few minutes, he said to the girl who waited—in a tolerably strong Lancashire accent—"Come, come, lass; make haste! time's munney!" (money). Then, turning to me, he added, "Isn't it, sir?" Now it was the breathing-time of day with me, and I answered, "To you it may be: I'm sorry to say it is not so with me."

"Ha!" said he, after taking my measure with his eye, "I dare say you don't *trubble* yourself wi' business mooch."

"Why?" I answered; "*what* would you take me to be?"

"Oh," said he, "I should take you to be aboov all business; not to need it, I mean."

To give him a surprise, and see how he would take it, I replied: "How wrong you are! I am an actor!"

"Are you?" said he; "then" (slapping his hand on his thigh) "I can tell you *who* you are. You are George Vandenhoff."

"How do you know?"

"By the voice. I saw you play Henry the Fifth t'other night, and mightily pleased I was."

"Well," said I, "are you surprised to find that I'm an actor, instead of a man of fortune, which you took me for?"

"Not a bit," he answered; "you might as well be one as t'other; and," he added, "I don't know that any one can do more than *look* like a gentleman, and *behave* like one, whether he has a fortune or not."

Pretty good, I thought, for a country tradesman.

After taking my benefit at Liverpool, and remaining for a week, I engaged immediately at the Manchester Theatre Royal for four weeks; one of which I played alone, and three in conjunction with Helen Faucit. I have elsewhere described this charming actress, and will only say here, that it was the first occasion of my meeting her professionally. We played the usual business; but not to great houses: for Miss Faucit's attraction had begun to decline. I had the good fortune to please the public here mightily: of which fact they gave me, nightly, the amplest demonstration, particularly in Jacques, Charles Surface, Hamlet, and Rover in "Wild Oats." In all of these parts, the applause was of that hearty, determined kind, by which a Manchester audience testifies its perfect satisfaction. The management of the theatre proposed to me, before the end of my first week, a long engagement for the next season.

Of course, after being so long absent from the English stage, it was gratifying to me to find myself so well, I may say, so enthusiastically received on my return.

At the close of this engagement, not having entirely recovered my strength, I deliberately gave myself a holiday, bought a sweet little chestnut mare, and indulged myself with a delightful equestrian excursion into North Wales; starting from Manchester on the 15th June, and riding *via* Chester, Bangor, Beaumaris, Conway, Rhyl, Denbigh, Ruthin, Llangollen, Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Birmingham, Kenil-

worth, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, Leamington, Woodstock, Oxford; and thence through Henley on Thames, and Maidenhead, to London; where I arrived 10th July, having ridden 450 odd miles—a most agreeable excursion. My little mare, a perfect beauty, Arabian in form and style, and not more than fourteen hands high, did her work admirably;—sometimes I rode her forty, sometimes even fifty miles a day: she never refused a feed, and entered London brisk and well:—stopping a day or two at agreeable places, and always finding capital inns, good beds, and excellent fare on the road; and my expenses not exceeding, horse-keep included, an average of fourteen shillings and sixpence sterling, about $3 50 per day. Of course, I did not feed on turtle-soup, or drink champagne; but contented myself with a good, plain dinner from one excellent joint, beef or mutton, and a glass of sound, well-brewed ale from malt and hops, which you can get anywhere and everywhere in England and Wales.

I mention these items for the guidance of my American fellow-citizens who may feel desirous, on the other side of the water, to make an equestrian or vehicular excursion in England or Wales; independent of railway carriages and time-tables; with the view of improving their health, seeing the country, enjoying God Almighty's fresh-air, and the beauties of nature, with no foolish ambition of "swelling it," or passing for princes in their own country.

I have made similar excursions in this country, but not with the same pleasure as in Europe. In summer, the heat is too oppressive here, and horse and rider

suffer too much from it: besides, at the small taverns on the road you are not always certain of a dinner, unless you arrive at or about the gong-hour; nor are the roads in such fine order as those of England, which is the country of all others for a horseback trip, from the temperance of the climate, the excellence of the beautiful high-roads, the comfort of the little inns, the goodness and cheapness of the fare for man and beast, and the continued succession of villages between the large towns and cities, so that the traveller can never be at a loss for a good stopping place, and civil treatment. These are two things, mind you, which one does not always find here, especially when one lights on any of those sort of amateur hosts, "who don't keep tavern, but take folks in"—in more senses than one—who make it a favor to give you very poor fare, a horrid, collapsing, mockery of a feather-bed, in the middle of summer, a "drefful bad" breakfast, and charge you hotel prices into the bargain!

I came upon such a fellow once—a Capt. T——, (of course, he was a captain!) in a little village about eleven miles from Hartford, Conn., who would only allow me just so much straw for my horse's bed—about enough to litter a good-sized dog—and would feed him just as he pleased; a regular ignorant, insolent, old bully: I let him know, however, that when I stopped at a tavern, whether it was called so or no, I was in the habit of having my way in such matters; and, by dint of coolness, and a determined standing on my rights, I brought his captain-ship to reason, and the next morning extorted from him a kind of apology, on the plea that "he didn't know what sort of a per-

son I was, the night before," (didn't know whether I would stand his insolence or not,) "if he 'd' a knowed as I was a gentleman, &c." But I gave the old fellow a lesson on civility to "folks" in general, and a few words on the duty of a tavern-keeper, amateur or other, that I rather think he remembers.

On my arrival in London, I found at my father's a note from Mr. Buckstone, the manager of the Haymarket Theatre, proposing to me an engagement as leading actor of that theatre, for the season to commence on the following October: and, after an interview with him, the terms of our agreement were settled. In deciding on my opening part, Mr. Buckstone was very much opposed to "Hamlet," or any other Shaksperean character, "for," said he, "it's no matter if you could play it as well as John Kemble, a Shaksperean play keeps money out of the house!" Here was a prospect in a first-class Metropolitan Theatre! I however adhered to my point, and "Hamlet" was finally decided on for the 25th October following. The theatre was to re-open on the 24th, and on the second night, I was to make my re-appearance on the London stage, after an absence of eleven years.

There was, at this time, performing at the St. James' Theatre, a company of German *spillers* (players), with the somewhat celebrated Emile Devrient at their head. Observing "Hamlet" announced one night, I went, with my father, to witness the performance. It was Schiller's version that was given; and it was so

faithful to the Shaksperean text, line for line, that there was difficulty in following it. Devrient's rendering of "Hamlet" was not without merit; though in the first act he was unnecessarily violent, and even grotesque in attitude and gesture. In the subsequent acts he improved wonderfully, mellowing, and growing into the character, and touching the assumed madness of "Hamlet" with great nicety of discrimination. The great drawback to his performance was a lack of dignity and grace; there was nothing of the *Prince* about him: and one shocking absurdity that he allowed himself to be guilty of, would have gone far to destroy the effect of a much greater performance. It is so ludicrous as to be worth mentioning; though it was only carrying out a ridiculous custom to the extreme of inconsistency.

When, in obedience to the silent summons of the *ghost*, who

> "wafts him to a more removèd ground
> As if it some impartment did desire
> To him alone,"—

Hamlet made his *exit* with the words, in German,

> "Go on, I'll follow thee,"—

there was some applause from the audience; not very enthusiastic, but *some* applause. On which, the German actor, who had scarcely passed the *wing* (side-scene), immediately returned, breaking off, for the moment, from his obedience to the ghost; and, abandoning his identification with Hamlet, advanced to the foot-lights, and bowed three times to the audience,

in acknowledgment of their favor! Could any thing be more absurd? more fatal to the gravity of the situation? I expected the Ghost to "hark back," too, but he was a *discreet*, as well as

"an *honest* ghost,"

and did not return to the glimpses of the *foot-lights*, to express his sense of terrestrial and mundane compliments. This was, unintentionally, the greatest practical satire on the *calling* system that I ever witnessed; and made me blush for the servility, as well as laugh at the absurdity of the *spiller* who was guilty of it. Such violations of propriety, in obsequious flattery of the public, are "villainous, and show a pitiful ambition in the fool who uses it!"

The interval between this time and October, when I was to make my *entrée* at the Haymarket Theatre, I filled up by an excursion, on horseback, to St. Leonard's, a delightful watering-place on the south coast of England; which I recommend to any health-seekers from this country, who desire fine air and the best of sea-bathing. There is, too, a capital hotel there, which has been patronized by royal personages (I know this is always a recommendation to my *republican* fellow-citizens), and by the aristocracy in general; I mean the Royal Victoria Hotel, admirably situated, and capitally conducted.

From St. Leonard's I rode to Brighton, the fashionable watering-place, as crowded as London, in the season; and where there is, perhaps, the best hotel in

the world—the Bedford; thence to Arundel, a pretty little town, with Arundel castle on its skirt; thence to Portsmouth, the most strongly fortified place on the south coast; and thence to Southampton. From Southampton I crossed over, with my horse, to Cowes (Isle of Wight); thence, passing the Queen's residence, Osborne, I rode to the Sandrock hotel, fifteen miles distant, near Niton, five miles from Ventnor, on the south of the island, and arrived wet to the skin; having ridden the last ten miles in a drenching rain: but a good bed, dry clothes (my portmanteau, which, in these equestrian trips, I always send on ahead by rail, had arrived before me), and a good dinner, with a bottle of nearly the best claret I ever tasted, soon set me to rights.

When I inquired of Mrs. Kent, the landlady of Sandrock hotel, which, by-the-bye, is one of the most picturesque, and, at the same time, most comfortable little country inns in England—a rustic, cottage-looking house, backed by the high cliff under which it seems to shelter; with a woodbine-covered porch, and a sloping lawn, green as an emerald, bordered with flower-beds, and looking out on the English channel—when I inquired of the landlady how she happened to have so fine a bottle of claret (Lafitte, which must have been at least fifteen or twenty years old), she told me it was laid in by her late husband, on the occasion of the Princess Victoria (the present Queen) and her mother, the Duchess of Kent, and *suite*, stopping at this house, on their *tour* through the Isle of Wight, about fifteen or more years before; which sufficiently accounted for the exquisite flavor thereof. It

was charged in the bill the reasonable price of nine shillings sterling, about $2.25. It could not be bought in this country under $5 a bottle, if at all.

This trip to the Isle of Wight is one that I also recommend to my friends who visit England. Cross over from Southampton to Cowes; thence by a carriage to Newport—four or five miles; visit Carrisburg castle; thence to Sandrock hotel, stay there a day, rambling about; visit Black Gang chine, a wild and picturesque ravine on the sea-side; the next day go in a carriage to the Needles; return *via* Sandrock hotel, dine there, and go on, in the evening, to Ventnor, on the south side of the island; where the climate is as balmy as the south of France, and the sea-bathing excellent. The whole excursion need not occupy more than four days, and is truly delightful.

It is a delicious drive from the Sandrock hotel to Ventnor; the nearest resemblance to which, in this country, is a ride I am very fond of taking, from the Weehawken ferry, on the Jersey side of the Hudson, up to Fort Lee. But the Isle of Wight is wonderfully picturesque, and highly cultivated; the climate is balmy, but temperate; and it is the most attractive spot in England to indulge in the *dolce far niente*.

At the Sandrock hotel I met, I think, the finest woman I ever saw in my life. Miss Annie Costello was her name, by inheritance or adoption, I know not which; but, at that particular time, she was travelling under the highly romantic name of Mrs. Brown; her *compagnon de voyage* being a gentleman who temporarily sported that distinguished and *un-identifiable* cognomen. She was, I discovered, one of that

numerous class of *femmes entretenues* in England, so remarkable for their magnificent and voluptuous beauty. She was above the middle size, splendidly proportioned, with brilliant dark eyes, a brunette complexion, rose-tinged on the cheek, luxuriant dark brown hair, superb shoulders and bust, with the roundest and finest waist I ever saw. She was a *grand Venus!* I found she was possessed with an ardent ambition for the stage, and was desirous of placing herself under my tuition. I, however, declined the dangerous honor; and the stage has one bewitching sin the less upon it.

"Of such stuff our dreams are made;"

from which the waking is so terrible. Her protector was a young man, not over twenty-five years of age; not a fellow of much mark or likelihood, but he was evidently given up, body and soul, to the influence of her all-conquering beauty, and the result would probably be his ruin! It was a miniature edition of Antony and Cleopatra—friends, family, reputation, fortune, were nought to him; her smile was worth them all; and

"Her beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command him."

Old Damas says well:

"O! woman, woman, thou art the author of such a book of follies in a man, that it would need the tears of all the angels to wash the record out!"

XVI.

REAPPEARANCE in London, after Eleven Years' Absence—1853-5—Hamlet at the Haymarket Theatre—The Company—Remarks on Hamlet—Hamlet's age—A Leading Actress of the Present Day—A New Play—*Sifflé*—The Duchess Eleavour—Town and Country—London Assurance—Lady Gay a *Miss*—New Comedy, "Knights of the Round Table"—Scene from it—Spanish Dancers—DOUGLAS JERROLD—Death of Mrs. FITZWILLIAM—An Ingenious Literary Trick—"Foreign Airs and Native Graces"—Result of Experience at the Haymarket—St. James' Theatre—"King's Rival"—Mrs. SEYMOUR's Nell Gwynne—The Garrick Club—A Dinner at the Mansion House—Mr. BUCHANAN on British Institutions—Bath—Paris—Return to the United States—Marriage—A Reminiscence of the Hon. RUFUS CHOATE.

IN my note-book of the 25th October, 1853, I find this memorandum:—

"Going to reappear in London after eleven years' absence, without knowing a single person connected with the London *Press*, except Douglas Jerrold. By 'not knowing,' I mean not knowing so much as to say, 'How d'ye do?' to, nor have I taken steps, of any kind, to secure a favorable jndgment. Let us see the result."

On the 24th October, Mr. Buckstone re-opened the Haymarket Theatre, newly decorated and embellished, with the comedy of "A Cure for Love," and "The Beggars' Opera;" and, on the following night, I made my *entrée* in the character of Hamlet, with only one rehearsal, and with a company whose *forte* was decidedly not tragedy. Indeed, I do not remember ever

to have seen, at any respectable theatre, so weak a cast of the play as ours was, in many respects. There was no efficient "heavy lady" in the company—a cheering circumstance to start with! The Queen was, consequently, undertaken—with great kindness and courage,—by a young lady of fine figure, and considerable personal attractions, whose appropriate and accustomed province was genteel comedy,—gay widows in farces, and sprightly *intrigantes*, generally,—not exactly the wood from which Queens in "Hamlet" are made! I might, indeed, have well exclaimed,

"No more like my *mother*
Than I to Hercules!"

Horatio was very weak; being confided to a gentleman who had never before acted in the play; nor, as he candidly confessed, had even seen it acted! His regular business was foplings in comedy and farces; his general style was of the lightest and flimsiest substance; consequently, Horatio was a dead weight on him. The Ghost, fortunately, was steady, careful, and respectable; Mr. Howe (the Quaker, as he was called, from his family having, I believe, belonged to the Society of Friends; and he is the only instance that I know of, of a Quaker's having taken to the stage), was never any thing less, in the multiplicity of characters assigned to him. The strength of the cast lay in the Polonius of Mr. Chippendale—who was also stage-manager—the Grave-digger of Mr. Compton, and the Ophelia of Miss Louisa Howard. The Laertes was a novice, and more unskilful even than the Laertes-es usually are—which is saying much—in the use of the

foil. This, considering that the fencing-match in the fifth act is a main feature, and that on its execution, well or ill, depends, in great measure, the successful or unsuccessful winding-up of the play, was a particularly encouraging prospect for me! Luckily, all, even the fencing-bout, passed off without any glaring mishap; and the Queen, however deficient in weight, was letter-perfect in text, and scrupulously exact in the business of the scene; as, indeed, Mrs. Buckingham always was. I was warmly received, and liberally applauded; though it was my first appearance at the Haymarket Theatre, and that audience is, proverbially, very self-controlling in its outward display of approbation.

Mr. Buckstone, the manager, came and congratulated me on my success at the end of the third act, as did the performers generally; and a friend, H. Holl—a kind, good-natured fellow as ever breathed, and whom every one likes—came round from the front, to confirm by his report, in detail, the verdict which the audience had rendered by their applause. My father, as Holl informed me, and as I had myself observed, was one of the auditory; deeply attentive, Holl said, silent, abstracted, wholly *in* the play; he, too, was content with me, and earnest in his approbation—as Holl reported.

So, of course, I went on to my fifth act with renewed spirits. Even the fencing-bout went off tolerably well, and I received a thundering call at the fall of the curtain.

Mr. Buckstone was pleased to make the following announcement in the bills and advertisements of the day:—

"Mr. George Vandenhoff having, on his first appearance, created a sensation equal to that made by any tragedian of the day, will repeat the character of Hamlet on Thursday and Monday next;"

and the *Times*, and the press generally, upheld the manager's judgment.

The following is the *London Morning Post's* notice (26th October, 1853):

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—DEBUT OF MR. GEORGE VANDENHOFF.—If Mr. Vandenhoff has not gained fame and money from our transatlantic brethren, he has certainly acquired experience and improvement in their land, and to such an extent as to make us doubt his identity with the gentleman who some years since performed at Covent Garden Theatre under the management of Madame Vestris.

We have no hesitation in declaring Mr. Vandenhoff's Hamlet to be not only by many degrees the best at present on the stage, but also better than any that has been seen since the days of John Kemble. What he may make of other Shaksperean characters, requiring greater energy, passion, physical power and melodramatic excitement, we are not prepared to say; but of this we are sure, that his picture of the contemplative, philosophical, elegant Prince of Denmark, who is only goaded into action by a supernatural visitation, and the pressure of terrible and extraordinary circumstances, could not possibly be surpassed. In this age of strong accents and exaggeration, especially in theatrical matters, it is truly refreshing to meet with an actor who never "o'ersteps the modesty of nature"—who moves with gentlemanlike ease and grace upon the stage, and speaks the language of Shakspere with just emphasis and purity. Such is Mr. George Vandenhoff; but his merits do not stop here, for he is not merely a correct performer, but a great one. He not only satisfies us, but he delights us. First, by his really beautiful level speaking, which is truly "nature to advantage dressed." This, at once, honorably distinguishes him from all contemporary tragedians,

not one of whom can make any effect except in passages of great excitement, where the delineation of strong passions may justify a spasmodic style of expression. Secondly, he charms us by the exquisite delicacy he imparts to his dramatic picture, and the masterly finish of its details: thirdly, by the sympathetic glow of feeling emanating from the heart—the genial, steadily-burning poetic fire which everywhere vivifies his conceptions, and warms by its electric power the coldest of his auditors into admiration. Add to these, the influence of a very agreeable voice, a commanding figure, most graceful gestures, and an expressive countenance, and a fair idea may be formed of the very remarkable qualities of Mr. Vandenhoff, as exhibited on this occasion. We have preferred giving a general sketch of the *debutant's* powers to selecting special portions of his performance for praise. Where all was so evenly good, where the Horatian precept—

"Denique sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum,"

was so finely exemplified, such a course would be scarcely just.

Mr. Vandenhoff was warmly applauded throughout, and called for with enthusiasm at the fall of the curtain.

The following is the criticism of the *Sunday Times*, Oct. 30th:

Mr. G. VANDENHOFF'S HAMLET.—Mr. George Vandenhoff, the son of the celebrated tragedian, who some years since made his metropolitan *début* at Covent Garden, during the Vestris management, in the character of Leon, in *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, appeared on the Haymarket boards, for the first time, on Tuesday evening, after a long absence in the United States, where he has gathered histrionic laurels in abundance. The character selected for his second entrance to the English stage was Hamlet, for which nature seems to have especially fitted him by bestowing upon him a graceful and commanding figure, fine expressive features, an intellectual head, a penetrating eye, and a voice capable of being modulated according to the passion or emotion to be delineated. The great merit of Mr. Vandenhoff in the charac-

ter is the skilful manner in which he unfolds it without destroying its delicate texture. All his care seems to be to render Hamlet such as Shakspere certainly intended—gentle, contemplative, and philosophic, with a disposition naturally warm and generous, stimulated by a solemn supernatural revelation to an act of cruel vengeance, from which his soul recoils. It is the mind, and not the passions of Hamlet, that is excited; he can moralize and weigh to the minutest grain questions of a present and future state, and can speculate with philosophic exactness upon the justness and morality of his terrible mission. No man whose passions were highly wrought upon could so abstract his reasoning faculties. Taking this view of the character, we entirely agree with Mr. Vandenhoff in what may be termed the subdued and intellectual reading he gave of it. The total absence of all clap-trap or trickery, either in voice or action, and the consummate art with which, by the judicious reading of the part, he developed all its beauties, cannot be too highly commended. We admit that to ears accustomed—we will not say attuned—to the violence of some performers, or to exaggerated and stagey points—as far removed from dramatic truth as they are from nature—the reflective and poetic style of Mr. George Vandenhoff may appear insipid. We should as soon expect a confirmed brandy-drinker to relish the mild but generous warmth of pure claret. That Mr. G. Vandenhoff possesses power, as well as tenderness and pathos, we need but refer to his scene with the Queen in the closet, the play-scene and his delivery of the passionate soliloquy, "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!" His advice to the players was an admirable combination of the familiar with the didactic style. Altogether, we do not remember any Hamlet of late years with whom we were so well pleased.

The *Illustrated London News* thus wrote:

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—On Tuesday *Hamlet* was performed for the purpose of testing the claims of Mr. George Vandenhoff to the tragic lead of the company, and the trial was perfectly satisfactory. During the Vestris management of Covent Garden,

Mr. Vandenhoff gave promise of perhaps more power than he now evinces, but was crude in style; when he left us altogether for America, where by practice he has become evidently a finished artist. His *Hamlet* is certainly an elegant, and, in some situations, a highly wrought piece of acting. His success was incontrovertible; and an honorable future awaits his exertions.

Finally, the *Thunderer* pronounced its oracular sentence. The following extract is from THE TIMES (Wednesday, Oct. 26, 1853):

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—Playgoers of a dozen years' standing may recollect Mr. George Vandenhoff (elder son of *the* Mr. Vandenhoff), who made his *début* at Covent Garden, during the management of Madame Vestris, as Leon in *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*. He remained at that house for a season or two, playing the principal parts in several new and revived pieces, and was generally deemed a serviceable actor.

So much has happened, and such changes have taken place since the management to which we have referred, that Mr. George Vandenhoff had left no distinct impression on the memory, and when he re-appeared last night at the Haymarket, after a long absence in America, he had the reception of a completely new actor, and he has certainly re-introduced himself to the London public in a very creditable manner. Hamlet—the character which, like so many young tragedians, he has chosen for his opening—does not, indeed, receive any new light from his interpretation, which he has based on long-established precedents, but nevertheless it is marked by a combination of elegance and carefulness which is not often to be found. If he created no great astonishment by what he *did*, he is entitled to great praise for what he avoided; for while, as we have said, his acting was founded on the conventional routine, he shunned all the old conventional tricks. By saying that he gives a castigated edition of the established Hamlet, we should perhaps convey the most accurate impression of his performance.

Reading with the utmost correctness, elegant in his move-

ments, accomplished in the externals of histrionic art, and endowed with considerable advantages of person and voice (the latter being clear, though soft), Mr. George Vandenhoff's forte seems to lie rather in the colloquial and gently pathetic, than in the violently passionate, and his elocution is marked less by force than by refinement. At the same time some situations, particularly the play-scene, were powerfully worked up, and may perhaps justify the friends of Mr. G. Vandenhoff in forming sanguine hopes of future greatness. His performance throughout was heard with evident approbation, and he was called with loud applause at the end of the play.

The reader will, I trust, pardon me for making these extracts. As my connection with the stage was now nearing its close, I am naturally ambitious to leave some record of what was the opinion of the critics on my mature efforts; so as, in some measure, to justify the sudden step I took in abandoning the glorious uncertainty of the law, for the still greater, and perhaps more glorious uncertainty of the stage.

May I be allowed to add that any credit I may have obtained by my performance of Hamlet, I owe simply to confidence in Shakspere—to a conviction that he was, and is, sufficient for himself. What I mean to express is, that Hamlet is able to act out himself if the actor will trust to Shakspere for doing it; if he will not "over-do" the master's work, but "use all gently," and not overlay a perfect picture of imperfect humanity with stage-trick, strained effect, extravagant attitude, and what Lord Shaftesbury, in his criticism on the play, happily calls "blustering heroism." There is no room for any of this in Hamlet, as I conceive it; except in the one scene with Laertes at Ophelia's grave—and for his violence

there, the philosophic prince expresses his sorrow, and excuses it to Horatio, on the ground that he was in

"a towering passion,—"

except in this instance, violence and rant are entirely misplaced. The more simply the character is presented to the audience, the more thoroughly will the actor's impersonation of this extraordinary metaphysical epitome of the weaknesses of humanity in one of its noblest types, carry out the master's design, and win its way to the popular heart. I am far from intimating that I have succeeded in this, myself; but I have aimed at it. It is not because Hamlet is a *hero* that we love him, and sympathize with him so intimately in every situation and every scene; it is, rather, because, with the highest motives, the most elevated aspirations, and the most accomplished intellect, he is *so little of a hero in action*, that we feel his approximation to ourselves; and our vanity and self-love are flattered by recognizing the reflection of our own imperfections and irresoluteness, in so grand, so pure, so refined a mirror. In sympathizing with Hamlet, we are paying court to ourselves, and finding a splendid apology for our own short-comings. Now nothing can be less in harmony with such a conception than "blustering heroism," in "the 'Ercles vein" of inflated tragedy. This is to throw the robes of a Player-King over the shoulders of the Apollo Belvidere; or to dress up the Venus de Medici in modern flounces, berthas, Valenciennes lace, a blaze of jewelry, and the expansive extravagance of crinoline!

It may not be inopportune, in this place, to make a remark on a point that is often debated, and which, I think, I have never yet seen settled by the critics: I mean the question of Hamlet's age. Was he a young, or a middle-aged, man?

Opinions, I find, on reading Hazlitt and other critics, incline both ways: some imagine that the Prince of Denmark was a very young man, scarcely of full age; others, more rationally, and more consistently with the evidences of matured intellect, and the reflective self-examination which his conversation and his soliloquies display, believe Hamlet to have arrived at the full maturity of manhood, both physically and intellectually. Still, the question seems to remain in some doubt. Let us see if we can settle it.

In the first place, I think, we must admit that the opinion, or idea, of Hamlet's being quite a young man, is entirely incompatible with the philosophic discipline of his mind, its high intellectual culture, its discursive power of thought, its metaphysical subtlety, its polish, its exquisite refinement. What *young man*, just fresh from College, that any of us have ever known or heard of, could ever have *thought* the soliloquy of

"To be, or not to be?"

What young man was ever capable of designing, and building up that soliloquy, in its solid and impregnable sequence of argumentative construction; and of combining in its eloquent expression by language, the exactest reasoning and the highest sentiment; such

as are blended—with the power of an orator, the severity of a logician, and the imagination of a poet—in that wonderful outpouring of meditative abstraction?

Again, where is the *young* man of so correct a judgment, so refined a taste, such subtle critical acumen, or nicety of discrimination, as to extemporize, from the stores of his experience and observation, that elaborate epitome of the actor's art, and the purposes of the stage, contained in the "Instructions to the Players?"

I have never met that young man yet, who was capable of this; if such a one there be, I would go a long way to see him!—The argument is, that Shakspere would not have put those passages into the mouth of Hamlet, but that Hamlet is supposed to be mature in years and judgment.

Then, it is scarcely possible that any young man, who had not long made his *débût* at court, and in the world, could have attained—prince though he might be—to so distinguished a position, by his accomplishments, and elegance of mind and manners, as to merit the high eulogium of possessing the combination of excelling and diverse qualities, comprised in this description of Hamlet:

> "The *courtier's*, *soldier's*, *scholar's eye*, *tongue*, *sword*;
> The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
> The observed of all observers:"

this all implies maturity of power, and age. This idea is confirmed by the line that follows, a little further on, in this description; in which Ophelia laments

"That unmatch'd form, and feature of *blown youth*,
Blasted with ecstasy."

The expression "blown youth," I think, clearly indicates Hamlet's age to be in the maturity of manhood; when the rose of youth is full-blown; not in its early opening, but in its full bloom: that is to say, about thirty years of age. And this I take to be the very age at which we see him.

Do you start at this, reader? does this theory seem to rob Hamlet of some of his romantic attraction, by setting too many years on his head, and by robbing him of the first blush and grace of opening manhood?

Let us see if I cannot establish my position by the text of Shakspere. In the first scene of the fifth act, when Hamlet has returned from England; in his dialogue with the grave-digger, occur these questions and answers:

Hamlet. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Hamlet. How long is that since?

Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was *the very day that young Hamlet was born:* he that was mad, and sent into England.

Hamlet. How came he mad?

Clown. Very strangely, they say

Hamlet. How strangely?

Clown. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet. Upon what ground?

Clown. Why, here in Denmark. *I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.*

Thus, we find that the Clown has been a grave-

maker thirty years; and that he came to it "the very day that young Hamlet was born." (The Clown calls him *young* Hamlet in contradistinction to the late king, his father, of the same name.) Hence, it is sufficiently well-established that, at this period of the play, Hamlet is thirty years of age.

It may be reasonably asked, if it may not be considered, that this play occupies several years, perhaps, in the action; and, if so, was not Hamlet quite a young man at the commencement of the play? And the line in the original text—never given on the stage—in the mouth of the King to Hamlet—

> "For your intent
> *In going back to school in Wittenberg*,
> It is most retrograde to our desire,"—

may be put forward to show that the Prince had not even finished his education; and therefore certainly could not have attained thirty years of age.

But I do not construe the expression "going back to school in Wittenberg," to mean, going back as a scholar, an *alumnus*, for the purpose of continuing his studies. It is not unusual at this day, in England, for a man who has taken his degrees, and holds a fellowship at one of the Universities, to retire occasionally, for a period, to his college, under the pressure of grief, anxiety of mind, or great reverse of fortune, or even with a desire for contemplative study and retreat. In this sense, Hamlet, in grief at his father's sudden death, and indignant at his own exclusion from the throne by the usurpation of his uncle, on his marriage with the Queen,—in this view, Hamlet,

"weary of the world," which, in the affliction of his mind, seems to him stale, flat, and unprofitable, might, even at thirty years of age, not unnaturally thirst for the retirement of his college, and the consolations of philosophy and study.

I do not consider that the action of the play occupies more than six months, or a year at the outside. For, in the first act, Laertes goes to France, for the purpose of a visit of pleasure merely; such a visit as might fill up six months, or a year at the most; and we do not hear of his coming back, till his father Polonius has been killed by Hamlet; the news of which brings him back to Denmark suddenly; probably, therefore, before the intended period of his visit had expired.

Nor can we think Ophelia was more than eighteen or twenty years of age when she dies; which age she must have considerably passed,—in fact, she must have been entering the respectable stage of old-maidenhood,—if Hamlet is taken to have been eighteen or twenty years of age in the first act, and thirty when he stands by Ophelia's grave.

I therefore conclude that Hamlet's age is thirty, in the fifth act; and not much less—perhaps, six months, or a year—at the opening of the play. What say you, reader?

It was quite clear to me and to everybody, from the specimen exhibited in "Hamlet," that tragedy was not the *forte* of the Haymarket company. The part of Evelyn, in Bulwer's admirable comedy of *Money*,

was therefore fixed upon for my second appearance; and the comedy being well cast, was repeated six times during the next fortnight, and several times afterwards, during the season. I received many compliments on my performance of Evelyn, both from the actors, and the public press. The most valued of all was my father's expression of satisfaction, communicated to me by my mother. He had said, she told me, that "it was as good as the Hamlet; and he could not say more." Conceive my delight at hearing this, when I recollected how dreadfully my father had been disappointed by my change of profession, and how little hope he had entertained of my attaining eminence in a pursuit adopted as an after-thought, without the advantage of a regular apprenticeship in early life. His present approbation was therefore doubly valued by me.

The following notice of Evelyn, in a London literary weekly, gratified me, I think, as much as any critical eulogium I received; and I pray the reader's indulgence for quoting it:

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—Bulwer's comedy of *Money* was produced at this theatre on Wednesday last, Mr. George Vandenhoff sustaining the character of Evelyn. Mr. Vandenhoff's performance of this character is chiefly remarkable for ease and naturalness. There is no straining after effect—none of those attempts to draw down applause by loud tones and violent gestures, which are so frequently indulged in where an opportunity permits. Mr. Vandenhoff appears to feel that he was acting a part in the drama of daily life, and that the conventional shouts and starts of the stage would be out of place. His manner, throughout the piece, was that of a well-educated gentleman, and his most earnest bursts of passion were tempered to suit the situation in which they were

displayed, and the circumstances by which they were produced. In the scene at the club, in which he plays with such seeming recklessness with Dudley Smooth, there was just sufficient exaggeration to show that his wild demeanor was assumed, and yet sufficient reality to indicate that Evelyn was, to some extent, affected by the very excitement he was simulating. Nothing could be more truthful than Mr. Vandenhoff's acting in this scene. It completely carried the audience with it, and proved, beyond doubt, that his performance was the result of great study—that, in fact, it was a display of that art which conceals art. In his passionate appeal to Georgina, in the last scene, he was equally effective. The faltering voice, the agitated manner, the nervous, almost frenzied anxiety with which he listened for her reply, his whole existence seeming to depend upon the few words she might utter,—were finely contrasted with the burst of sudden joy which followed her avowal of affection for Sir Frederick Blount.

Mr. Vandenhoff's performance of Evelyn places him in the first rank as a performer of refined comedy; and we must congratulate Mr. Buckstone upon such an acquisition to his company.

But what shall we say of Mr. Buckstone, as Stout—that shadow of a character? Shall we say that he was the very embodiment of parochial pomposity, refined by legislative experience? We might say this, and much more; but we fear we should convey but a faint idea of the talent and infinite humor which Mr. Buckstone displayed. Dress and manner were alike admirable, and whenever his round, red, and good-humored face appeared upon the stage, it was the signal for a burst of genuine applause. Mr. Compton, as Graves, was as droll as usual, but was badly dressed, and did not look sufficiently lugubrious for the melancholy widower. Mrs. Fitzwilliam was *not* Lady Franklin, but was, as she always is, exceedingly clever and artistic.

Up to this time, the regular leading actress of the theatre had been incapacitated by illness from playing with me; but Claude in the "Lady of Lyons" being selected as my third part, I had the full benefit of the lady's assistance!

Imagine my recognizing in this woman of some eight and thirty years of age, with a harsh brassy voice, a person brought out originally to the United States, fifteen years previously, by a certain *Yankee Delineator*. The unenviable reputation which she enjoyed in this country, she had, on her return to her own, marvellously well kept up; being now, notoriously, the mistress of a married man, who was nightly to be seen in the private stage-box to witness her performances. As an actress, her style was coarse, her voice dissonant, and her manners had all the affectation and effrontery combined, that usually distinguish ladies of her stamp. Such was the person whom I found myself doomed, during a whole season, to address on the stage in the most courteous and refined language of chaste and respectful love; into whose hackneyed ear I was to breathe the most impassioned vows, and whose form I was to clasp in my arms, with the ardor of a knight, and the devotion of a pilgrim at the shrine of a virgin-saint! It was the greatest trial I ever met with on the stage. It was a perpetual and complete *désillusionnement*, eternally meeting and striking down my enthusiasm for an abstract *ideal*, by the coarse, common, hard, unpoetical, unloveable reality!

It was impossible to imagine that metallic-voiced, bold-faced woman, the gentle Clara, or the betrayed, heart-broken, self-sacrificing Pauline! The contradiction was too glaring, too shocking; and this was the penance I had to look forward to, during a season of about thirty weeks.

Talent, as an artist, unless costly dresses and im-

pregnable assurance constitute talent, she had none; none, I mean, for the line of business into which she was thrust; she would have made a good *soubrette*, of the most audacious kind, nothing more. Yet, here I found her, in the Haymarket Theatre, London, by force of the pressure from without of peculiar influences, occupying the position that women of unblemished purity of character, as well as of high dramatic genius, had hitherto adorned!

The "high and palmy days" of the theatre must be gone indeed, when such a person occupied such a place. For—however other situations, in the theatrical profession, may have been filled by women of loose lives and sullied reputations—the position of leading actress, at a leading metropolitan theatre, had hitherto, in England, at least, preserved its moral eminence; and the loves, sufferings, self-sacrifice, and heroism of Juliet, Belvidera, Mrs. Beverly, had grown to be associated with the virtues of daily life, by the exemplary conduct of their stage-representatives. There is something revolting to the feelings in seeing such characters filled by a woman of known licentious and immoral life; especially, when she does not possess the veil of genius with which to cover, or, at least, to soften the features of her irregularities. Characters that have been hallowed by connection with the names of Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neil, Miss Ellen Tree, and others, whom to name is to honor, should never be degraded and defiled by the low and unsympathizing personation, or rather, *travestie*, of a common *intrigante*.

I do not hesitate to say, that I consider the fact I

allude to as the most fatal evidence of the decay of the drama in England that struck my mind. Such outrages on public decency, and taste, merit the contempt and neglect which they incur; and it behoves a decent public to rebuke them by their continued absence.

My fourth character was Benedick.

Charlotte Cushman was with us for a portion of the season. She opened in Bianca; I declined playing Fazio; but appeared with her in "The Stranger" several times, and as the Cardinal, in "Henry the Eighth," twice. She produced a piece by Chorley, (Mrs. Hemans' biographer, and the musical critic of the *Athenæum*,) which had great literary merit, but was hissed on the second night, and so, failed, to Charlotte's great mortification; for she had what she deemed a very fine part in it, and on which, I believe, she very much counted for great success. On the reading of the play in the Green-Room, I surprised her and the author, by selecting (as the terms of my engagement gave me a right of selection in all new pieces) the character of an old *roué*, gambler, thief, and assassin, her father; instead of the part of a noble count, her lover. They were both villains; one of about thirty, the other of about six, "lengths;" foreseeing the failure of the piece, I chose the *shorter* of the two knaves. The author had named him Balthasar; but, as that was a very undignified appellation, associated, in dramatic nomenclature, with servants

and torch-bearers, *et hoc genus omne*, Mr. Chorley very kindly, at my request, dubbed him l'Incognito; thus shrouding him in mystery. As I said, "The Duchess Eleanour" scarcely lived through the second night; a volley of hisses settled her fate, in the fifth act; and threw Charlotte Cushman back on her old fortune-teller, Meg Merrilies.

Morton's "Town and Country" was produced for me shortly after, and I had the satisfaction of repeating Reuben Glenroy five nights. Mr. CHIPPENDALE played Old Cosey, with good effect; BUCKSTONE was the Hawbuck; COMPTON, Bobby Trot; Hon. Mrs. Glenroy, Miss FEATHERSTONE, now Mrs. Howard Paul.

"London Assurance" was also revived, (in which I played Dazzle,) but was stopped on its fourth representation by Mr. Webster, of the Adelphi, who had purchased from the author the sole right of representing that comedy in London. It was very well cast with us, with the exception of Lady Gay Spanker, which was intrusted to a lady utterly incompetent to represent it, even if she had been perfect in the words; which she was not. In the celebrated description of the steeple-chase, she *baulked*, *boggled*, *fell*, and *floundered* in the ditch. Nevertheless, she was upheld by some of the Sunday *Press*, who, I suppose, received their *cue* from the management; but the good sense of the public prevailed, and the ambitious attempt was pronounced a failure. In other respects, the cast was good:

Sir Harcourt, ...	Chippendale.
Max Harkaway, ...	Rogers.
Charles Courtly, ...	Howe.

Dazzle, ...	G. Vandenhoff.
Dolly Spanker, ...	Buckstone.
Meddle, ...	Compton.
Cool, ...	Clarke.
Grace, ...	Miss L. Howard.
Pert, ...	Mrs. E. Fitzwilliam.
Lady Gay, ...	———

The next new piece, and the only one produced this season at the Haymarket with any just pretensions to the rank of a comedy, was PLANCHE's "Knights of the Round Table." It was founded on a French piece, entitled, "*Des Chevaliers de Lansquenét;*" but it was so skilfully remodelled, and adapted to the English stage, that it had all the racy and varied effect of one of Fielding's novels skilfully dramatized—if such a thing were possible. It is full of intrigue, action, and complication: as the *Times*, in a long and elaborate article, observed of it:

"So full of adventure is the story, that an unskilful playwright might, very easily, have made of it an indissoluble tangle. As it is, the complexity with which the threads of the tale are tied together, is only equalled by the clearness with which all is explained at last."

On the reading of the comedy in the Green-Room, I used my privilege of selection, and chose, not the part (D'Arcy) which the author designed for me, but Captain Cozens, the leader of "The Knights of the Round Table," which are simply a gang of sharpers, and whose field of action is the gaming-table. Manager and author were surprised, and the latter somewhat disappointed, at my choice. I confess, one of

the motives that guided me, was that I thus avoided the position of lover to the leading lady, which was a relief, at any time, worth some sacrifice; but I thought that I saw, besides, that Captain Cozens might be made the strong character of the drama: the result justified my judgment. The following is the *Times'* notice of the performance:—

"The piece has the advantage of admirable acting, and while we extend our commendation to all parties, we would particularly pick out Mr. G. Vandenhoff and Mr. Buckstone, inasmuch as the excellence of these gentlemen lay beyond the limits of their usual departments. Mr. Vandenhoff, who had inauspiciously opened the evening by an apology for a cold, fought so valiantly against this physical impediment that he presented one of the most finished pictures of a cool, deliberate, well-bred villain that has been seen for many a long day. Firm in his evil purposes, and proud of his mental superiority, Captain Cozens always showed himself the ruling demon of the scene, and not an attitude or a gesture was without its value. In Tom Tittler, Mr. Buckstone gives us a specimen of some legitimate acting, in which the oddity of the poor, but valiant Tittler, by no means obscures the chivalric foundation of the character. We could dwell at some length on the excellent manner in which Mr. Compton, as Smith, cheats the landlord, but we purposely omit all description of that episode. It is an anecdote that would set a company in a roar after dinner, and which, told in a dramatic form, makes the house ring with laughter."

The piece was admirably put upon the stage; and the final scene of the fifth act, a view of London from Hampstead Heath, a hundred years back, was an elaborate "set;" and, as was universally admitted, was so admirably painted and arranged, and the light so skilfully disposed, as to form a most perfect landscape, equal to one of Cooper's or Moreland's.

DOUGLAS JERROLD, in *Punch*, said, in his concentrated, quintessential way:

"Mr. Vandenhoff, in Capt. Cozens, was cold, subtle, venomous; he seemed as though *he lived on snakes!* a swindler whose syllables are drops of poison."

The *Athenæum* was pleased to write:

"The success of the play greatly depended on the manner in which Mr. Vandenhoff supported his character."

This comedy ran fifty-four successive nights, at the Haymarket Theatre. The scene alluded to by the *Times*, in which SMITH cheats the landlord, is so good, that I give it here; as I am sure very few of my readers have seen the Comedy; which—I presume, owing to want of care and outlay in its production—did not, I believe, meet with great success on this side of the Atlantic.

SCENE FROM THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Coffee-Room at Locket's. Gentlemen dining at various tables—Waiters in attendance.* CAPTAIN COZENS *seated at a table in front. A table on right unoccupied.*

CAPTAIN. (*looking at his watch*) Quarter past five—they are late. Waiter!

WAITER. Coming, Sir.

CAPT. A pint of Claret.

WAITER. Yes, Sir—pint of claret, (*repeating the order*)

Enter SMITH.

SMITH. (*advancing to empty table*) Waiter!

WAITER. Sir.

SMITH. This table engaged?

WAITER. No, Sir.

SMITH. Then I may be permitted to sit here?

WAITER. Certainly, Sir. Dinner, Sir?

SMITH. If you please, I should feel obliged—as soon as possible.

WAITER. Bill of fare, Sir. (*giving it to him*)

SMITH. Thank you. I may have any thing I see here?

WAITER. Certainly, Sir. (*aside*) Some country gentleman.

SMITH. (*surprised*) You're very good. Then I'll say some *turtle*, to begin with.

WAITER. Turtle—yes, Sir. (*aside*) An alderman, or a banker.

SMITH. To be followed by *Filet de Turbot, á la Hollandaise—Hashed Venison*, and *Apricot Fritters.*

WAITER. (*bowing*) Yes, Sir. (*aside*) Oh, a very rich banker!

CAPT. (*who has been attracted by* SMITH'S *manner, aside*) Humph! Not a bad judge of a dinner, whoever he is!

SMITH. Some *punch*, of course, with the turtle.

WAITER. Yes, Sir—what wine, Sir?

SMITH. Is your *Madeira* fine?

WAITER. We have some very fine, Sir.

SMITH. I'll taste your Madeira. (*takes up newspaper, and reads*)

CAPT. (*aside*) A bon vivant—dressed plainly, but like a gentleman—a stranger here; at least I never saw him before.

Enter D'ARCY.

D'ARCY. (*seeing* CAPTAIN) Ah!—there you are!

CAPT. You're late. Where's Sir Ralph?

D'ARCY. Up stairs with the Baron and the Chevalier—we've a private room. I made an excuse to slip down whilst dinner is serving, to see if you were here. What news?

CAPT. The bird is found.

D'ARCY. Hah!—you are certain?

CAPT. Certain.

D'ARCY. And—can be—secured?

CAPT. Whenever I please—to-night, if I knew a safe cage for her till I could find a mate.

D'ARCY. The lodgings of one of our friends?

CAPT. No—I had rather not trust them in this matter.

SMITH. (*whose dinner has been served during the above conversation*) Waiter!

WAITER. Sir.

SMITH. Champagne.

WAITER. Yes, Sir. (*serves champagne*)

CAPT. (*to* D'ARCY) Do you know that man?

D'ARCY. (*looking at* SMITH) No.

CAPT. He knows how to live.

WAITER. (*to* D'ARCY) Your dinner is served, Sir—the gentlemen only wait for you.

D'ARCY. I am coming. (*aside*) I trust all to you.

CAPT. You may safely. What of your scheme?

D'ARCY. Come to-night to Madame Boulanger's, in Golden Square—there is a dance there—

CAPT. Where you have lodged—*your sister?*

D'ARCY. Aye, aye! of course—you know—ask for me—I shall be there till twelve, and may want you.

CAPT. Good! [*Exit* D'ARCY.

SMITH. Waiter!

WAITER. Sir.

SMITH. A pint of Burgundy—and some peaches.

CAPT. (*aside*) Peaches in May!—half-a-crown a-piece, at least!

SMITH. (*to* WAITER, *who brings Burgundy and peaches*) A toothpick; (WAITER *hands him one in a glass*) and in about ten minutes you may send for—

WAITER. A coach, Sir?

SMITH. No; an officer.

CAPT. (*aside*) An officer!

WAITER. An officer—of the Guards, Sir?

SMITH. No; a peace officer—a constable.

CAPT. (*aside*) and WAITER. (*aloud*) } A constable!

SMITH. A Constable.

WAITER. Lord, Sir! what for Sir?

CAPT. (*aside, and rising uneasily*) Aye, what for, indeed?

SMITH. To take me up!

CAPT. Take *him* up!

WAITER. Take *you* up, Sir?

CAPT. He's a madman!

SMITH. Well, I don't insist upon it, only take notice, I shall go as soon as I have finished this Burgundy.

WAITER. Well, Sir, your bill will be made out in a minute.

SMITH. Perhaps so; but it won't be paid in a minute—I've no money!

WAITER. No money! Here, Master!

SMITH. I told you to send for a constable.

CAPT. (*aside*) If the fellow is not mad, he's an artist.

Enter LANDLORD.

LANDLORD. What's the matter here?

WAITER. This gentleman, Sir.

SMITH. The Landlord, I presume. Sir, the matter is exceedingly simple—I have eaten an excellent dinner, and have no money to pay for it.

LAND. Lost your purse, Sir—not in my house, I hope?

SMITH. Oh, dear, no, Sir! I had no money when I entered it.

LAND. And you ordered a dinner that comes to—(*holding out bill*) one pound, eighteen and sixpence!

SMITH. No more! your charges are very moderate; I should have guessed two guineas at least.

LAND. And you can't pay it?

SMITH. It's a melancholy fact.

LAND. Then what the devil, Sir—

SMITH. My friend, my dear friend! pray don't make a disturbance: I have desired your waiter to send for a constable; what would you have me do more?

CAPT. (*aside*) He is a great artist—a very great artist!

LAND. Sir, you—you're a rogue—you're a swindler!

SMITH. Sir, you are abusive—you are offensive! If you do not choose to send for a constable, I am your most obedient—

LAND. But I will. Here, Dick, run for a constable.

CAPT. Nay, nay; stop! don't be hasty! the gentleman is,

perhaps, only a little eccentric. Allow me to say one word to him. Sir—(*to* SMITH)

SMITH. Sir. (*bowing*)

CAPT. (*aside to him*) A little difficulty of this description may happen to any gentleman. If you will pardon the liberty I take, as an utter stranger, in offering you the trifling loan of two guineas (*slipping them into his hand*)

SMITH. My dear Sir, no apology, I beg. I am your debtor!

CAPT. Hush!

SMITH. Certainly. (*aloud to* LANDLORD) Harkye, my friend It is just possible I may be a rogue, but it is also possible I may be an Ambassador—a Minister of State—or an East India Director. I, therefore, only request you to decide whether you will send for a constable or not.

LAND. (*hesitatingly*) Well, I should be sorry to do an uncivil thing by a gentleman for a guinea or two; and if you are a gentleman, I suppose, some other day, you might pay me.

SMITH. I *might*, undoubtedly, but mind—I *don't say I will.*

LAND. Well, you are an odd gentleman, certainly, but I'll trust you sooner than have a disturbance, and a mob round my door—so I leave it to your honor. (*throws bill on table, and exit.*)

SMITH. (*aside*) In that case—here go the two guineas! (*putting the two guineas which he has held in his hand into his pocket, and taking up his hat and cane*) Your humble servant, Sir. (*makes a gracious bow to* CAPTAIN COZENS, *and putting on his hat, walks out, picking his teeth and humming an Italian air!*)

This season was marked by the sudden death of Mrs. FITZWILLIAM, Buckstone's faithful partner and ally. She died suddenly, of cholera. She was a good-natured soul, and a hearty, clever, versatile actress. One of the pieces in which she was best known in this country, was called "Foreign Airs and Native Graces." Of this little piece I have the following incident to relate. While finishing my studies for the law, in early life, I wrote a one-act interlude,

entitled "The English Belle," and sent it to the Haymarket Theatre, during Mr. Webster's management, for acceptance. Nearly a year after, the piece was returned to me, rejected; and, a few weeks after that, this piece of "Foreign Airs and Native Graces"—this title being taken from a line of my rejected piece, "the English Belle"—was produced at that theatre, containing my incidents and a great part of the dialogue, with some additions: in fact, my piece, with a change of title and names of the characters.

In 1846, I played my own piece for my benefit, at the Howard Athenæum, Boston, under the title of the "American Belle,"—with MARY TAYLOR for the heroine, and WARREN for the Old Man. It went off with great laughter and applause; but, of course, the press, in noticing it, discovered, naturally enough, that it was almost a verbatim copy of "Foreign Airs and Native Graces." Amusing, very!

MEM: It is not always safe to trust a MS. farce to the Reader of a theatre, when that reader is a farce-writer himself! Mr. Moncrieff was, I believe, Mr. Webster's reader.

The SPANISH DANCERS, headed by the agile little Andalusian *Perea Nèna* were the next novelty at the Haymarket Theatre; and such was their, or rather *her* attraction—for her *corps de ballét* were shocking contrasts to her rapid, flashing, *coquettish* movements, now like the curvettings of an Arab barb, fretting on the bit, anon like the bound of the antelope, and now again like the whirl and whiz of a steam engine—such was her attraction, that acting and actors became of quite secondary importance. Mr. Buckstone

took advantage of the opportunity to rid himself of all salaries that it was inconvenient to pay, and of all services he could now dispense with; by the expedient of a notice in the Green-Room, closing the season on a Saturday night, and re-opening it on the Monday following, as a Summer-season! Ingenious and ingenuous!

During the season at the Haymarket Theatre, I played the following parts in tragedy and comedy:

Hamlet, 3 times; Evelyn (Money), 12 times; Claude (Lady of Lyons), 9 times; Benedick, twice; Rovely (in a three-act piece, called Ranelagh), 19 times; Cardinal Wolsey, twice; Stranger, 4 times; Incognito (Duchess Eleanor), twice; Duke Aranza, once; Bob Handy, 5 times; Reuben Glenroy, 6 times; Dazzle, 4 times; Captain Cozens, 54 times;—an average of more than three nights per week, for a season of thirty-eight weeks.

The result of my experience was, that I made up my mind to quit the profession of the Stage as soon as I could see my way clearly out of it: for I had now, as the leading actor of the leading Metropolitan Theatre, with acknowledged success in a great variety of characters, in tragedy and comedy, made this discovery—that, in the present condition of theatricals, there was no prize worthy a rational ambition, or the efforts of any man capable of other things. It was evident to me, that the London Stage, as an arena for the display of intellectual culture, or the cultivation of artistic excellence, was near its end: it had become a vehicle for spectacle, and illegitimate attraction of various kinds. I felt, at all events, that what little talent God had given me was misplaced on the stage,

and I resolved, as soon as possible, to say farewell to it—I hoped, forever!

Meantime, I played a three-weeks' engagement at the Liverpool Theatre; and next, an engagement of two months at the St. James' Theatre, London, under the direction of Mrs. Seymour.

This theatre opened with a Drama by Tom Taylor and Charles Reade, "the King's Rival," which did not meet with the success which was anticipated for it by the management. Charles Reade, in his preface to the printed play, seemed to attribute this to the deficiency of the representative of one of the principal characters. After a forced run of the piece for a month, to losing houses, we had to fall back on the regular Drama; and I found myself again playing Evelyn, in "Money," and Charles Surface, on alternate nights, followed by Claude, Lord Townley, Don Felix, and the never-dying, but much-abused, Stranger.

Illness compelled me to break off my engagement at the St. James' Theatre, which closed shortly afterwards, after a losing season of about three months—another proof that that theatre will never answer, except for French plays. Fashion supports them; but even they have not, I believe, always been profitable to Mr. Mitchell. It was the Theatre that ruined Braham, by his attempt to keep it open with English opera; and it will always be disastrous to any *Entrepreneur*.

Let me do Mrs. Seymour and Captain Curling the justice to say, that they fulfilled their obligations to me, and, I believe, to every one whom they engaged, faithfully and honorably. Mrs. Seymour's playing of

Nell Gwynne, in "the King's Rival," was an admirable piece of comedy, worthy of the best days of the Drama; and, if the play had been equally well acted in more pretentious parts, I have no doubt that it would have been a great success; but, in the serious scenes, it was allowed to flag horribly. Both Tom Taylor and Charles Reade will bear me out in this, I am sure, from what fell from them immediately after the play on the first night. I played the King to oblige Charles Reade, although I had the choice of characters; but he considered it easier to find a Richmond than a King Charles, and I accepted the less interesting, but more difficult part, at his request. I received his and Tom Taylor's thanks, after the first performance. The play itself is an excellent one, and ought to have succeeded. It would have done so, too, had there been a competent stage director. Had Mr. Wallack, for example, put it on the stage, it would have been a certain success.

This short season at the St. James' Theatre was another proof to me that it was time to quit the Stage. So powerfully had this feeling grown on me, that I continually had a fancy that I heard ringing in my ears, the Witch's ominous words in Macbeth,

"*Harper cries 'tis time! 'tis time!*"

So, I ran down to St. Leonard's, aforesaid, for a few weeks, and there shook off a violent attack of cold that had seized me. I was summoned back to town by an invitation from Sir James Moon, the Lord Mayor, to a special dinner at the Mansion House, to be given by him, on the 27th Feb., to the members

of the GARRICK CLUB, to which his lordship belonged. I mention this dinner, because the present President, Mr. BUCHANAN, then Minister at St. James's, was among the invited guests, and made a happy *hit* in his speech. The Earl of Carlisle was there, too, in his Lord Lieutenant's uniform, with the Ribbon of the Bath, the night before he quitted town to assume the Vice-royalty of Ireland. The chief Baron, POLLOCK, also, and other notables sat at the *Dais*.

The occasion of the dinner was this :—

Many of my readers are, perhaps, personally acquainted with the little Garrick Club, ("the little G," as Thackeray calls it,) in King St., Covent Garden; and those who are not so acquainted, yet know of it through the *éclât* of the recent difficulty between Mr. E. Yates and the author of "Vanity Fair," which created a sort of division in the Club—one party taking Yates' side, the other espousing that of Thackeray.

The merits of this "pretty little quarrel" I will not discuss. It seems, however, strikingly to illustrate the trite moral, that "they who live in glass-houses should not throw stones." I regret the falling-out of the affair: for such "quarrels of authors" cannot be classed among the "amenities of literature;" and "the little G" itself suffers damage, in public opinion, by the agitation of so puerile a matter.

My American friends may be interested to know that the Garrick Club was originated something less than half a century ago, by about a dozen gentlemen, chiefly members of the theatrical profession, who met together, formed themselves into a society by that

name, gradually increasing their number, which at this day amounts to about three hundred. The Dukes of Beaufort, and Devonshire, were successively its presidents. Its list of members comprises the names of some of the most distinguished ornaments of literature and art; and it enjoys, or did enjoy—I trust the little family quarrel has not permanently disturbed its harmony—the enviable reputation of being the least formal, and most *cosily*-agreeable club in London.

Of this Club, Sir James Moon is a member; and, in the smoking-room, one evening, being then Alderman, some one said to him:

"Moon, *you* will be Lord Mayor, before long; then you'll have to give us *all* a dinner at the Mansion House."

"I *will*," replied Sir James, "with pleasure."

Thus it happened that, being elected to the Chief Magistracy of the City of London, the year after this pledge, he redeemed it by the invitation I have mentioned, for the 27th Feb., 1855.

I find in my note-book on that night, the following memorandum:

"Dinner capital; speechifying *shy!*"

And so it was. Douglas Jerrold was there; and, on coming out, we agreed together on that verdict at the door.

It really was surprising that, among so many men of talent, in so many different lines, there was not one really good, smart, telling speech made for the whole evening! The Lord Mayor himself, the best of hosts,

was decidedly "no orator;" the Earl of Carlisle was not particularly felicitous on the occasion; the chief Baron ran, somehow, off the track, on to *education;* Thackeray was not (he never is) happy in his after-dinner out-pouring: he requires pen-ink-and-paper to make his thoughts and language flow easily;—and no one stood up to sustain the credit of the Garrick Club for *post-prandial* wit, and extemporaneous fluency. Dickens was not present, or he would have redeemed its honor, and "sent his hearers *smiling* to their beds!" In vain the Lord Mayor's "loving-cup" was handed round; in vain delicious wines, of the most exquisite flavor, and the most costly price, circulated in the extravagant profusion of a princely hospitality: they drew no responsive fervor from the lips that engulphed them down, and revelled in their lusciousness.

The solitary flash that lit up the tables—the solitary stroke that *told*—came from the forge of Mr. J. Buchanan, the American Minister. In reply to some toast of the Lord Mayor's, complimentary to the United States, Mr. Buchanan rose, put his hand, I think, into his broad, white-waistcoat pocket, and began:—

"My Lord Mayor, my lords and gentlemen: Republican as I am,"—he paused for a moment, and there was a solemn silence at his formal and rather ominous beginning— *Conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant!*

"Republican as I am, there is one Institution of Great Britain for which I feel the deepest respect, and the most affectionate admiration. I fervently pray that, whatever changes may take place—whatever reforms may be carried out—whatever alterations may

be wrought by public sentiment and opinion—whatever revolutions, even, (which heaven avert!) may take place in this country—I fervently pray that *one* institution, at least, may be spared—that *it* may continue to flourish, to grow, to increase, and be strengthened and confirmed! I allude, my lords and gentlemen, to THE PUBLIC DINNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN!"

Imagine the surprise, the shouts of laughter, and the cheers that followed this unexpectedly humorous turn to the solemn and imposing opening of his republican exordium! The American Minister had made a *hit:* he clenched it by courteously acknowledging the hospitalities he had received in England; and, proposing the health of Lady Moon, sat down, amidst general applause.

It was to recount this little incident that I mentioned the dinner; which, "barring the spayches," as SAM LOVER, who sat next to me, said, was, I think, the best I ever *ate;*—or "drank aither," Lover added. It took place in the beautiful Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House, amidst its classic forms of sculptured marble; the fragrancy of the viands, and the deliciousness of the wines, commended to our lips by strains of most exquisite music.

The morning after this great civic entertainment, I mounted my horse and rode down towards Bath—arrived the day after—remained there a few weeks, drinking, and bathing in the *eaux* of that once celebrated and fashionable watering-place, where Sheridan found his wife, Miss Linley, eloped with her, and fought the duel with Matthews: from which circum-

stances it was supposed he took the idea of his first and best comedy—"The Rivals, or a Trip to Bath."

Having set myself on my legs again by the Bath waters, I rode up to London, sold both my horses—as good horses as ever were crossed; one, a little chestnut, about fourteen hands, the other, a light bay, about fifteen-and-a-half—put myself in the train for Folkestone, and ran over to Paris, to take a peep at the great exhibition there, to see how nearly it came up to ours, (which it did not,) remained there a few weeks, *wrote an important letter, with an all-important proposition, to a certain lady in America*, came back to town, settled my affairs, declined an engagement which Charles Kean had offered me, at the Princess's, ran down to Liverpool, played there five nights, took a berth on board the "America" steamer, and arrived at Boston, after a stormy passage, on the 17th August, 1855.

Three days after, (on the 20th—*dies memorabilis!*) I was married, at Trinity Church, Boston, to the lady to whom I wrote the letter aforesaid. There was a small crowd assembled, though we had endeavored to avoid publicity; and the late Hon. Rufus Choate was one of the first persons who came forward to congratulate us. He was always a kind and sympathizing friend; and his recent death was painful news to myself and to my wife. We used to meet him frequently at the house of valued friends in Boston; and it was always a great joy to find Mr. Choate seated there, of an evening, delighting the circle with the play of his conversation, his happy facility of graphic, concentrated expression—with an occasional *Carlyle-ism* in

it—and that readiness of apt quotation which shed such a light on his serious, and even his sportive sayings: for he could call in classical authority, Greek, Latin, or English, for each. He had a quickness and aptness in this that I never knew excelled. None, who had only seen him dark, mysterious, grand, and self-abstracted, as he

"thunder'd in the tribune;"

or, who had only heard him shaking, and at the same time, moulding to his will, the hearts of a jury by his daring hypotheses and his impassioned eloquence; while ever and anon, with lowering brow and weird look of warning, he pointed at them that terrible index finger, as if threatening them with immediate retribution for a false, or even a mistaken verdict,—none who knew him only in these severer hours, could guess how simple and particularly unassuming he was in private—how affably indulgent to inferior minds—how considerate of their want of knowledge—how calm, how gentle, how courteous to all. He was a man that all who knew loved: those who knew him best, the most. His great delight was his books:

"His library was dukedom large enough."

There would he sit for hours, engaged with his favorite classics—of which he had ample store and a great variety of copies—the delight of his youth, the solace of his mature age; always a refreshment of his mental strength, and a rekindling of its energies, jaded and exhausted in the close and wearying Court-room.

I recollect a remark of his that struck me as peculi-

arly worthy of attention, coming from a mind of such experience and sound judgment on the particular subject, as his; and noting a fact, too, worthy of all praise and imitation. We were speaking of the conviction for fraud of the great bankers and defaulters, Sir John Dean Paul, Strachan & Bates, in England, who were brought to trial without delay; and, on sentence being passed on them, it was carried into effect at once, just as it would have been on the humblest clerk convicted of embezzlement. Mr. Choate expressed his approbation of the strict course of justice in this case; and added—

"Of all things that struck me as worthy of admiration on my visit to England, and that which impressed me most, was the certainty with which crime is punished there; there is no escape for it."

"Why," I asked, "do you think, Mr. Choate, those men would have escaped here?"

"I am afraid so," he answered.

"You are supposing," I suggested, "that they would have had you for their advocate."

"No," he replied, "I am supposing that they would have got off through some loop-hole; by dint of new trials, delay, and the default of witnesses, wearied out or tampered with. Here the punishment would be problematical; in England, it is certain."

I made a note of his remark.

A striking instance of the universal confidence in Mr. Choate's well-established power over a jury, was told me in Greenfield, Mass., where I had a country-house last summer. Mr. Choate had been down there on a special retainer, and had suc-

ceeded in obtaining the acquittal of a prisoner charged with murder, against whom the circumstantial evidence was very strong. A day or two after this unexpected result, two colored children—the eldest not over ten years of age—playing together, got into a quarrel. One of them struck the other; who, enraged at the insult, exclaimed—

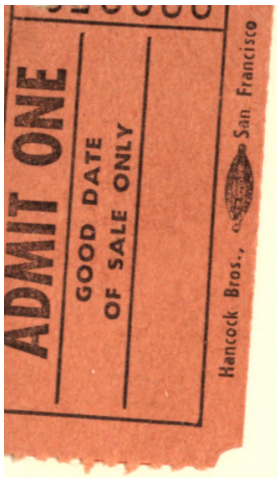
"Look-a-here! if you do dat again, I'll kill you."

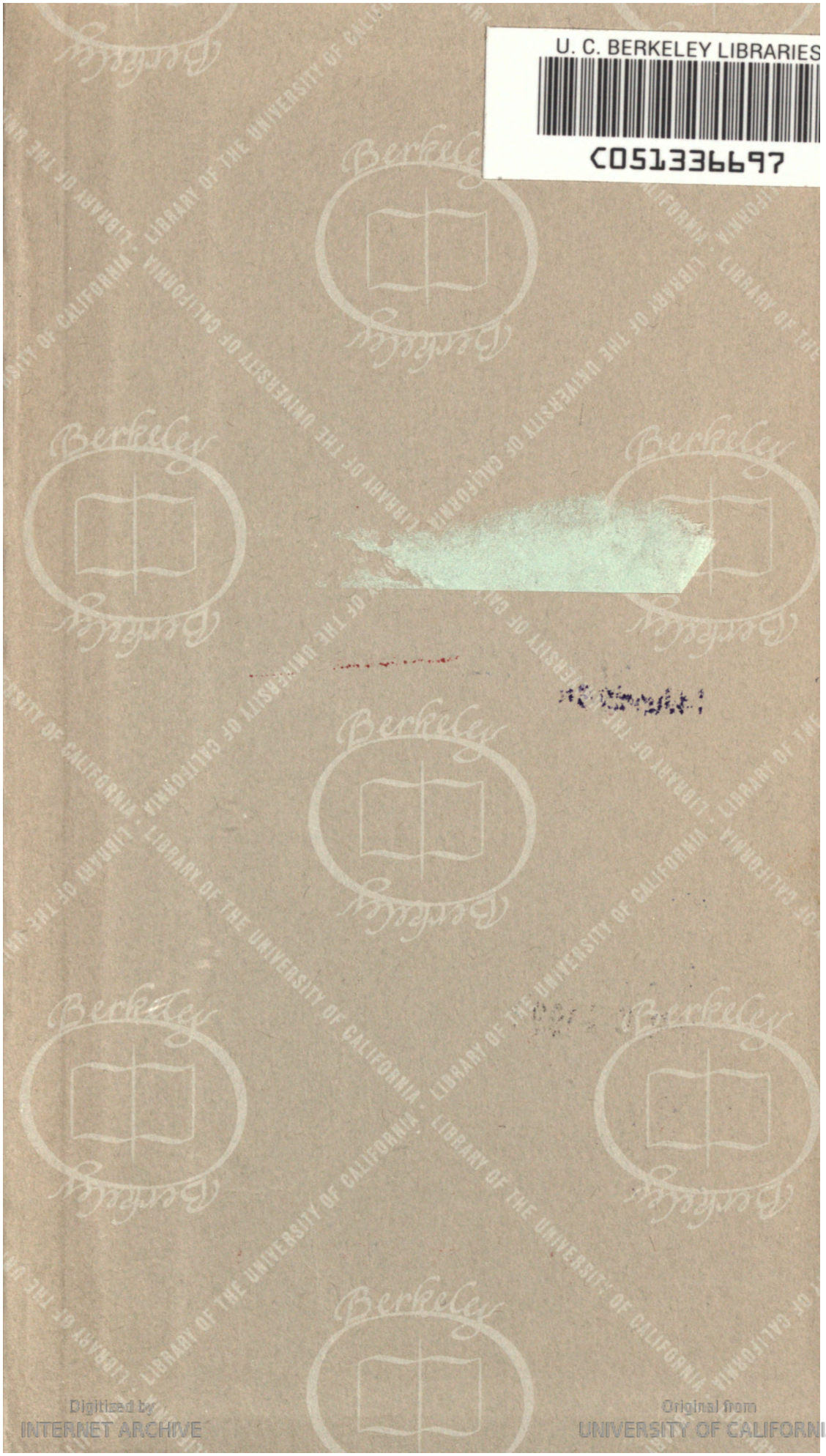
"Den, if you kill me, you'll be hung," said young Sambo.

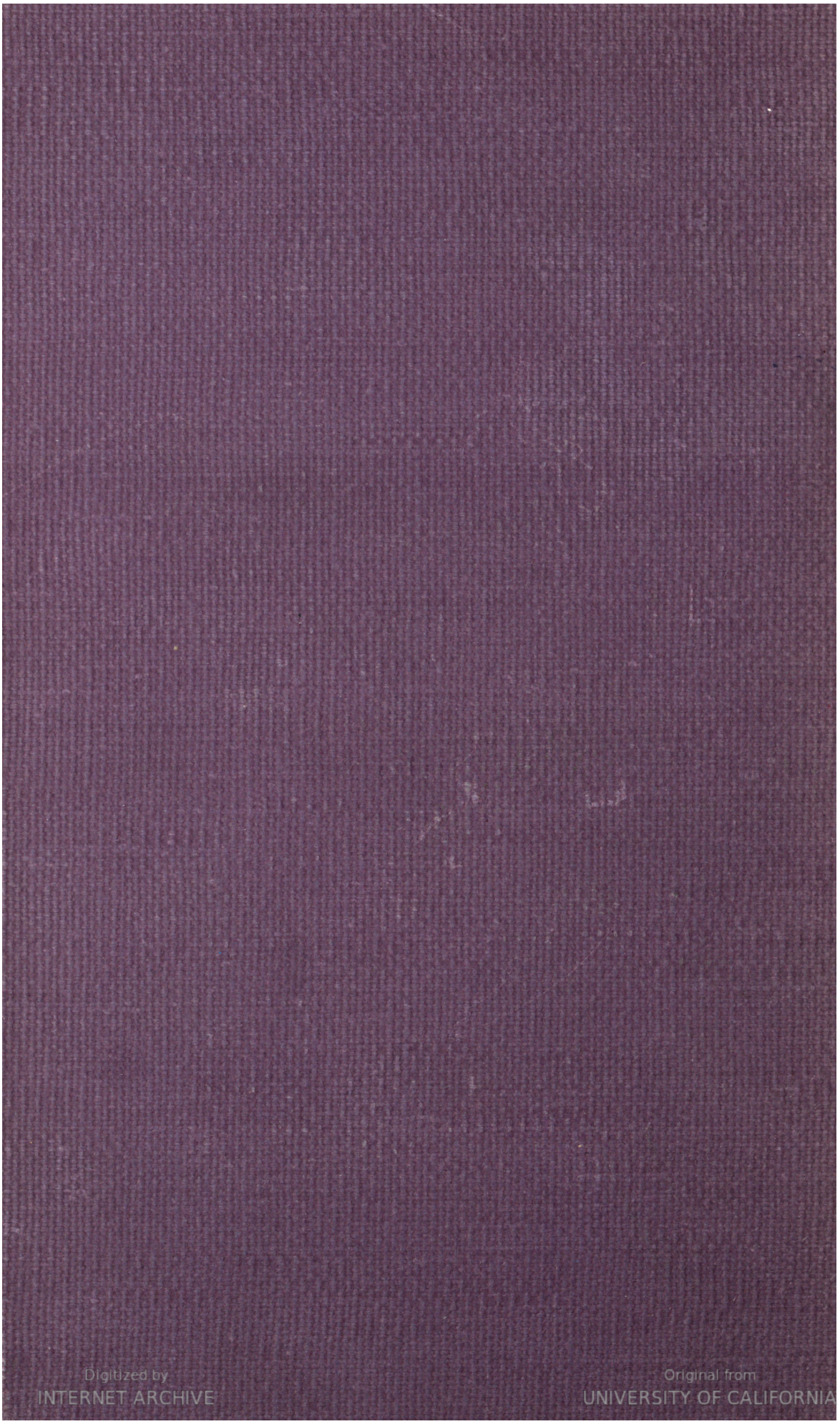
"No," replied the infant contemplator of homicide, with a precocious eye to the uncertainty of the law—"No, I shan't, neider; Mr. Choate 'll get me off:"—a singular comment on the great advocate's remark, which I have quoted above.

Mr. Choate carried out in its full sense, Lord Brougham's saying, that "in his duty as an advocate, a counsel knows no one but his client;" and he pleaded the cause of his client, whoever he or she might be, as if his own life depended on the issue. He argued, he wept, he warned, he threatened, he implored; he was at times Demosthenic in impulsive, fiery outburst; bitterly sarcastic, and "terribly in earnest;" anon, he was Ciceronic in the graceful flow, and polished cadence of his style. He neglected no effort, and despised no trick of oratory that could help his client and his cause; he put his whole soul into the action; and there can be little doubt that his unwearied and anxious labors in his profession, wore out his life. His was

> The fiery soul, that, working out its way,
> Fretted the feeble body to decay,
> And o'er inform'd its tenement of clay.







Leaves from an actor's note-book; with reminiscences and chit-chat of the green-room and the stage, in England and America. By George Vandenhoff ...

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