

"the height of the season." Among the operatic attractions of that year—I am writing of the days when the ballet was still a popular form of public entertainment—there was a certain dancer whose grace and beauty were the objects of universal admiration. I was asked if I had seen her, wherever I went, until my social position, as the one man who was indifferent to the reigning goddess of the stage, became quite unendurable. On the next occasion when I was invited to take a seat in a friend's box, I accepted the proposal; and (far from willingly) I went the way of the world—in other words, I went to the opera.

The first part of the performance had concluded when we got to the theatre, and the ballet had not yet begun. My friends amused themselves with looking for familiar faces in the boxes and stalls. I took a chair in a corner and waited, with my mind far away from the theatre, for the dancing that was to come. The lady who sat nearest to me (like ladies in general) disliked the neighborhood of a silent man. She determined to make me talk to her.

"Do tell me, Mr. Germaine," she said. "Did you ever see a theatre any where so full as this theatre is to-night?"

She handed me her opera-glass as she spoke. I moved to the front of the box to look at the audience.

It was certainly a wonderful sight. Every available atom of space (as I gradually raised the glass from the floor to the ceiling of the building) appeared to be occupied. Looking upward and upward, my range of view gradually reached the gallery. Even at that distance, the excellent glass which had been put into my hands brought the faces of the audience close to me. I looked first at the persons who occupied the front row of seats in the gallery stalls.

Moving the opera-glass slowly along the semicircle formed by the seats, I suddenly stopped when I reached the middle.

My heart gave a great leap as if it would bound out of my body. There was no mistaking that face among the commonplace faces near it. I had discovered Mrs. Van Brandt!

She sat in front—but not alone. There was a man in the stall immediately behind her, who bent over her and spoke to her from time to time. She listened to him, so far as I could see, with something of a sad and weary look. Who was the man? I might, or might not, find that out. Under any circumstances, I determined to speak to Mrs. Van Brandt.

The curtain rose for the ballet. I made the best excuse I could to my friends, and instantly left the box.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN ENGLAND.

THE announcement of the death of Miss Charlotte Cushman awakens recollections of a character at once so pleasant and so melancholy that it may interest some of her numerous admirers and friends if I place them on record in these pages.

Late in the year 1844 I was engaged in the editorship of a London paper of some consequence, chiefly devoted to *belles-lettres*, the fine arts, and the drama. Moreover, I had written several dramatic pieces for the Lyceum and other theatres which had been tolerably successful, and I had thus become acquainted with the managers of several of the dramatic temples in the great metropolis. One morning, while engaged with my colleague, the late Shirley Brooks, in preparing the paper for publication, I received a visit from Dr. Beard, afterward Charles Dickens's last medical attendant. He came to invite us to his house in, I think, Maddox Street, Regent Street, to be introduced, as he said, to an American actress of the highest type who had been vainly seeking an opportunity of appearing on the London boards. We ordered a cab and drove up to the house at once. We found Miss Cushman in the drawing-room, with Eliza Cook, Mr. Barton—a gentlemanly actor, in a painful state of consumption—and Miss Cushman's mother.

I was at once struck with Miss Cushman. Though far from what would be called a handsome woman,* her face betokened rare intelligence—a broad, massive forehead and a powerful rounded jaw gave evidence of high intellectual capability and great determination of purpose. The teeth were good and regular, the eye expressive, and the whole manner sprightly and good-humored. We had not been long in Miss Cushman's society before the subject of a *début* in London was brought on the tapis, and after being informed by herself of her *répertoire* and by Mr. Barton of her great capacity, Shirley Brooks and I came to the conclusion that Miss Cushman would be a safe card for any manager to play. We therefore took our leave and hastened to the Princess's Theatre, in Oxford Street—the only house, indeed, in the fashionable quarter of London which could make an opening for an actress. It was objectionable in some respects. The manager was not only destitute of any taste for the higher order of the drama, but was absolutely an indifferent character. He had some years previously "left his country for his country's good," going to Australia as *Medix*, and returning as *Maddox*. He had, however, made a little money during his enforced exile; and as the proprietor of the "Princess's" was eagerly desirous of letting his theatre to any one who could pay rent, Mr. Maddox had no difficulty in securing a lease. He chiefly laid himself out for opera, and from time to time engaged mediocre foreign singers at low salaries. His stock company was composed of inferior act-

ors who would rather play at any theatre than not play at all. The only respectable performer whose name occurs to me at this moment was Charles Fisher.

As we walked toward the Princess's Theatre we were joined by Albert Smith, who lived in the neighborhood, and soon afterward we met Maddox himself. I at once broached the subject.

"Maddox, you villain," said I, using the most complimentary and applicable word that suggested itself, "there's a chance of a fortune for you. We have just seen a lady who will be a bright particular star in the cloudy firmament over which you preside. Engage her at once before Bunn or Webster can see her."

His sharp eye glistened. "Whom do you mean?" "Miss Cushman, American."

"I have heard of her; she's not good-looking; and 'Mericans ain't no good unless they can jump Jim Crow."

"You are a fool, Maddox. You must give her a trial."

"Well, let me go to market first, and then we'll talk about it."

Here Brooks left us, as he had business elsewhere, but I was determined not to let Maddox escape. In Oxford Market he gave us a specimen of his habitual meanness, not to say rascality. Purchasing some potatoes which were in trays, classified according to price and quality, he selected three pounds of the cheapest; but while the market woman's back was turned to place a few in a scale, Maddox furtively stole three or four of the larger quality and slipped them, unseen by the vendor, into the measure, observing to us, with the most audacious effrontery, "If you don't look after these people, they're sure to cheat you."

Albert Smith observed, "At your old tricks, Maddox? You'll be getting lagged again."

The Jew grinned, but I could not help feeling some degree of repugnance at the prospect of placing Miss Cushman in such a blackguard's hands. However, I walked with him to his office in the theatre, and after some persuasion he agreed to see the lady. I then returned to Miss Cushman, having fixed an early day for the interview with the manager, and apologized to her for being the medium of bringing her into unavoidable contact with a ruffian. Her answer was prompt and characteristic. "I thank you heartily. I care not what he is, so long as he gives me an engagement and pays my salary."

I did not further interfere; but some days later, seeing Miss Cushman announced for Bianca, in *Fazio*, I called, delighted at the prospect of her success, on Mowbray Morris, the manager of the *Times*, John Oxenford, the dramatic critic, Michelli, of the *Post*, and Sir John Easthope, of the *Chronicle*. Dr. Beard's brother, Tom, was the sub-editor of the *Herald*, and needed no "stimulus." The others were entreated to send reporters to give Miss Cushman a helping hand, and Robert Bell and Rantoul promised every thing on behalf of the *Atlas* and the *Spectator*. I confess I did not feel comfortable about the selection of Bianca. Milman's play had been shelved since 1819, when I saw it admirably interpreted by Miss O'Neill and Charles Kemble. But it was unavoidable. There was no Macbeth in the Princess's company, and Maddox would not engage a suitable representative of the Thane, "'cos, don't yer see, it would cost too much money." Miss Cushman's success was triumphant. She threw all her fine energy into the character of the jealous wife, astonished her auditors in the third act, and electrified them in the fourth. The next day I wrote to congratulate her, and received a charming letter in reply.

Two years passed away, during which I rarely saw the great *tragédienne*—for such she had become by common consent. Helen Faucit's glories were dimmed. Her artificial style, nurtured by Macready, found few admirers by the side of the mighty woman who took nature and impulse for her guides. In 1846 or 1847 I was at Liverpool on business. Miss Cushman had then been playing a round of characters. Calling upon her at her hotel, she grasped me with both hands, and exclaimed, "My earliest and best friend in England, I am rejoiced to see you." She at once introduced me to her beautiful sister, Mrs. Merriam, who, she told me quietly, in a half whisper, was about to be married to Dr. Muspratt, a man who had acquired much celebrity as a chemist. She then said: "We are going over to Chester this afternoon. Come with us. I am engaged by Hammond to play Meg Merrilies. Do come! We'll have rare fun, and you can play a gypsy." I went. Dr. Muspratt and his brother joined the party, and it was altogether a very merry affair. The theatre was small and out of repair; it had once been a chapel attached to a monastery. The *corps dramatique* was a "scratch" concern, hastily recruited from the Liverpool theatres. The scenery was a collection of ragged canvas remnants. But Meg Merrilies rose above all obstacles. I had seen the opera of *Guy Mannering* performed at least twenty times, and the old gypsy nurse had generally been in the hands of the "heavy woman" of the company, who could not sing, and dressed herself in irreproachable tartan. But here was the veritable Meg. If Walter Scott was delighted when he discovered his Baillie Nicol Jarvie in Mackay, of the Edinburgh Theatre, he would have been thrown into ecstasies if he could have seen his own Meg Merrilies, in tatters, withered and worn, plaintively warbling the old ditty, "Oh, slumber, my darling," and afterward witnessed the awful throes of the dying gypsy, struck to the heart by a bullet from the pistol of the savage Dutch smuggler. If John Kemble could have seen Miss Cushman in that scene, he would have said of her what he predicated of Edmund Kean—"Terribly in earnest." Charlotte Cushman received £30 as her share of the night's performance, and insisted the next morning on my accepting a *gage d'amitié*, which I preserve to this hour.

Years passed away. The extraordinary artiste returned to America, after a glorious and profitable career in England; and in 1860 I came to the States, and had the pleasure of seeing her at Newport. She asked me to "give a reading from Dickens" at the hotel, and she would get all her friends to come. How, I asked, was I to advertise the inhabitants of the great treat in store for them? "Oh," said my dear friend, "get some little bills [programmes] printed at once, rise at five to-morrow morning, take a hammer and some tacks, and nail the programmes on the trees," adding, from *As You Like It*,

"Run, run, Orlando; carve, on every tree,
The fair, the chaste, and unexpressive she;"

and we laughed heartily at the odd conceit. But the device succeeded. Unhappily, in one of the recitations from Hood, I had to speak of "Sister Susan." Miss Cushman burst into tears. I had unwontedly touched a chord: her beautiful sister, Susan Muspratt, had recently died. I did not know it.

Six months later, I saw Miss Cushman play, at the Winter Garden, Romeo, and Juliana (in the *Honey-moon*). She was vilely supported. I ventured to remonstrate with her on an arrangement which seemed to place her at a disadvantage: a good picture ought to have a suitable frame. "Oh, it does not matter," said the indomitable woman. "If I can not carry a play through of myself, I am not worthy to be an actress."

Fifteen years more, and after a long absence in England I am again in the States. Last summer I went to Newport for a day. I called on my excellent friend. She was too ill to receive me; but on my return to New York I received from her a most kind—indeed, affectionate and affecting—letter, which I religiously preserve.

I saw Mrs. Siddons, the immortal, in Lady Macbeth in 1816, and though she was not what she had been, there were still so many traces of grandeur in her person and style that I deemed it impossible the stage should ever produce any thing finer. Charlotte Cushman, however, satisfied me that genius could be reproduced—or transmigrated—for she caught the mantle of Mrs. Siddons, which had long been unappropriated, and wore it with a grace that would have satisfied the greatest admirers of her marvelous prototype. J. H. SIDMONS.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE Martha Washington Centennial Tea Party at the Academy of Music and Irving and Nilsson halls, all of which were connected for the occasion, was a conspicuous feature in the celebration of Washington's Birthday in this city, and proved socially and financially a great success. It will be remembered that this reception was in aid of the Floating Hospital of St. John's Guild. It is stated that about ten thousand tickets were taken at the doors. Early in the evening every seat was occupied, and soon the halls were so crowded as to somewhat mar the pleasure of the occasion. When the curtain rose, about ten o'clock, a striking tableau was disclosed on the stage of the Academy, composed of the ladies who had charge of the tea-tables, all dressed in antique costumes, and of gentlemen in military uniform. After the singing of a patriotic song, there followed the "Menuet de la Cour," danced by twenty-four ladies and gentlemen dressed in costumes of 1776. This old-fashioned minuet is entirely new to the present generation. After this those on the stage fell into a promenade, passing into the corridor which led to Irving Hall, where the tea-tables—forty-nine in number, to correspond with the States and Territories—were spread. The ladies presided at the tables with grace and dignity, serving tea in delicate china cups, which were afterward sold as souvenirs of the occasion. Some of the guests meanwhile took possession of the Academy floor for dancing, while others wandered around to examine the curious relics of ancient times which were on exhibition. Among these were:

- The chair used by George Washington at his inauguration.
- Lock of George Washington's hair.
- Washington's coat and vest buttons.
- Washington's queue tie.
- Mrs. Washington's scarf.
- Part of dress worn by Mrs. Washington the day after her wedding.
- Washington's wine-coolers.
- Table used by Washington at Hackensack.
- Shoe-buckles worn by Washington.
- Lafayette's camp bedstead.
- Three chairs used by Charles Carroll of Carrollton.
- Official copy of the trial of Major André.
- Commission issued by Governor Hancock, 1789.
- Two letters from Aaron Burr, 1798.
- The rifle used by Patrick Henry, 1774.
- Musket found on the battle-field of Bunker Hill.
- Sword used by a British officer at Bunker Hill.
- Letter of Secretary of War Knox, 1791.
- Pennsylvania scrip, 1775.
- Commission of an officer in the Royal Artillery, signed Marlborough, Duke.
- Watch owned by Governor Fitch, of Connecticut.
- Two letters written in camp of the Revolutionary army.
- Part of bed-curtain presented by Lafayette to Mrs. Washington.

At the tenth annual meeting of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which was recently held in this city, an elegant silken banner was presented to the association by some ladies of New York, in token of their hearty sympathy with its objects and proceedings.

Japan continues to make rapid strides. A fine arts university has just been founded at Tokio, and the government has sent to Italy for three professors to fill the chairs of architectural design, ornamentation, and painting and sculpture combined. These professors are to be engaged for five years, and will receive salaries of 20,000 francs a year.

In addition to the five principal buildings on the Centennial grounds—the Main Building, Art Gallery, Machinery, Horticultural, and Agricultural buildings—many smaller structures either have been or will be erected. Among these are the United States Government Building, the Women's Pavilion, a wagon and carriage exhibition building, Judges' Pavilion, Centennial Photograph Association Building, United States

Laboratory, Swedish School-house, Pavilion for the British Empire, French Restaurant, Vienna Bakery and Coffee-house, German Restaurant, American Restaurant, New England Log-house and Modern Kitchen, Women's School-house, United States Hospital, Shoe and Leather Exhibition Building, and numerous other structures erected by private enterprise, or by some one of the States, or by a foreign nation. A Centennial National Bank and extensive telegraph offices will be on the grounds.

Some hundreds of Australian kangaroos have been recently sent to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, in Paris.

The celebrated painter Meissonnier has been named as the president of the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris.

There is a growing interest in the free high-school system in Maine. They have been kept in about 160 towns of the State during the past year.

The Byron Memorial Fund now reaches—so says the *Court Journal*—the sum of £2500.

Chilian law makes no distinction of sex, the only qualifications required for citizenship being the attainment of majority, and the ability to read and write.

A curious phenomenon is often witnessed in Virginia City, Nevada, during the winter—the snow seems to be falling from a sky blue and clear. Sometimes this curious storm continues for hours. This mysterious fall of snow comes from the peak of Mount Davidson, which rises high above the town on the west. The prevailing westerly winds catch up the snow from the top and sides of the mountain, and sift it down over the town. When there comes a heavy gale after a recent storm, the sight is grand; snow is hurled through the streets in blinding showers, and more may be seen in the city than falls directly from the clouds during the heaviest storm.

All the waiting-rooms of the principal railway stations in Paris are to be lighted by means of electricity. By working the "Graham Machine" with three-horse power, as much light is obtained as that given by a hundred gas lamps. The electric lantern is placed at a height of ten meters from the ground, and sheds a soft, clear light over an area of 20,000 square feet.

A family in Worcester, Massachusetts, having exhibited symptoms of being poisoned, a thorough investigation was made by the family physician. The fact was developed that the servant-girl had been using hot water from the copper boiler for making tea and coffee, and, indeed, for all cooking purposes. This boiler had, in process of time, collected impurities from the water and particles of copper sufficient to render it poisonous. Many cases of sickness may be traced to a similar cause.

The terrible mining disaster at St. Étienne does not grow less horrible as new details are developed. The exact number of men who were in the pit at the time of the explosion is not certainly known, but the man who had charge of the lamps reports 226. Two days after the disaster, 108 bodies had been recovered; and the funeral of those victims took place on February 7 amidst the most heart-rending scenes that can be conceived. The whole day was occupied with the services, in which an immense throng from every class in society participated. Large subscriptions have been raised for the benefit of the families of the dead miners.

It is greatly to be regretted that the admirable paintings of M. Baudry which decorate the New Opera-house in Paris have already suffered considerably in tone from the effect of the gas and the respiration of the audiences. It is asserted that these magnificent productions will be entirely lost in ten years—less time than the talented artist employed in their execution. All means will, of course, be used to preserve works so precious, which mark a distinct era in art. The proposal has been made to reproduce them in mosaic, as was done in Venice and Rome for masterpieces, of which the copy thus executed still remains as fresh as ever, after two centuries of existence.

The funeral of Charlotte Cushman, who died in Boston of pneumonia on February 18, took place on the following Monday. The services of the occasion were remarkably brief and simple, the great actress having expressed before her death an earnest desire that they should be so. The funeral rites were held in King's Chapel, the oldest of the Boston churches, which was thronged with those who loved and respected the deceased lady. The floral decorations, offerings of friends, were remarkably beautiful. She was buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, in a charming spot, which she herself selected in the latter part of 1874.

Miss Cushman had been a great sufferer from cancer, but recent treatment of the disease had apparently benefited her so much that she felt that she was really getting well, when a sudden cold resulted in fatal pneumonia. In this connection, and as illustrating her private character, our readers will be interested in an extract from a letter written to Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge about a week before her death:

"Dear, I am better; there is no question that I am coming through my dreadful slough. The way has been long and dark, but at last a ray of sunshine brightens every thing, and in spite of the self-pity at getting no sleep, I am not the wreck you might imagine from my manner of expressing myself. If you could look at me, as I wish from my heart you could, for my pleasure, you would say, 'She has been pre-tending.' . . . I believe now that I am going to get well! And then—and then—what shall I do to show my love and gratitude to the dear God who has raised me up from death, and what has been mortal ailment before ever since the foundation of the world? What way shall I live? What shall I do? Perhaps read again, who knows? . . . Your portrait of me in your letter, dear, is painted with a liberal hand. If I could only have been or be all you say, then I should wonder at nothing which happens to me. But what would affection be worth if it did not make us add our own excellence to that of the object beloved? . . . You shall hear from me again—how I am going on in health, and all. Now I am too tired to write more. God bless you, Yours,
CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN."

* She was at this time so like Macready in feature and expression that Mrs. Cushman (*mere*) told me that when the actor was one day looking over the shoulder of the actress, she could not for the moment distinguish them.

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