GOODWIN NATHANIEL CARLL

NAT GOODWIN'S BOOK

Nathaniel Goodwin

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Goodwin N.

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Содержание

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PREFACE

In penning memoirs or autobiographing it is extremely difficult to avoid writing impersonally, yet I shall strive to avoid it as much as possible, not so much from a sense of duty as from a standpoint of mercy.

I have never enjoyed reading about myself and I am firmly convinced that there are few who have. Perhaps, if I am tempted during this review to give myself an opinion of myself, it may be received with favor even by those critics who have never agreed with any of my characterizations.

I started this little work with some degree of terror. I had such a poor background to frame my somewhat checkered career upon. I fully realized that a man must be a very great person, or at least imagine himself to be, to write an autobiography. But finally after listening to the advice of friends I approached myself, albeit surprised at my temerity. After having read many autobiographies I discovered that most nearly-great persons who indulge in the dissipation of giving to the world their opinions of themselves were either born in dilapidated garrets or on unproductive farms.

As there were no trees in my garden of youth nor a candle placed in an empty bottle to shed its effulgence upon my future life I wondered how I could diversify and be truthful, yet entertaining. A feeling of apprehension akin to that which always follows the first night of one of my productions took hold of me. I wondered how this little effort of mine would be received.

When reading a criticism the morning following a production I am always fearful of being found out. If I am condemned I know I have been! But after I have fully digested all the unkind criticisms, which are usually written by those who do not fancy me in any serious effort, I am in the end always superlatively happy in knowing that the critic has done his duty.

If I had my way, he would be doing TIME!

Generally he is so blissfully ignorant of what he prates about that I have a silent chuckle all to myself at the expositions of his glaring and blatant incompetency. Yet it has always been a question in my mind whether the public enjoys reading vituperative attacks upon its stage favorites particularly after it has been entertained and amused the previous evening. I think that it is thoroughly satisfied with its own verdict and resents another's antagonistic to it. It much more enjoys reading something of the actor's private life particularly when it can read something which exposes his or her particular vagaries. And the public is prone to believe everything the visionary gentlemen of the press chronicle. The more unwholesome it is the more it believes; the more suggestive, the more palatable.

You have only to put any sort of halo around an actor or a cigar, good or bad, to beget a following or a smoker!

Unfortunately the halo that the public has been kind enough to place above me will not bear minute inspection. It is opaque. However, being unable to escape it I have always been content to smile within and when the haloed one has been supposedly exposed I can do nothing but sit tight and accept the inevitable. At times it has been a bit harrowing to submit, yet it has taught me self-control which I will endeavor to exercise in this little work. If I am tempted to use the personal pronoun more frequently than necessary I shall deflect and command my thoughts, to wander among more agreeable persons. Having lived so long within the confines of my kindly bestowed halo I have become fully aware of my limitations. The agreeable personalities are easily found and I hope my readers will enjoy their companionship as much as I have enjoyed them.

Every reference made to these delightful people is inspired by the kindliest of feelings and if I have judged one or two more harshly than they seemingly deserve the error is of the head, not of the heart; for I loved, liked or admired them all and I am none too poor to do them reverence – even now.

While some may regard my opinions as impertinences none can convincingly deny my right to think, and as all is given impersonally I believe that none will doubt my motives.

Many will question the various attitudes in this book particularly regarding marriage and divorce. They will advance the theory that the bonds of matrimony must be welded more closely even when the participants find it difficult to live normally. I know that many who are incarcerated in the dungeons of matrimonial thraldom would not stop at murder to burst their bonds. It does not require the philosophy of a Bacon or an Emerson to prove that such incarceration is wrong. Why make martyrs of those forced to live together when hate supplants love, when bodies and thoughts play upon different instruments producing only discords? The laws of our country make it possible for us to file the bars of our unwholesome cells and suppress this monumental mockery. The views I have incorporated in this book, right or wrong, I stand by. All through my life I have never feared criticism for any of my acts. My moral or physical courage has never failed. I have been and always will be willing to stand by my guns and take my medicine.

Before completing this work I unfortunately submitted a few excerpts to a visionary representative of one of the Los Angeles papers. He immediately published broadcast what he had absorbed and very obligingly gave it the title of his own imagination, "Memoirs of Matrimony," thereby creating the impression that my book was to be devoted simply to my marital experiences. Such was never my intention, but as more than thirty years of my life have been devoted to matrimony naturally my autobiography demands mention of the women who have borne my name.

I have been censured sometimes harshly for my versatility in the selection of wives and many have marvelled at my fortunate (or unfortunate) selections. I have always been long on the market of home and wives.

I truly believe that no home is complete without a wife, providing she is of the kind that enjoys the company of intelligent, honest and clever people. Some men only lease their mates and then prate about their respectability. If I have decided at different times to tear down any of the Ephesian domes which I have erected, is the fact of my destroying them enough to warrant my being known, as was Alexander, as the fool that razed (or is it raised?) them?

While autobiography and a round up of memories will necessarily be conspicuous I shall endeavor also to make this book a medium of retrospective thoughts given to the many people, prominent and otherwise, with whom I have come in contact. As I have no notes I shall write purely from memory's tablets. If inaccuracies occur they will be unintentional.

Many of those dear friends have long since passed down the lonely mountain trail, but their sweet memories still linger by the roadside. If they but leave the perfume of their souls to mark the road for me to follow when I arrive at the corral nature has established in the valley I hope that we all shall meet and that they will elect me their callboy, that I may be privileged to ring up the curtain upon perpetual joy.

N. C. G.

Ocean Park, California.

Chapter I
COMMENCEMENT DAY

One bright morning in June, 1872, the Little Blue Academy of old Farmington College, Maine, rang with the plaudits of an admiring throng of visitors. Some of them had come in their capacious coaches, lumbering and crushing their way through the streets of the usually quiet village, while others in good old Puritan fashion had come afoot and across fields and by-ways. Altogether the tumult was great both without and within and the Puritan housewives, their quiet thus sadly disturbed, devoutly offered up thanks that such affairs occurred but once in a twelvemonth. But the clatter of contending Jehus and vociferous villagers on the campus was nothing compared with the resounding clash of palms and other noisy demonstrations of approval within.

It was Commencement Day. Eager papas and mammas, sweet, admiring misses and anxious friends were there that neither valedictorian, salutatorian, orator nor poet might lack that proper sort of encouragement, without which any affair of this nature must necessarily be incomplete. They were to decide as well the winner of the prize in elocution. Truly it was a day of mighty portent.

Many had spoken their parts and the rafters and roof had given back the approving shouts in echoes almost as resounding as the words themselves. At length my name was announced by our preceptor and worthy master, Mr. Alden J. Blethen, the present manager and owner of the Seattle "Times."

With some timidity, but tremendous eagerness, I mounted the improvised rostrum and began my recitation of a poem called "The Uncle." As I began my eyes seemed to be swimming back and forth in my head. I saw nothing but birds floating into space. Then a death-like silence ensued and images usurped the place of birds. They assumed forms and through the mists came men and women and one by one they seemed to come before my vision until the room was filled. I finished, I thought, in a hush and was utterly oblivious to the great burst of applause which greeted my efforts. My seat-mate, poor Charlie Thomas who in after years was associated with Charles Hoyt, the writer and producer of many successful farce comedies, grabbed me by the arm and hurled me back upon the stage whispering, "Give them that 'Macbeth' speech!" Mechanically I acted upon his suggestion and began the soliloquy. I remembered nothing more until we left the hall. In fact I was in a comatose state until summoned that evening by Mr. Blethen to come into his library where, in the presence of the other scholars, I was presented with a set of Shakespeare's Complete Works.

As I went to my room that night I began to dream of the life to come. I saw myself startling the world as King Lear.

Two days after I received the first newspaper criticism of my work from the Portland papers. The notices pleased me beyond words and brought more joy to my young heart than any I ever received in after life. With pardonable pride, I trust, I set one forth here: —

"The little Academy had never known the delirium of applause until a slight, delicate youth, with peculiar flaxen hair, round blue eyes, and a complexion as fair as a girl's mounted the rostrum and spoke his lines. Such elocution must have awakened unusual interest, and so easy was the speaker, so perfect his actions and charming his intelligence, that the old dormitory shook with plaudits."

I was told twenty-five years later by a little Jew critic named Cohen that I lacked all these attributes, after I had devoted a quarter of a century in earnest endeavor to accentuate them! How I must have retrograded in all those years! Until he told me I thought I must have travelled ahead, for I could not possibly have gone back. But perhaps I never started! The notices in the Portland papers fanned the smoke into a flame and from that day I determined to become an actor. Some years before I had become imbued with the idea, the inspiration coming from my living in close proximity to an actors' boarding-house kept by a Mrs. Fisher at No. 3 Bulfinch Place, Boston. Many and many a time

have I waited between school hours and play to catch a glimpse of the occupants of this celebrated yet modest hostelry, for here were housed many conspicuous actors of the day. Many a time I endeavored to touch the sleeve or any part of the garment of the players as they emerged from the house on their way to rehearsals and if I succeeded my mission was fulfilled for the day.

On one occasion William Warren's hat blew off. I rushed for it and rescued it from beneath a horse's hoofs. I returned it to the owner and he thanked me very graciously. The incident was too much for my young nerves. I played hookey that afternoon. School had no charms for me that day. An actor had spoken to me!

Years after I was privileged to meet this gentleman at a breakfast given in my honor by the Elks of Boston with Mayor O'Brien in the chair. I had been invited to appear at a charity benefit to be preceded by this breakfast. I was playing at the time at the Bijou Theatre, New York, but I arranged to leave on the midnight train, arriving in time for the breakfast at nine. Afterwards I appeared at eleven o'clock at the benefit, catching the one o'clock train back to New York.

Upon my arrival in Boston the Mayor met me at the train with a Committee which took me in charge. We drove straight to the breakfast room. There the first to greet me was dear old William Warren. A lump came up into my throat as big as a water melon. Think of it – that tall, big player to greet me! With out-stretched hand he bade me welcome home where, he said, all loved me. "Come and sit by me, my son," said he, and as I turned to answer him he looked to me like a god. I was privileged to sit by the genius whose coat hem I had in years gone by waited for hours to touch. He was unconsciously rewarding me for my boyish hero-worship. He was touching my heart strings and creating delightful memories to remain forever in my mind. No food passed my lips. I was above the clouds playing upon a golden harp! My blood flowed through my veins like lava! I was sitting by a great comedian and, believe me, I was glad, for I consider William Warren the greatest comedian that ever lived.

After the breakfast which was hurriedly eaten we started for the playhouse. I was so nervous that I could scarcely make up, but I knew that I had to do something as this great man was in the audience.

At length the moment came for me to make my entrance. Tremendous applause greeted me. I endeavored to play as I had never played before. My inspiration was the gentle face in the right-hand box beaming upon my incompetency. I was dreadfully self conscious. I knew I was in the presence of a master and try as I would nothing seemed to get over the footlights as I wished. Every word seemed to stop dead at that right-hand box and would not go beyond. When the finish came I offered up a silent prayer of gratitude.

As I wended my way slowly to the dressing-room someone congratulated me upon my efforts. As I sank into my chair the stage manager opened the door, reiterating the congratulations. I simply asked, "How did Mr. Warren like me?" Before he could answer the tall figure of Warren appeared at the door and he said, "I couldn't have done it better myself, young man!" Then he patted me on the shoulder, saying, "Hurry, or you'll miss your train." He shook me by the hand, bade me good-bye and returned to the boarding-house where he had lived for many years, to his little back room. A few weeks later twelve men bore his body to Mt. Auburn Cemetery placing him among the roses.

Warren's Sir Peter Teazle, Jefferson Scattering Batkins, Jessie Rural, Tony Lumpkin, Bob Acres, Dr. Pangloss and about all of Shakespeare's clowns have never been equaled by any player of any age. He had all the humor and the pathos that comedy is heir to – a player of the old school, not the night school.

Chapter II
MY DEBUT

After leaving the Little Blue Academy of Old Farmington I returned to New York with my parents. We were there but a short time when we returned to Boston, where my father, one of those thoroughgoing Bostonians who intended me for the law, compromised by securing for me a position as an entry clerk in the counting-room of Wellington Bros. & Co., dry goods merchants. This did not appeal to me, and at stray intervals I found great pleasure in fraternizing with a few actors with whom I had become acquainted. I preferred play books to the ledgers and account books of Wellington Bros. They were my special delight, and I devoted all my spare time to committing the lines of the leading parts to memory. My father always allowed me money to attend the theatres. I was privileged to see all the great actors of my day, and every other night found me in either the front row of the balcony, or gallery of the local theatres. I would go over the lines as I had heard them, and in doing so found that I could reproduce the tones and gestures of the players I had seen. Thus I discovered that I had the gift of imitation. One by one I added to my parts until at length I found that I had a repertoire of seventeen. I would rehearse them with my only auditor, my mother, who considered them perfect.

Night usually found me at the back door of the Boston Theatre or Boston Museum importuning the Captain of the Supers to be allowed to carry a spear. The major portion of my time was given to affairs theatrical until finally my employers decided to dispense with my valuable services, and much to my delight I was cast adrift.

My mother, who always had a great fondness for the stage and was always seeking the society of those connected with it, made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Thorne, Sr., the father and mother of Charles, Edwin and William Thorne, and persuaded them to take a suite of rooms at our house in Boston, situated at the corner of Bulfinch and Howard Streets, directly opposite the famous Mrs. Fisher's theatrical boarding-house. The Thornes were very delightful old people, and for hours I would sit and listen to them discussing the favorites of olden times, dating back to the advent of the Keans. Finally, they persuaded their son Edwin to come and live with us, and for the first time I found myself in the divine atmosphere of the players' life. Edwin was the leading man at the Howard Athenaeum, playing stock pieces and supporting travelling stars.

The Thornes were a great delight to me, as they had the entry to all the playhouses in Boston, and it was my joy to accompany dear Mrs. Thorne to every "first night."

Edwin Thorne finally left our house and became leading man at the Providence Opera House, under the management of William Henderson. I would often visit Providence, go behind the scenes and hold the book while Thorne was committing his various parts to memory. It is unnecessary to state that I was always enthralled at these golden opportunities. After repeated requests Thorne was persuaded to use his influence in procuring me an engagement. Finally I was offered the part of Sir George Hounslow in the old melodrama, "The Bottle." I fortified myself with a blonde wig, never dreaming of using my own blonde locks. I thought every actor should wear a wig. From Thorne's wardrobe I selected clothing altogether too large for my slim proportions. I required inspiration and atmosphere and decided that in the wardrobe of the illustrious player I should find it. Bedecked in those ill-fitting garments I stood at the wings on the opening night waiting for my cue.

I was possessed of so much assurance at rehearsals that little attention had been paid to me regarding the details of stage business, the stage manager taking all for granted. I was the bad young man of the play, seeking to bring about the dishonor of the soubrette. I was supposed to have endeavored to embrace her down the road, she to have eluded my advances and broken away, rushing onto the stage, I following. Naturally she did not rehearse all she intended to do that evening, and while I was quietly talking with her in the entrance, the cue was given and she uttered a fearful shriek!

I didn't know what had happened and looked around for the cause. Then I found she was in the center of the stage wildly beckoning me to come on and finish the scene that was supposed to have started down the road. Somebody shoved me on. The orchestra played chilly music suggestive of my base intentions. This took every line out of my head, and I simply stood there and gasped! Not a sound could I ejaculate! The young lady contemplated me for a moment and cried, "You shall not!" Then she rushed off, leaving me transfixed. From each side of the stage I could hear, "Come off! Come off!" but I seemed paralyzed and could not stir. At last the lights went out, the scene was changed and when I came to I found myself in the property room with two or three gentlemen in red flannel shirts throwing water into my face. They left me for an instant, and I ran out of the stage door in all my makeup and Thorne's wardrobe (which he afterwards told me I failed to return). I waited until the train came through for Boston and boarded it, utterly oblivious of the sensation I was creating among the passengers by my painted face and penciled eyebrows. I jumped into a cab upon my arrival at the Boston station, drove home to my parents and threw myself into my mother's arms crying, "I cannot act! Get me a position in a shoe store!"

I was heartbroken for many weeks and firmly resolved never to become an actor; but gradually my mother, who always believed in my hidden histrionic powers, instilled some courage into my soul, I yielded to her sympathy and advice and determined to try once more.

Through my mother's influence my father bowed at last to what seemed the inevitable and consented to permit me to prepare myself for the stage, exacting from me a promise, however, that I would devote not less than five hours a day to my studies. Accordingly I was sent to Wyzeman Marshall, an old-school actor of some repute during the reign of Edwin Forrest, who undertook my training. I spent many happy hours with this charming old gentleman as he devoted most of his (and my) time to anecdotes and stories of the past. He taught me but little, apart from the scanning of Shakespeare, which he thoroughly instilled into my mind, so the few months which I spent under his tutelage did me much good. I had no thought of being a comedian and devoted all of my time to the study of serious rôles, from Douglas to the bloody Thane of Cawdor, and committed all those parts to memory.

Fortunately for me at this time I became acquainted with Stuart Robson.

Chapter III
STUART ROBSON

My meeting with Stuart Robson was brought about by the influence of Joseph Bradford, a clever playwright of the day. He had heard my imitations of actors and pronounced upon them favorably, "not only for their accuracy," as he put it, but the methods I employed reminded him of a dear friend of his who had passed away some years before – Robert Craig, to whom I was told I bore a striking resemblance.

Robert Craig was a clever player, playwright and wonderful mimic. He was for years leading comedian at Mrs. John Drew's Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia. Had he lived he would certainly have made dramatic history for himself. I have only a faint recollection of him, but Bradford often told me of his many wonderful gifts and I have many times wished that I had been born earlier or he later.

Bradford was an extraordinary person. A most incompetent actor, which he often with great regret admitted, but one of the greatest geniuses that I have ever met – a master in all matters pertaining to the drama and literature of the theatre. Had he lived I feel certain that he would have become the Pinero of the American stage. Alas, he was given to conviviality and lived only for his friends.

He possessed a splendid physique and was gifted with fine conversational power. His fund of humor was excelled by none. He was liberal to a fault, devoid of egotism, with always a kindly word for those with whom he came in contact and possessed a brain as pyrotechnical as Paine's fireworks. You can imagine his influence upon those who were fortunate enough to be his associates. His knowledge of painting, drama, music, sculpture, literature, poetry, in fact all the arts, seemed unlimited. As a critic he had a style peculiarly his own, equalled only by Hazlitt, Lamb, Lewes and a few others. He was a graduate of Annapolis and left there with many honors. Very often we would sit in his rooms and he would read me his prose and poetry, which he never allowed to be published but which I think was as nearly unique as that of Edgar Allan Poe, to whom he bore a striking resemblance. He was a devotee at the shrine of Poe and often regretted the untimely end of America's greatest lyrical genius. Little did he imagine that his end would be the same. Burns, Poe and Bradford were the victims of their mastering passion – the loving cup.

Through his kindly interest and guidance I was enabled to secure my first real engagement and make the acquaintance of the best Shakespearean clown of modern times and one of the cleverest of modern comedians as well, Stuart Robson.

I remember the morning Bradford guided me behind the scenes of the old Howard Athenaeum to present me to Stuart Robson. As we entered we found that gentleman in the throes of a busy rehearsal of one of Bradford's plays. As I stood in the entrance faint from excitement Robson stopped, looked toward the entrance where I stood, transfixed, walked toward me and said, "My God, Brad! who is this young man?" Bradford answered, "A young friend of mine who wants to go on the stage. Of whom does he remind you, Rob?" Robson looked at me for a minute, and ejaculated, "Merciful powers, Bob Craig!" After being introduced we shook hands and he said, "Come into my dressing-room, young man, and let me have a good look at you." As we entered the room he seated me upon a trunk, took both my hands in his and with the tears streaming down his face gasped, "Wonderful! Wonderful! I have never seen such a resemblance between two human beings!"

Within a few minutes the rehearsal was dismissed. Bradford and Robson took their seats in the front row of the parquet and I went through my repertoire of imitations. I rendered sixteen and Rob, bless him, always pronounced the last one the best. I was about to leave the stage when Brad insisted that I should give one of Robson. I put a veto upon that proposition and after about fifteen minutes of violent pleading Robson, who understood my feelings, sustained the veto.

Robson immediately offered me a part in the play which he was about to produce, and on the following Monday I appeared in Bradford's play, "Law in New York," as Ned the newsboy, and in the pier scene I first gave my imitations of celebrated actors on the stage of a theatre.

They told me that my stunt went remarkably well, but I have no recollection of what occurred. After I had responded to several encores someone in the gallery cried out, "Give us an imitation of Robson!" It took my breath away, but I stood still and calmly shook my head. I was recalled and still the cry came, "Robson! Robson!" He was standing in the wings and as I came off I said, "What can I do, Mr. Robson? They are clamoring for me to give an imitation of you!" "Do?" said he in that falsetto voice so well known to theatregoers of that period, "Go back and give the villains hell!" On the impulse of the moment I went through an entire scene which the audience had just witnessed between Robson and a favorite player named Henry Bloodgood. As I assumed each voice, particularly Robson's, the applause was deafening, and at the finish, after repeated recalls, Robson was obliged to take me on and make a speech, thanking the audience in my behalf.

After the play Robson said to me, "Young Goodwin, you have done two things tonight that I shall never forget – halted the performance of a very good play and given a very bad imitation of me. I could have done it better myself."

Poor Rob, like all people possessed of conspicuous mannerisms, was never able to detect his even when emphasized by mimicry. One can never see himself in another.

I appreciated this in after life when I was seated in the private box of the Broadway Theatre, New York. A young man named Alf Hampton had given what I considered some remarkably clever imitations of leading actors. Having somewhat of a reputation at that time in this same line and being rather conspicuous that evening I gave vent to my pleasure by applauding most vociferously all of his efforts. To my horror he approached the footlights and announced an imitation of me! As he finished the applause from all over the house shook the rafters, but I could not discover one familiar tone. As he gave the imitation a friend of mine, seated in the front row, looked over and very audibly asked, "Well, what do you think of that, Nat?" I replied, "One of us is rotten."

Poor Bradford dissipated his genius, and died, twenty odd years ago, in penury. I was not present at his death, but fortunately I arrived in time to save him from a pauper's grave, and he now sleeps tranquilly in beautiful Mt. Auburn with his poems and other children of his brain – a happy family known only to the elect. Adieu, dear friend. "Though lost to sight, to memory dear."

Through all my theatrical career up to Robson's exit from life's theatre the closest association and dearest friendship existed between us. He was always my sponsor, my adviser; and what knowledge he bestowed relative to the ethics of our art! Analytically he was master of more of the fundamental rules of acting than even Lawrence Barrett who was an authority. While Robson was never able to convey a sentimental thought by any facial expression or delivery, he could point out correctly the methods required to convey them. Had he not been handicapped by a vocal organ that squeaked forth only fun, his pathos would have equalled John E. Owens' or Joe Jefferson's.

I shall never forget the time when Robson, Crane, and I appeared in an act of "Julius Caesar" at a benefit given to poor Tony Hart. Robson was the Cassius; Crane, Brutus, and I was cast for Antony. We gave the characters all the study and attention due to the great master and were firm in our resolution to play the respective rôles with proper reverence, to bestow upon them all the tragic force and power within our capacities; but the public took the idea in a spirit of jest and came prepared to see us burlesque the characters, never assuming that we were in earnest in our purpose.

The afternoon came. The theatre was packed. I was the first of the trio to make an entrance. Fortunately I came on with the mob and my few lines passed unnoticed, as none in front recognized me. To be sure I was denied the thrills of a reception, but I had the end of an act and was quite content to wait.

The scene was soon over and the full stage of the old Academy of Music opened radiantly as Robson and Crane made their entrances as Cassius and Brutus. They came majestically forth and

were greeted by applause that lasted fully a minute. They looked pictures. Forrest and Macready never looked more like Roman senators than those two comedians as they acknowledged the plaudits with true tragic dignity. Then a hush, as the audience settled back for the expected travesty. It needed only the familiar notes of Rob's voice to reassure them that they were right in their conjectures and a shout of laughter went up as he began the speech, "That I do love you, Brutus," etc. The shrieks of laughter interrupted his long thought-out delivery. He paused. His face became livid even through his heavy make up. Then he began the speech again in a more modulated tone. The second time he got as far as "I do love you, Brutus," when another yell blared from the front. He again stopped, bit his lips with suppressed rage and waited a few seconds. It seemed an eternity to us in the entrance. Then Rob raised his hand and by a simple gesture commanded silence.

The laughter soon quieted down as it became apparent that Robson was endeavoring to play the part legitimately and a subdued silence greeted him as he began his speech for the third time. He started in even a lower key and continued the speech. As he got into it he began to feel the meaning of the words and tried to read them with true expression. As he gave them the necessary emphasis his voice, that most ready of organs, refused to obey the dictation of the brain and the gradual crescendo required for the delivery became a succession of Robsonian squeaks! The audience loyally tried to suppress its hilarity. At first it smiled, then giggled, then peals of laughter hurled themselves across the footlights like shots from a Gatling gun. All upon the stage, except poor Robson, heard the merry storm. He was now thoroughly engrossed and squeaked away to beat Gilmore's band, utterly oblivious of the fun he was creating. Thinner and thinner came Rob's squeak; louder and still louder came the laughter until it became a veritable avalanche. As he reached the line,

"Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder the old Anchises bear" —

He realized that the audience was laughing at him and he continued,

"Did I, the tired Caesar, you blankety-blank, blankety-blank!", his added interpolation being really unfit for publication.

Fortunately the laughter drowned the words. Had the audience heard them the performance would have ended then and there. We all thought that it must have heard, that the end had come. I prayed fervently that it had, but no such luck! It gradually quieted down and the play proceeded. When my turn came to end the act some of my friends said I did very creditably. At all events I got through without a laugh. And that I considered a triumph. We often referred to it in after life and always with great pleasure.

Robson was a unique person, gifted with the most thorough sense of right and wrong of any man I ever knew. His word was a contract and with it went the liberality of a king. He absolutely refused to grow old and sought only the young. He tried to emulate the deeds of charity of the Good Samaritan and had a kind word for all humanity. He possessed the soul of a saint and the heart of a fawn. His motto was JUSTICE. He wrote the words and music of HONOR.

In a spirit of jest he once promised a coachman a gift of five thousand dollars if the coachman succeeded in winning the hand and heart of a certain lady. He gave him one dollar on account never dreaming that the man would woo and win successfully. Imagine his surprise when six years later the man turned up and informed him of the date of the wedding. I happened to be present at the time at his summer place at Cohasset, Mass. The coachman went his way and Rob told me of his promise. I said, "Surely, you are not going to make good a promise made in jest?" He answered, "I am," went inside the house and in a few minutes came back on the veranda with the cheque for four thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars in his hand. He called his daughter and sent her down the road with the cheque in quest of the young coachman, with instructions to present it to him as a wedding gift "from S. Robson, Esquire," ordered a brandy and soda from his servant and rudely left me with instructions to "Go home!" Knowing dear Rob's proclivities for B and S's, I loitered about for a few hours and then returned to the house, but Rob had disappeared.

His daughter and I finally located him, with a few convivial friends in the hotel bar at Hingham. He called us to one side and quietly asked his daughter if she had performed the duty as requested. She answered, "Yes, papa, I gave him the cheque." Rob asked, "How did he take it?" His daughter replied, "Papa, he cried!" "How long did he cry?" asked Rob. "About a minute," she replied. "That's nothing," said Rob, "when I signed it I cried an hour!"

I could fill pages with such deeds of his as this one and I knew him, man and boy, for thirty years. The world never knew a better man than Stuart Robson; a loving father, a dutiful husband, a great comedian, an honest actor and an upright American citizen. To quote from one of Boucicault's plays in which he appeared, "He had the soul of a Romeo and the face of a comic singer."

God bless you, Rob, wherever you and our dear friend, Bob Ingersoll, are! Move over, and leave a place for me! If it's hell, I'll invoke a blizzard; if Heaven, we shall need each other's companionship! We shall say that we were wrong down here and ask to be forgiven.

Shall we be?

I wonder!

Chapter IV
JOHN McCULLOUGH

At the end of the year 1882 I attracted the attention of the manager of the Dramatic Festival which was to be held at Cincinnati and was engaged to play the grave digger in "Hamlet" and Modus in "The Hunchback." Neither of these parts had ever been assumed by me prior to his engagement. It had always been my desire to appear in Shakespearean rôles and other legitimate characters.

The Dramatic Festival was a splendid success, artistically and financially. We began April 30, 1883, the first performance being "Julius Caesar." My associates were John McCullough, Lawrence Barrett, James E. Murdoch, Mary Anderson, Mlle. Rhea, Clara Morris and Kate Forsythe. The other plays given were "The Hunchback," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Othello," "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet." The enterprise was managed by R. E. J. Miles and stage-managed by William H. Daly. The receipts for the week were in the neighborhood of a hundred thousand dollars. It was a happy time, marred only by our discovering that poor John McCullough was a doomed man, his mind showing a gradual decay. It was the beginning of the end, for in a few months the curtain rang down on dear John and he walked the stage no more.

A great, big-hearted, genial soul was lovable John McCullough! Everybody loved him and who could help it? Broad-minded and equally broad-shouldered, his companions ranged from prize-fighters to senators, wantons to duchesses. He was a splendid player and many suggestions have I received from him. He was a tragedian on the stage, a comedian off. I knew him for twenty years and in all that time, as intimate as we were, I always addressed him as "Mr." McCullough – and it annoyed him greatly.

One night at the old St. James (New York) bar I greeted him with the usual salutation. He replied, "Damn it, my name is John!" I answered, "I don't care whether it is or not, I can't say it" – and I never did. To me he was a Roman senator and oh, how simple, how kind! I was always awed when in his presence. When we met and he slapped me on the back by way of comradeship my spine would open and shut. Maybe it was the vehemence of the attack, but I always attributed it to my admiration of the man.

One noon I went into Delmonico's after a long siege of poker with the late Billy Scanlon, actor (and clever chap by the way), William Sinn, proprietor of the Park Theatre, Brooklyn, Billy Barry, Henry Watterson and John R. Fellows, District Attorney of New York City. I wanted a bracer badly, I can tell you, for we had participated in a very strenuous evening. As we entered, there was dear old McCullough having luncheon.

I stopped, transfixed. He saw me and beckoned me to a seat at the table. I was terribly self conscious. He said, "Son, have a drink." I replied, rather timidly, "No, thank you." (I was slowly passing away.) He continued, "Well, you do drink, don't you?" "Yes," I replied, "once in awhile." "I mean you get drunk!" he insisted. I replied in the affirmative. "Good for you! I wouldn't give a damn for a man who didn't, occasionally!" he commented. "Is that right?" I queried. "Certainly," he replied. "Well, then," and I yelled to the waiter, "Give me an absinthe frappé!" "That's right, my boy; and, waiter, make it two," he quietly remarked.

We sat there for some time and soon I forgot all about my losses, listening to his fascinating stories of Edwin Forrest and the palmy days.

He was a most entertaining man and my memory often returns to the many happy hours passed in the company of my good friend, "Mr." McCullough – "John" for short – and sweet – now.

Chapter V
SIR HENRY IRVING

After the Dramatic Festival my wife and I embarked for Europe. It was during this time that I made the acquaintance of Henry Irving who was then managing successfully the Lyceum Theatre in London. Irving apparently took quite a fancy to me. He showed me many attentions and I was the recipient of many hospitalities at his hands.

Irving was an extraordinary man in many ways and considering what nature had denied him his achievements were little short of marvelous. Possessed of a voice of but little power, utterly lacking in grace, even ungainly and awkward in action, he was possessed of that occult power that made all those infirmities subservient to his fine intellect.

I think that Irving had a wider knowledge than any man whom I have ever met in the theatrical world. So much has been written by able writers regarding this remarkable man's abilities that anything that emanates from me will seem puerile in comparison.

Irving's humor always appealed to me, his sense of it ever being in evidence no matter how serious the surroundings. His utterances were subtly humorous and at times a little cynical, but never harsh, his gentleness of delivery always disguising the little cynicisms that might lurk beneath them.

I remember lunching with him one afternoon at the Garrick Club. An actor named Kemble came in, a little under the influence of the succulent grape, and began bewailing the decline of the drama. He expatiated upon the downward trend of the player, expressing great dissatisfaction over the then present conditions and his desire to "chuck it." He preferred solitude, away from the incompetency that he was forced to witness. He would like to build a shack and relieve himself from all these humiliating associations on some desert island. Irving, calmly wiping his glasses, looked at him for a moment and asked, "Why not try one of the Scilly Islands?"

Another time an awful bore, one Fletcher, whom Irving detested, rushed up to him in a most affectionate manner, saying, "My dear Harry! whom do you suppose I met in Paris, last week?" Irving replied, "I have no idea. Paris is so filled with people." Fletcher continued, "I know, dear Harry, but it was our old friend Graham – Charlie! You remember him." Irving grunted, "Ah!" Fletcher rattled on. "Well, Harry, you know we had not met for years and he accosted me right in front of the Louvre and placing both hands upon my shoulders he said, 'Great God! is this really Fletcher?'" Irving quietly looked up and queried, "And was it?"

We passed many happy evenings, together with dear old Johnny Toole, at the Beefsteak Club. I look back with pleasure upon those improvised little suppers Irving used to bestow upon the visiting Americans and his fellow players upon the stage of the Lyceum after the evening performance. I have never seen such unostentatious, yet lavish, display as he exercised in those delightful hospitalities. They extended far into the night and many times the sun was up as he, Toole and I made the rounds of the Covent Garden Market where the butchers and fruit venders were as friendly disposed towards him as were the guests of the previous evening.

I never knew when Irving slept.

The last time we met was in his dressing-room at the Broadway Theatre, New York. I had just produced "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at a great outlay – a new experience for me at the time – investing a fortune on the production before receiving the verdict of the capricious public. It was an old story with Irving. As I shook hands with him he said, "Ah! Goodwin, my boy, I see you are indulging in a little Monte Carlo around the corner." I answered, "Yes, Sir Henry, I have a big bet down on the single 0." "Well," said he, "this business is a fascinating gamble no matter where the little ivory ball may land."

The little ivory ball proved in the end very disappointing to this splendid player who did so much to dignify our art. For when the ball fell into the single "0" Sir Henry's bet was on the black, No. 23. Had he lived he would have found it impossible to indulge again in the dissipation of costly productions.

Chapter VI
"BARRY" AND JEFFERSON

The world delights in sunny people."

I recall many.

Maurice Barrymore, actor, playwright, raconteur, gentleman, all-around athlete and man of the world, was the most effulgent man whom I have ever met. A brain that scintillated sparks of wit that Charles Lamb or Byron might envy, a tongue capable of lashing into obscurity any one who dared enter into verbal conflict with him (yet always merciful to his adversary), with the wit of Douglas Jerrold without the cynicism, the courage of a lion, the gentleness of a saint – there you have but a faint conception of the qualities of this child of Bohemia. I knew him for twenty-five years and in all the many hours that we spent together I never saw him out of temper, never heard him utter one unkind expression nor speak a cruel word. Even under the most trying conditions he seldom permitted himself to use his rapier. And his muscle and brawn were always subordinates, servants, never masters.

Fate hardly played fair with Barry. Perhaps the fickle jade was fearful to bestow her best upon one whom the gods had created so powerfully brilliant. She allowed his genius to run purposelessly upon the sands of time until, jealous of the admiration which he won from all, she robbed him of his chief asset and hurled his fine mind from the cliffs of reason.

I shall not dwell upon the passing away of this remarkable man – it is too terrible to recall – but I shall give the world a few of his quips and jibes, showing his brilliant wit.

He gave the world much – a powerful play, "Nadjesda," sunshine and happiness and a legacy of three brilliant children, whom I knew as Barry's babies, whom I love for their own and their father's and mother's sakes —

Ethel, John and Lionel – I greet you all!

Barry came into the Lambs Club one evening evidently much distressed. Asked the reason, he answered "I am terribly annoyed and excessively angry at the brutal treatment of Mrs. Bernard Beere by the press of New York."

Barry was the leading man of Mrs. Beere's organization, the recipient of three hundred dollars a week and, in the foreshadowing of that lady's failure in a rather *risqué* play, "As in a Looking Glass," felt his engagement trembling in the balance.

"Brutal!" quoth the loquacious and severe Lackaye. "It was thoroughly deserved! I was there and I never saw such an immoral play in my life before a civilized community!"

"Granted," replied Barrymore, "but why censure the lady personally, a foreigner as well? We can at least be courteous. Only the offensive theme of the play was dwelt on; no attention was paid to her finesse and subtle art. That was all lost, due to the huge playhouse in which we were forced to appear. Hammerstein's was never intended to house acting that requires such delicate treatment; it should be devoted to opera, or the circus. Nothing ever gets beyond the third of fourth row."

"Which is most fortunate," replied Lackaye. "You punish the musicians, and save the remaining rows, the suffering endured by those closer to the actors. I am no prude, but I felt the blush of shame mounting to my cheeks as the terrible and unwholesome dialogue came over in chunks."

"My boy," said Barrymore, "you don't comprehend the theme of that play. Dialogue amounts to nothing when problems are to be solved. Maybe the language suffered in the adaption but that does not palliate the offense perpetrated upon the lady who was endeavoring to perform a duty and teach a lesson by her consummate art."

"You call that art," asked Lackaye, "a wanton, expounding her amorous successes? What edification can that give? I tell you, Barrymore, you may be all right in your argument but the performance was simply nauseating, nasty and suggestive. The whole thing reeked with filth!"

"I know," said Barrymore, quickly but quietly, "but you fail to realize, my dear Lackaye, that Hammerstein's is a theatre where one may be obscene and not heard."

Barry was chided by one of his friends for not going to see Sothern's "Hamlet" which he was playing for the first time at the Garden Theatre with mediocre success.

"Why don't you go and witness a performance?" asked a friend. "Go and sit out only one act."

Barrymore replied, "My boy, I never encourage vice."

Dear old Frank Mayo who was passionately fond of argument, after exchanging the usual greetings with Barrymore one afternoon, soon became engaged in a very heated controversy. Mayo would project an idea and before Barrymore could get breath enough to answer would spring another. Mayo had put several vital questions to Barry to his own entire satisfaction and answered them with equal satisfaction before Barry had a chance even to offer a reply.

"My dear Barry," said Mayo; "it is a pleasure indeed to meet a man of your calibre – to interchange thoughts and ideas with one so brilliantly gifted as yourself."

"How do you know anything about my mental capacity?" asked Barry. "I never get any further with you than 'Yes, but'!"

Barry went home late, or rather early, one Sunday morning after a long session at the club. He met his wife on the stoop of their dwelling. She evidently was on her way to church. As Barry said afterwards, "She was made up for the part perfectly and had a prompt book with her." She simply bowed haughtily and was about to pass on when he apologized for being away all night, finishing with, "Oh, by the way, Georgie, dear, I was with Geoff Hawley last evening." "Indeed," said his wife, "I thought Hawley was a man!" This was a body blow to Barry but he took his punishment smilingly and as she disappeared down the steps shouted after her, "Where are you bound for, dearie?" To which, without turning, she replied, "I'm going to mass; you can go to – !"

"Summer isn't as bad as it is painted," remarked Barrymore as he calmly contemplated a landscape picture, painted by Joseph Jefferson, hanging on the walls of the Lambs Club. This criticism came from one who knew whereof he spoke concerning the climatic conditions of the Rialto during the hot months when the thespian is prone to talk about the summer's adversity. Barrymore was equally conversant with the value of paintings. His remark fell like a bomb among the sycophants who were ever ready to praise even a chromo were it oiled over by the illustrious player they were pleased to call "The Dean of the Drama."

The adulation paid to Jefferson's landscape was but a reflex of the homage paid to this player by all those not "in the know."

Dear old Joseph Jefferson was loved by all those who came under his magnetic influence. A delightful, scintillating, keen, old man, possessed of rare technique, exquisite repose and the touch of a master (but always guarded as to the manner of touch!). He touched an effect but never assaulted it, as Mansfield did. Conscious of his limitations he never ventured upon dangerous ice and always left his auditors wishing that he might have been endowed with a more venturesome spirit. He always wisely refrained from pioneering upon original ground, quite content to pasture in the Sheridan and Boucicault downs.

For four weeks I studied this man when I appeared some years ago in an "all star" cast of "The Rivals." My associates were Julia Marlowe, William H. Crane, the Holland boys, Francis Wilson, Fanny Rice and Mrs. John Drew.

(What a performance Mrs. Drew gave! She put the play in her gown every night and took it home with her and the management told me that her salary for the tour was less than that paid to Francis Wilson! My weekly stipend was far in excess of hers and every night after viewing her performance I was really ashamed to take the money.)

During that artistic trip (five dollars a seat makes anything artistic) I watched Mr. Jefferson day and night. He was most kind to me and attentive (for reasons which he afterwards explained).

Some one had told him that I associated with his sons a great deal; consequently I was not a desirable person to have in any first class organization! He had given up all hope regarding his sons so he thought that he would have a try at my redemption. My conduct was so exemplary, however, that the third week he apologized to me and earnestly begged that during the rest of the tour I kindly look after him. As Willie, Joe and Tom were really wielding a bad influence over the artistic congregation I took the job and firmly believe that I improved his morals to a great extent. (I tried to reform Wilson, too, but met with failure!).

I watched this charming man for days and parts of some nights. I never missed any of his scenes and during the performance when not concerned in the play I was always watching him from the entrance. I absorbed his methods in his interpretation of Bob Acres and while he was not my ideal I think that his interpretation was really better than the author intended. I used to shriek with laughter listening to his curtain speeches or, rather, his curtain speech. Like his performance it never varied – always the same, never a change, standing in the same position, no altering of intonation or gesture, everything given by rote, but always with fine effect.

After those performances, I would walk to the private car, go over "The Rivals" as I had seen it performed and wonder if any of us, with the exception of Mrs. Drew, were anything like the characters of Sheridan's brain. I became firmly convinced that one was not – myself. Were the others? Was he, "The Dean," anything like what the author intended Bob Acres to be? Then I would ponder over the night speech of the dear old gentleman, remembering the homage that he paid to the author, his reference to the artistic rendering that they were giving his work, the extreme pleasure it afforded him and his comrades to have the privilege of acting such a comedy as this. Then with a five-dollar-trembling voice he would bewail the fact that Sheridan was not permitted to view this wonderful interpretation of his work. Choking with sobs that hardly gave his words utterance, he would refer to past performances by lamented actors and thank the audience for its attention. Concluding with a semi-congratulatory reference to its being permitted to view this wonderfully artistic performance, the benign old gentleman would make his bow, deftly wiping away a tear, amid the plaudits of the throng.

After listening to all this, I became convinced that we were artistic. At least my associates were. (I was on to myself from the first night.) They must have been terribly artistic. The sprint from the theatre to the private car, participated in by Joseph Brooks, the Jefferson boys, and the dear old gentleman (with Charles Jefferson in the lead, with the nightly receipts), convinced me that they were! They would arrive at the car – panting – and falling into their seats prepare to divide the artistic spoils, "The Dean" taking fifty per cent. As I viewed this "Chimes of Normandy" episode my artistic side went to the winds and I knew that we were as commercial as Cohan and Harris are now.

Then I began, by comparison, to study this man, and wonder what he had accomplished for the drama. Had he built a playhouse, like the man of his hour and time, Edwin Booth? Had he produced any original plays, made any production, or even leased a theatre, like Mansfield, or Sothern, Irving, or Possart? Had he during the last decade created any characters? An echo answered "No!" Then what had he done from the time of his association with Laura Keene (at which time he was considered only a fair actor as compared with Charles Burke, John E. Owens, William E. Burton and William Blake) to the time of his becoming conspicuous in the eyes of the American public?

Briefly, he returned from London after a successful engagement, having previously occupied his time for three years in Australia producing successfully American plays; then launched forth in a revised edition of "Rip Van Winkle," a play previously performed with success by his half brother, Charles Burke. For thirty years or more he presented Rip to the dear American public with intermittent changes to "The Rivals," "Caleb Plummer," Dr. Pangloss in "The Heir at Law" and "Lend me Five Shillings." The revival of these latter plays met with little pecuniary success unless he added

names to the cast, featuring conspicuously such artists as William Florence or Mrs. John Drew. After a brief tour he would again drift back to dear old Rip and dear old scenery with some of the dear old gentleman's dear old family dominating the cast. Thus he went on for years, and posterity will say that he was "a great actor," "beloved by all."

Yet he lived among the great producers of his era – without producing!

Irving, who died almost penniless and who invested thousands of dollars in an earnest endeavor to uphold the drama, Lawrence Barrett and dear Edwin Booth, who lost a million in erecting a temple to Art only to see his name chiseled out by a dry goods establishment – these were truly great men.

I concede that Joseph Jefferson was "a great actor" as Rip – a most benign person, a charming companion. For this man I have the most profound respect; for what he did for the stage I have not. His performance of "Rip Van Winkle" was perhaps a very great one (I never saw Charles Burke). As for Bob Acres, I can only quote a really great actor, William Warren – "Jefferson played Bob in 'The Rivals' with Sheridan twenty miles away."

I have seen two men who are alive to-day play Sir Lucius O'Trigger in "The Joseph Jefferson Version of 'The Rivals'" and I have played it.

Which leaves me to imagine that all those who made a hit in the part are dead!

Chapter VII
A SUNNY SON OF SOMETIME

A sunny son of Sometime was Peter Dailey. When the Creator called him to join the merry throng that had passed before the world lost one of the sweetest characters that I have ever known. His memory will go laughing down the ages.

There were no clouds when Pete pranced among the men and women of the profession. He met you with the honest grip of a man and a smile that only the seraphs can appreciate. Never an unkind word left the brain that invented only sweet and wholesome sallies. The wit of a Sheridan and a repartee that made it an impertinence to attack made him impervious to all retort. As gentle as a fawn, as brave as a warrior, Pete Dailey was a man among men.

During a friendship of over twenty-five years I never heard him utter a profane word or use an obscene expression. No adjective was necessary to enhance a story of his, no preface to foretell the trend of his wit – which was as quick as the flight of a rifle ball.

When he was on tour with his own company some years ago he was chided for his familiarity with his company by a German comedian, Al Wilson. Wilson told him that he was losing his dignity by even associating with the members of his organization, following this by saying, "Why, Pete, I do not even speak to my company!" Pete replied, "Well, if I had a company like yours, I would not speak to them either."

It was useless for any author to give Pete lines to speak, his interpretations were so much better than any lines the author could invent. I well remember one of the first nights at Weber and Field's Music Hall, New York. He had a scene with Charles Bigelow who had apparently given much thought and study to his part. Bigelow was a bald-headed, blatant, obvious comedian who was principally engaged to make children laugh or frighten them to death. They started in on the scene and after a few words of the text Dailey threw his lines to the winds and in a few moments had Bigelow tied into knots. Bigelow stood there, hopelessly fuzzled, while the audience yelled with delight at his discomfiture. Finally, enraged and mortified, the perspiration pouring off him, he removed his hat to mop his brow. Quick as a flash Pete said, "Put your hat on; you're naked!" This was too much for Bigelow and he rushed off the stage.

I could fill pages with a recital of this man's many gifts, his goodly deeds. Would there were more Pete Daileys! The world would be better, humanity more gentle, hypocrisy unknown; fewer tears would be shed and the journey through life made lighter.

Chapter VIII
CHARLES HOYT

During the early '80's a young man jumped into the theatrical arena, having previously graduated from the editorial rooms of the Boston "Post" where he had achieved some degree of success as a comic writer and dramatic critic. He was a man of considerable education with an absorbing insight into character. In this respect he was like the present George Cohan. But he had more refinement than Cohan and was more of a caricaturist than he. He had little charm but possessed a brand of cynical humor which appealed to men, seldom to women. All his characters were well defined. For about fifteen years his plays were received with much favor and had he lived I have no doubt that he would have proved a dangerous rival to the clever Cohan. His name was Charles Hoyt.

His financial partner, Charles Thomas, was my seat mate at the Little Blue Maine Academy and it was through him that I became acquainted with the versatile Hoyt. For whatever charm poor Hoyt lacked Charles Thomas made amends as he was one of the handsomest and most fascinating of men. He died very young. That cruel censor Death was the master that beckoned him to Phoenix, Arizona, where he passed away.

Hoyt was noted for his pungent and satirical humor. When in his cups he was most poignant and insulting, never sparing even his best friends. One night in a *café* adjoining the Bijou Theatre he was very rude to me. I realized his condition and was silent, but the first time I met him sober I demanded an apology, which he gave, but not with very good grace. A few months later Bert Dasher, one of his business friends, told me that Hoyt met him one cold, frosty night in January in front of the Hoffman House and after vainly endeavoring to explain our quarrel imparted the information that I had talked to him pretty roughly and he was determined to revenge himself. Hoyt had taken lessons in the manly art of self-defense.

"I realize that Nat is alert and dangerous," he told Bert, "so I am going to accost him unawares, feint him with my left hand and uppercut him on the point of the jaw." He accompanied the remark with a downward swing from the shoulder to the knee. The force of the swinging gesture hurled him into the middle of Broadway where he fell in a semi-conscious state until Bert came to his rescue and took him home.

The first night of my production of "Nathan Hale" Hoyt had assured me of his intention of being present with his wife. But when the time came she refused to accompany him. Charley, having purchased two tickets and not desiring to be alone, sought someone to go with him. He soon found a friend and invited him to come along. Much to Hoyt's astonishment his friend quietly but firmly refused the invitation. "Why not?" asked Hoyt. His friend replied, "I don't like Goodwin." "Well," said Charley, "you like him as an artist, don't you?" His friend replied, "No, I don't like him, on or off the stage." "Well," said Hoyt, "come along; you are sure to enjoy this play for they hang Nat in the last act."

"Have you any idea what the price of American beauties is?" asked a friend of Hoyt's one day, referring to the exorbitant charges of the florists. "I ought to" answered the witty Hoyt, "I married one."

Years after I indulged in flowery dissipation for I married a bunch and yet there are some curious creatures who wondered why I was appearing in vaudeville while Hoyt was playing a harp.

Chapter IX
SIR CHARLES WYNDHAM

Sir Charles Wyndham is a remarkable man in many ways, a delightful actor, a splendid manager and a most sagacious business man. Of prepossessing appearance, he is further blessed with a slight figure which he keeps even after passing the age of seventy. He still manages to win approval in *jeune première* rôles in spite of a most disagreeable, rasping voice. He is ably assisted, artistically and managerially, by Miss Mary Moore. He has won a place on the English stage second to none.

What a blessing to win fame on the English stage! No impertinent references to one's age; no vulgar inferences concerning the social position of any player! How like our own delightfully free country! (It's so different.)

One afternoon at the Green Room Club while actors of renown and some just budding were seated at the long table enjoying the "two and six" dinner, Sir Charles came in. He had just finished his matinee performance of "David Garrick" with which he was packing the Criterion Theatre. They have a chair in the club, supposed to have been the property of Garrick. Wyndham sank into it, seemingly overcome by his efforts of the afternoon. (Many of the poor devils dining would have liked to share his exhaustion.)

A very clever dramatist named Hamilton, looking up, caught sight of him and in a quizzical tone remarked, "Wyndham, you make rather a fetching picture, sitting in the original Garrick Chair – and, what is most remarkable, you are absolutely playing the character!"

Wyndham nodded back a mumbling and patronizing answer, evidently pleased with the interest that he was creating.

Hamilton studied his victim a moment and then said, "By Jove, Wyndham, do you know, you are more and more like Garrick every day and less and less like him every night!"

Chapter X
CHARLES R. THORNE, Jr

What an extraordinary, complex creature was Charles R. Thorne, Jr.

Beginning a stage career under the management of his father, an actor of considerable repute in the '40's, young Charlie soon developed into a leading actor of the old school, a ranting, vigorous player, declamatory and thoroughly devoid of repose. He gradually drifted from California to the East and during the '60's became the leading man of the then well known Boston Theatre Stock Company. There he remained for several seasons supporting all the leading players then starring throughout the United States, including such celebrated artists as Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, Charlotte Cushman, Lotta, Edwin Adams and many others.

Of an extremely jovial disposition, never dissipated but fond of company, naturally witty and an extremely courageous man, he soon worked himself into the hearts of the Boston public. He was not particularly versatile, but had a splendid personality and a magnificent physique – marred only by a head too small for the quality of intelligence such a figure demanded. However, he was a royal picture to contemplate, particularly in romantic and Shakespearean rôles. In these he truly suggested the "Greek god." He gave his professional work little thought and was quite content to bask in the sunshine of the encomiums of press and friends until Dion Boucicault discovered latent talents which even Thorne himself did not know he possessed.

Boucicault was about to produce one of his plays, "Led Astray," at the Union Square Theatre, New York, and selected Thorne to create the leading rôle. Taking him under his wing for a few months he succeeded in transforming the man. Under his able tutelage Thorne, discarding his ranting and mouthing methods, awoke the morning after the première of "Led Astray" to find himself famous. He became founder of the modern school of suppressed, natural acting and the most convincing actor of the American stage.

He was not a man easily handled and had no respect for the rules and regulations of any theatre. He was in constant difficulties with A. M. Palmer, manager of the Union Square, but Palmer realized Thorne's value and put up with many annoyances from him. Thorne held despotic sway, much to the amusement of his companion players who loved him as they loathed the management. Palmer exercised every means within his power to humiliate Thorne, casting him for leading heavies for instance, but Thorne's convincing methods always made the hero look ridiculous. In the play "False Shame," in which he was cast for the villain, he took all the sympathy from the hero and of course killed the property.

Palmer brought over the late Charles Coghlan at a salary of $1,000 a week – Thorne's salary had never gone beyond $125! – and cast them both to create simultaneously the leading rôle in "A Celebrated Case," giving Coghlan the quodus of the New York and Thorne the Pittsburgh opening. I saw Coghlan's opening. He gave a marvelously thought-out performance and made a tremendous hit. I saw Thorne some weeks after and told him of my impressions.

I remarked, "Charlie, I think that Palmer has got you at last." He observed, "Yes, I hear that that chap Coghlan is an actor. I am up the spout as Palmer intends playing me at the Grand Opera House in two weeks and I guess the boys will get me as that English fellow has had the first whack at them and they will have the chance to compare us in the same rôle." I said, "Well, I am going in front to-night and I will tell you what I think." Before leaving his dressing-room I added, "Charlie, if you take my advice you won't go to New York. Be ill, and let your understudy go on." He laughed and, waving his hand, cried, "All right, sonny boy, I may take your advice!"

I went in front and after the performance I rushed back into his dressing-room and yelled, "For God's sake, don't get ill! Get to New York as soon as possible!"

I had never seen such a performance! While you admired Coghlan's technique and art, Thorne gave you no time to think of anything – he was so real, so convincing. He drowned all judgment with the tears his acting started. You simply sobbed your heart out.

In a few weeks Thorne went to New York and amazed the public. In a short time Coghlan's name headed the road company and Thorne was snugly housed again at the Union Square Theatre where he remained a Czar for many years, until John Stetson engaged him to star in "Monte Cristo," a play made famous by the French actor, Charles Fechter. He opened at Booth's Theatre to a $3,500 house. The streets were packed for blocks by a swaying, eager multitude ready to pay homage to an actor who for twenty years had been their idol and whose salary was never more than $150 a week at any time.

He was very ill on the opening night – in fact he was dying on the stage before his beloved public, but no one knew it. The fact that his performance was most unsatisfactory gave no one an inkling of the truth. He was driven home after the play, and never appeared again, dying in a few weeks. Just as power was within his grasp, they rang the curtain down and poor Thorne's soul passed into the great beyond.

All of the Thorne family were possessed of a wonderful sense of humor. I, as I have said, knew them all – Charles, William and Edwin and their father and mother. Many happy evenings have I passed with this delightful family. They were truly, to quote from Dumas' "Three Guardsmen," "One for all, and all for one!" Charles had a much keener sense of the ridiculous than the others and he would exercise it even in a serious scene, if for no other reason than to break up the players.

One day at the old Niblo's Garden in New York, Charlie came to play a two weeks' starring engagement for his father who was at that time the lessee of the theatre. I was a member of the company playing general utility. Business was very, very bad and the advent of Charles did not enhance the exchequer of the theatre. We were playing a Scotch drama, "Roderick Dhu." Charles and his father had a powerful scene, ending an act. The old gentleman spoke the tag, saying to Charlie, "If you are King James of Scotland, I am Roderick Dhu!" Before the curtain fell upon the line Charlie, who had bribed the prompter to delay its coming down on the direct cue, took out a large document and said, "Yes, Mr. Thorne, and your rent is due."

When the curtain fell the old man chased his son out of the theatre and in a fit of passion swore he would not allow the play to continue. Charles came back, apologized and the play proceeded.

Boucicault took him and Stuart Robson to London to play in "Led Astray." Charlie made a great hit and poor Rob a dire failure. Robson's failure Charlie took to heart as his love for Rob was unbounded. After about six weeks three gentlemen, the proprietors of the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres, called on Thorne and Robson at their chambers with a proposition to Thorne for a long engagement. He listened to their patronizing suggestions as to a consummation of the deal and, pointing to Rob, asked, "Is my pal included in this?" When told that their business was with him solely he cried, "Out upon ye for arrant knaves! I'll not play at Dreary's Lane nor at Covey's Garden either!" They thought he was mad and quickly withdrew.

Chapter XI
SOL SMITH RUSSELL

What a dear, delightful humbug was Sol Smith Russell. By humbug I mean nothing disparaging for Sol was one of the sweetest natures I have ever met. But he was a most eccentric person, a combination of good and a tiny bit of bad, with the aspect of a preacher and the inclination of a beau and man about town. If Sol had had the moral courage I am sure he would have turned out a *roué*. He worshipped the beautiful, particularly in woman, was passionately fond of gambling and loved the cup that soothes and comforts. Yet he indulged his foibles only in solitude. Very few knew the real man.

There was nothing vicious in his nature. He was merely alert, artistically inclined. He was a genius in his quiet and inoffensive dissipation. Of a frugal turn of mind, he became commercial when he loosed his mental bridle and gave himself his head.

Tommy Boylan of Guy's Hotel, Baltimore, told me that Sol, evidently contemplating a slight debauch, asked him in his bland way the price of gin cocktails. Tommy replied, "Fifteen cents per." "How much a dozen?" asked Sol. "To you," answered Tommy, "ten cents." "Two dozen to my room, please," said Sol. At the door he turned and added, "By the way, Tommy, ten per cent off for cash and thus enable me to reimburse the bell boy. And, Tommy, be sure and have them made separately and send six at a time when I ring the bell."

In this way Sol would have his little spree with only his mirror for a companion and emerge the next day spick and span with two bottles of an aperient water added to his account. By noon he would be found officiating at some church function or passing tea at some lady's seminary.

I never considered Sol a very great actor on the stage – but a marvel off. He was a splendid entertainer and sketch artist, but he had higher ambitions. His greatest was to wear the mantle of Jefferson whom he worshipped.

We three were supping one night at the Richelieu Hotel, Chicago. Jefferson had previously suggested to me the idea of my playing Doctor Pangloss in "The Heir at Law," endeavoring to point out the many benefits I would bestow by appearing in that character. I listened with much respect but refused, knowing how old fashioned were both the play and rôle. Sol, however, was not proof against the clever old gentleman's blandishments and fell for the suggestion. The fact of appearing in any character made famous by the astute old fox was enough for the guileless Sol. I knew Jefferson wanted some one to play the part only to court comparisons. To prove his interest in Sol's future, Jefferson presented him with his entire wardrobe, even to the shoes and awful wig. Sol was delighted at the prospect and accepted them readily. When told of this at the supper that evening, I turned to Sol and said, "Well, the press has been hurling Mr. Jefferson's mantle at me for years, but you have undressed him. I guess I'll have to wear my own."

Jefferson seemed to enjoy the sally but I'm afraid Sol failed to appreciate my remarks or gather my meaning. It would have been better for him if he had, for later he produced the play and met with instant failure.

While touring in the all star cast of "The Rivals" I called on an old and esteemed friend of mine at Chicago – the bar keeper at the Grand Pacific Hotel – who informed me that my friend Sol Smith Russell and he had spent a most enjoyable evening the night before. Sol had left him at about two a. m. saying he was looking forward to our appearing in "The Rivals" with joyous anticipation. I asked about Sol's health and capacity. The bar keeper replied, "He's fine. I have his tabs for sixty dollars." I gasped, "Not cocktails!" He replied, "No, pints."

The next afternoon at the matinee after the first act Sol's card came up to Mr. Jefferson's dressing-room (which I shared on tour). Of course he was admitted at once. Not appearing in the first act, I was preparing the finishing touches to my make-up in a remote corner of the room and

was not seen by Sol. He rushed over to Jefferson who warmly greeted him. Sol was most enthusiastic over the performance of the first act. Standing in the center of the room, safely braced by both hands on a massive oak table he gushed forth as follows:

"My dear Joseph, I have never seen such acting, such art. Surely Sheridan in his grave must appreciate such artistic values as are being dealt with this afternoon, such – "

Then came a long pause and his eyes closed as if he were in deep meditation – I knew it was a hold over – then his lids started open and he gathered up the thread of his complimentary effusion: —

"Such superb treatment, delicacy, subtlety, and – " again a pause and the same closing of the eyes, the awakening and continuation: —

"Your work is a revelation and great object lesson to the students of the drama, the commingling of the older and younger elements only lends a charm to the works of the grand master and,"

Again the pause, and on his awakening after this last standing siesta, he discovered my presence.

"Ah, Nattie, I hear splendid reports of your Sir Lucius O'Trigger."

I inquired from whom as I had been kept in ignorance of any. He said from everyone.

"And now, my good friend," said Sol, addressing Jefferson, "I must leave you as I don't want to miss Nat's first scene, the opening of the second act."

Bowing, he made his exit, his left hand deftly placed upon the wall of the room as he guided himself in a somewhat circuitous way to the door. As he was bent directly opposite, I went to his assistance and led him outside, detecting a slight odor of what seemed to me gin fizzes. I bade him adieu and returned to my dressing table. Jefferson appeared much gratified.

"Sol is awfully pleased apparently and was most gracious," he said. I answered, "Yes, for a tired man, Sol spoke remarkably well." Jefferson, who was very literal, asked, "Is Sol tired?" I replied, "He ought to be with that load he is carrying."

Said Jefferson, "What load is he carrying?"

"A basket of lovely peaches," quoth I.

"I didn't notice he had a parcel with him," replied Jefferson.

"He is tanked up to the collar button," I said. "Oh, what a lovely skate he has!"

"Tanked up to the collar button and skate? What the devil are you talking about. You have a vernacular, my dear Nat, that requires translation. What are you talking about?"

"Didn't you notice his condition?" I asked. "He's loaded to the eyebrows."

"Tight?" asked Jefferson.

"As a new drum," I replied.

"I can't realize it," said Jefferson. "My eyesight prevented my scanning his face as accurately as I could wish. I noticed his conversation was a bit measured, but very well expressed. I can't believe he was under the influence of liquor. Are you sure?"

I replied with much pride in my delivery, "You can't deceive an artist."

Jefferson simply screamed at this remark and during the afternoon repeated the incident several times to each and every member of the company. It met with so much favor and seemed to amuse the people to such an extent that for several years, by imitating both Sol and Jefferson, I made it one of the best stories of my repertoire.

I once told the story to a number of actors at the Green Room Club in London. At the finish, "You can't deceive an artist," it failed to provoke the laughter it always aroused in America and I thought I noticed a look of blank amazement on my auditors' faces. I paid no attention to it at the time, attributing their lack of appreciation to their density or their limited acquaintance with the mannerism of the gentlemen I was imitating. Three weeks later Fred Terry met me on the Strand and with much gravity apologized for the silent manner his *confrères* at the club had received my story.

"My dear Nat," said Terry, "the lads entirely mistook your meaning. They thought you were putting on a lot of side and when you pointed to yourself with that egotistical gesture and proclaimed yourself an artist, they thought it in exceedingly bad taste. I have been all this time taking each

one aside and telling him that was not your meaning at all; that you were a very modest man for an American. You were simply telling your superior officer what a drunkard you were. Now they thoroughly understand the story and won't you please come to-night and tell the story over again?"

Which request I politely but firmly refused.

The last time I saw poor Sol was at a luncheon at the home of the late Stillson Hutchins given in our joint honor at Washington. Now both are gone. God bless their memory. Adieu, good friends.

A few nights after telling this story, I was relating the incident to Beerbohm Tree at a supper party. He agreed with me as to the density of the average Britisher so far as appreciating American humor is concerned. He told me he understood it thoroughly. As the supper progressed we were entertained by song and story, contributed by the guests. In my turn I told of an incident that happened in Denver.

I had come in from one of the clubs very late and directed the clerk at the hotel to call me at 5 a. m. sharp, impressing upon him that I was a very heavy sleeper. Having only a few hours to rest I wanted him to be sure to rap on the door as loudly as possible and not go away until he heard a response from me. It was vital I make the train for Leadville and it left at 6 o'clock.

An Irish porter standing near overheard my instructions and volunteered to assume the responsibility of awakening me on time. I handed him a dollar and retired to my room, a cold, bleak apartment, and was soon asleep between the icy sheets. It seemed but a few minutes until I was awakened by a most violent knocking on my door. I shouted, "What's the matter?"

"Are yez the man that left the call for the five o'clock train?" I answered, "Yes."

"Well," came the reply from outside, "go back to sleep. Your train's gone."

Several of the guests laughed loudly. Tree, however, looked blank and ejaculated, "The silly man should have been discharged for incompetency."

I hurriedly left the party and told no more stories that summer.

Chapter XII
RICHARD MANSFIELD

Had I known as much then as I do now or had my youthful obduracy been less pronounced the sudden rise to heights of fame which marked Richard Mansfield's career might never have happened – in any event it would have been postponed.

It was while I was rehearsing in "The Black Flag," a melodrama which won much success later, that a gifted journalist, A. R. Cazauran, who was then acting in the capacity of play reader, adapter and general factotum for Shook and Palmer, the lessees of the Union Square Theatre, came to see me. After watching the rehearsal Cazauran decided that I was sacrificing my time and talent with "such drivel as 'The Black Flag.'" When the rehearsal was finished he insisted upon my accompanying him to Mr. Palmer's office, as he had something of great importance to communicate to me. After seating ourselves at Mr. Palmer's desk, he said,

"Goodwin, I am now going to give you the opportunity of your life. We are going to produce a play called 'A Parisian Romance.' J. H. Stoddard has been rehearsing the part of the Baron, but he has decided not to play it, feeling that he does not suit the character."

Cazauran then continued in his delightfully broken English that that was the part he had in mind for me and it would suit me "down to the ground." The character of Baron Chevreal was that of a man of middle age; but a young man, with virility, was necessary to act the death scene which required tremendous force. He brought out the manuscript and read me the entire play. When he had finished, I said,

"For the love of heaven, Cazauran, why did you select me to play that gruesome tragedy rôle?"

"Because I think you can play it," he replied.

I was dumbfounded. "Why, I am a comedian, and it looks to me as though that part were made to order for Stoddard."

Cazauran shrugged his shoulders and, placing both hands on mine, observed in a most impressive manner:

"Goodwin, you are a comedian and, I grant, a fine one. So was Garrick, but no one remembers Garrick in comedy."

How true that was, and how often that expression has come back to me in after life! They seldom remember those who make them laugh.

"You accept this part of the Baron," Cazauran continued, "give me three hours of your time each day for three weeks and I will guarantee that you will never play a comedy part again. I and the Baron will make you famous."

I sincerely thanked him, but firmly declined to be made famous in that particular line. We adjourned to his favorite restaurant, Solari's, in University Place, where for three hours he endeavored to persuade me to play the part. I was obdurate and would not listen to any of his suggestions.

"Well," he said at parting, "Stoddard cannot and will not play the part and I have resolved to try a young man we have in our company, selected from the Standard Theatre Company, where he was playing in a comic opera 'The Black Cloak.' He is now rehearsing the part of the ambassador in 'A Parisian Romance.' He shall play the Baron. He is intelligent, knows French and I am convinced that I can coach him into a success."

In four weeks from that time the young man who was taken from the ranks to play the Baron awoke to find himself famous. His name was Richard Mansfield.

Philosophy, Thou Liest!

One night several years ago at the Garrick Club in London, Joseph Knight and I were discussing the American invasion of England by American artists. During the course of our conversation, Knight said: —

"My dear Goodwin, we had an extraordinary chap over here from your country some years ago. I can't recall him by name, but he was a most uncomfortable person to meet and an *awful* actor! He endeavored to play Richard the III and gave an *awful* performance! He followed this with a play, written by Robert Louis Stevenson in which he scratched the carpet and was somebody else! He was a boss-eyed chap, spoke several languages and was remarkably adept at the piano. I can't for the life of me recall his name."

From Knight's description I knew that he meant Mansfield and ventured to suggest that that might be the man to whom he referred.

"Mansfield! Yes, that's the chap! Is he still going strong in America?"

"Going strong!" I replied. "Why, he makes more money than all of us combined. He is called America's greatest player!"

"Really!" exclaimed the illustrious Knight. "What an extraordinary country!"

Mr. Knight unconsciously echoed my sentiments. We are an extraordinary people.

Think – and be called a fool. 'Tis better to realize a fact than agree with the majority.

Only a few weeks ago I was reading a biography of the late Mr. Mansfield, written by one of his managers; another, by a notorious critic; and, believe me, Edmund Kean's biographers were amateurs compared with Mansfield's in their shamelessly abject adulation of that "genius." The fulsome flattery of the senile, undersized critic who pens his truckling screeds at so much a column (but never again in the paper from which he was dropped) and has been doing so to my certain knowledge for over thirty years, is but the vaporing of his infinitesimal soul.

For years this critic held the position of reviewer on one of the leading New York daily papers and was the recipient of a stipulated salary from the late Augustin Daly. He was also on the payroll of many of the successful stars of America and the recipient of many bounties at their hands. Thirty years ago I was standing in the lobby of the Tremont House in Boston talking with John McCullough, "the noblest Roman of them all," when this drunken critic, an "authority" on plays and players, reeled into our presence and in a thick voice asked John the number of his room. I shall never forget the look of disgust which McCullough bestowed upon this leech of the drama. As he shuffled to the elevator, mumbling incoherently, McCullough turned to Billy Conners, his manager, and in stentorian tones that could be heard a block away cried, "For God's sake, Billy how long am I to be annoyed by this drunken incubus?"

Years after this same critic came to my opening performance of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Knickerbocker Theatre, in New York, long after the curtain had been up. In fact my first scene was finished before he staggered down the center aisle to criticise my efforts. I knew that he contemplated treating me severely, irrespective of what I might be able to achieve. He did not consider it worthy of his attention and left before the play was finished. The following morning his "criticism" appeared, containing over two columns of vituperative abuse of my work, deservedly, no doubt; but as the paper went to press at eleven thirty and our performance was finished precisely at that hour I wondered how so beautifully a worded review could have been composed or even dictated in so short a time. The article was evidently inspired by an imaginary production which he was privileged to witness before it was seen or heard.

Yet this man's adulation of Mansfield, patently written at so much a line, will be handed down to posterity and be believed and respected by the multitude! Truly, "What fools these mortals be!"

Mansfield, to me, was an enigma. Ask any worthy member of my profession to-day his opinion of Mansfield as an actor and he will, I am sure, agree with Joseph Knight. I am one of the few actors who made a study of Mr. Mansfield – for many reasons, the paramount one being that I considered that I was indirectly responsible for his amazing and sensational success in "A Parisian Romance."

I maintain that Mansfield was never a great actor, but a clever and gifted man – a dominant personality which asserted itself even when clothed in mediocrity.

I ask any fair-minded person if Mansfield ever moved him to tears, broke his throat and caused his heart to burst and sob his soul away, as did our beloved Booth. Did he ever cause a ripple of laughter to equal those ripples set running by delightful Willie Collier? Did he ever make you feel like bounding upon the stage and climbing up to Juliet's balcony, as one is prompted to do when witnessing E. H. Sothern pay tribute to Julia Marlowe? Did he ever make you start from your seat and thank God that the performance was over, as when listening to Edwin Booth's appeal to be allowed to enter the banquet hall where his daughter is being held prisoner in "A Fool's Revenge"? Did he ever rivet you to the spot by pure, sweet, untheatric delivery of a speech without effort, as did Charles R. Thorne, in "The Banker's Daughter"? Did he ever hold you enthralled in a spell of reverence, as did Salvini or John McCullough in his address to the Senate in "Othello"? In a word did Mansfield ever make you really laugh or truly sob? Never? Then greatness was denied him.

I argue that if an actor cannot appeal to you through the emotions he should take down his sign. If an actor cannot make you laugh or cry; fails to impress by any method except that of physical force or personality; cannot make love, he fails to qualify. Mansfield's attempts to storm or win any of these emotions were as futile as they were absurd and when he ventured within the realms of Shakespeare he was atrocious or preposterous. With all his unquestionable intelligence, he was never able to master Shakespeare's rhythm or to scan correctly, as those who have witnessed his Richard, Henry the Fifth, and Shylock, will remember.

That is my opinion of his acting.

What he did for the American stage is a far different proposition. There is no denying the fact that he was quite as successful in elevating the drama in America as Irving was in England, but he suffered by comparison, as Irving was superior in knowledge of stage craft. He was not the equal of Irving, either as actor or stage manager. True, he was denied Irving's authorities and the assistance of technicians who lightened Irving's efforts and materially added to his fame. Neither were Mansfield's methods, employed to further his ends, as legitimate as Irving's. Irving never found it necessary to insult his audience for its lack of patronage, or failure of appreciation. Dear benign Henry Irving devoted as much time to beget a friend as Mansfield did to destroy one. Had Mansfield studied his characters with the same amount of reverence which he bestowed upon his productions and attention to "detail" I might have agreed with his biographers; but I conscientiously say that I cannot. The mistakes he perpetrated were often misconstrued into perfections of art.

Mansfield, in my opinion, was an actor who selected the one art in which he was totally unfitted to shine and in which nature never intended him to soar. He did everything wrong, well.

Personally, I liked Mansfield. He was most companionable, full of anecdotes, a fine musician, sculptor, linguist, conversationist and could be most agreeable, particularly to those whom he cared to interest. I had several delightful chats and very often dined with him in his private car and always came away wishing he could be persuaded to send over his charm into some of the plays of his extensive repertoire. But no, his channels were in the deep, dark waters of the uncanny.

I have never left the playhouse, after witnessing one of his performances, with a sweet taste in my mouth or a wholesome thought. The trend of his characterizations was towards the cruelty in mankind. He catered to the morbid. There was little sunshine in his plays. They were as a rule overcast with the clouds of misery, crime, and the "Winter of our discontent!" In the words of Joseph Knight, "*How Awful!*" Yet what a true disciple of Cazauran he proved to be! No one remembers a laugh provoker, while even third rate "serious" actors win posthumous praise!

Mansfield was considered a great actor by the masses. But do the masses know? No! You will hear them prate about his "detail." I do not agree with the masses and never have agreed with them.

I do not enjoy a visit to the morgue.

I consider Mansfield's detail, as a rule, misapplied. If sitting upon a great piece of scenery resembling an artichoke and stabbing himself with a huge Roman dagger without toppling over, as he did as Brutus, is detail, then I am wrong. When I saw him perform this piece of "business" I marvelled at the vitality of Brutus and the weight of his head for surgeons tell me that when one dies of a self-inflicted wound, particularly when administered by a cleaver, the head falls forward and naturally the body follows. Not so with Mr. Brutus as played by Mansfield! He appeared too busily engaged in counting the people in the gallery to allow any authority on self-inflicted wounds to interfere with his "detail."

Again take the death scene in "A Parisian Romance." He is supposed to die from a stroke of apoplexy, not a stroke of lightning. Mansfield flopped over as if hit on the head with a club. The original, Germaine, who played the part in Paris, received his stroke like a gentleman, sank into his chair, was carried into an ante-room and calmly passed away, a white hand appearing between the curtains as he endeavored to rejoin his disreputable friends. If one were privileged to read the original manuscript one would find that the Baron is supposed to faint as he has fainted many times before. The people carry him off and the party continues its revels until notified that its host has passed away in the adjacent room. Not so with Mansfield, catering to the masses, which enjoy "detail!" He got his stroke, dropped his glass upon the table, fell – tableau! All stand riveted. Someone cries, "The Baron is dead! Stop that music!" Curtain!

The American people not only fancy "detail"; they also want "ginger" and "the punch"! No *pousse café* for them! They want "the straight goods" – and Mansfield certainly handed them over!

Chapter XIII
IN VARIETY

After my engagement with Robson at the Howard Athenaeum, which lasted for only a week, my mind was fully made up to adopt the stage as my vocation. I went to New York and secured a position as utility man at Niblo's Garden, under the management of Charles R. Thorne, Sr., and Edwin Eddy. But this lasted for only a few weeks, the season proving a failure.

During the seasons of 1875 and 1876 I found it difficult to secure any employment whatever. The variety business, now called vaudeville, about this time had well-nigh supplanted the legitimate drama in the estimation of the masses and I, being rather an astute observer for a youngster, determined to turn my attention in that direction. The salaries offered were tempting and the opportunities of advertising one's ability much greater than in the legitimate. I persuaded my father to advance me enough money to have some costumes prepared and succeeded in inducing Bradford to prepare a sketch for me. It was called "His First Rehearsal," the receipt for which I take pleasure in submitting. You will see that sketches in those days cost small fortunes!

I succeeded in procuring an opening at the Howard Athenaeum under the management of John Stetson. My associates appearing in the same programme were Gus Williams, Sol Smith Russell, Pat Rooney, Denman Thompson and several others who afterwards became famous players. I was handicapped to a great extent by this competition and my success was not very flattering until about the end of the week when I gained more confidence and my methods were a bit surer. On the Saturday night of my engagement Bradford brought a friend of his, Clay Greene, to see his *protegé*. That evening, fortunately for me, my sketch went particularly well. Years after Mr. Greene wrote the following tribute:

THE LEGEND OF NATHANIEL

By Clay M. Greene

"Come thou with me, tonight, and sit awhile,
To see the mummers; not at the Museum:
'Tis laughter's Tomb. The Park's a dull Te Deum;
The Globe's a Morgue. Mayhap there be a smile
That lurketh somewhere in the dingy Athenaeum."

Thus spake my friend, Joe Bradford: Rest his soul!
I'd known him then a day, and we were chumming,
As though we'd been for years Love's lute-strings thumbing.
We'd told each other's lives; each ope'd his soul,
And drank the other's health 'till riotous becoming.

To his beloved Athenaeum, then,
We almost reeled, and in a trice were seated,
So close that we could scent the footlights heated.
We laughed indeed, again, again, again,
As clownish Mummers ancient songs and quips repeated.

Then came into the light a slender boy,
And Bradford yelled with lusty acclamation:
"That's Nat, God bless him!" Then, without cessation,
The stripling held each hearer like a toy,
And thrilled him now with song, then wondrous imitation.

First Farce, then Opera, now broad Burlesque,
Then e'en in tragic realms majestic soaring,
And each attempt success prodigious soaring;
(Be it pathetic, tuneful, or grotesque,)
Till every palm was bruised with ravenous encoring.

The youth had scarce outgrown his spelling book,
And yet tho' oft some honored name defaming,
By matchless ridicule, his pure declaiming
Came easily as ripples to a brook,
Or thrills to lover's souls when latest sweethearts naming.

"Who is this boy?" I cried. "He's clever, quite;
Whence came he? Where began his gentle schooling?
'Tis pity there's no art in such tomfooling,
And much I fear this youth I've seen, tonight,
Is but a clever clown! Alas! Such kindless ruling!"

"Then thou'rt a weakling Judge to so decide!"
Cried Joseph, redd'ning in his indignation.
"A clown? No art? Why 'tis no imitation
That we have heard; nor can it be denied
This callow boy is that one genius of a nation!"

"You smile; you purse your lips; and even doubt.
E'er I have drunk myself into perdition,
Nat Goodwin will have filled with inanition
The fame of every actor hereabout: —
For Nature gave him the Creator's tireless mission!"

He reproduced no song, no speech, no jest,
But it was lustered by some hidden power
That comes to Genius born with Fortune's dower.
Youth in his veins, ambition in his breast,
This boy will be one day the hero of his hour.

More than a decade passed. Unlike to me,
Joe lived not to fulfill that night's foretelling;
Yet oft adown the years there comes a welling
From that Somewhere, to green prophecy
Which in my doubting soul that night usurped a dwelling.

Today, I saw an eager, jostling throng,
Like some greed-laden human panorama,
Surround a playhouse door with vulgar clamour,
To honor Bradford's star. "Seats! Seats!" their song: —
To witness his, Nathaniel's, show of laurelled glamour.

Oh, gentle friend of mine, thou art no more;
But lend thy spirit ear while I am spinning
My admiration's tale of endless winning
Nat ever made. He never failed to score
Since we together saw his modest first beginning.

I hid thy prophecy within my breast,
And ever and anon its force recalling,
Watched Goodwin stride with speed that was appalling;
Till now his very foes proclaim him best
Amongst his votaries, thy very words forestalling.

And I am glad to know, my spirit chum,
That I long since let honest admiration
Be leavened by a Friendship's adulation
For him who in these decades hath become
No artless clown, but that one genius of a nation.

Drink deep with us, thou gentle Friendship's wraith; —
If thou hast aught to drink where thou'rt abiding,
And Nat and I'll recall thy stalwart faith
Which met my doubting with indignant chiding,
That night when you a new star's orbit were deciding.

"Come thou with me, tonight, and sit awhile,
To see the Mummers (not at the Museum.
'Tis laughter's tomb; the Park's a dull Te Deum;
The Globe's no more): for I would see thee smile,
While thousands laud the star of thy loved Athenaeum!"

After my run at the Howard Athenaeum Tony Pastor offered me an engagement at $50 a week to appear at his Variety theatre in New York. When I arrived I was terror stricken at the way in which he had announced me. I was advertised as "Actor, Author and Mimic." I remained with Tony several weeks and when I left Gotham my salary had grown to the sum of $500 a week, a tremendous salary in those days.

Variety was hardly to my liking as it gave me too much time to myself and I regret to say that I saved but little from my season's work.

Colonel Sinn of the Olympic Theatre, New York, made me alluring offers to continue on the variety stage, but I decided to enter the legitimate and accepted an engagement to appear as Captain Crosstree under the management of Matt Morgan, then the manager of the 14th Street Theatre in the burlesque of "Black-eyed Susan." It was there I met for the first time dainty little Minnie Palmer and we appeared together in two farces, "Sketches in India" and "The Little Rebel."

After a few weeks at the Fourteenth Street house we accepted an engagement to return to the Howard Athenaeum and we opened there at a joint salary of $750 a week. I was very proud of this, as I had previously left that theatre, not particularly successful, at a salary of only $15 a week.

Chapter XIV
ELIZA WEATHERSBY

Minnie and I determined to remain together and continue in vaudeville through the following year and made our arrangements accordingly. But these were vetoed by her mother who decided that we had better earn our respective livings apart.

The following summer (1876) I opened in the production of Rice and Goodwin's "Evangeline," words and lyrics by J. Cheever Goodwin, music by Edward E. Rice. I appeared in the character of Captain Dietrich. My associates in this production were William H. Crane, James Moffit, Harry Josephs, Veney Clancy, Lizzie Webster and Eliza Weathersby, one of the most famous beauties of the burlesque stage, who came to this country originally with Lydia Thompson.

A friendship sprang up between Miss Weathersby and me. It quickly ripened into love and at the close of our season we were married by the Rev. M. Kennedy of New Rochelle, New York, on the 24th day of June, 1877.

Eliza Weathersby proved a loving and lovable wife and was of great assistance to me in my profession, playing the principal female rôles in all my plays with great success until she was forced to retire from the stage because of the illness which gradually brought about her death.

Eliza Weathersby was one of the most beautiful women whom I have ever known and one of the most self-sacrificing wives that ever blessed man with devotion and love.

Forced by circumstances, she left a position at the Haymarket Theatre, London, where she was considered the best soubrette since Mrs. Keely, and came to America with the celebrated Lydia Thompson's famous troupe of British blondes. Her environment was most distasteful to her as the women with whom she was forced to associate were not to her liking. Lydia Thompson, herself, was a most exemplary woman and as virtuous as Eliza. She, too, was a very clever actress even before entering the field of burlesque and a friendship sprang up between them which lasted for many years.

The reason for Eliza Weathersby's entry into the burlesque field was that the salary offered enabled her to support her widowed mother and five sisters who were left in want by the death of their father. She knew that no matter what her surroundings were she was proof against all temptations and her after life revealed how thoroughly she had diagnosed her character and future. Every week after our marriage a certain sum was sent across the ocean, out of our joint salary, to the widow and orphans left in London and, one by one, each succeeding year a sister would come over and join our happy family. Emmy, the most beautiful, our favorite sister, was taken away from us two years after she arrived. Contracting a severe cold she died of pneumonia and we sorrowfully put her away in Woodlawn. She was a charming girl. And she gave promise of becoming a splendid actress.

I was only a stripling when I married this beautiful creature. Moreover I was unreliable and, I confess, unappreciative of what the fates had been so kind as to bestow upon me. Many have accused me of "wanton neglect." I may have neglected her, but only for the companionship of men. She never complained and during the ten years of our happy married life there was never one discordant note. She was ten years my senior and treated me more like a son than a husband, but, like the truant boy who runs away from school now and then, I was always glad to return and seek the forgiveness that an indulgent mother always gives a wayward child. Our own home near Boston was a little paradise. I was seldom away from it and together we spent many, many happy hours, surrounded by our little sisters and my friends – who were always her friends. She was domesticated to a degree and never cared for the theatre. A loving sister, a dutiful daughter, a loving wife, she is resting in Woodlawn and the daisies grow over her grave.

We remained with the "Evangeline" aggregation during the summer of 1876. This engagement was interrupted by my accepting another to appear at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia in

conjunction with the famous John Brougham. This only lasted for two weeks when I rejoined Rice and continued with him until I was discharged for having a fistic encounter with the stage manager who was always making things particularly disagreeable for me. Eliza was offered an increase of salary to remain, but she preferred casting her lot with me.

We packed up our parcels and went to New York in search of an engagement. I succeeded in procuring an opening with Harrigan and Hart at the Theatre Comique where I remained for several weeks. Tony Hart and I were always like Damon and Pythias.

What a delightful character was Tony Hart!

"His face was a thanksgiving for his past life and a love letter to all mankind."

About 1872 a bright-eyed Irish-American lad named Anthony Cannon came over the theatrical horizon like a burst of sunshine and it took but a few short years for him to establish himself in the hearts of the American public. I met him about 1874, before I went on the stage, and a friendship sprang up between us that terminated only when he was laid to rest in the Worcester graveyard.

Tony Hart was the name of the lad of melody, after he had fired the Cannon. From the time he became associated with Edward Harrigan until the name of Harrigan and Hart became famous from coast to coast, that boy caused more joy and sunshine by his delightful gifts than any artist of his time. To refer to him as talented was an insult. Genius was the only word that could be applied. He sang like a nightingale, danced like a fairy, and acted like a master comedian. No dialect was too difficult for him – Irish, Negro, Dutch, German, Italian became his own, and one lost sight of the individual in the truthfulness of portrayal. His magnetism was compelling, his personality charming. He had the face of an Irish Apollo. His eyes were liquid blue, almost feminine in their dove-like expression. His head was large and round and covered with a luxurious growth of brown curly hair which clustered in ringlets over a strong brow. His feet and hands were small, his smile almost pathetic. His disposition turned December into May. This was the lad who sang, danced and acted himself into the hearts of America during the seventies and early eighties.

Tony Hart was the friend of all mankind and my especial pal.

I have loved three men in my life, and he was two of them.

I miss him greatly, especially on the 25th of each July. We both were born on that day and during a period of twenty years we exchanged telegrams, letters or cables of loving friendship.

He went away many years ago, but his memory will always linger with me. We laughed and sang together for twenty years and when they took him away to join the seraphs, nature discarded the mold that fashioned him. She could find no one worthy to fill it. When poor Tony left us the stage was seen through tears; an artist had gone to join the past masters; the world had lost a man and I, man's greatest treasure – a friend.

After leaving Harrigan and Hart, Eliza and I made up our minds to go on our own. I knew my limitations and her reputation. She had previously made one or two journeys into stardom alone and I thought it would be a good idea to organize a company featuring her. I would be in her support.

Our finances prohibited a production sufficiently elaborate for a burlesque organization so we determined to have a play written on the lines of The Vokes Family skits and Salsbury's Troubadors which were then playing successfully throughout the country, I interested a ne'er-do-well playwright named George Murray. We collaborated and brought out a little play called "Cruets" into which we injected all the little stunts in which we excelled (and all others that we could crib!). Thus we started out on our first starring tour, her name heading the company.

We played through the New England circuit where we had previously appeared in "Evangeline." Our proceeds the first week went away beyond our most iridescent expectations. We cleared in the neighborhood of two thousand dollars profit.

Out of the proceeds of our first week I paid a retainer to Benjamin Wolfe, a Boston journalist who had written "The Mighty Dollar" for W. J. Florence, to write us a play on the lines of the one we were then doing. Had I known what was in store for us I would not have indulged in such extravagance.

For the next five months we never saw a house of more than two hundred dollars at any performance and in a little while the remainder of our $2,000 had almost vanished. I had paid Wolfe a thousand dollars down as a retainer on his agreeing to deliver the manuscript in five months. We had been travelling through New York, Ohio and Illinois to gradually decreasing business. We always left a favorable impression, so much so that John Albaugh who was then managing the leading theatre at Albany wired me for a return date. I accepted with avidity, as it meant a week's rest and a possible relief from bad business.

Upon our arrival at Albany I received a telegram saying that Wolfe had sent his play, called "Hobbies" C. O. D. A thousand dollars was needed to get the manuscript from the confines of the post-office. A thousand dollars to me then looked like a million!

Poor Eliza had saved enough from her earnings to enable her to put aside ten one thousand dollar government bonds. These I insisted she lock up in a safe deposit box the day after our marriage with instructions to tell no one of her hidden fortune nor ever to molest it unless we were starving. When the telegram arrived she insisted upon going down to New York and taking out one of the bonds with which to release our play. I would not give my consent and started out to try to borrow the money. I knew few people in Albany, but had two friends in Troy whom I thought I could rely upon to come to my rescue. One was a judge, the other a gambler. I found them both financially embarrassed, but between them they dug up a hundred dollars which they presented to me.

My gambler friend suggested that I take the hundred dollars, go upstairs into a faro game in which he held a slight interest and try to win out. I reasoned that the hundred was of no use to me and determined to take a chance. I went into the gambling room, and bet the hundred dollars on the high card. It won. I let it stay and it won again, giving me four hundred dollars. I asked for a chair then and sat down.

In ten minutes I had eleven hundred and fifty dollars! I immediately returned the hundred dollar loan, bought Eliza a bunch of lilacs, her favorite flower, went to the post-office and returned home with the much coveted manuscript.

I was ashamed to tell her how I "earned" the money, but I wouldn't tell her a falsehood and finally told her of my afternoon's experience. This worried her greatly as she never believed that any good results came from money obtained that way. I assuaged her grief and as usual was forgiven. We spent that night pondering over the manuscript and at the finish we both decided it was vastly inferior to our little play "Cruets." However, we announced a production for Friday night. This gave us only five days of preparation. We thought so little of it that we never gave any attention as to what we should wear, arriving at no definite conclusion until the night of the performance. So little did we think of the play that I offered Charles Bowser, my leading comedian, a half interest in it for five hundred dollars and a cancellation of the three hundred and fifty dollars I owed him for back salary.

"Natty," he said, "I haven't five hundred dollars and even if I had I wouldn't care to invest it in your property." How little did he know he was refusing a fortune!

When the curtain rang down on the finale of that play I would not have sold a half interest in it for fifty thousand dollars! It was a whirlwind of laughter from beginning to end. We were all dumbfounded and could not understand why the play was received with such manifestations of delight. Everything was encored time and time again and the rafters shook with applause and laughter. The Saturday morning papers were most enthusiastic and in a few days I was besieged with offers from all over the country.

We performed this play successfully for four years, Eliza and I dividing a small fortune. Hers was put away in the safe deposit vault while most of mine went back into the coffers of the proprietors of various places of the same kind as that in which I won the original thousand dollars.

I really never knew how much we did make out of that play until Eliza died and willed me her share. It came in very handy at the time and was gratifying for two reasons – it eliminated all my debts and was a vindication for me, in a way, as I considered it proof that (since she left me every

dollar she possessed, with the exception of the ten thousand dollars in bonds which she had earned before our marriage) I had not treated her as cruelly as my vilifiers would have the world believe.

We followed "Hobbies" with several other productions including "The Member for Slocum," "Sparks," "Ourselves," "The Ramblers" and one or two others. Then we associated ourselves with Edwin F. Thorne and produced a melodrama by Henry Pettit called "The Black Flag." I appeared as Sim Lazarus and Eliza as Ned the waif. We produced this play at the Union Square Theatre in September, 1882, and continued through that theatrical season with very gratifying success.

Our association with Edwin Thorne was a delightful one. Though only a mediocre actor, he was a charming companion and his personality was most attractive. It was a funny experience to be associated with Thorne as it seemed but a few short months since Frank Burbeck and I would sneak into Thorne's bedroom at my mother's house, abscond with his sword and scabbard, adjourn to the back yard and indulge in a "duel" which we would continue until interrupted by the Thornes or other occupants of the dwelling.

Chapter XV
SUCCESSFUL FAILURES

Paradoxically my most conspicuous failures, barring one or two, have been my greatest successes notwithstanding the reports which perhaps will be handed down to posterity. The best instance of this is my production of "The Merchant of Venice." The critics condemned it harshly; some before they saw it and more cruelly after. Maybe it was deserved. I say maybe because against those cowardly assaults I have the comforting knowledge that there were a few, including myself, who disagreed with those enlightened gentlemen. Among the minority I might mention Henry Watterson, Mr. Clapp of the Boston "Advertiser," William Ball, Stillson Hutchins, George Riddel, George P. Goodale of the Detroit "Free Press" and a few actors of intelligence.

Many of the sapient censors of my work objected most strenuously to the disguising of my known methods and a loss of personality. I presume they would have preferred me to play Shylock as it was played by the predecessors of Macklin, but why should I copy "tradition" before tradition was born?

Nobody with human intelligence could ever discover humor in the dignified Shylock, a Jew, but, nevertheless, the only gentleman in the play. Possessed of subtlety? Yes. Humor? No. A THOUSAND TIMES, NO!

Had the learned critics who assailed my efforts known anything regarding the motives that prompted Shakespeare to adapt the play from a Spanish source, written only to please the vagaries of the Elizabethan court, they might not have marvelled at my efforts to dignify the character of Shylock. I would not venture to assert how easy was the rendering after I had absorbed the character nor would I even dare whisper what the performances throughout the country yielded.

As a matter of fact history tells me that they were the largest returns, at the prices, of any series of performances ever given in America up to that time.

The same results marked my production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" – which is written down as "another Goodwin failure." If more than five thousand dollars on the day (which were the receipts of the last Saturday at the New Amsterdam Theatre) spells failure, mine was unmitigated.

The same story of successful failure may be told of my production of "Nathan Hale." It was greeted by packed houses and condemned by the press for my "audacity." It was audacious to play characters in serious plays.

My performance of Nick Bottom in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was supposed to be funny, but Shakespeare's name was on the front door and "knocking" was forbidden until the door was opened. Then how the iconoclasts did knock! They even found fault with the anatomy of the ass's head! However, that is easily accounted for – one sees oneself reflected in a brook and an ass never looks down.

Two failures I concede – "Beauty and the Barge" and "Wolfville." The former, a splendid play, was inadequately cast. The other, a bad play, was perfectly cast. The net results – both hopeless. I knew that "Beauty and the Barge" was lost with all on board before I made my entrance. "Wolfville" was wiped off the map at the dress rehearsal. They met deserving ends but I honestly believe that "Beauty and the Barge" could be resuscitated and, properly cast, run the allotted span.

So sanguine was I regarding the reception of those plays, barring "Wolfville," that I was fearful lest the critics would not be present.

I regret to say that they were!

They strangled my Shylock, crucified my Beauty, sank my Barge, burned my Wolfville, spanked my Bottom and relegated me to the sage brush of farce comedy, gaining their ends by withholding their praises – for business gradually decreased. Up to the period of my return to farce

comedy I broke every record at the Knickerbocker Theatre with "Nathan Hale" – much to the discomfiture of "Willie" Winter and his satellites; and of course I was condemned by the critics who shine in the reflected light of that hypocritical, self-seeking Thersites.

Shortly after I appeared in a farce called "The Genius" at the Bijou Theatre, New York, and never in my life have I been the recipient of such commendatory notices for my work. I was "absolutely perfect" from the critics' point of view. Even the Hebraic gentleman who writes for the New York "American" was courteous – aye, even complimentary, as was also the dainty critic of the "Evening Sun" – and receipts never reached $4,000 during any given week!

Truly a wonderful picture is that painted by Reynolds of Garrick between the Muses, Tragedy and Comedy. To which does he turn?

I wonder!

Which leads me to remark —

Give the average American critic a mirror and a hammer and he will demonstrate his prowess as an iconoclast.

Chapter XVI
BACK IN THE EIGHTIES

My first trip to England resulted in my being able to add to my list of imitations a study of Sir Henry Irving. How it came about may be of interest. It followed my decision to produce "Confusion" and "Turned Up."

"Confusion" had previously been played by Henry E. Dixey and Florence Gerard with some degree of success. I think they would have made a great success had they not made the play subservient to a most wonderful imitation of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in a travesty on "The Merchant of Venice." They performed this travesty delightfully, but as it lasted only about thirty minutes and was the feature of the entertainment the *pièce de resistance* naturally suffered.

I saw the possibilities of "Confusion" and made a deal with John Stetson for a road tour. I gave it a most excellent cast, including such names as John Mason, Robert Coote, Loie Fuller, Charles Bishop, Leila Farrell and others who were conspicuous at that time.

During this engagement I produced for the first time my burlesque of "The Bells," imitating Henry Irving as Mathias. It was a double bill and included "Turned Up." The performance made an instantaneous hit and I received much credit for what the press and public were pleased to call a most faithful reproduction of the great man. I was extremely nervous on the first night as I was following a magnificent imitation of Irving lately given in the same theatre by Henry E. Dixey who had scored a tremendous success. He had a striking make up for his Irving, suggesting him in face and carriage, but his reproduction was more of a caricature than mine and I suffered little by comparison.

Later on, while producing "The Bells" in conjunction with "Confusion" at the Grand Opera House, one of the company whispered, "Irving's in the box!" I nearly fainted. However, I had only a few moments more in which to finish the performance so I gritted my teeth and went to it.

Irving visited me later on in my dressing-room and grasping me by the hand ejaculated, "My dear Goodwin, I congratulate you! I had no idea that 'The Bells' was such an interesting play!"

"My dear Irving," I said, "think of the man you saw play it!"

"Having played the part for over twenty years and having seen your wonderful reproduction of me, I can now see where I have been very much in error," he replied laughingly.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.