

BOOTH IN CALIFORNIA.

YOUTHFUL DAYS AND EARLY TRAINING OF A GREAT ACTOR—THE BEGINNING OF A SPLENDID CAREER

—A GOOD EXAMPLE.

During the last twenty-five years of his life Edwin Booth was accustomed to write freely and frequently to the undersigned, and several hundred letters of his have been preserved,—many of them being of much interest, and, by reason equally of their narrative-substance and their sprightly style, well worthy of publication; since they depict various episodes in theatrical history, and, at the same time, illumine various aspects of the interesting and noble character of their writer. In one of those letters,—dated London, December 18, 1882,—he made a significant allusion to his early experience as an actor. These are his words:

Glad of your boy's success. With Barrett he is in good hands, but he must not have all serious work. As much comedy and character-bits as he can carry will do him a world of good. My principal experience was in a variety of quaint and comic parts; and I am endeavoring to get Clarke's boy, Creston, into that sort of work. He was with me on the tour, and he did very well, for his first season.

Later researches, among old California records, have afforded means of illustration of Booth's reference to the "variety of quaint and comic parts" in which he gained his "principal experience." A careful abstract of those records is here displayed, and it is believed that every admirer of Edwin Booth's acting, and likewise every student of theatrical history, will be glad to possess and preserve it. Edwin Booth's first professional appearance, it will be remembered, was made, at the Boston Museum, on September 10, 1849, when he was in the sixteenth year of his age; after which time he travelled and acted with his father, for about three years, at first in cities on the Atlantic seaboard, later in California, which had just then become the land of promise and Eldorado of the West. It is to the California episode that these chronicles relate:

1852.—Wednesday, July 28.—The elder Booth (J. B.), accompanied by his sons, Junius and Edwin, arrived at San Francisco aboard the steamer California, Captain Whiting, from Panama.

July 29.—The elder Booth made his first appearance in California at the "Jenny Land Theatre," San Francisco.

Saturday, July 31.—The elder Booth acted Sir Giles Overreach in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts."

Sunday, August 1.—"Hamlet" was presented. The elder Booth acted Hamlet. Edwin Booth appeared as Laertes and Charlotte Chapman as Ophelia.

Monday, August 2.—"The Mountaineers," founded on an episode in "Don Quixote," was produced, with Edwin Booth as Viviolet and Mrs. J. B. Booth, first wife of Junius, the younger, as Floranthe.

August 3.—"Othello" was acted, with the younger Junius B. Booth as Othello, for the first time, and Edwin Booth as Cassio.

August 4.—The elder Booth played Shylock and Edwin Booth played Gratiano.

August 5.—The elder Booth played Richard III and Edwin Booth played Richmond.

August 7.—"The Apostate" was acted, and the elder Booth played Pescara. Edwin Booth played Hemeysa.

Sunday, August 8.—"Richard III" was acted,—the elder Booth playing Gloster and his son Junius playing Richmond.

Wednesday, August 11.—Payne's "Brutus; or, the Fall of Tarquin," was acted,—the elder Booth playing Brutus and Edwin Booth playing Titus.

August 12.—"King Lear" was acted,—the elder Booth playing Lear and Edwin Booth playing Edgar.

August 13.—"The Iron Chest" was acted,—the elder Booth playing Sir Edward Mortimer and Edwin Booth playing Wilford.

August 14.—"Othello" was acted, with the elder Booth as Iago, Junius as the Moor, Edwin Booth as Cassio and Caroline Chapman as Desdemona.

The engagement ended that night, August 14, and the elder Booth and his sons subsequently visited Sacramento and other interior towns of California.

On Friday, October 1, 1852, the elder Booth sailed from San Francisco, aboard the steamer Independence, on his return journey to the East. He crossed the isthmus, from Panama, and sailed from Colon to New-Orleans, where he acted six times, at the St. Charles Theatre,—closing, with Sir Edward Mortimer and John Lump, on November 19, 1852. He then embarked on the steamer J. S. Chenoweth, for Cincinnati; but he had not sailed far before he became fatally ill, and a few days later,—on November 20, 1852,—he died. His body was carried to Baltimore and there buried. His death was felt as a calamity, wherever the theatre then flourished. On hearing of it, at Boston,—where his fame was great, and where he had but recently acted, with such splendid vigor and such brilliant success,—Rufus Choate expressed the general feeling of the hour, when he said: "Then there are no more actors!" Friday, December 24, 1852, J. B. Booth, the younger, and the Chapman family opened, in San Francisco, a theatre called the San Francisco Hall.

1853.—Wednesday, February 2.—Edwin Booth made his first appearance at the San Francisco Hall, acting Fred Jerome, in "The American Fireman."

February 3.—That performance was repeated.

February 5.—"Rosina Meadows" was acted,—Edwin Booth playing Henry Meadon.

February 10.—"The Child of the Regiment" was performed for the benefit of Mrs. George Chapman, and Edwin Booth acted Philippe.

February 12.—"Charles II" was acted, with George Spear as Captain Copp, and Edwin Booth as Charles II.

Friday, February 18.—The San Francisco Theatre, S. F., was opened, by William Chapman and J. Fairchild, with a stock-company, of which Edwin Booth was a member. The opening play was "Maidens Beware," with Edwin Booth as Henry Hamilton, and Caroline Chapman as Rosalie Bouquet.

February 21.—"The Soldier's Daughter" was presented, with Edwin Booth as Frank Heartall.

February 22.—"Paul Pry" was performed. William Chapman acted Paul Pry, and Edwin Booth appeared as Harry Stanley.

February 23.—Edwin Booth acted Charles Franklin, in "Sweethearts and Wives," and also Lord Sparkles, in "Love in Livery."

February 25.—Edwin Booth acted Sir Charles Rivers, in "The Trumpeter's Wedding."

Friday, March 4.—Repetition of "The Soldier's Daughter" occurred, with Edwin Booth as Frank Heartall.

1853.—March 9.—"The Heir-at-Law" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Dick Duberly.

March 11.—"She Stoops To Conquer" was acted, with Edwin Booth as young Marlowe.

March 14.—Same performance.

March 16.—"Maidens Beware" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Henry Hamilton.

March 18.—"Paul Pry" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Harry Stanley.

"The Invisible Prince," in which Edwin Booth was not cast, then had a brief run.

Thursday, March 24.—"A Lesson To Merchants" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Mr. Bromley.

March 25.—Same performance.

March 26.—"The Trumpeter's Wedding" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Sir Charles Rivers.

March 28.—"A Lesson To Ladies" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Mons. St. Val. That performance was repeated March 29 and 30.

March 31.—Edwin Booth acted Mr. Bromley, in "A Lesson To Merchants."

Friday, April 1.—"Sister Kate" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Charles Unit.

April 4.—"The Heir-at-Law" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Dick Duberly.

April 5.—"The Trumpeter's Wedding" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Sir Charles Rivers.

April 6.—"Guy Mannering" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Colonel Mannering.

April 7.—"A Lesson To Ladies" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as St. Val.

the public is familiar—lasting till his death, in 1893. Ample accounts are readily accessible,—in his Biography by the present writer, and in other books,—of his professional proceedings in mature life; but, of his early training and experience as an actor, these records afford a fresher and more particular exposition than has hitherto been published. He was in his nineteenth and twentieth years, when he passed through this, the most important period of his novitiate, and the example that he thus set,—an example of patience, endurance, and steadfast effort,—is one that young actors may well remember and emulate.

Long after his early California days, and when his renown had been everywhere established, Edwin Booth, writing to the undersigned, October 29, 1872, from Portland, Maine, made the following facetious reference to old times and juvenile vicissitudes:

I am doing well, though not better than if I had gone on in the old way, of starring, at reg-



EDWIN BOOTH.

(From a rare photograph.)

April 8.—Edwin Booth acted Walker, in "Leap Year," and Mr. Bromley, in "A Lesson To Merchants." That performance was repeated.

April 9.

April 11 and 12.—"Green Bushes" was acted with Edwin Booth as George.

April 13 and 14.—Edwin Booth acted Furibond in "The Yellow Dwarf," and Walker, in "Leap Year."

April 15 and 16.—Edwin Booth acted Sir William, in "Roebuck," and Furibond, in "The Yellow Dwarf."

Thursday, April 21.—Edwin Booth appeared in Richard III, playing that part for the first time in California.

April 22.—"Leap Year" was repeated, with Edwin Booth as Walker.

Monday, April 25.—Edwin Booth acted Hamlet, for the first time, taking a benefit.

April 26.—"The Rivals" was performed, with Edwin Booth as Captain Absolute.

April 27.—"Dombey and Son" was performed, with Edwin Booth as Dombey.

Monday, May 2.—Edwin Booth repeated his performance of Richard III, for the benefit of Mr. Dumfries.

May 3.—"Maidens Beware" was acted, with Edwin Booth as Henry Hamilton.

May 10.—"The Lady of Lyons" was presented, for the benefit of Catherine Sinclair (Mrs. Edwin Forrest), and Edwin Booth acted Claude Melnotte. Miss Sinclair played Pauline.

May 11.—"The Stranger" was acted, and Edwin Booth played Francis.

May 12.—Edwin Booth acted Charles Surface, in "The School for Scandal."

May 19.—"Ingomar" was presented. Edwin Booth acted Ingomar, and Catherine Sinclair acted Parthenia.

May 21.—"Katherine and Petruchio" was presented, with Edwin Booth as Petruchio.

May 25.—"London Assurance" was presented, with Edwin Booth as Dazzle.

The San Francisco Theatre was closed on May 26, 1853, and thereafter, for about a year, Booth was associated with a new theatre called the Metropolitan, managed by Catherine Sinclair (Mrs. Edwin Forrest), with whom he acted principal parts. In 1854 he made a professional visit, in company with Laura Keane, to the Sandwich Islands and Australia, but he returned to California, after an absence of nine months, and remained there until the autumn of 1856, when he came back to the East, and began, at Baltimore, that triumphal career with which

dar theatres, without my company; and I don't know that I like this hurry from place to place. It is still rather novel; though I had lots of it in my California and Sandwich Island days, when the edge was rubbed off, and it does not afford such keen enjoyment as it did then, besides, it is too contumeliously civilized for romance. I find good halls and regular theatres in many places, and comfortable hotels, with respectable, well-dressed audiences—all of which is tedious, not to say disgusting, when compared with my Kanaka and Digger Injun experiences! I sigh for the Sierras and pine or Lone Gulch and Shirt-Tail Bend, to say nothing of Cock-Tail Canyon, and the rough-and-tumble patrons of wild California. But, it is a change from the monotony of Booth's Theatre, at all events, and it teaches me to know when I am well off.

Weariness of monotony attended Edwin Booth through all the later years of his laborious, patient, often afflicted life; but the loftiness of his spirit was never subdued, the sweetness of his disposition was never embittered, and the light of his playful humor was never dimmed. To have known him is a lasting blessing, and to remember him is to be constantly encouraged and cheered.

WILLIAM WINTER.

ONE MISERY OF ANGLO-INDIAN LIFE.

From The London Saturday Review.

Every night at dinner the Anglo-Indian holds a kind of levee. The insects which attend dace gayly round the lamp, and one has to watch one's plate and glass carefully lest some of the insects should dance into them. There is one insect—a little, flat, brown, shining creature—which emits the worst odor in the world. If one of these touches your food the whole is tainted and rendered inedible. You dare not kill these pests, for if one be squashed the whole room becomes filled with its disgusting smell and is uninhabitable for the next half hour. So these abominable insects fly about with impunity while the poor Anglo-Indian must perforce look helplessly on and inwardly sigh "Spero meliora."

LITERARY NOTES.

There is to be, after all, a supplementary volume to the delightful new Murray edition of Byron. This volume—the thirteenth—will contain the bibliography and index. Six volumes have been devoted to the letters and six to the poetry.

M. Emile Zola has finished a large part of his new book, and the English version will be brought out during the autumn. It is to be called "Truth," and is the third of the series of four projected by the novelist a long time ago. The first and second, it will be remembered, were "Fruitfulness" and "Labor." Neither book achieved the success of his earlier novels. The last of this series is to be entitled "Justice."

The man who paid \$1,110 last March for the "unique" copy of Charles Lamb's bit of nursery verse, "The King and Queen of Hearts," must look upon his purchase now with some searchings of heart. For a second copy appeared, and now a third copy has turned up, and the price has come down to—\$25!

Some reminiscences of Charles Reade, that brilliant novelist, are coming from the pen of his onetime friend, John Coleman, the actor. In England at least there is a constant demand for Reade's books; it is stated that nothing sells better in cheap editions. In the United States there is generally a demand for that masterpiece of historical fiction, "The Cloister and the Hearth." It is a book so witty, so charged with knowledge of human nature, so picturesque and so thrilling that it cannot die. The man who does not read this novel with wonder and delight writes himself down one without taste, imagination or the historical sense. As for Reade's lighter books, who can turn without keen enjoyment the pages of that most humorous and acute little study of feminine character, "Love Me Little, Love Me Long"? We are anticipating, not too patiently, the publication of a small, light, handy pocket edition of Reade's novels. May it not be long delayed!

The sixpenny reprints of popular books are being sold in great quantities in England, and it is stated that they have seriously affected the sales of the sixpenny magazines.

Those who have seen Mr. Kipling's pen and ink drawings for his forthcoming book of "Just So Stories" describe them as being full of fun.

It is the complaint of "The London Morning Post" that the current "Lives" of Dickens do not contain any account of his wonderful powers as a talker. "As a boy in a lawyer's office he was famous for his powers of mimicry, and as an actor he would easily have become famous. On the other hand, his inexhaustible flow of fancy and humor, a flow which he never made any attempt to check, must have made him most delightful of talkers. One remembers the comment of Thackeray on one occasion when Dickens was making an after dinner speech, 'I cannot afford to coruscate like that.' Perhaps it was impossible to preserve any of his conversation. Voice, expression and gesture might seem to those who heard him so essential to the effect he produced that the bare words seemed cold and dead when those who had listened came to write them down. But we have a recollection of a story to the effect that Dickens once took Thackeray out for a walk and brought him back exhausted—not with walking, but with laughter. One would like to have even a faint echo of the conversation on that occasion."

The re-establishment of Poland as a kingdom and the plots laid for the purpose furnish the machinery of Mr. Henry Seton Merriman's new novel, "The Vultures." These "Vultures" are introduced as men in the service of strong governments "whose mission it is to find themselves where things are stirring—to be at the seat of war."

Mr. Paul du Chaillu, kindest and most cheerful of travellers, has been living in Russia for the last year, busied in the collection of material for a book dealing with that country. He means to devote three or four years more to this preparation, perfecting himself in the language, of which he already has an excellent knowledge, and living among all classes of the population. He has had an interview with the Emperor, who is greatly interested in his plans and who has promised to provide the author with a particularly useful special passport.

In a little pamphlet called "Better Say" Mr. J. C. Fernald recalls the dispute of two friends as to whether the word "news" was singular or plural. They telegraphed to Mr. Greeley the question: "Are there any 'news'?" and he promptly flashed back the answer: "Not a 'new.'"

Nothing, says "The London Academy," could be better adapted than the "parallelisms" produced by the Bacon-Shakespeare cranks to hold up a mirror to the essential difference between the Shakespearean and the Baconian temper and mode of expression. "Here," it adds, "is one more example which, from this point of view, bears meditating."

LOVE HOSTILE TO FORTUNE.
We have kissed away Love troubleth men's kingdoms and prov-
inces.
"Anthony and Cleopatra," III, 8 (1825).

It is hard to see how a writer with any power of reason could calmly advance these passages in parallel.

Mr. Kakuzo Okakura, the Japanese artist is publishing a book in which he discusses the philosophy of Japanese art. John Murray is bringing it out in England.

The just issued supplement to Bishop Burnett's "History of My Own Time" is derived from his original memoirs, his autobiography, his letters and his private meditations—all before unpublished. Here is what the good bishop wrote about his wife: "When Lauderdale was one day sick (a great court of ladies being about him), I was first acquainted with her whom I have since married. She was his great friend, a zealous Presbyterian, and a woman of so great intrigue that though I was nearly related to her and had been invited to her acquaintance by several obliging messages from her, yet I had still declined it. For I dislike all meddling women; upon which I said once to the Duchess of Lauderdale [somewhat?] that was not ill-timed: I thought there were two sorts of persons that ought not to meddle in affairs, though upon very different accounts, these were churchmen and women; we ought to be above it, and women were below it. But from a general acquaintance with my wife there grew a great