EDWIN FORREST

His Home as It Was and as It Is.

HIS CLOSING YEARS.

Remembrances and Traditions of the Great Tragedian.

THE PROPOSED "HOME FOR ACTORS."

His Habits and Manners—His Personal and Professional Tastes—How He Lived and How He Died.

The Closing Scenes of a Celebrated Life.

PHILADELPHIA, March 25, 1875.

For the last fifty years there has been no figure more conspicuous in the streets of Philadelphia than that of the great tragedian who was born in this city, and whose bones now rest with those of his father's in the quiet little churchyard of St. Paul's. There were occasional absences on professional errands, but Edwin Forrest always returned to Philadelphia, and never abandoned his affection for it. On a sunny morning he was sure to be seen on Chestnut street, "the observed of all observers," his powerful form and marked face, swarthy, and ridged with heavy, expressive muscles, dashed with a purple or blue necktie, with plain apparel, his eye-glasses swinging across his breast, and in later years carrying a heavy cane. Sometimes you would meet him sturdily lumbering through the suburbs; sometimes he would ride on horseback slowly down Chestnut street at midday. Now and then you would catch a glimpse of him at some theatre, the Walnut Street especially (which was his favorite resort), sitting in the shadow of a box, looking with deep, critical, lowering glance upon the stage. No figure was more widely known. When Forrest appeared there would be in his train, at a respectful distance, a shoal of admiring boys, who had probably worshipped him from the lofty recesses of the gallery, and who feasted their eyes upon the greatness that had made known to them Richard and Lear and Coriolanus. Although a most conspicuous figure in Philadelphia, Forrest led a shy life. But little was known of his habits and associations. The interest taken in his fortunes and fame, however, have led me to follow up some interesting threads of narrative and observation that may not be without value to readers of the HERALD, especially as throwing light on the career of an extraordinary man.

THE HOME OF FORREST.

Forrest's home in Philadelphia was on the southwest corner of Broad and Master street. When he purchased this dwelling, nearly thirty years ago, it was as far removed from the centre of busy life in Philadelphia as Fort Washington or Fordham would be from the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The world had not gone pleasantly with Forrest in personal and domestic ways. He had followed the bent of his ambition to England. He had aimed to found a home in New York, and to rival on the Hudson the castellated splendors of the noble houses of England. But a cloud came upon his life, whether from his own fault or the fault of others it is profitless to inquire now. After the overthrow of his family he returned to Philadelphia, and, evidently desiring to shun observation and society, he retired, like Timon of Athens, to what was then a lonely, out-of-the-way section of Philadelphia, and built him a large dwelling. Here he resided during the better part of the closing years of his life. The building stands upon the corner of a lot about an acre in extent. It is a large, straggling, double house of brick, trimmed with stone. On the Broad street side is a picture gallery and theatrical room some hundred feet long. On the Master street side the brick buildings occupy more space. Seen from the street the house, even in its master's days, always had a gloomy look. The windows were never opened, there seemed to be no life or society about it. Occasionally from the second floor window, looking out from his study, the well known face of the tragedian would be seen studying the life which on sunny days surged up and down the broad and beautiful avenue. The house gained a reputation for mystery. Its loneliness excited wonder, and now and then strange stories would float into our ears, something like those which attended the retirement of Lord Clive at Charlemont, concerning the lonely, angry, irascible old man who quarrelled with mankind, who had been sullenly defeated in the contest, who lived in growling, moody, cynical retirement, seeking no one, looking with contempt upon all mankind, recognizing neither virtue in women nor integrity in men. These were the whispered rumors of the time, and the home of Forrest became one of the curious places in Philadelphia, and when a stranger was escorted through our streets it was always pointed out as of peculiar interest.

FORREST'S HOME AS IT WAS.

And yet, to those who knew the inner life of Edwin Forrest nothing could be more unjust than this public reputation. It all came back to your correspondent as he sauntered up Broad street the other morning, marvelling at the changes that had taken place in Philadelphia in ten years, and recalling the Sunday afternoon strolls which Damon and himself were wont to take to visit the tragedian. To those who were in any way welcome Forrest's house was always open. It was my privilege during some years to be among those who were admitted on terms of personal friendship into the lonely mansion on Broad street. A curious custom about Forrest's house was that if you desired to call upon him it was necessary to send him word in advance, for he maintained his seclusion so rigidly that practically all visitors were denied admission. But no one could be more gracious in the dispensation of hospitalities. You named your hour, say at five in the afternoon, and at five, upon ringing the bell, Forrest, himself, would open the door. There seemed to be no servants in the house. With the exception, I think, of a gardener, who attended to the grounds, there were none. His two sisters took charge of his housekeeping. One of his peculiarities was the dislike of servants, and he would not have them around the house, until after his sister's death, when he was compelled to seek their aid. His favorite room was the library, and it was certainly a noble chamber. He was proud of his books. There was the 1623 Shakespeare, bound in red morocco, which he kept under a glass case, as the holy of holies, and which was, perhaps, the only thing on earth that ever extorted from Forrest a sentiment like that of worship. I try to recall many evenings that were passed in this apartment, but only the shadows remain; the hearty although somewhat austere greeting of the great actor, his lofty way of asking you what wine you preferred, adding generally, "be sure and name what you want, for I have all the wines of the world in the cellar;" the delight with which he would dwell upon his favorite pictures; his books; the mementoes of past days; his collection of curiosities, not varied or large, but all full of interest. And then the charm of that wonderful voice! It was never heard upon the stage in the perfection and beauty it possessed in his library. I remember the finest passages of Forrest's acting, but I can recall nothing—not even the farewell speech in "Othello," which was perhaps his loftiest piece of declamation—to equal his reading of Shelley's "Skylark," or the "Lines to a Cloud," or that marvellous bit of color from "Epipsychidion," beginning, if I quote correctly, "This isle and house are mine, and I have vowed thee to be lady of my solitude." The reading of the "Skylark" especially lingers in the memory as wonderfully beautiful and touching. Sometimes, if the tragedian was in the mood, he would drift off into recitations, one especially, called "The Idiot Boy," that would melt the firmest heart into tears. Occasionally a playful mood would come upon him, and he would tell a negro story and illustrate it with a snatch of melody, perfect in its imitation and rollicking fun.

EDMUND KEAN.

Not a deeply read Forrest was a widely studious man in all concerning his own profession. He had great powers of mimicry, and I can remember on one occasion his reciting the Othello speech in the third act of the play after the manner of Kean, whom he had supported as Iago. Kean was his ideal in acting. He never spoke of him but with extravagant admiration. In fact, Forrest's praise or blame was always clothed in exuberant adjectives. Kean he believed to be the greatest actor that ever lived. When he played Iago to him his own presence sunk out of sight, and he felt he was but the reflex of Othello. There is a snatch of a story which I wish I could remember of a visit Forrest paid to Kean one morning at his hotel in Albany, when the English tragedian was in a melting, perhaps a maudlin mood, and entertained his visitor by singing:—

You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will:
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

His imitations of Kean and others whom he liked were only equalled by his exaggerations of the elder Booth and Macready and those whom he disliked. On these points he was morbid. His life was tinged with three or four hatreds which never took shape in his speech without the most extravagant denunciation. The jury system, marriage, Charles O'Conor and Macready were the subjects which roused him. An unfortunate marriage had ruined his life. A jury had defeated him in his suit. Charles O'Conor had conducted the case against him. Macready had been his rival, and not always, perhaps, a courteous rival, in England. These were points of irritation, and they were subjects which those who knew his weakness and respected his character always took pains to avoid. Proud of his genius and conscious of his power, he was irritable to the last degree. A slight paragraph showing lack of appreciation or dislike wounded him. Then came bursts of angry passion and libel suits. In this I often fancy that Forrest resembled Walter Savage Landor, as he is described by his biographer, or Dickens' character of Boythorn, in "Bleak House," which is known to be based on Landor. It was often a question whether Forrest's boisterous talk upon these subjects was affected or had become a habit with him. He was too frank a man to be insincere on any question, and, therefore, I suppose that these expressions were the convictions of a man who either strongly loved or hated.

FORREST AMONG HIS PICTURES.

But as the figure of Forrest comes out of these shadows it is always in a gentle aspect. I cannot recall an occasion when he was angry or even impatient. I see him slowly tramping through his picture gallery with heavy foot, pointing out one after another of his paintings. His taste in art was not a taste but a prejudice. He had likes and dislikes, which he asserted in the most curious way. "I would not take $10,000 for that picture," he would say, pointing to a pretty little thing by the German painter Meyer of a girl paddling in the brook with her fair feet. "I sit by it for hours and hours, and I feel the cold rush of the water in my blood and on my brain." There was a copy of a Spanish picture of an Andalusian boy playing on a guitar, which he always insisted was an original Murillo. There was a "Napoleon at Moscow," the Emperor standing at a window, drawing back the curtain, while he sees through the frosty pane the beginning of the fire, and indicates by the darkening scowl upon his brow that the flames of Moscow presage the downfall of his house. He would stand before this picture and dilate upon it in high emphatic speech as one of the finest conceptions of modern art. There was another collection of three pictures—"Morning," "Noon" and "Night"—well known to art connoisseurs, pleasant enough, but nothing striking, which he was always proud to show to his visitors. There was the painting of his dog that accompanied him on his travels through the West when he was a young strolling actor. "How I loved that dog!" he would say, with strange tenderness of voice. "That dog was the best friend I ever had. He had brains enough to be President of the United States. When he was dead I had him painted. I have always loved dogs on account of that one." In fact, all Forrest's opinions were of this character.

ACTOR AND CRITIC.

His criticisms on Shakespeare were marked by impatience of any reading but that which pleased his own fancy. I remember his contending with another actor almost to the point of angry controversy as to whether Hamlet meant "a sea of troubles" or a "siege of troubles." Forrest always read the line:—

To take up arms against a siege of troubles;

and, lest the critics might not understand him, was wont to place the strongest emphasis upon "siege." He had a reason for everything, and in his stage business was a most exact and methodical man. Nothing annoyed him more than to have the text of Shakespeare recited imperfectly. His industry was boundless. He was punctual in appointments, hard in money matters, and toward the close of his life extremely so. He never shirked a pecuniary engagement. His constant lesson to young men was "industry, industry." There are stories of his harshness in stage discipline, but he was never harsh except to those who deserved it. No young actor of merit was ever pushed back by him. I have heard many stories of his kindness and his courtesy from one who played with him during the last years of his life, and who is now in the front rank of our tragedians. "Forrest," he said, "was always considerate. If the business of the stage required you to go to the front he always gave place. If you desired to make a point in any speech he always acted to you, and you felt always while on the stage that he was following you and supporting you. It was only to those who were incompetent or imperfect or seemed to lack enthusiasm in their art that his anger broke forth. He hated sham and cant and folly, and in rehearsing a piece would insist upon the actors going through the business over and over again until they became as perfect as it was possible to be. He had a perfect knowledge of stage effect and dramatic art. On the stage he never thought of the audience—never saw it. He played his part correctly, earnestly, always doing the best he could. He never skipped the 'business' or shirked the lines. Perhaps the strongest point in the character of Forrest, and that upon which his fame will largely rest, was that whenever he went upon the stage, whether there were ten people or 10,000 before him, he did his best." One of the most remarkable peculiarities of the great tragedian, and one which, probably, no one ever suspected, was that he never went upon the stage, no matter under what circumstances, without a certain degree of trepidation. He soon forgot it and his audience, but this "stage fright" was always there at first.

FORREST'S FRIENDS.

Forrest's circle of friends was small, but he held them in his heart with strong affection. The dearest of them all was James Oakes, of Boston, whom he had known for fifty years, and whose praises he never tired of repeating. He was his ideal gentleman—"the truest, bravest, noblest, sunniest soul"—and was made one of the executors of his will. He had a great affection for Daniel Dougherty, of Philadelphia, another executor, whom he regarded as the first of American orators, and never ceased to praise for the blameless beauty and integrity of his life. He was fond and proud of John W. Forney, and took the deepest interest in Forney's ventures and successes. Mr Lawson, of New York, also an old friend and executor, was a peculiar favorite. Those who were closest to him, I take it, were, first and above all, Oakes, and Dougherty and Forney. John McCullough, much younger than either, he regarded with great affection. He took the utmost pride and care in his dramatic education, and always prophesied he would be a great tragedian. Joseph McArdle, for thirty years his agent and intimate bosom friend, was also highly esteemed by Forrest for his honesty and fidelity. These men saw most of his life, for with them almost altogether his latter years were spent.

FORREST'S HOME AS IT IS.

The old mansion looks gloomy enough on this cold spring day. We ring the bell, and in a few minutes are admitted by Mr. McArdle, who has been designated by the executors to take charge of the place. It is now offered for sale and has been partly dismantled. We stroll into the drawing room. The carpets are up, the ornaments removed, the collection of prints and pictures are gathered into a corner. We go up stairs, our feet resounding on the unfurnished steps, and we come to the door of the old library. A freshly-painted spot shows where the fire broke out shortly after Forrest's death, destroying, among other things, the 1623 folio Shakespeare, which he prized as the apple of his eye. The books have been taken away, and are packed up to be sent to his Actors' Home. The walls are bare and fresh and clean. Here are two large photographs, life size—one of Forrest in citizen's dress, the other as Lear, holding his sceptre of straw, and saying, "Aye, every inch a king!" Around the wall there is a collection of photographs of Forrest, in all of his characters, imperial size, taken by Brady. He took a great deal of pride in this work, and when the photographs were printed he persisted in buying the negatives, so that they could not be reproduced. Here we have him in all his characters—Lear, Hamlet, Othello, Rolla, Claude Melnotte, Jack Cade, Metamora, Spartacus, the Broker of Bogota, and so on down the list. Here, on a table, is the glass case in which he kept his acting swords. We open it and take them out, for they are a noted collection. The first is Richard the Third's sword, with the monogram "J. P. K." engraved upon it, for John Philip Kemble, to whom it originally belonged. On the weapon is this superscription:—"This sword, worn by Edmund Kean as Richard III., was presented to Edwin Forrest by his sincere admirer and friend, Stephen Price, London, 1826." We look at the weapon which Kemble and Kean and Forrest wielded and put it by with reverence. We take up another, a Roman sword, with "Talma" engraved upon it. This was the property of Talma, the great tragedian, who wore it in his Roman parts, and the tradition is that he received it from the Emperor Napoleon, his friend. There is another Roman sword, with a handle in the shape of an eagle's beak, and a Scotch claymore, which are not known to have any special history. And here, also, is a bowie knife, the first ever made, and made a present to Forrest by Colonel Bowie, the inventor of that interesting emblem of American civilization. The blade is nearly a foot long, and sheathed in a rude leather scabbard. Here is a cane that belonged to George Washington, and another signifying that it had been presented to Forrest by the artists of the Broadway Theatre, New York, on the sixty-ninth night of his performance in that city, April 30, 1852. We close this case and look at a portrait of the elder Wallack, which Forrest treasured, holding, as he did, that great actor and princely gentleman in high esteem. We pass into another room which is occupied by Mr. McArdle, and is the only chamber furnished in the house. Here are many personal relics of the actor. Here is his favorite cloth cap which he wore around the grounds or in tramping the streets in rainy weather. Here are all the known or attainable prints of Forrest, from the earliest down to the latest, taken just before his death. Here is a painting of Forrest as Rolla, which must have been made when he was quite a lad, for the face is boyish. Here are pictures of Oakes, Dougherty, McArdle and Forney, which were among his dearest household treasures. We note also two play bills, of which he was proud and had framed. The first records that at the Broadway Theatre, on April 8, 1852, Forrest played Othello for the fiftieth night of his engagement. The Iago of the occasion was F. B. Conway, who died very recently; Cassio was Mr. A. W. Fenno, just passed away; Desdemona was Mme. Ponisi, who for the last three months has been the mother of Conn, the Shaughraun. There was the after piece, "My Precious Betsy," in which Mr. Davidge was the low comedian, and Miss Crocker, who was afterward to be the wife of Mr. Conway, supported him. Around the room are various prints of famous actors, Kemble as Cato, Rolla and Hamlet, and of Bishop White; a small statue of Napoleon; and the little odds and ends that he treasured, his grandfather's spectacles, old receipt books, silhouette portraits of his brothers, all the marks of active and vigorous life. His desk seems to be overladen with business and to wait for its owner to come and clear it up.

THE PICTURE GALLERY.

We pass from this room into the picture gallery, going through the dismantled parlor on our way, now filled with boxes containing the books of Forrest's library. The picture gallery is a building erected during the last years of Forrest's life, an oblong room, well lighted. The lower story was fitted up as a theatre, Forrest's intention being to give instruction to young men and women who cared to enter the dramatic profession. This work he looked forward to as the closing duty of his life, and he often spoke of it with pleasurable anticipations. But the theatre is closed now, and he never had an opportunity of entering upon the scheme. The picture gallery has been very little changed, and is very much as it was during the lifetime of Forrest. It is an interesting and not a great collection, representing, as I have said before, the fancies of a wayward collector rather than the ripe experience of a connoisseur in art. What strikes the eye at first is the life size statue of Forrest as Coriolanus, which was made by Ball, and was presented to Forrest by twelve Boston gentlemen. It is a noble work, cut in Italian marble, and pleased the tragedian greatly. Mr. McArdle tells us that when it was first unveiled in Forrest's presence in Boston he sat for a couple of hours looking at it and expressed his pleasure with emphasis and feeling. At the head of the stairs as we walk up the picture gallery we note an interesting placard, announcing that "Mr. Sheridan will speak at the close of the poll." This is a memento of English political life which brings back as with a flash those great days when Pitt and Fox and Burke and Sheridan ruled England, and the British Empire was struggling with Napoleon for existence. Here are busts of Napoleon, Milton, Alfieri, Burns, Shakespeare, and two of Forrest at different times of life. Here are portraits, all from life, we believe, of John C. Calhoun, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Dr. Bird, author of "Spartacus;" General Washington, James Oates, his dear friend; Daniel Dougherty, Cooper, the actor; George Frederick Cooke, Rachel as Cleopatra, Henry Clay, John W. Forney, Frederick the Great, with his lynx eyes blazing out upon you, and Napoleon at Moscow, to which we have before referred. We note also a noble portrait of Andrew Jackson, whom the tragedian knew well and of whom he always spoke with respect and esteem. We see many theatrical pictures and prints—Garrick as Macbeth, Edmund Kean as Richard, Cooke as Iago, Nell Gwynne, Mrs. Jordan (who became the mother of the children of William IV., and who, if he had not been a king, would have been his wife). We have also Napoleon at St. Helena, dictating to Montholon. Of the remainder of the pictures there are none worthy of note, unless we except the "Christian Martyr," by Slingemyer, a work of more than usual merit. It is an interesting but not a valuable collection, and will be removed to the Actors' Home.

THE ACTORS' HOME.

This project of the Actors' Home, as our readers will remember, was set forth at length in Forrest's will. It had been for many years his purpose to found a home that would perpetuate his name and give his fortune to his brothers and sisters in his art. To this end he requested his friend Oakes to go to England and Scotland and study up all the institutions of charity and endowment, for the purpose of obtaining the best results of experience. In his will he provides that in twenty-one years the Home shall be opened, and our readers will be pleased to know that his property has been managed with so much judgment and discretion by Messrs. Oakes, Dougherty and Lawson that the Home will have an endowment of more than $1,000,000. Forrest died quite a rich man. There is some difficulty about carrying out the projects of the Home, the opinion of the executors being that, as expressed in Mr. Forrest's will, the home would have many disadvantages. It is to be hoped that these disadvantages can be overcome, more especially as it is known that, after making his will and more carefully studying the matter, Mr. Forrest had resolved upon changing his whole plan. Thus, by the terms of the will, the city house, which we are now describing, is to be sold, and his country place, Spring Grove, about ten miles from the city, is to be set apart for the Home. If anything could be more desolate it would be the banishment of a company of old actors and actresses to a country dwelling, there to live all the year round, away from their old haunts and all that would bring back to them their own trials and triumphs. Mr. Oakes tells a story of a visit he made to the dramatic institution near London of this character, and his asking one of the inhabitants how he liked his "Home" life. "It is the blasted heath, sir," said the old comedian, who went on mourning his absence from the city, from Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and the lonely, lonely life thrust upon him. The executors are of the opinion that Forrest's true intention would be carried out if the city building could be set apart for this purpose. It is a question, however, whether this could be done either under the present statutes or by special law. They will do nothing that will in any way injure the property or lead to litigation, and so destroy the purpose of the tragedian. The trustees are men of the very highest character, and as soon as the estate is in a fair way to be wound up the business of opening the Home will begin.

CLOSING YEARS.

I have referred to the intention of Mr. Forrest to open a school during his lifetime for the instruction of young persons who wished to go upon the stage; but this was not to be realized. Toward the end of his life he became fond of money and applause. This rich man, who for years in the prime of his life retired from the stage, as he grew old became possessed with the purpose of playing all the time. He seemed to have felt that he could never die. A compact, strong, lusty form, overflowing with the resources of manhood, with vigor, activity, health, he could not believe in old age. There are many stories, touching, almost tragic in their way, of how he battled with the inevitable. His hair and beard were as white as snow, but were as tenderly decorated as though they were the locks of a young man. He took the utmost care of his person. He bathed and scrubbed himself until his skin shone like burnished marble. He believed that men should live until they were 120 years old with proper care. His aim was to make money for the home, to keep always in the eye of the public. Little necessary expenses in his household affairs would sometimes throw him into a fury, and there is a story of his walking up and down the room in a hotel far off in Southern Texas in a blazing anger because he remembered that the fence around Spring Grove had cost him $250. He would not concede that his power was failing. He had a premonition in Washington in a touch of paralysis which left his brain in such a condition that his physicians unanimously concluded his life hung by a hair and that he might die at any moment. His friends, Oakes and McArdle, consulted as to whether they should tell him, but it was thought best not to excite emotions which might lead to fatal results. He had strong religious sentiments, without any special belief, his mind running toward the Catholic faith, of which he always spoke with the utmost respect and reverence as "the mother Church." But he never accepted its sacraments or discipline. His mind, always accurate and literal, never forgot a line of a part, but as age came upon him his memory began to fail, and the prompter would be compelled to follow him through his recitations. One who played with him said that he observed this first in the Academy of Music, Philadelphia, during a performance. "I had retired up the stage while Forrest was beginning the speech from 'Othello.' The prompter was sitting at the back of the stage reading a newspaper, not dreaming that his services would be required by one who had played the part for fifty years. Suddenly Forrest paused. He looked toward the prompter's box with a sudden gaze of alarm and a clutching of the fingers, which always indicated feeling on his part, and attracted my attention at once. As he was in the habit of making long pauses no one else observed this particularly. In an instant I saw the situation, and, making some business, walked toward him and whispered the cue. 'What do you say?' asked he. I repeated it louder. He caught the cue and went on, finishing the scene. As we came off the stage he threw his arms around me and said, 'You old scoundrel, I couldn't have got on without those words for a hundred thousand dollars!'" Other signs of decay became manifest. But he would not leave the stage. He gave readings in different cities; but his skill as an actor failed him as a reader, and he did not succeed. This preyed deeply upon his spirit and wounded him, although he was too proud to confess it. When the public of New York and Philadelphia wearied of him he even went to towns like Wilmington and Peoria, always seeking the public, driven by an insatiable impulse, for fame, work and money.

HIS LAST PERFORMANCE.

His last engagement was in Boston. He had had an attack of pneumonia which affected one of his lungs. Mr. Oakes, his life long friend, implored him not to go on the stage again. He was ill all the afternoon, so hoarse that he could scarcely speak. The play was "Richelieu." All the entreaties of his physicians and friends could not keep him from the theatre. Too feeble to walk he was led to his dressing room and arrayed himself for the part. The physician had given Mr. Oakes a small phial of whiskey, telling him that if Forrest showed signs of suffering to administer it to him. When Forrest heard this he said:—"If I die on the stage I will die, but they shan't find any rum in me." A chair was put behind the scenes, and when he was called he was led to it by Mr. Oakes. When his cue came he was raised to his feet. "Steady me," he said, "steady me, and let me go on." Tottering on the stage, the sound of the applause of the multitude seemed to put new life into him, and he went through his part accurately, and so to the end of the play. When he finished he was led, half fainting, to his hotel, and he never appeared upon the stage any more. The next night the play was "Virginius;" but his physicians and friends absolutely forbade his playing the part. He struggled until the last moment, resolved he would not be governed by either friends or physicians. Finally the doctor said, "If you dress for Virginius to-night, and go upon the stage, you will die." He listened for a moment, burst into tears like a child and submitted himself to be put to bed. This was at the Globe Theatre, Boston, and he never acted again.

DEATH.

Forrest left Boston and came to New York next day. Mr. Oakes accompanied him to the train, and as they drove along made an appointment with him to come and spend the Christmas with him and Forney and Dougherty, and talk over the matter of the actor's home and remodel it. On his arrival in New York he was met by Mr. McArdle, his faithful friend, who took him to the train and bade him goodby. He reached Philadelphia in good spirits, apparently well for one of his age and infirmities. The next day he drove into town and attended to some business. Among other things he took a large diamond ring of great value, which he wore as a seal, to have it properly set. He returned home, wrote some letters and spent the evening in his library. About nine o'clock he rang the bell for the servant and said he would like to have an apple. He was sitting in his shirt sleeves at a table reading at this time. When the apple was brought he spoke with great pleasure of the enjoyment which it afforded him, and thanked the girl. He retired early, and at nine next morning the bell rang for breakfast. There was a pause and no response. Again it rung, and Forrest's non-appearance, although the most punctual of men, led the servant to rap at the outer door of his bathroom. Still receiving no response she entered the bathroom and rapped at his bedroom door. There was yet no answer, and the door being slightly ajar she heard heavy breathing and stepped in. Forrest, fully dressed with the exception of his coat, his cravat partly tied and in his hands a pair of light dumb-bells, had fallen back upon the bed, was insensible and breathed heavily, with an effusion of froth on his lips. The alarm was given, but he was dead before aid arrived. It is supposed that the attack came like a thunder clap as he was finishing his toilet. The room in which he died is still as he left it, plainly furnished. The dumb-bells clasped by his fingers in the death agony lie in the corner. Here is an Indian club, the crutches that he used when the gout pursued him and an old-fashioned bed. In this room there were but two pictures. They were those whom he loved better than all the world. They hang there now. The one is a life-sized portrait of his mother, with all the Forrest traits stamped upon her face. The other is a medallion picture of James Oakes, which must have been painted twenty years ago.

EASTER.

How the Holy Anniversary is Celebrated in Various Parts of the World.

CURIOUS RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

The festival of Easter is termed a movable one, from the fact that the date of its occurrence varies between March 22 and April 25. Inasmuch as there was constant discussion with regard to the proper date for its observance, the Council of Nice appointed the first Sunday after the first full moon following the 21st of March; and as the moon fulled this year on March 21, it follows that Easter occurs on March 28, which is its earliest possible happening.

Easter, a festival which with us is chiefly connected with spring bonnets and abnormal egg-shaped confectionery, ornamented with various devices—many of them trivial, many of them beautiful—is still contemplated in other countries as a season of great solemnity, and as offering all the most pleasing features of religious worship as a commemorative testimonial to the important event it recalls. From time immemorial its celebration has been characterized by peculiar ceremonials in each of the three great churches which recognize its importance—the Roman Catholic, Protestant Episcopal and Greek.

EASTER IN ENGLAND.

Although old customs are perhaps continued in their observance with as much fidelity in England as in any other country, yet, in the course of time many have become forgotten or have grown disagreeable to the changed tastes of the people. This fact is noticeable with regard to many festivals and holidays, and the manner of conducting the observances belonging to these differs greatly in different counties. In Kent, for instance, certain generously disposed persons bequeathed twenty acres of land to the local poor, the rents to be divided among them every Easter, forever. So every Easter Sunday afternoon there are divided there 600 cakes and 270 three-and-a-half pound loaves of bread, each accompanied by one-and-a-half pounds of cheese. The giving of Easter eggs is a custom generally in practice throughout England, particularly in the northern counties. These eggs are there, as with us, beautifully colored, and covered with ornamental designs and inscriptions. A common pastime among children is that of cracking eggs, the one whose egg cracks the most and remains whole the longest being the champion. In Warwickshire it is still customary for young men to seek who can catch a hare and carry it to the village pastor before a certain hour in the morning of Easter Monday; the fortunate person is made happy by the reward of a calf's head and 100 eggs. Another custom in Kent is called "Going pudding-pieing." The young folks make calls and are treated with a very desirable article of pastry, made up of custard and currants.

IN AUSTRIA, POLAND AND HUNGARY.

The customs in these countries are similar, and may be given in combination to save space. On Palm Sunday every one obtains a consecrated sprig of something green at the church, where every one goes as a matter of conscience; but the early days of the week are not marked by any ceremonies of peculiar interest. The churches, however, are all open, and all filled with crowds of people evidently interested and devout; but on Thursday the more impressive ceremonies begin. Processions are common in the churches, incense is burned, its strong perfume making the air heavy, and all are preparing for the solemn commemoration of Good Friday. On that day the crucifixion is symbolized by the priests, and everything is solemn and religious. On Saturday night the close of Lent is celebrated by parties and social gatherings, where enjoyment rules the hour. On the morning of Easter Sunday it is common among all classes to send ham, eggs and bread to the priest, to be blessed. Early on Easter Monday the young men go forth armed with whips made of willow and ornamented with colored ribbons, and proceed to call on the young ladies of their acquaintance. Such of these as are early risers escape molestation, but those who are prone to be too much under the influence of the drowsy god are flagellated with the whips of their male friends until they buy their ransom with parti-colored eggs. On Easter Monday, however, the young ladies revenge themselves on the gentlemen in the same manner. The afternoon of Easter Monday is devoted to foot races and various games, which are participated in by all classes. Every manner of equipage turns out and the streets are crowded. The churches of these countries are quite as noted for flirtation as are the opera houses and concert rooms of New York; but, strangely enough, only at this period. Good Friday is specially selected for this species of amusement, though why is a mystery. On Holy Saturday it is the custom for all who can obtain it to eat roast lamb. Such as are unable to afford the luxury put up with kid as an alternative, and the number of these species of animals thus annually sacrificed is great and melancholy.

SPANISH CUSTOMS.

In Spain begins to be seen the ancient glories of religious festivals. A description of Easter at Seville will give a good idea of the manner in which the season is celebrated in the chief cities, it being there, however, more magnificently observed than elsewhere. Early in the morning of Palm Sunday the melancholy sound of the Passion bell announces the beginning of the solemnities for which the last of Lent is a preparation. In the Cathedral a sombre procession of the church officers, clad in long robes of black silk, their heads shrouded in hoods, preceded by thirty priests, who chant in deep bass voices the Ambrosian chant, and, accompanied by a full band playing the grand music peculiar to the occasion, winds slowly through the aisles, swinging aloft palm branches, which bend in graceful curves above their heads. These branches are blessed by the officiating priest, and are then distributed among the citizens, who tie them to the railings of their balconies, where they are believed to be a specific against lightning. The altars are covered with purple curtains, the organ is silent, and priests and choristers chant the narrative of Christ's crucifixion in deep and solemn voices. The various characters in that awful drama—Pontius Pilate, Peter and the Maid—are filled in with the tenor and counter-tenor voices with wonderful effect. On Easter Eve (Saturday) an immense paschal candle, twenty-seven feet in height, and thick in proportion, weighing 2,000 pounds, is placed upon a marble pedestal by the side of the great altar, where it is lighted by so-called "holy fire," struck from a flint by the high priest. High mass is performed behind the great veil which for the last two weeks in Lent hides the great altar; now the priest chants "Gloria in excelsis, Deo," the veil is raised, fireworks are sent off in the upper galleries and the four and twenty bells in the great tower proclaim to the city and are answered from 150 steeples, that "Christ is risen!" Musketry and cannon are fired, and stuffed figures, supposed to represent the body of Judas, are shot, hanged, drawn and quartered in the streets.

HOLY WEEK IN ROME.

We come now to the ancient city, the capital of the Church, where flock all strangers and foreign tourists who can by any possibility so time their movements as to see Rome during the impressive and magnificent ceremonies of Holy Week. All throughout Italy it is the custom to keep watch and ward over the sepulchres in the churches from Good Friday to Easter Sunday, at midday. The bells are during this time tied up—in some localities to prevent them from falling into the hands of the devil.

In Rome the ceremonies of the Passion Week commence with Palm Sunday, when the Pope distributes the consecrated palm branches. The cardinals, dressed in their richest costumes, assist at the ceremonies—a procession is formed, masses are sung and incense floats through the air. The kiss of peace is then given by the Pope to one of the cardinals, who passes it to another, and so it goes on through priests and acolytes and the whole holy office. On Wednesday the Sistine chapel is crowded by those who are fortunate enough to obtain admission to hear the far-famed "Miserere" sung by the Pope's choir. As the glorious music—the most impressive in the world—continues, the candles are one by one extinguished, and it concludes in perfect darkness. The effect borders on the sublime, and frequently the most frightful terror and dismay are induced among the excited audience by the solemnity of the scene. On Holy Thursday the Pope washes the feet of the pilgrims, so called by courtesy alone, as their pilgrimage usually extends no further than from the Campagna, and sometimes only from the streets of Rome, where they pick up a precarious living by begging. However, as the ceremony is purely symbolical, these answer the purpose as well as if they had journeyed from "over seas." The special pilgrims selected for the manipulation of His Holiness have their extremities prepared beforehand, and his duty may, therefore, be considered as a light one and purely perfunctory. He merely touches the feet of each with water from a golden bowl and then with a soft damask napkin, and the task is performed. But the cardinals have no such sinecure; their labor is indeed a penance. Here are collected the dirtiest feet and legs to be found, and with tubs of hot water they must scrape, scrub and soap with energy and faith. After this is over the pilgrims fortunate in being selected, and rejoicing under the unaccustomed luxury of an ablution, are provided with an excellent dinner, and afterward tucked comfortably in bed. The females are similarly cared for by some lady abbess, princess or nun. On the afternoon of the same day hundreds repair to the Sistine chapel, where a cardinal, with a long rod, touches their heads and absolves them from sin. On the evening of Good Friday the illuminated cross is suspended from the dome of St Peter's. As there are no other lights burning at the time, the scene is wonderfully impressive. The Pope throws himself prostrate beneath the cross and remains in a silent prayer while the assembled masses kneel around him. Meanwhile the various religious orders pass slowly with folded arms through the long aisles, covered from head to foot with long black robes; up in the balconies the canons expose the sacred relics in their golden shrine, while torches borne by monks and friars cast a wavering, uncertain light over all. Saturday, symbolizing the descent into hell, is gloomy and silent; but the eve of Easter Sunday, which ends the long period of fasting, shadows forth the pomp, pageantry and universal rejoicings to follow. The shops are brilliantly lighted, in the windows are St. Peter's and St. Paul's done in butter and lard and festooned with sausages, or in pastry and adorned with confectionery and palm branches. One curious ceremony of Holy Saturday is the custom of procuring one or two Jews to be baptized on that day. The ceremony is made as imposing as possible, usually very much to the disgust and discomfort of the poor Jews, who are thus made the scapegoats for the sins of their ancestors.

PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS.

On Easter Sunday the Pope goes to St. Peter's and attends high mass. The priests and cardinals are clad in cloth of gold, velvet and ermine. Mitres and crucifixes are brought forth glittering with diamonds and other precious stones. The Pope is carried in, seated in a crimson chair of state, borne by twenty men, dressed in white robes. He wears the triple crown of the Trinity, and a canopy of cloth of silver is held over his head. He is preceded by men bearing enormous fans of ostrich feathers, with long gilded handles, and is thus carried on, pausing a moment before the miraculous Madonna and distributing blessings as he passes. He is next placed upon a magnificent stool near the altar, where he kneels, his crown being removed and the cardinals taking off their red caps. After reading a little from one altar and chanting a little from another he throws some incense into the air and returns to his throne again. High mass is now performed by a cardinal and two bishops, at which the Pope assists. That over, a little bell tinkles and all is still. Every one kneels; the soldiers reverse arms, which clang on the pavement as they drop on their knees, and the really great solemnity of the scene is heightened by the recollection of the previous confusion and the reflection that the cause of all this is the elevation of the Host. The soldiers now march out of the Cathedral and form in front, the Pope is carried out, the vast assemblage kneel devoutly and then the Pope pronounces a short prayer and, raising his hands, invokes a benediction upon the multitude. Immediately the guns of St. Angelo and the bells of St. Peter's proclaim to the city that "Christ is risen," and the ceremonies of Holy Week are at an end. In the evening, however, the grandest sight of all is the illumination of St. Peter's. Thousands of lights are distributed through the immense building, while myriads of rockets render the scene one of surpassing magnificence. It is a common custom to have infants baptized and blessed on Easter Sunday.

EASTER SCENES AT JERUSALEM.

During Passion Week Jerusalem is lined, in the neighborhood of the holy sepulcre, with stalls, booths and bazaars, where are sold crosses, beads from Mecca, mother of pearl images from Bethlehem and bitumen crosses from the Dead Sea. Caravans come in from the East, camels from Damascus, and Bedouin horses gallop in from the desert, their sides clad in yellow shawls and black abbas. The wild asses of Hebron, with the beautiful Bethlehemite women, dressed in their white robes bordered with red, and who claim a descent from the crusaders, mingle with the motley crowd of friars, beggars and soldiers, making up a perfect carnival.

OBITUARY.

EX-JUDGE BARNET JOHNSON.

After a comparatively short illness, Ex-Judge Barnet Johnson, late Associate Justice of the Kings County Court of Sessions, expired at Sweeney's Hotel in this city last evening. Deceased was born at Gravesend, L. I., in 1836, and had for many years played a prominent part in the politics of his native county. Having been elected a Justice of the Peace in Gravesend eight years ago, he was chosen two years later Associate Justice of the Sessions, a post which he had filled for six successive years, his term expiring on the 1st of January last. Although a republican in politics, he was exceedingly popular with both parties, and leaves a wide circle of personal and political friends. His dying moments were soothed by the presence of his sorrowing wife, his lifelong companion Joseph H. Winters, and a few of his relatives. The remains were removed to his late residence last night, from whence the funeral will take place on Tuesday.

LOUIS AMEDEE EUGENE ACHARD.

One of the most brilliant and elegant French writers who have shed a lustre on modern literature is dead. M. Achard has been a prolific writer of those novels which, differing from the general character of those works by French writers, attract by their moral tendency as well as by their artistic finish. He was born at Marseilles in April, 1814, and was at first intended for a commercial life. He went to Algeria at the age of twenty years for the purpose of engaging in a grand scheme of husbandry, which he quickly abandoned for a high political position. He made his début in literature in a journal published in his native city, and he arrived in Paris at the age of twenty-four years. There he entered the field of literature with enthusiasm, attaching himself to some of the journals, and at once gained a name and fame. From that time M. Achard was the leading spirit among the Parisian *littérateurs*, and some of his letters were copied extensively. He went to Spain in 1846 with the Duke de Montpensier, and the year following one of the most popular of his romances, "Belle Rose," appeared in the columns of *l'Esprit Public*. After the revolution of 1848 M. Achard took up politics, and established an illustrated paper—*Le Pamphlet*. He took an active part in the terrible scenes that took place in Paris that year, and after losing his brother he was taken prisoner by the revolutionists. The next year M. Achard became connected with *l'Assemblée Nationale*, and in this journal he published his romance, "La Chasse Royale." In 1850 he fought a duel with M. Fiorentino, and being severely wounded, he went to Aix for the sake of his health. There he wrote a charming work on this well known resort. After his return to Paris M. Achard was an indefatigable writer, and the American public have enjoyed the perusal of many of his novels. On "La Belle Rose," "Histoire d'un Homme" and "Le Clos-Pommier," his reputation as a novel writer will mainly rest. He was decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor twenty-eight years ago.

CHURCH FAIR.

A FAIR IN AID OF THE FREE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN—A NOVEL PROGRAMME.

A fair on an apparently novel and highly interesting plan is to be opened on Tuesday next at the Masonic Temple for the benefit of the Protestant Episcopal church of St. Mary the Virgin. As a rule church fairs are not the most enticing for paterfamilias, as there is but little amusement, and, unless he is extremely stoical and capable of withstanding the *naïveté* of the pretty saleswomen, he generally leaves with a very light purse. But the ladies of St. Mary promise a radical change. They have quite a new programme. Apart from a handsome collection of articles everything is to be arranged geographically. Each country is to have its proper stall and representative. Hence there will be at once great variety and also, it is presumed, great beauty. Columbia is to be clothed in the time-honored Stars and Stripes. The presiding belle to represent the noble reds is to assume the robe and feathers of the Kiowas or Sioux. Great Britain and Ireland will be represented by a lady dressed after a special style, combining the ancient and modern. *La déesse Française* will show the beauties of Parisian millinery. Spain and Italy are to have representatives. Germany and Russia will provide attractions. And the stately Turk and Persian in tassel and toga, it is said, are to show us the beauties and eccentricities of Oriental dress. Each *vendeuse* is to have her costume. An excellent band is to be stationed in the temple to discourse good music, and last, but not least, a first class restaurant department will furnish the "good things" for visitors. The object of the fair is to assist in paying the church debts. The opening will be on March 30 and the closing April 30. If the committee act up to their very entertaining programme they will deserve and, doubtless, meet with great success.

BOARD OF EMIGRATION.

The grand fight upon which is supposed to depend the perpetuity of the Board of Emigration as at present constituted will come off on Thursday next at Albany, at which time the Committee on Commerce and Navigation of the Assembly will sit to hear the respective parties upon the various questions which may arise. The steamboat men, through whose influence the "head money," formerly established at $2 50, was reduced to $1 50, are bending all their energies to defeat the increase to $2, which the Commissioners a[illegible] present ask, and which amount th[illegible] claim to be essential in order [illegible] meet the running expenses of the B[illegible] The opposition to the increase, as sta[illegible] not so much owing to the increased a[illegible] money which the steamship lines wi[illegible] pelled to pay should the change be m[illegible] whatever it is it eventually comes ou[illegible] grant, as to the effect it will have [illegible] immigration to other ports, where [illegible] money is charged or a much less [illegible] other hand, it is claimed by [illegible] that no decrease of immigra[illegible] such increase, as the money [illegible] the immediate benefit of t[illegible] his interest much better [illegible] sickness or in health, he [illegible] else. The investigatio[illegible] of the Board by the [illegible] closed by the answ[illegible] rogatories recentl[illegible] sioners, and w[illegible] HERALD, and [illegible] ter may be lo[illegible] [illegible]ked for.