STARS THAT DAZZLED THE WORLD.

California's Crop of Famous Actors and Singers.

California, so rich in natural products, has been prolific also of histrionic genius.

When, however, inquiry becomes narrowed down to such members of the theatrical profession as have originated in this State and afterward become prominent in the profession elsewhere the field is at once cleared.

The result of such an inquiry is here given, and it will be seen that the qualifications referred to cut off a great many well-known names often associated with the California stage.

For instance, it was thought at one time that we could claim Edwin Booth and that he made his first appearance at the Jenny Lind Theater, now the old City Hall, as Wilford, supporting his father when in 1851 he played Sir Edward Mortimer in Coleman the younger's tragedy "The Iron Chest." But the claim will not hold. Young Booth's first appearance was as Tressil in "Richard III" at the Boston Museum, September 10, 1849.

Mary Anderson is proudly claimed by California as a native daughter of her State, although it must be confessed that that great actress has not been very closely identified with our stage.

It was in 1849 that the Eagle Theater—the first in California—was built in Sacramento, being in size 30x65 feet, built of lumber costing from $600 to $700 per thousand, its roof being formed of sheet-iron and tin and its sides of canvas sewed together by men paid $16 a day for the job. Pieces of packing-boxes served for the stage, which was 16 feet deep; there were only three drop scenes—a wood, a street and an interior. As an entrance to the second tier or gallery a step-ladder was provided outside the building, and in deference to the ladies canvas was nailed beneath it. Seats were of rough boards, the bare ground serving as a floor, and people paid for their admission in gold-dust, weighed at the "box-office."

In October, 1851, the Jenny Lind Theater, capable of seating 2000, was opened on the "plaza" in this city, but was soon sold for a City Hall. In the same year the American Theater was built.

In 1853 the Metropolitan Theater was erected by Joseph French, but, outside of San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton and possibly one or two other towns, there were then no theaters at all in the State, although, as a proof of how quickly the histrionic art took root here, it may be noted that in the following decade almost every mining town possessed its "theater."

Yet with such a short, almost ephemeral history, the wonder is that so many coruscating stars have arisen in the California stage firmament.

As the mind reviews the histrionic pageant of the past twenty years a large number of names crowd up to memory.

Lotta as Topsy.

There was Edmund Leathes, who began under Barrett & McCullough's management at the old California. For years he played there, appearing in such parts as Mr. Smith in "Man and Wife," Gustave in "Camille," Danville in "The Lancashire Lass," Arthur Shafton in "Sam," Edward O'Connor in "Handy Andy" and Jack Kallard in "Ben McCullough." He afterward attained distinction in England as a leading man.

Then there was Maggie Moore, whose real name was Sullivan, and who was born in this city. She began life as a song and dance girl at Gilbert's melodeon with her brother Jimmy. We find her singing duets with Alicia Mandeville in 1870 at the Alhambra in this city, and earlier yet—in 1868—participating in a variety entertainment with Lew Rattler as bones and Fanny Brown as tambourine, Maggie being down for a ballad and later for the part of Jack in the pantomime of "Jack that Killed the Giant, or Humpty Dumpty."

Soon after she married Manager James Williamson, and was by him put on the stage of the old California Theater as a soubrette. Later she starred with her husband in "Struck Oil" (a California play, in Australia, where by their united efforts they did, in fact, "strike oil" and realized a fortune. They are still in Australia.

Then there was Ed Harrigan, the great Irish comedian, who was a calker by trade and who began in the drama as a variety man at the Bella Union Theater. He afterward made himself famous in New York in company with Tony Hart. Harrigan has written a number of domestic plays, pertaining for the most part to humble life, which have nearly all been successes.

What old playgoer does not remember Joseph Murphy, familiarly called "Joe?" Joe, as a young man, was a Sacramento River fisherman and afterward became a negro minstrel and played at Gilbert's melodeon with Lotta for several years.

Yes, and there were the Mandeville sisters (one of whom is spoken of later), Lulu Sweet, the Worrall sisters, Julia Dean Hayne, Mrs. Judah (Marietta Starfield Torrence), Sophie Edwin, Charles Barton Hill, Adah Menchen, Ada Clare, Belle Pateman, Eben Plympton, old Walter Leman and a host of others. But, under the limitations imposed, their fame cannot be claimed by California, although their memory is preserved in the minds of thousands of residents of the Golden State.

LOTTA.

Miss Charlotte Crabtree or "Lotta," as she will always be known in California, was born in Grand street, New York, on November 7, 1847.

When she was about 7 years old she came to California, and at 8 years of age, although such precocities as the recent little Lord Fauntleroy were unknown in those days, she made her first appearance in public.

In 1858 she appeared as Gertrude in "The Loan of a Lover" in Petaluma.

Lotta was first seen in New York in 1864, when she played in Niblo's saloon, making a rather unfavorable impression. Then she traveled through the West with her parents. It was not until 1868, after her engagement at Wallack's Theater, that she became the celebrity she has since remained.

Everybody knows that Lotta is one of the richest women on the stage, but everybody doesn't know that she owes her cozy financial condition to the shrewd management of old Mrs. Crabtree. Mrs. Crabtree is a financier to the backbone. She has guarded Lotta's earnings like St. George's dragon. She has never permitted any extravagance, and in the height of her affluence her companies have been organized with as much care and financial precision as though Miss Lotta were about to risk a barnstorming tour.

It is said that Lotta has a mortgage of $280,000 on a well-known hat factory in New York. At any rate, she owns the Park Theater in Boston, free from all incumbrances, and her brother, John Crabtree, manages it for her.

Mrs. Crabtree is a terror to the actors and actresses in her daughter's company and Lotta is completely under her control.

There has never been but one Lotta. This little lady has founded a school. Her imitators are to be counted by ten thousands, and on the principle that imitation can never equal the original, Lotta still has no rival.

In private life Lotta is delightful, or as delightful as Mrs. Crabtree will permit her to be. Lotta dotes on her brother Jack, who is known as a rather wild young man with a good heart.

She is superstitious, like most members of the theatrical profession. Lotta never permits a discarded horseshoe to remain unmolested. She captures and gleefully keeps the bit of iron.

Lotta is credited with a belief in spiritualism, but this has never been verified beyond a doubt.

The little lady "rested" during the season of 1890, but is positively asserted not to have retired from active life, where she pouts and pirouettes into the good graces of the public.

This favorite actress is thus apostrophized by an old-time actor: "Lotta, thou midget, come into my mirror of memory as I first saw thee, away up in the foothills at Ione City—was it? Yes, I think it was at Ione City. I forget the county, but the State was California.

"A little girl with a banjo, which thou didst play with grace and skill, hopping and skipping and kicking—how thou didst kick—at everybody and everything, and when there was nothing else to kick at thou wouldst kick out into space; how thou didst squirm and do a 'walkaround,' and do all with an impunity and a vim that defied all opposition and criticism, for thou wast bright and merry, and everybody wanted to see thee, laugh at thy capers, enjoy thy fun and toss into thy lap the coins and nuggets of the land of gold.

"In 1866 she was a 'star' in New York when she had grown older but not much bigger than in the California era, and though her acting, judged from an artistic standpoint, did not call for much comment, she was always pleasing and wonderfully attractive.

"The idea of Lotta being serious in anything seemed an absurdity, and yet in 'Little Nell' she was serious and played with feeling.

"But she was born to make us laugh and not to weep, and she has fulfilled and is fulfilling her mission.

"John Brougham called her 'a dramatic cocktail' for the following reason:

Because in Lotta we can see
Artistic concentration
Of sweetness strength and piquancy—
A pungent combination.

Lotta's gift of a water fountain to San Francisco stands at the intersection of Kearny, Market and Geary streets, and marks her gratitude to the city which first recognized her unusual talent.

Emma Nevada.

MARY ANDERSON.

In these days, when it is the fashion for every man or woman who has made a social sensation to turn the fact to pecuniary account by appearing upon the stage, it is refreshing to recall the history of one actress who has succeeded by personal merit alone.

Mary Anderson is a native daughter of the Golden State, having been born at Sacramento in the year 1859. At an early age, however, she moved with her family to Kentucky. Mary is said to have been about 12 years of age when the study of some of Shakespeare's plays first aroused her enthusiasm for a dramatic career.

It is recorded that when a young girl she would stand upon an inverted washtub and declaim by the half hour, to the no small delight of the colored servants.

At the age of 15 Mary Anderson was anxious to discover whether she really possessed the true dramatic fire, and for this purpose she went to Cincinnati to see Charlotte Cushman. The interview has become historical. Every one has heard how the great actress, patting the youthful Mary affectionately on the cheek, observed; "You have three essentials for dramatic success—voice, personality and gesture."

This encouragement was supplemented by the advice to study for a year with a good teacher before making a public appearance. In following this counsel the late Henry Vandenhoff, son of the famous actor, was chosen as Miss Anderson's instructor, but the young lady never took more than ten lessons. Like most other successful actresses she owes little to mere instruction.

On November 27, 1875, Mary Anderson made her first public appearance at Macauley's Theater, Louisville, in the character of Juliet. Even when experience had matured her acting the unfortunate Verona heroine was never considered one of Miss Anderson's very happy impersonations, but notwithstanding this fact her debut was a successful one, good critics declaring that she showed great natural talent.

In the January following her first appearance she had a regular engagement at the Louisville theater, playing Evadne, Bianca, Julia and Juliet. Later she played in St. Louis, New Orleans, Washington and San Francisco. Her first bow before a New York audience was made on November 12, 1877, when she played Pauline in the "Lady of Lyons" at the Fifth-avenue Theater.

Her success in New York was instantaneous and lasting. For some years she returned there every season, touring in the meanwhile through all the principal cities of the Union.

Her first professional visit to Europe was made in 1883, and she fairly took the British public by storm. Both her beauty and her statuesque attitudes were something new and uncommon. Every one flocked to see and hear "the Apollo Belvidere in petticoats" who could pose like a classical statue, and whose acting, while not considered inspirational, was pleasing and conscientious.

In August, 1885, Mary Anderson added a classic touch to her fame by playing Rosalind at Stratford-on-Avon for the benefit of the Shakespeare Memorial Theater. The proceeds of the performance were devoted to raising the sculptured emblems of tragedy and comedy that now adorn the front of the Memorial Hall.

Her Rosalind has been variously criticized. On the whole it gave more satisfaction in England than did her later impersonations of Hermione and Perdita in "A Winter's Tale," whereas the reverse was the case in America. In appearance she realized Lodge's description of "Rosalynde." All in general applauded the admirable riches that nature had bestowed on her face.

But Rosalind is one of Shakespeare's most complete characters, in spite of its apparent colorlessness.

A critic, writing soon after her Stratford performance, observed: "Her Rosalind was girlish rather than womanly, but it was so brightly frankly healthily girlish that to have quarreled with it would have been sheer captiousness."

On her return to New York in the autumn of 1885 Mary Anderson disappointed the papers and the public generally by absolutely refusing to be interviewed. Not a word could be wrung from her respecting her European experience nor her future plans, and there was a general feeling that foreign success had rendered her slightly haughty.

After a season with Rosalind at the Star Theater in New York and an extended tour of the United States, Mary Anderson returned to England in June, 1886, and since that time, with the exception of visits to the United States, seems to have adopted Europe as her permanent abode.

This has led to a good deal of patriotic comment in America, but one excuse can readily be found. Mary Anderson, as a talented woman with a spotless name, has been welcomed into the highest as well as into the most cultured society in the British Isles. She has been the honored guest of an aristocracy that respects talent, and her friendship with such gifted persons as Black, the novelist, is well known.

In America people "who sing and play and act" have a very much lower social standing; society is suspicious of them, and eyes them askance when they presume to cross its portals.

Few actresses have been more conscientious and painstaking than Mary Anderson; she is never known to have shirked a rehearsal, and has also taken a personal interest in the rehearsals of the various members of her companies. Her "support," however, always speak enthusiastically of her kindness and consideration.

Classical and statuesque beauty like Mary Anderson's is rare, and this may in some measure account for the extreme popularity of her pictures. Not one of her contemporaries is half so familiar to the general public through the medium of photography as Mary Anderson.

In 1889 she appeared in New York in "A Winter's Tale," playing Hermione and Perdita. Many critics pronounced this difficult play to be her greatest success, partly on account of the fact that it demands more pathos, womanly feeling and innocence than it does passionate love. Mary Anderson has often been considered cold in the portrayal of the latter sentiment.

It is not easy to give her full repertory, but even a glance at a few of the plays with which she has associated her name shows at once her ambition and the wide range of her powers—Parthenia in "Ingomar," Meg Merrilies in "Guy Mannering," Lady Macbeth in "Macbeth," Duchess of Torrenurra in "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady," Galatea in "Pygmallon and Galatea," Desdemona in "Othello," Clarice in "Comedy and Tragedy."

Rumor had married Mary Anderson a dozen times and had as often been proved to be false. It was almost a matter of surprise to the world when about three years ago the report that she had been quietly married to Antonio de Navarro, an Italian, proved to be correct.

Since her marriage Mrs. Navarro has retired from the stage and devoted herself to domestic life. From time to time it has been stated that she intended to reappear, that she is writing a novel, or is preparing her memoirs for publication, but to all these conflicting rumors she invariably gives an emphatic denial. Henceforth, she declares, she intends to live only for her own home.

Samuel W. Piercy.

THE THORNES.

Charles R. Thorne Jr., son of C. R. Thorne, who is still living in this city, died several years ago in New York. He was a high-salaried leading man, being well known both here and in the East. He never "starred," however.

His father, C. R. Thorne, was born in New York in 1814; made his debut in 1830 at the Park Theater, New York, as Octavian in the "Mountaineers"; first appeared in Philadelphia May 11, 1830, as Bertram, at the Chestnut. He was manager of the Chatham Theater, New York, when it opened.

In 1849 he visited California and opened in Sacramento, July 18, 1850, at the Tehama Theater, as Rolla.

He afterward went to England with his wife and opened there September 28, 1857. At one time he was manager of the Federal-street Theater, Boston, also the Howard Atheneum. In 1858 he was manager of the Union Theater, Leavenworth, Kans., since destroyed by fire.

Maria Ann Mestayer, afterward Mrs. Thorne, was born in Philadelphia. She made her debut at the Chestnut-street Theater, as the child in "Pizarro," and first appeared in New York as the Little Pickle at the Lafayette Theater.

She took her farewell of the stage April 12, 1864, at the Metropolitan, San Francisco, in the opera of "Guy Mannering." Admired and respected by all her associates, both before and behind the footlights, Mrs. C. R. Thorne gracefully took leave of the mimic scene, yielding that arena of professional effort to fresher aspirants for popular favor.

Walter M. Leman, in his reminiscences, thus introduces Mr. Thorne:

"I was again in San Francisco on July 21, 1865. After a vacation of nearly a year's duration, I reappeared at the opera-house on the night of the 26th as Sergeant Austerlitz.

"I found in Mr. Maguire's company at that time an actor with whom I had a slight acquaintance some years before, and who some years later won the title and maintained it to his death of being, if not the best, certainly among the very best, representatives of the intense emotional school, which has to some extent supplanted the older methods—and produces its effects more by what it refrains from doing than by what it does—not but that Mr. Thorne could act on the old lines as well, but he adopted the new method and became a proficient in it.

"Of a manly person and expressive face, and with a well-rounded voice, Mr. Thorne had all the natural qualifications for success, and study, aided by good judgment, placed him eventually at the top of the ladder."

Charles R. Thorne Jr. was only 47 years old when he died.

He made his first appearance here in California at the Metropolitan Theater when about 19 under his father's management. He was afterward engaged with Maguire at the Washington-street Theater. In the meantime his father, wife and family had gone to China, and thither after his engagement Charles followed them, greatly enjoying his visit to that interesting country.

On his return he was engaged with Palmer at the Union-square Theater, New York, as leading man, remaining for about five years and making a success of every piece he played in. He was a very fine looking man and always "took" with audiences.

After staying five seasons with Palmer he was engaged by Stetson when the latter opened Booth's Theater in New York, the salary agreed upon being $1000 a week, but he did not live long to enjoy it.

At one time he made a successful trip to England, whither he was taken by Boucicault to play the leading part in "Led Astray." It was on this occasion that Boucicault wrote to a leading manager in New York: "If you have any other actors like Charlie Thorne, send them over, for we want them here badly."

His fatal illness was contracted up North River in a country resort where he had gone for the summer, and although he returned immediately to New York he died shortly afterward of blood poisoning.

He played several times in San Francisco under engagement to Palmer, besides at New Orleans and other leading cities. He was at his best in modern parts, achieving perhaps his greatest success as Frank Levison in "East Lynne" and as the villain in "The Octoroon," "Streets of New York," "Money," "The Robbers" and "Camille."

Sybil Sanderson.

In many ways he was one of the most successful of California's contingent of bright Thespians, his versatility making him invaluable in any company.

ANNIE PIXLEY.

Annie Pixley is one of a large family residing in this city, who have devoted themselves to the stage.

Annie is the eldest and has been a star for several years, realizing a fortune by her exertions. She stars in her own plays and is still in useful work.

Miss Annie Pixley was a member of the Proctor Company in 1870 at the Metropolitan Theater, Sacramento. With her were Miss Jennie Mandeville and Miss Ina Robinson. Miss Pixley, a California girl, since made her mark in dramatic annals.

Little needs to be said of Miss Pixley's career, which since her marriage has been constantly successful. Only recently she was starring in this city.

Mary Anderson.

The Grand Opera-house in "Snowflake," and since then has appeared in all the principal cities of America with constant success. Her husband, who supplied her with the first essential knowledge of "stage business," still occasionally acts with her, but is also invaluable as

Her real name is Shay, but her mother having married Mr. Pixley, uncle of the well-known local druggist of that name, all the members of the family have thenceforth been known as Pixleys.

Her stepfather died some thirteen years ago, leaving a family by a former wife. Her mother is still alive, together with her sister and brother.

Miss Pixley more than twenty years ago played with the members of her family, who would give "room-shows" or semi-private entertainments, when a hired violinist would play for the rhythmic measures danced to by the light feet of the talented young actress.

She never distinguished herself in a public sense until after her marriage with Robert Fulford, an English actor of considerable cleverness, who obtained instant recognition for her exceptional powers.

She first gained prominence at the opening of the Grand Opera-house in "Snowflake," and since then has appeared in all the principal cities of America with constant success. Her husband, who supplied her with the first essential knowledge of "stage business," still occasionally acts with her, but is also invaluable as

Aggie Perry.

a business manager and financial assistant. He appeared first in California about 1870.

In a line with her first spontaneous outbursts of talent in the youthful "room shows" Miss Pixley has always clung to light comedy and in that particular walk has few if any superiors. She is 44 years of age.

She and her husband have been blessed with one child, whose life was short. Little "Tommy" died when only 5 years of age at St. Thomas, Canada, and his memory is still a very tender spot in his mother's heart.

Annie Pixley is known in the profession from her social and entertaining qualities. Always bright and pleasant she has legions of friends scattered over the continent.

She is gaining in avoirdupois, however, as the years go on, and in all human probability will not be able to appear on the boards in her favorite roles very much longer. Still she takes care of herself, or rather her husband "Bob" takes care of her, insisting that she shall visit Europe every year for a rest.

Thousands of San Franciscans will be sorry to see Annie Pixley bid farewell to the stage, but when she does it will be to retire into a tolerably well-lined nest, for she is estimated to be worth anywhere from $80,000 to $100,000, all won by hard work and cleverness.

SYBIL SANDERSON.

Sybil Sanderson, daughter of the late Judge Sanderson, was born in Sacramento, Cal., and was educated in San Francisco.

She was always of a dramatic turn of mind, and from her earliest childhood her greatest delight was to be allowed to dress up and play at acting.

As Sybil grew older she became convinced that her voice would make her famous. No one, however, encouraged her in the idea. She sang at a few musicales under the direction of Henry Heyman and other San Francisco musicians, but her family strongly objected to her adopting singing as anything more than a mere amusement.

In the end, however, her determination triumphed, and her mother accompanied her to Paris to pursue her studies in the conservatory there. Admission to the Paris conservatory is by no means easy, especially for a foreigner, as there are always many more applicants than there are vacancies. Without any influence, however, Miss Sanderson was at once accepted on the strength of her marvelous upper notes alone.

After working for some months in the conservatory an incident occurred that had a great effect upon her after career. Massenet, the well-known French composer, was invited by some musical friends to hear the young American girl.

Miss Sanderson was singing when Massenet arrived, and he paused at the door to listen, exclaiming when she had finished, "This is the voice." Just as Wagner sought for his ideal of Brunhilde so he was seeking for a woman and a voice to satisfy the requirements of the title role in his "Manon." The prima donna who had cremated the part was dead, and "Manon" had fallen into disuse for want of a working exponent.

It was an unheard-of thing for Massenet to give singing lessons, but having found the voice he wanted he determined to train it himself. For this purpose Miss Sanderson withdrew from the conservatory and received instructions from this famous composer.

Later Marchesi gave her some lessons also, but the real credit of the young Californian's artistic singing is not due to Madame Marchesi, but to Massenet. It was Massenet who taught her interpretation, too, in order that the actress might carry out the composer's ideal of the various characters.

So delighted was the master with his pupil's progress that he wrote an opera, "Esclarmonde," to make her debut in, and it was decided to produce it at the Opera Comique.

People unacquainted with music in France are apt to translate "opera comique" by "comic opera." In justice to Miss Sanderson it must be stated that no greater error could be made. Comic opera or opera bouffe is far removed from grand opera, whereas opera comique is the nearest possible relation to it.

Bizet's "Carmen," for instance, can be played either as opera comique or grand opera. The greatest artists have performed at the Paris Opera Comique and in many cases the seasons there have been better than those at the Grand Opera-house.

At the time of Miss Sanderson's debut things had not been going well, financially, at the Opera Comique, but the management decided to stake heavily on the success of "Esclarmonde" and of the new prima donna. A good support was secured, and dresses and scenery that astonished even Paris were ordered.

As an instance of the confidence entertained in the success of the young American debutante, it may be mentioned that one of the gorgeous dresses provided by the management was so heavily embroidered and jeweled that Miss Sanderson was unable to move alone in it; she required five women to carry the train.

Every one knows how the Opera Comique more than made back all that had been risked. "Esclarmonde" and the young singer took Paris by storm. The extraordinarily high note that the heroine sings as she comes through the screens into her lover's room had to be heard to be believed. People held their breath in wonder and then went into frantic applause.

Since her first appearance Sibyl Sanderson has continued to add to her fame. She realized Massenet's hopes by creating an ideal of "Manon," that makes it still her favorite part with the French people.

Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet" is another opera that suits her voice and her acting admirably. "Lakme" is also identified with her name, and she has been very successful in "Rigoletto."

Dramatic music is best suited to her voice. Recently she has sung Mozart's "Magic Flute," without transposing the high notes as they were originally written, a feat that has never been performed in our own day except by Christine Nilsson. On hearing Miss Sanderson, Nilsson urged her to save her voice by not taking the extreme high notes every time she sang in the "Magic Flute," adding "I only did it occasionally to show that I could."

On another occasion Nilsson publicly alluded to Miss Sanderson as a rising star, adding sadly that she herself was a star on the wane.

The California singer's success has not been confined to Paris alone. She received an ovation in Brussels, and in St. Petersburg, where the audiences are very critical, she was idolized. In London she was not so successful, but this has been partly attributed to the fact that she was out of health at the time of her season there.

So far she has not sung at the Grand Opera-house in Paris. She once made a contract with the management there, but receiving a more profitable offer elsewhere she paid an indemnity of several thousand francs to break her contract with the Grand Opera.

When asked why she does not sing in California Miss Sanderson replies that she cannot afford it, the prices offered here being lower than those she receives in Europe.

Of late she has been singing in Nice, and Patti, who has heard her, has predicted a great future for her. She has every qualification for success, for, added to her extraordinary voice, Miss Sanderson possesses great personal beauty and is a magnetic and gifted actress.

Some proof of her popularity in Paris may be gathered from the fact that during the cholera scare last summer, when most of the theaters were practically deserted, Miss Sanderson's performances of "Manon" drew crowded audiences to the Opera Comique.

At present Massenet is engaged on a new opera—"Thels"—of which Miss Sanderson is to create the title role.

Charles R. Thorne Jr.

EMMA NEVADA.

Emma Nevada (Palmer) was born in Nevada City, Cal., in 1861, and is the daughter of William Wallace Wixom, a California physician.

She was educated at Mills Seminary, and when quite young showed promise of the grace and flexibility for which her voice is now considered phenomenal.

Before reaching the age of 14 Miss Wixom had determined to become a prima donna, and had even decided upon her professional name—Nevada, which had the double advantage of being pleasing in sound and of recalling her birthplace.

In December, 1874, she made her debut at a Mills Seminary concert as a pianist, but the following year she was put forward prominently as a vocalist in the school concerts under the direction of Alfred J. Kelleher.

Even in her early girlhood she seems to have had a special aptitude for operatic music, singing such compositions as the prayer from "Der Freischutz" and arias from "Il Trovatore" and "Rigoletto," music that scarcely any young girl could attempt, much less render successfully, as Miss Wixom did.

After leaving Mills Seminary Emma Nevada went to Europe to continue her studies, placing herself under the instruction of the famous Mme. Marchesi, who was then giving lessons in Vienna. In Europe Nevada is generally considered almost Marchesi's best pupil, as the delicacy of her execution is beyond reproach.

She made her debut under Colonel Mapleson at Her Majesty's Theater in London in April, 1880, in the opera "La Sonnambula," which is admirably suited to her voice and acting. The first appearance was a triumph, and ever since then she has been a favorite in England.

After that she sang in all the large cities of Italy with success. The engagement at La Scala, in Milan, was during he continuance of the national exhibition of Italy, and she owed it to the recommendation of Verdi, who was consulted as to the selection of artists.

Later Nevada sang with great distinction at the Academy of Music in New York, where she made her debut in her native land. "La Sonnambula" was again the opera, but after charming the audience with "Ah Non Giunge," in response to an ovation, she came to the footlights and answered by singing "Home, Sweet Home."

The appearance at the Grand Opera-house in San Francisco with the Mapleson Company, in the same year, was the signal for a most enthusiastic reception; but artistically she is not considered to have distinguished herself on the occasion of her first appearance here. She was said to be suffering from ill health, and on this plea the management kept her back till almost the end of the season.

In April, 1885, Nevada created immense enthusiasm in Chicago, at the grand opera festival, when some of the world's greatest singers, including Adelina Patti, Scalchi, etc., appeared.

At the conclusion of the last opera in which she sang the audience refused to go home even after the curtain had been lowered and the orchestra had retired. "A ballad! a ballad!" they all yelled in chorus, and finding it was impossible to clear the theater Nevada, in her walking-dress, came before the curtain and sang "The Star-spangled Banner."

In November of the same year she appeared in a series of three concerts on the occasion of the opening of the Alcazar in San Francisco, creating a much more favorable impression than on her first appearance.

Nevada's voice at the present time is delicate, pure and sweet, with an ease and grace of expression that few living light sopranos can equal. She has little power, but the penetrating flute quality of her voice makes it carry, even in a large building. She excels especially in florid and bravura singing. The valley song in Gounod's "Mireilla" evokes "bravos" loud and heartfelt, and from an Italian audience. Indeed "Mireilla" is a work that suits her admirably throughout.

"Lucia di Lammermoor" is another opera in which she is very successful, and the florid music of the "Barber of Seville" has been the occasion of one of her recent triumphs.

Like many prophets, Nevada has less honor at home than abroad. Possibly she has improved since singing in San Francisco, for at present she is well known all over Europe and pleases most in those countries where the public is most critical and where delicacy of execution is most appreciated.

Annie Pixley.

In Paris she is a success, in Spain she is adored, and in Italy she can double the prices of first-class theaters and secure crowded and enthusiastic houses, a feat that even Eleonora Duse, the gifted tragedienne, cannot perform.

FRANK MAYO.

Frank Mayo began his career with Thorne under Maguire's management in this city. As a boy he sold newspapers on the streets.

He has been one of the greatest ornaments of the stage, which he still adorns, having become a star in such pieces as "Davy Crockett," "Nordeck," etc.

There is no doubt "Davy Crockett," like "Metamora," owes much of its success to the actor who plays the titular part. Frank Mayo's performance of this backwoods hero is a gem in its way. He is quiet and subdued; he looks and walks and talks the trapper to the life, never overacts and never forgets the character he represents.

He first played "Davy Crockett" in Rochester in November, 1873, producing it in New York at Niblo's Gardens on March 9, 1874, when he had the support of Miss Rosa Rand as Eleanor Vaughn, the heroine, who looked down to blush and who looked up to sigh, with a smile on her lip and a tear in her eye, and who made in the part a very favorable impression.

Mayo took part in the strongest cast of Hamlet in all its parts ever presented in America.

This was at the famous Wallack testimonial in New York on May 21, 1888, when Lawrence Barrett played the ghost; Frank Mayo, the King; John Gilbert, Polonius; Eben Plympton, Laertes; John A. Lane, Horatio; Joseph Wheelock, first actor; Milnes Levick, second actor; Henry Edwards, the priest; Joseph Jefferson and William J. Florence, the gravediggers; Miss Kellogg Gertrude; Miss Coglan, the player Queen, and Mme. Modjeska Ophelia to the Hamlet of Edwin Booth.

Frank Mayo was born in Boston, April 19, 1839, and made his debut July 19, 1856, at the American Theater, San Francisco, as the waiter in "Raising the Wind."

He arrived in New York in August, 1865, and visited Boston, where he played an engagement. Since then he has played star engagements throughout the country. When the "Tempest" was produced at the Grand Opera-house, New York, March 31, 1869, he was specially engaged to play Ferdinand, that being his first appearance in that city.

In 1870 Mayo returned to San Francisco from the East and participated in an unsuccessful season at the Grand Opera-house, opening with the "Three Guardsmen." Charles Thorne was manager, but the California Theater, under McCullough and Barrett, proved too attractive to compete with.

An old actor says: "Frank Mayo commenced his professional career in California. I remember him first in the American Theater, San Francisco, with Julia Dean Hayne as manageress.

"He played with us later in the Union Theater, rose rapidly, went East and made a phenomenal hit in Boston in the part of Badger in the 'Streets of New York.' From that time his career has, I believe, been a highly successful one.

"The play of 'David Crockett' made a great deal of money for Mr. Mayo, and later a new play, 'Nordeck.'

"Frank Mayo is a handsome, stalwart man, and an actor of whom California may be proud. He resides, when at home, somewhere in the State of Pennsylvania."

In August, 1866, Mayo appeared in the opening of the Boston Theater in New York, taking the leading part in Bulwer's comedy of "Money." Mrs. Agnes Perry was the Clara Douglas, J. B. Booth also playing.

Following is a critique on Mr. Mayo's representation of Hamlet in this city in 1870:

"Mr. Frank Mayo must have been highly gratified with his reception on reappearing before the San Francisco public at the opera-house last evening. The house was filled with a fashionable audience. Doubtless most of those present were curious to see whether the promise of his earlier years had been fulfilled. Still they were evidently inclined to be critical upon his acting merits and not to bestow applause through favoritism or indulgence. It was manifest upon his utterance of the first passages that he had not neglected to improve his talent during his absence, but had with the fervor and assiduity of a true histrion devoted himself to a thorough study of his art in its highest branches.

"Mr. Mayo's rendition of Hamlet, in which character no actor who is not possessed of very superior histrionic qualities can hope to succeed, realized the warmest expectations of his numerous friends and gratified the most exacting among the audience. Gifted with splendid physical advantages, his personal appearance on the stage cannot fail to win admiration. His action, though at times extremely fervid and somewhat convulsive, is, nevertheless, almost invariably in accordance with the principles of grace and elegance. His elocution is very clear and distinct and his enunciation of the whispered passages was audible throughout the remotest portions of the house. Mr. Mayo's voice is well modulated, is naturally clear and melodious, and during the delivery of the soliloquies and long dialogues when there was no opportunity for vehemence its tone was notably mild and melancholy and well adapted in its modulations to the peculiar sentiments and character of the 'melancholy Dane.' In many of the scenes—those of the King kneeling in front of the altar, the violent upbraiding and parting from Ophelia, the burial of the unfortunate maiden and the combat at the close, he was fervid and effective. Mr. Mayo received the compliment of a call before the curtain at the close of each act."

He also appeared in "Macbeth," "Night and Morning," "Wild Oats," "The Romance of a Poor Young Man," "The Streets of New York" and "Othello" during that engagement.

SUE ROBINSON.

One of the brightest comediennes the State has ever produced was Sue Robinson, who was remarkable for her good looks and graceful figure.

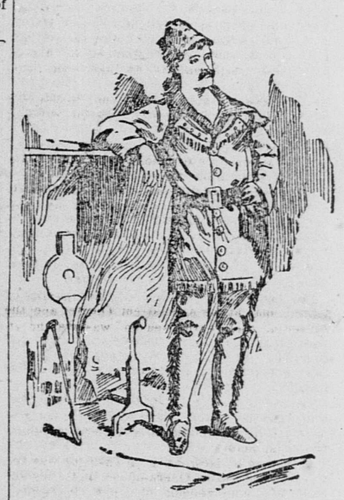
The daughter of a pioneer manager, she began to act almost in her infancy, and gradually worked her way into the foremost rank of popular favor.

McKean Buchanan played in 1855 an engagement of six nights' duration in San Francisco. The "Naiad Queen" was produced with some eclat, and at the close of the season a young girl, though an old Californian, appeared—Miss Sue Robinson, the Fairy Star.

An actor who has since passed away thus writes of her: "In the fall of 1870 Mr. Joseph Proctor commenced a theatrical campaign at the Metropolitan Theater, Sacramento.

"It was the 10th of September, just prior to the commencement of the State Fair, whereby Mr. Proctor availed himself of the advantages which that great gathering offers to those who cater for public patronage. The weather was intensely warm, but the week's business was very lucrative, and his season had an excellent 'send-off.'

"The stage manager was J. F. Cathcart.



Frank Mayo as Davy Crockett.

This gentleman came to California not long before with some organization which got stranded in San Francisco. He was a good general actor, and had been through an English provincial experience. Mr. Cathcart subsequently visited California, playing the seconds with Charles Kean.

"Miss Sue Robinson was our leading lady. She had grown up from a child on the Pacific Coast, and was known far and wide in every mining camp of the early days as the 'Fairy Star,' brim full of natural talent.

"If she had been taken when young and given the culture and training of a proper dramatic school, I can think of none more likely to attain to the highest grade of her profession; but when nuggets and handfuls of golddust were thrown to the little girl who twirled the banjo and danced the clog and sang the topical song, those who controlled her were too eager to gather the spoil of the present to think very much of her future.

"When she joined Mr. Proctor she was a very good actress, in spite of very bad training, or rather of no training at all; and in the two seasons she remained with us her development and improvement were wonderful; her performances in some of the higher characters of comedy would have done credit to any first-class theater, and the vocal and terpsichorean extravagances of her earlier youth, modified by good judgment and taste, were powerful adjuncts to her attractiveness.

"Toward the close of the season she was in treaty with a prominent Eastern manager and getting ready to start for a new field when death intervened and she was suddenly cut off at the threshold of what I believe would have been a great artistic future. Poor Sue Robinson!"

Mr. Robinson, the father of Miss Sue Robinson, the "Fairy Star," was one of the early comers to the land of gold. He had played in all the mining regions of Oregon and California and the lavish favors of fortune had been followed by her frowns so often that he had become alike indifferent to smile or frown.

The old theater in Victoria still standing, though dilapidated, in 1879, was erected by him in 1854. Dr. Robinson had never received anything like regular theatrical training, but like John K. Porter and J. B. Addams he was "up" in everything and some parts he played very well.

No better illustration of the evolution of the drama in California could be given than the following of an episode in a theater in San Francisco's earliest days when Sue Robinson played. It is from "Men and Memories," by Barry and Patten.

"Evrard & Robinson were proprietors of the Dramatic Museum on California street, between Montgomery and Kearny, in 1850.

"Dr. Robinson, in 1851, opened the American Theater on the corner of Sansome and Halleck streets and did a great business there. Biscaccianti, under the management of George Loder, made her debut before a California audience at this theater. Kate Hayes, Emily Coad, Miss Sophie Edwin, Miss Sue Robinson (daughter of the manager), Emily Thorne, Julia Pelly and a score of lesser celebrities filled engagements there.

"One evening, when some unusual attraction was on the boards and the house was uncomfortably hot, an American sovereign, evidently from 'I-dee,' occupying a seat in the dress circle, finding the atmosphere too sultry arose upon his feet and deliberately pulled off his coat, laid it upon the seat and sat down in the comfort of shirtsleeves. This proceeding was observed by only a few in his vicinity, as the attention of the audience was given to the play, which just at that moment was quite interesting, but the 'gods' who act as mentors for the dress circle just as severely as for the actors—always watchful for