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A GIRLISH "JULIA"—"THE HUNCHBACK"

MY EARLY DAYS ON THE STAGE

By Mary Anderson de Navarro

*NUMBER II



FTER the plunge into the sea of public life, which my first appearance on the stage gave me, it was naturally heart-breaking to be thrown back again upon the dry land of study without practice—hope without realization. The interval of three months with no engagement in sight was not spent, however, in idle moping. The part of "Bianca," in Dean Milman's "Fazio," was thoroughly prepared. At the end of that time Mr. Macauley offered me a week at his theatre in Louisville, Kentucky, which was accepted with joy.

The repertory selected was as follows:

"Bianca" in "Fazio" for Monday
"Julia" in "The Hunchback" for Tuesday
"Evadne" in Lawler Sheil's "Evadne" for Wednesday
"Pauline" in "The Lady of Lyons" for Thursday
"Juliet" in "Romeo and Juliet" for Friday and Saturday

At the end of the engagement I was in debt to the manager for the sum of one dollar, the houses having been large enough only to cover the running expenses. All I had gained by a week of hard work was a sad heart and a very sore throat. Besides, creditors became unpleasantly importunate, for my scanty wardrobe was not yet paid for. This consisted of a white satin dress, simply made, which did service for all the parts. It sparkled in silver trimming for "Juliet"; was covered with pink roses for "Julia," became gay in green and gold for "Evadne," and cloudy with white lace for "Pauline." The unfortunate gown owed its many changes to the nimble and willing fingers of my mother, who spent much time each day in its metamorphoses. A train of velveteen, a white muslin dress, and a modern black silk gown (which, like "Mrs. Toodles," we thought "would be so useful," but which had to be discarded after its first appearance) completed my wardrobe—surely a meagre one for five plays of five acts, each requiring at least twelve gowns. We had built up financial as well as artistic hopes for that week, and were disappointed in both. But it proved more successful than was at first thought, for shortly after Ben De Bar (one of the greatest "Falstaffs" of his time) engaged me for six nights at his St. Louis theatre.



A RÔLE IN WHICH SHE WON GREAT FAVOR

At the end of that time I found myself in his debt for the sum of six hundred dollars; but the houses had steadily improved, and the press was

filled with long articles, enthusiastic about the present and full of predictions for the future.

After seeing "Evadne" Mr. De Bar engaged me for the last week of that historic old theatre, the St. Charles, in New Orleans, before it was converted into a music hall or variety theatre. After traveling from Saturday until Monday there was only time for one hurried rehearsal for that night's performance. The company, like the one at St. Louis, was composed of a most helpful and kindly set of men and women, who found no trouble too great to make the plays successful. But our hearts sank very low on learning that not one seat had been sold for the entire week. The outlook was hopeless, and horrible visions of failure and new debts rose up before me. I could not but be amused, however, when the Irish box-office attendant said: "Och, the houly saints bliss yer yung heart, not a sate have we sauld for the wake. Oi asked Missus Mc—if she wud give me the plisure of sinding her a few tickets for the wake. Ye see she's the mither of a large family, and Oi thought they wud help to fill up a bit. 'Well,' sez she, condisceindin'-like, 'if it wud obloige ye, sur, I moight take a few.' 'Divil a bit,' sez I, with me temper up, 'if it's only to obloige me, not a sate do yus get with thim foine airs. Maybe before the wake's out yees'll be beggin' thim of me.'" This, it seems, she did, and in vain, for his heart was like flint against deadheads when success smiled upon us.

Dr. Griffin, quite unknown to us, realizing the disaster of closing the theatre on a first night for lack of an audience, gave the head of one of the medical colleges, an acquaintance of his, a ticket of admission for all the students, also inviting a number of his army friends. When the curtain rose, to my surprise, the house was well filled; though I afterward learned the gross receipts for the night were but forty dollars. Two of my childhood's favorites, *General and Mrs. Tom Thumb, sat in a box clapping their tiny hands vigorously.

After the first night the houses steadily increased, and on the last nights were crowded. So successful in every way was the engagement that Mrs. Chanfrau offered me the following week at her theatre, the leading one of New Orleans, only stipulating that "Meg Merrilies" should be studied and acted on my benefit night. The opportunity of impersonating the withered gypsy was a lucky one, for many attributed my success to "youth, etc."

After bidding farewell to the St. Charles, whose stage had witnessed the triumphs of Rachel, the elder Booth, Julia Dean, Forrest and Cushman, I began my fourth week of public life before a large house at The Varieties. I remember that engagement as one of the pleasantest of my life. The manageress, Mrs. Chanfrau, the handsome wife of "Kit, the Arkansas Traveler," made it one of the freshest, cleanest, and most comfortable places imaginable. She kept it as a good housewife keeps her home—immaculate. Welcoming all pleasantly, she seemed more like a charming hostess to those who acted under her than like the usual businesslike manager. The week

passed off very successfully. On Friday I donned the witch's rags, in "Meg Merrilies," for the first time. All my teeth were covered with black wax, except one, which in its natural whiteness produced a tusklike effect. The hair concealed by gray snaky locks, the complexion hidden beneath the wrinkles and brown parchment-like skin of the weather-stained gypsy, the eyebrows covered with shaggy gray hair, the figure bent nearly double, made the illusion so perfect that my mother could not recognize one feature or movement. The character had been studied at a few days' notice, and the astonishment of all, including myself, was great when it was received more warmly than anything I had attempted. After much enthusiasm from the audience that crowded the play-house, speeches and presentations were made; checks concealed in baskets of flowers were handed over the footlights, and among other gifts the greatly-prized "Washington Artillery" badge, which made me an honorary member of that battalion, was presented. Miss Mildred Lee, a daughter of General Robert E. Lee, and I were the only lady members, an honor of which we were justly proud, for the splendid bravery of that body of men during the war had won for them the title of "The Tigers."

My unexpected success in New Orleans, a success of which any veteran actor might have been proud, was almost stupefying, coming as I had so suddenly from utter

obscurity into the dazzling light of public favor. Nothing was left undone to make our visit delightful in every way. The railway company's parting compliment was to place at our disposal a special car to Louisville; and all along the journey we had proofs of their constant thoughtfulness. After arriving an utter stranger it seemed remarkable to be leaving the beautiful Crescent City two weeks later loaded with so many favors and marks of its friendship. My bright dreams were first realized there, and I shall always remember New Orleans with affectionate gratitude.

Our first act on returning was to pay off all our creditors. The satisfaction of doing this with one's own earnings must be experienced to be understood. Toward the end of the summer a week's engagement at Owensboro, a small pretty town near Louisville, was offered me. The disadvantages of acting with a group of country players, we were told, would be many: the "juvenile leading man" of the company was a rather elderly woman; the scenery, to say the least, not of the best, and the discomforts and inconveniences were sure to be legion. Still, every performance was a gain in experience and



A YOUTHFUL "GALATEA"

ease, and a fever for improvement at any cost, as well as the anticipation of some primitive "barn-storming," induced me to accept the offer. I was a tall, slender "Juliet," and my "Romeo" proved to be a plump, pleasant little woman, probably the mother of several would-be "Romeos" and "Juliets." The moon she ("Romeo") swore by we found to be the headlight of a railway engine hired for the occasion. This was held by a small negro boy perched upon a ladder, who was so amused by the play that he laughed until he shook over the most tragic scenes. His mirth, as may be imagined, was not conducive to the moon's steadiness. At one time she was shining in an upper box, at another on the head of a bald musician, often blinding the unfortunates in the front stalls, here, there, everywhere save on the face of her ("Verona's lovely flower") she had been especially hired to illuminate.

The conductor of the orchestra was a carpenter by trade, and sawed away as lustily during the day at the boards he was converting into profile statues of "Evadne's" noble ancestors as he sawed upon his violin at night. These statues, I may remark, bore a striking resemblance, when finished, to the little men and women kind cooks cut out of dough, and "fry and sugar" for favored children. The week was very successful artistically, for the performances (how bad they were I am ashamed to remember) met with the approval of "the most discriminating audience in the States." This standard of critical excellence I found later to be of home manufacture, and common to every small town we appeared in. Until one learned that its meaning was not as awe-inspiring as it sounded, it hung like the sword of Damocles over the heads of all young artists like ourselves, bent on "barn-storming." Financially the visit was also successful, for the theatre was packed, gangways included, at each performance. A year later we returned to the same town with a company organized by my old friend, Mr. Thomas Hall. He had arranged for a short tour with several utility men and women, the leading juvenile comedian of the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and a few other stray actors from the same city. These were styled on the bills "A Company of Metropolitan Artists."

We played to such full houses at Owensboro that it was decided to give a morning performance, and a "grand matinée" at two o'clock was accordingly announced. Why a matinée should be invariably called "grand" on the bills has always puzzled me. "The Lady of Lyons" was the play. When I arrived to dress for "Pauline" not

*Mrs. de Navarro's first paper, telling of her study, rehearsal and "First Appearance on the Stage," was printed in the December JOURNAL. The third chapter of Mrs. de Navarro's memoirs will be given in the February issue. Copyright, 1895, by Mary Anderson de Navarro.

*The charming wee General afterward came to pay me a formal call. On entering the drawing-room I found him standing on a chair, so as to enable him to see out of the window.

a creature had appeared in the auditorium. It was already half-past one. The experienced old stage-manager's advice, not to dress for the play yet, was received with indignation. At a quarter to two only rows of empty benches were to be seen on peeping through the curtain. "Doubtless," said I, with a sinking heart, "it will be a fashionably late audience when it does arrive." At two o'clock emptiness and stillness in front, dismay and silence behind the curtain. At a quarter past, two ladies arrived. At half past they were still the only audience, and the stage-manager went before the curtain to announce to them that the hall was not deemed sufficiently full to warrant a performance, whereupon the audience left quite contentedly. The walk back to our hotel was painfully humiliating. We fancied ourselves the laughing-stock of all Owensboro. The disgrace, however, was not as great as we thought, for at night the house was crowded, and we then learned that the empty theatre of the afternoon was only due to the fact that a morning performance had never before been given in the town.

During that time many of our journeys were made on the Ohio and Mississippi steamboats. These were not always remarkable for their comfort, though bright and pretty enough to look at. I remember once on our way to Cairo (the Eden of Dickens) awakening after a night spent in an upper berth in what seemed a cold bath. The bedding was soaked by the rain which had come through the roof of the "floating palace." The result was a bad cold, and a pair of eyes so swollen that they were hardly visible. The play that night was "The Lady of Lyons." When "Pauline" reproved "Claude" for his downcast, smileless looks, and he tenderly answered, "Thine eyes would call up smiles in deserts, fair one," I trembled lest his speech would call up smiles in the audience and ruin our sentimental scene. But they had never seen me before, and doubtless looked upon the tiny "slits" that did service to "Pauline" for eyes that night as a natural and enduring infirmity. A severe cold is bad enough even in a warm room, with every comfort about one, but to face an expectant audience in an icy theatre on a wet night, to paint one's face and appear gay and happy while coughing and sneezing violently is a form of absolute torture. It was still pouring with rain when the performance was over. The night was as dark as Erebus. To make matters worse we discovered that the few "hacks" (carriages) in the town had already been engaged to take the Cairo aristocracy to their respective homes after the play. There was nothing to be done but engage a boy with a lantern and walk to the boat awaiting us on the Mississippi. The "Deschappelles," "Glavis," "Beauseant," "Pauline" and "Claude" wearily wended their way through the rain and mud. My good friend, Linn Harris, a member of the company, took off his overshoes, and tearing his handkerchief tied them to my feet. Kind thoughts, kind words, kind deeds, how bright they always shine in our memories! After leaving the desolate streets we came to the long wharf, where the mud was ankle deep, and where we continually expected to be set upon by long-shoremen. It was very late before we saw the lights of our floating house twinkling in the distance. But every black cloud has a silver lining, and ours shone on the table that night in the shape of an excellent supper which the kind captain had prepared for us.

It was during that engagement that I acted before the inmates of a blind asylum. They were close to the stage and so aroused one's sympathies that it was difficult to go on with the play. The sad patient faces, with their closed eyes turned toward the actors, were always expressionless, whether pathos or joy was acted before them. Quite different they were from a deaf and dumb audience. These poor afflicted people were uncommonly responsive to every passion portrayed, unconsciously proving the theory that one is more quickly and strongly affected through the eye than by the ear.

My appearance in San Francisco at Mr. John McCullough's theatre soon followed, and was the most unhappy part of my professional life. With but few exceptions, the members of the numerous company continually ridiculed my work. My poor wardrobe was a subject of special sport to the gorgeously-dressed women; and unkind remarks about "the interloper" were heard on every side. The press cut me up, or rather tried to cut me down, advising me to leave the stage. Continual taunts from actors and journalists nearly broke my spirit. I slept but little, and then only toward morning, from the exhaustion of weeping all the night. There was no one with whom I could share these sufferings, for pride kept me from hinting my real state of mind by word or look, even to my mother. The effort to smile and seem hopeful before others was as wearying as the giving vent to sorrow and humiliation when alone. The engagement, with the exception of the last two nights, had come to an end, when "Meg Merrilies" was given and received with genuine enthusiasm by actors and public. But this success came too late. Only one night remained, and I could not hope to retrieve for Mr. McCullough all I had lost for him. For the last performance I played "Parthenia," for the first time, to his "Ingomar." This was also highly successful.

Mr. Edwin Booth was in San Francisco at the time arranging for his appearance there. The one bright spot in that unhappy engagement was meeting him. His assurance that such trials as I was then passing through were beneficial both to character and art, gave me new courage. He laughed at my idea of quitting the stage on account of the unkindness of my fellow-actors. "I also am a fellow-actor," said he. "I have sat through two of your performances from beginning to end—the first time I have done such a thing in years—and I have not only been interested, but impressed and delighted. You have begun well. Continue, and you are sure of success in the end." The effect of these words from (in my opinion) the greatest actor of our time, to one in the very slough of despond, may easily be imagined. For years they were as a beacon light in every hour of failure and discouragement.

The depressing effects of the California engagement were alleviated in a measure by the subsequent success that crowned all my efforts in the South during a tour under the management of John T. Ford. Savannah, with her beautiful Bonaventure Cemetery, her great trees cloudy with silver moss, her magnolias and orange trees; Charleston, with its quaint thoroughfares, its picturesque battery and characteristic negro oyster-women decked in gay bandannas; Augusta, with its wide streets and double avenues of fine trees; Norfolk, Baltimore, Richmond, Washington, were all visited in turn. The South wins one not only by its natural beauty and proverbial

hospitality, but by a nameless and romantic sadness which hangs over it like a shadow of the past. The difference between the North and the South, even to a casual visitor, is extraordinary. The bustle, energy and enterprise of the former make the tranquillity of the latter appear to be of another country. There is a vigor of youth in the North, while the South, with its repose, its quaintness, its conventionality of life, suggests a history older than itself.

At Savannah a bevy of schoolgirls—forty or fifty in number—swept past the stage doorkeeper and bursting into my dressing-room, insisted that I should embrace them one and all. The request was extremely embarrassing. I made a rush for the door, but was seized by the crowd and not allowed to depart until I had kissed them all. This feat accomplished with a very ill grace, I was permitted to quit the theatre. Not being able to find a carriage in which to escape, my mother and I were followed by the entire school, whose ranks were enlarged on the way by stragglers and passers-by until, reaching our hotel, they formed a long procession behind us. My cup of indignation and embarrassment overflowed when a grinning spectator remarked as we passed, "My stars! what a long tail our cat's got!"

It was during that delightful Southern tour that Dr. Griffin presented me to General—then President—Grant, whom he had known in old soldiering days, when the General had captured and imprisoned him. It was pleasant to see these enemies in war so friendly in times of peace. Kindness and simplicity were marked traits of the President, while a certain ruggedness of manner and speech that was suggestive of his earlier life gave an additional interest to all he said and did. In showing us over the White House his pleasure in pointing out various trophies was undisguised and boyish. While lunching with him, the natural way in which he brought himself down to the level of my youth and small experience of life without a touch of that visible condescension so annoying to the young, was charming. I resented keenly being treated like a child, and longed for the time when I could meet the older people, with whom I was so often thrown, on a more equal footing. I detested the 'teens and felt that all my efforts at dignity would be in vain until at least the venerable twenties were reached.

General Grant had a remarkable memory for faces. Some years after I was met at the door of the hotel in Washington by a man who greeted me in a cordial manner. Not recognizing him, I told him that he must have made a mistake, as I had never seen him before. "So you forget your early friends so easily, Miss Mary!" he answered. "I am General Grant." In my embarrassment I could only excuse myself by saying that my mind was still on the rehearsal I had just left; that he had so changed, etc., etc. "Yes," he answered, laughing, "I have grown thinner and paler; I am no longer President, you see, and am consequently less banqueting." In various other meetings with him I always found the great soldier modest, simple and unassuming.

It was about this time that my friendship with General Sherman also began. He was one of the few eminent men I have met whose interest in every subject of conversation was so great that his particular *métier* could not have been guessed. He knew much about the stage, Shakespeare and the drama generally, and was a passionate lover of the arts, thinking them all worthy of equal regard. As a critic he was good, though, perhaps, too enthusiastic over any excellence, however small, if genuine enthusiasm can be called a fault. His manner was brisk and hearty. His personality gave the impression of a rugged strength, so much so that his entrance into a room was like a breath of fresh, invigorating air. He scorned fear and discouragement of every kind, and refused to allow any one, while in his presence, to give way to either. It was easy to understand his influence over his soldiers and his success as a leader of men. Personally, I owe him much. Having grown rapidly, I had contracted a tendency to stoop, which displeased him greatly. He was himself tall and very erect, and was wont to say that, to him, the most perfect man or woman is marred by the slightest stoop. His kindly admonitions finally broke me of the habit. My handwriting was also subject to his criticisms. It amused him to make me write out my signature as legibly as possible, and then decipher it for him; for, he said, it was more than he could do. I give a part of one of his letters in which this subject is mentioned for the first time. His allusion to the name of Mary is retained, as it may be of interest:

"Headquarters, Army of the United States,
WASHINGTON, D. C., 1876.

"Dear Miss Mary:

"What a debt you owe to Providence and to your parents * * * and the latter have given you the prettiest name in the English language: the one Burns loved so well, and has made immortal. * * * But I must not flatter you, for I fear you are overwhelmed with it, and might be spoiled, though surely you possess character enough to resist the danger. The great room for improvement in you is your handwriting. The substance is good, but the writing is not good enough for you. Practice at it daily, and let me have a sample of it occasionally. My love to your father, mother and you.
"W. T. SHERMAN."

My unfortunate handwriting has always been a subject of worry to my friends. Longfellow, in acknowledging a letter from me, called it "a small Bible with large but illegible print." My first note to Cardinal Manning

SPECIMEN OF THE "UNFORTUNATE HANDWRITING"

caused him to call to his aid several persons to try and make out the signature. Failing in this, and finding after much difficulty that the subject-matter of the letter was important, he sent an answer "To the person living at —," then followed the address printed on my letter-head. I did not wonder at this, for I have often found it difficult to read my own writing, which is illegible because of an impatience to put down quickly what I want to say.

I doubt if "Lady Macbeth" or "Galatea" would ever have been added to my repertory but for General Sherman's constantly-expressed wish that I should study and enact both characters. His kindness to any one at the foot of the great hill of fame was proverbial. He never forgot his own difficulties in mounting it, and always stood ready to lend a helping hand to those struggling to reach its summit.

It is impossible to determine the effect of a play or character either upon the public or one's self until it is essayed. A well-known fact it is that a play which reads well frequently fails when acted, and *vice-versa*. Disliking "Galatea," and thinking the character unsuited to me, I expected failure in undertaking it, and met with success. Deeply impressed by the part of "Lady Macbeth," which I had likewise never seen on the stage, I hoped for success in it, and met with failure. My performance, however, was well received by the general public, though it disappointed my best critics and myself. I believe that "Lady Macbeth" is not only the most difficult of all Shakespeare's women to impersonate naturally, but the most unsympathetic to the public; yet none of Shakespeare's works appeal to me more strongly than "Macbeth" as a reading play. "La Fille de Roland," by Henri de Bornier, was also added to my repertory during the Southern tour. The nobility and purity of this tragic drama always touched the audience, and made one wish for others like it. The period it pictures is chivalric: Charlemagne still on the throne, full of honorable years, and the blood of Oliver, Roland and their noble companions showing in the valiant deeds of their sons, and the pure and courageous characters of their daughters. When such works not only draw the public but influence it for good, one cannot but regret that so many which leave a painful, often a harmful effect, should be produced. I am aware that to say this is to run counter to the latest development of the drama; but I fortify my opinion by recalling what Joseph Jefferson once said to me. He was very severe upon plays that drag one through the mire of immorality, even when they show a good lesson at the end. "What I could not invite my friends to hear and see in my own parlor," he said, "I would not feel at liberty to put before my friends in the theatre." I remember that at a luncheon-party, years after the above conversation, "La Tosca" was discussed, and Mr. James Russell Lowell was asked what he thought of the play. "I have not seen it," he answered. "I refuse to have my mind dragged in the gutter. If Madame Bernhardt will appear in such plays, I, for one, will forego the pleasure of seeing her act."

My engagement at Ford's Theatre, Baltimore, took place during the visit of the Emperor and Empress of Brazil to that city. They came to a performance of "Evadne," and sent for me to go to their box at the end of the play. They were to leave Baltimore the following day. When the curtain rang up on the next night's play, "The Lady of Lyons," it was a pleasant surprise to see them again in the same box. They had returned unexpectedly, and were kind enough to say they had come back expressly to see me in another rôle. The second interview with them was longer and even more agreeable than the first. There was a nobility about Dom Pedro's head that reminded one of certain pictures of Charlemagne. His manner and that of his wife was exceedingly sweet and gentle, and I was deeply touched by his cordial wish that I should go to Brazil, where he promised me success, and his and the Empress' patronage. There was much said about their second visit to the theatre, and it was amusing afterward to hear a newsboy shouting, "Years yur morning pa-pier, all about Dan Peter and Mary and her son."

From my first appearance my work had been difficult and up hill. Without any training I was gaining experience—not hidden in a small part under the shadow of some great "star," but in the bright light of leading characters, filled with memories of Charlotte Cushman, Julia Dean and Fanny Kemble, and with the critical eye of the public full upon me. Still I toiled on, hoped on, prayed on, and felt the work slowly growing in ease and finish. But it was painfully disheartening to find myself stranded for lack of technical knowledge whenever the usual enthusiasm in the great scenes refused through weariness or discouragement to glow. Indeed, I would not wish "my dearest enemy" to pass through the uncertainties and dependencies of those early years.



SOME PHILOSOPHIC BRIEFS

By Dora Bradcliffe

THE secret of a secret is to know how and when to tell it.

Sorrow and suffering are God's most potent agencies for good.

He who casts stones at another makes of himself a target for their return.

He who always complains of the clouds receives little of life's sunshine and deserves less.

Five minutes of careful preparation for a task is often worth an hour of the patient doing thereof.

A rule conducive to contentment is, if you wish to have what you want, never want what you can't have.

A woman's womanliness, like a Christian's Christianity, may be taken anywhere and lose none of its purity.

Anticipation may be better than realization, yet it is the unexpected pleasures that bring the greatest delight.

When railing against fate remember that we often get more than we deserve in this world, and seldom less.

If you would be successful do not permit circumstances to become your masters but rather make servants of them.

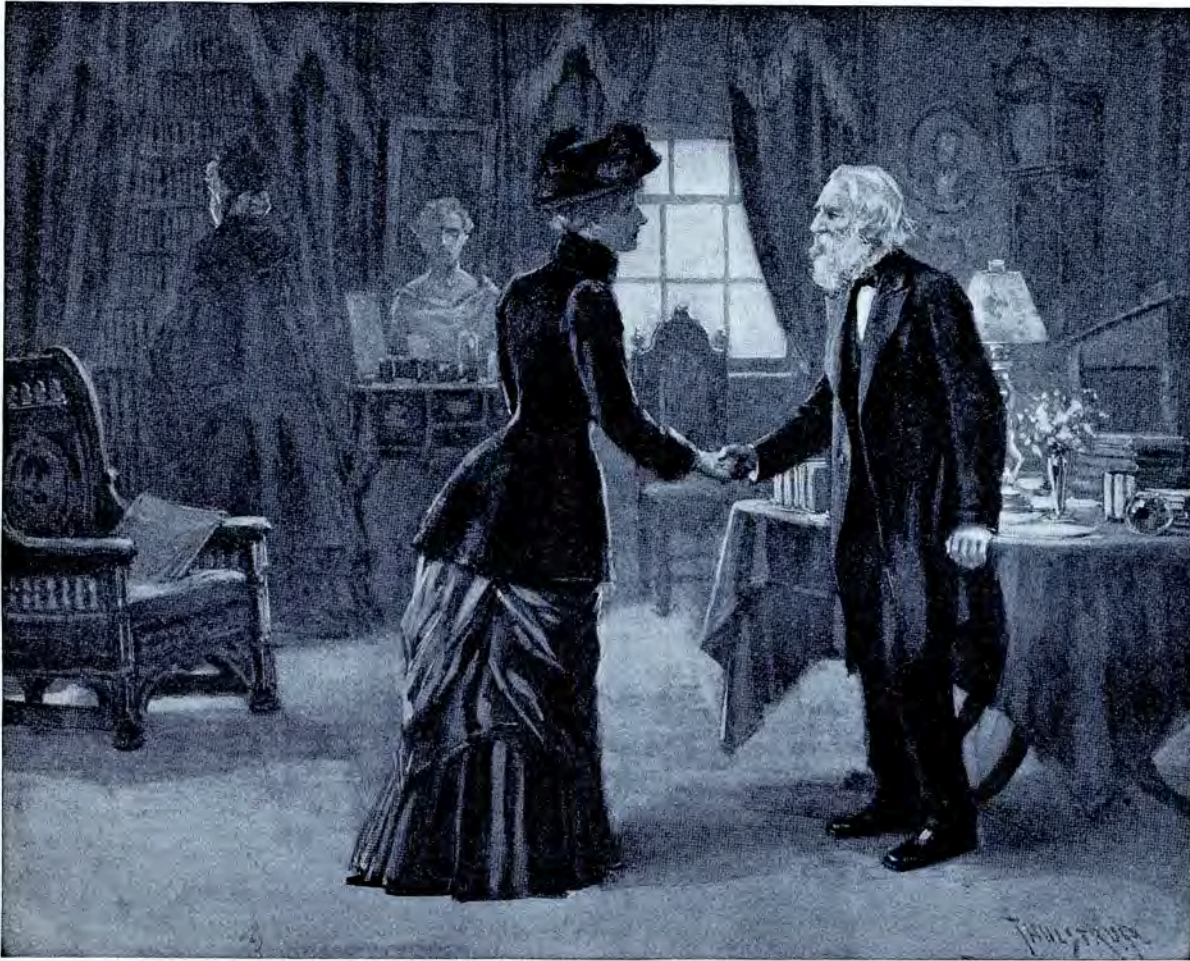
Judge yourself by the friends you form, for in them you will find mirrored either your own lofty ideas or your own selfish desires.

Give your sympathy to the humiliated unmixed with criticism, and let your condolence with the mourner be without curiosity.

Time past is irrevocably gone, let it alone; time future will inevitably come, lose no moments waiting for it; time present is irredeemably yours, use it.

It is a well-known characteristic of the illiterate to think disconnectedly, while the educated man carries out a systematic line of thought on any chosen subject.

Cultivate originality, for nothing is so much needed in the world of mentality; one good thought original with yourself is worth a thousand gleaned from other brains.



"I wonder if we shall ever meet again!" said Longfellow

EXPERIENCES OF A PROFESSIONAL TOUR

By Mary Anderson de Navarro

ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. DE THULSTRUP AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

* NUMBER III

FEW theatre-goers of to-day realize the difference between the old traveling star, and stationary stock company systems, and the present one, when every star has his or her own support. Though one could cite numerous individuals who have soared high in the theatrical firmament in spite of it, the effect of the former system could not but be pernicious in its influence on dramatic art generally; principally, because of the lack of time on the part of the members of the stock companies to study and digest their work, and so give to it the respect

and importance due to it as an art. Besides, it seemed to me anything but conducive to intellectual or artistic growth, or to originality. It fettered and cramped one, and its conventionalities frequently descended to mere tricks. One of these much practiced at the time, was for the actor to stand in the centre of the stage as far back as possible (in the lime-light if there was one) so as to force the other artists, in listening to him, to turn their backs upon the audience, thus concentrating all the attention upon himself; then say his speech, whatever it might be, beginning *pianissimo* and ending *fortissimo*; after which he was to sweep grandly into the corner and wait for his applause, which usually came from "the unskillful" and made "the judicious grieve." Before learning the remedy for this trick, which had in it nothing resembling the manner of "Christian, pagan or man," I often had an "Ingomar," "Colonna," "Master Walter" or "Macbeth" take me by the hand, swing me below him, then spring back three or four steps, and keep me during all of his speeches with my back to the audience, literally forcing me down the stage until I was almost in the footlights. Dion Boucicault unfolded to me the antidote for this evil, which was "simply turn your back upon the bellowing artist, and in ignoring him, cause the public to do likewise." It was amusing to see how humbly the old-stager came down from his central position, and turned his back to the public, even that, to get you to look at him. These practices often grew into conflicts between actors playing lovers' parts. Each player acted for himself, and ignored the *ensemble*. From this and other equally pernicious traditions I soon learned that the training of those companies was worse than no training at all.

Like the animals in Noah's Ark they were composed of twos and twos, "leads," "juveniles," "heavies" "walking," "utility," etc., and if the theatre was prosperous, a dozen or two "thinkers" of both sexes. The vocation of these was apparently to listen, think, sympathize with the joys and sorrows of the hero and heroine, and gesticulate wildly and indiscriminately. They were accused by utility per-

sons, who were a round higher on the ladder, and who occasionally made such remarks as, "Yes, my lady," or, "The chariot waits, my lord!" of carrying their gestures in a box, and using the same on all occasions. Each week brought a different star, with a round of new plays, to these companies (long runs were almost unheard of then), and they had frequently to memorize their parts while standing in the wings during the performance, awaiting their cues—"winging a part," it was called. Rapid study, a hurried rehearsal daily, the rearranging of their costumes for the ever-changing plays, left them no free time to reflect upon the characters they were to enact; and for this uncommon amount of work they gained but a meagre salary and a facility for memorizing, which is the smallest part of an actor's art.

We visited yearly all the Southern and Western cities which boasted such companies: Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Chicago, Baltimore, Washington, etc.

Though the experience was very hard I learned little by it, except many of the most irritating of the old-school traditions, and to identify the art with unceasing drudgery. In the smaller towns, where a traveling circus or a minstrel show was the general form of entertainment, we took a limited company of our own. The inhabitants usually stared at us as though we were the menagerie of one of their yearly shows. Though we produced nothing but strictly legitimate plays we realized with humiliation that we were classed with the lowest grade of entertainers. I remember one afternoon a small street urchin recognized me, and, calling together a crowd of boys, shouted in great excitement, "Come along, boys, here's the circus; come on and have a free look at the circus!" He evidently became an admirer, for after the morning's performance we saw his ragged figure in the crowd that came to have a look at "the circus" as it left the theatre. He was standing near the carriage, and, as I entered it, he looked at me wistfully, and, holding out his dirty little hand, said: "I say, Mary, do give us a kiss!"

Such publicity in the streets became very painful to me. I dreaded being stared at and vulgarly remarked; and though I dressed as simply as possible to avoid attention, such incidents were of constant occurrence. On another occasion, while driving to the hotel in an omnibus with the company, the conductor poked his head in at the window and accosted my mother—she being the most dignified-looking of the party—with, "I say, Miss! what time does your show commence?" "Show," being a word connected, in her mind, with the fat woman and waxworks, was more than she could bear. She looked at him indignantly, and in crushing tones answered, "My good man, this is not a 'show'!" "Well, Miss, what in thunder is it then?" "An intellectual treat!" This answer so mystified her questioner that he remained silent for the rest of the drive, apparently turning over in his mind whether or not he should ask for a free pass to such an ambiguous entertainment as an "intellectual treat." This expression became a byword in the company.

Those "barn-storming" tours were full of incident, accident and amusement. I can never forget an afternoon performance when two young men, who had evidently begun making their New Year's calls early in the day, so disturbed the actors and public with loud remarks that it was with difficulty we finished the scene. When it was over, Mr. John W. Norton, who was part manager and leading man, ordered the offenders to be removed—which had to be done by force. Being pressed for time

the following day, I hurried across to the theatre alone. There I found two hard-featured, collarless fellows upon the stage. One of them approached me, and in a rough voice said: "We are here in the name of the law to seize your baggage or arrest you." I was too dumfounded to ask them why they wished to make me a prisoner, for horrible visions of false accusations of murder or robbery rose up before my startled mind, and probably made me look as guilty as though I had committed both. The first old woman, the comedian, and a few utility people were on the stage. In the presence of these unshaven guardians of the law they were even more alarmed than I. The

AS "PERDITA"
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situation was terrifying. On recovering a little presence of mind I quickly resolved on escape at any cost. Extreme politeness was my first move in that direction. With a beating heart, but smiling face, I placed two chairs for the unwelcome visitors by the stove. Taking one myself I began questioning them about their families, while anxiously looking for the appearance of some rescuer. Though their replies were discouragingly curt this ruse succeeded, for when, answering an imaginary call from the wings, I asked for a moment's grace they readily assented. I knew of a side exit through an alley, often used to escape the curious crowd that generally collected about the stage door. I walked calmly across the stage, and once outside ran like one possessed to the hotel. There I found Mr. Norton, who hastily escorted me to our rooms, advising my mother and me to remain in them with locked doors. Two more frightened women it would be difficult to imagine, for we had no idea what the threatened arrest meant. Later on we learned that all the trouble had been caused by the ejected disturbers of the day before. Some influential friends went bail for me. There was a trial, and I am happy to say the offenders only received two cents damages. Why they received even this—being disturbers of the public peace—must, I suppose, remain forever an added mystery to the clouded working of the law.

The tragedy into which my name was dragged, unconscious though I was of its perpetrator, occurred soon after. I allude to the mournful event which created so much



AS SHE APPEARED IN "HERMIONE"

These two characters, "Hermione" and "Perdita," in "The Winter's Tale," constituted the dual role in which Mary Anderson closed her stage career

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* The last of the three chapters of Mrs. de Navarro's stage career memoirs to be published in the JOURNAL; the preceding two appeared in the December and January issues. Copyright, 1896, by Mary Anderson de Navarro.

sensation at the time, when a young and attractive girl imagining her lover attached to me wounded him, and killed herself, after having sought in vain to take my life.

Many of those early days were as fraught with danger and excitement as with discomfort and weariness. I have often smiled at the general belief that my path has been one of roses. During a visit to Canada, while resting in Toronto before beginning a week's engagement, I heard a grand opera for the first time. My pleasure in the music was so great that I had to be constantly reminded not to rise and cry out with enthusiasm. The operas were "Faust," "Trovatore" (old-fashioned, yet ever fresh) and "Martha." Brignoli in the leading rôles was admirable, though he had, through growing obesity, lost much of the grace which for many years had made him such an idol with women. His fresh, beautiful and impassioned voice soon swept one into forgetfulness of his looks and inferior acting. In those days I always took with me an old friend in the shape of a guitar, upon which, as a child, I had picked out, with much labor, a sufficient number of chords to accompany a few favorite songs. One day Brignoli passed our rooms while I was singing "The Irish Immigrant's Lament." He requested an introduction, and tried to persuade me to start for Milan at once for a year's training, and then to become an opera singer. "But," said I, "I am already on the stage. I act 'Juliet,' 'Lady Macbeth,' and all kinds of fine tragic parts." "Leave them all alone," he answered. "With your voice you would have a far more distinguished success on the operatic than on the dramatic stage." Though delighted to know from him that I could sing I assured him that I would not let go my hold on the robe of Melpomene for the glories of all the other Muses put together.

The difference between the audiences in Canada is very marked. In Toronto and Ottawa they are reserved, and much harder to arouse than at Montreal, where the French element gives to the public a glow of Continental warmth. The enthusiasm there over my work, crude as it was, caused the people to take the horses from my carriage and drag it through the streets. This and other marks of their favor were shown, I felt, not for what I then did but for what they thought my future promised; for I was full of youthful exaggeration, and impetuosity often swept me far away from my characters. Still this kindness was none the less appreciated, as the encouragement of early efforts often fires the spark of ultimate possibilities. Many English friends in Canada prophesied success for me in London. After a flash of enthusiasm on the subject these flattering predictions were put aside, for I had no wish to act out of America.

The critical judgment of the Eastern States, in matters dramatic, was thought by the theatrical profession to be very great, and an artist was not considered in the first rank until he had been stamped with the approval of a Boston or a New York audience. Contented with the South and West as a field of work and improvement, I never thought of the East until attractive offers from several managers induced Dr. Griffin to accept engagements in Philadelphia, New York and Boston. To me the world seemed to hold no greater artistic centres than these cities, for the thought of visiting Paris or London had never seriously entered my mind. The excitement of acting in Philadelphia, Boston and New York was intense. My first character at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, was "Evadne." At the rehearsals everything was so much brisker and more business-like than what I had been accustomed to, and the whole atmosphere so entirely new, that I was weighed down with apprehension lest the audiences should be different also. Fortunately the familiar faces of some of the "metropolitan artists," who had been with me "barn-storming," made me feel less strange. My surprise at the night's performance, when double recalls continually greeted me, was only equaled by the pleasure I felt when the press verified the success of the night before.

During that visit we saw much of R. Shelton Mackenzie, the friend and biographer of Charles Dickens. He was as interesting in himself as in his reminiscences of Sheridan Knowles, Dickens and many other eminent men, whose names and works had been familiar to me for years. He was a plump little man, with shining brown eyes, and a ruddy face surmounted by a wig of sleek, red hair, which often, in moments of excitement, got awry, causing him much annoyance. I remember how he used to jerk it into place, remarking that it was "a great bore," as it invariably limited his enthusiasm. Upon my asking why he did not discard it he answered that if he suddenly got rid of such a shock of hair every one would realize that he had been indulging in a wig. I assured him that any one glancing at his locks would easily discover their true nature. When we returned to Philadelphia the next year he appeared with a shining bald head fringed with silvery hair, which gave him an almost Pickwickian cheeriness and benevolence of face—Nature bringing out a frankness and charm of countenance which the false hair had completely hidden. Wigs are

certainly great enemies of the human face, even upon the stage. They are useful in saving one's own hair from the curling-tongs, and necessary for illustrating different periods; but they generally mar facial expression, and frequently add to the years they are supposed to conceal.

The unexpected kindness of press and public was a stimulus to renewed effort, and a marked progress was the result. Still, most of my work was, to me, sadly immature and inartistic, and I felt it would take years of practical experience to remedy my lack of an early training. In New York, however, there was great help in store for me, in the valuable advice of Mr. Dion Boucicault and Mr. William Winter. Their insight into dramatic effect was a revelation. Mr. Boucicault entirely rearranged the business of "Ingomar," and gave me many suggestions for my general work—usually in an abrupt manner, for he had but little patience with what displeased him, and is said to have frequently made his leading artists shed tears under his rigorous direction.

The following letter from the author of "The Shaughraun," was written after the appearance of some severe criticisms in two New York papers. It is very characteristic:

"Dear Miss Anderson:

"I had written this intending to take it to the theatre last night, but was too sick to go out. The 'Herald' and 'Times' this morning have increased my nausea. Don't be moved by them to lose any confidence in yourself. I knew Julia Dean well, and she is as inferior to you as I am to

and Clara Morris I also learned much. Long practice of their art, constant observation, and years of study in the school of hard experience had made them the best of critics.

Up to that time I had allowed the daily newspaper criticisms to influence my night's work. An old actress advised me to give up reading press notices while acting; her theory being that any marked comment, whether in praise or blame, necessarily made one self-conscious of the point or points criticised, thus marring the spontaneity of the performance. Thereafter, articles containing useful suggestions made by capable critics, who clearly stated why the work was good or bad, were carefully put aside, and when the season was over and study recommenced, often proved profitable. This habit of not reading press notices while acting was kept up till the end of my stage career.

The usual feeling of loneliness and apprehension on entering each of the large Eastern cities—we had friends in none of them—was of short duration in Boston; for soon after our arrival James T. Fields brought a letter from his friend, Henry W. Longfellow, the poet, inviting us to his house near Cambridge. The influence we each exercise over every one with whom we come in contact, either for good or ill, is not to be denied. Longfellow's was only for good. Surrounded by the calm of his peaceful home, it seemed as though the hand of evil could not reach him. Every conversation with him left some good result. His first advice to me, which I have followed for years, was: "See some good picture—in

Nature if possible—or on canvas; hear a page of the best music, or read a great poem daily. You will always find a free half hour for one or the other, and at the end of the year your mind will shine with such an accumulation of jewels as to astonish even yourself."

He loved to surround himself with beautiful things. I have seen him kneel before a picture which had just been presented him, and study every detail and beauty of his "new toy," as he called it, with a minuteness and appreciation which few would understand. A portrait of Liszt he was particularly fond of, and he explained how it was painted for him, as he had first seen the master, descending a dark staircase in his own house, the light of a candle which he held high shedding a golden glow over his silvery head, leaving the rest of the figure in shadow. However infested with care or work a day might be, a visit from him was sure to beautify it. I once mentioned to him that his poem, "The Hanging of the Crane," was a great favorite of mine. "I am so glad you like it," he said simply; "few seem to know or care for it, and it is a particular pet with me." The poet was very fond of a good comic story, and had many amusing ones of his own experience. He was particularly delighted at the ingenuity of an enterprising vendor of patent medicine, who, vaunting the "marvelous effects" of his drug, no doubt in the hope of inspiring the poet, invited him to write a verse for the label, promising him a percentage on each bottle, and a free use of the medicine for himself and family. Persons of genius have often to pay dearly for their prominence. On one of his birthdays he was astonished at seeing a wagon containing a piano drive up to his house, followed by a strange young lady in a carriage. The latter informed the housekeeper that she wished it to be put in a room where it would "sound well," as she had composed a piece of music in honor of the poet's birthday, and meant to play it to him on her own instrument.

Longfellow was a great lover of music, and Wagner appealed to him strongly. We heard several operas together in Boston after my engagement there. He generally arrived before us, armed with flowers and full of delightful anticipation. On one of these occasions some one sent a magnificent bouquet to our box. Not knowing the donor I did not take it up. He insisted on my doing so. "Put down my simple ones," he said, "and take up those beautiful flowers. It will gratify the giver, who is no doubt in the house; try never to miss an opportunity of giving pleasure. It will make you happier and better." Kindness was the keynote of his character.

A few months before his death, being unable, through illness, to leave the house, he sent for us again. The usual warm welcome awaited us. Luncheon over he showed me a "new toy," and tried to be amusing, but there was a veil of sadness over him, and I noticed how feeble he had grown. "Until the spring, then!" he said, as we parted, "if I am still here. I wonder if we shall ever meet again! I am old and not very well!" He apologized for not seeing us to the carriage, as was his wont, but stood at the window watching us leave. Its sash was covered with snow. His face looked like a picture set in a white glistening frame, for the sun was shining, and his hair and beard were nearly as white as the snow itself. I can see him still, standing there, waving his last farewell. Soon after the English-speaking world was saddened by the loss of one of its sweetest bards.

A sketch of "Mary Anderson as She is To-day," depicting her home life in England, her diversions, appearance and family, will appear in the March issue of the JOURNAL.—EDITOR.



"I say, Mary, do give us a kiss!"

Shakespeare or Sheridan. They find fault with you for your lack of art, which, if you had it, they would recognize as a blemish in one so young. 'Julia' is neither a heroic part nor a dramatic one. She is nondescript and unnatural, full of stage-trick and mannerism—of all characters the least fitted to you. That is clear. I don't think I shall like you in it, any more than I should like to see a crinoline and chignon on the Venus of Milo. Wash the blank verse out of the dialogue, and put 'Clifford' and 'Master Walter' into pants, and 'The Hunchback' is a society play (and not a very good one either). What the devil brings you into such a piece anyhow? Stick to parts where your arms are not bound with shoulder-straps, nor your feet tied together with pullbacks or frills. You want sweep and stride. I think you could play 'Rosalind,' and give it an altitude which few in our times have seen; but you should give it a long study.

Yours sincerely,

DION BOUCICAULT."

The difference of opinion about "The Hunchback" is extraordinary. Many persons, among them Fanny Kemble, speak of it as a great play, while the majority of theatre-goers look upon it as stilted and impossible. Personally, I have always had a very great liking for the part of "Julia." To me, the drawing of the character from beginning to end is without blemish. She represents so womanly a type, that most young women can hardly help sympathizing with her feminine inconsistencies. The language is undoubtedly bombastic at times, still the substance is good, and the sentiment genuine.

From Lawrence Barrett, Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson