

MEMORIES AND LETTERS OF EDWIN BOOTH.

It is to the honor of the American stage that so many of its conspicuous figures have been men and women not merely of upright lives, but remarkable for the beauty of their private characters. It was well known to his fellow-countrymen that Edwin Booth possessed amiable and noble traits which stood the test of grievous afflictions; and yet it was, of course, chiefly as an artist that he filled the public eye, and commanded so rare and universal a popularity. We know that the author and editor of the following memoirs and letters of the tragedian has been moved to the publication of them in *THE CENTURY* solely by the desire that the generation to whom was displayed the genius of the great actor should have the means of better realizing that side of his personality which made his friendship so exquisite a privilege. In these familiar epistles and intimate recollections shine forth the winning companion, the generous friend, the honest man, rather than the actor of power and fascination — though glimpses of the artist who for so many years dominated the American stage here and there break through the simple narrative.—EDITOR OF *THE CENTURY*.



THE beginning of my friendship with Edwin Booth was purely accidental. I had often seen him on the stage, but never elsewhere, till one day in the spring of 1864, while I was living in Philadelphia. I had gone

down town in the morning on some business, and had met Edwin Adams, who was at that time a member of the stock company of the Walnut Street Theater. While walking together we passed the theater, and Mr. Adams, wishing to stop there a moment, asked me to go in with him. After he had finished his business at the box-office he walked to the entrance of the parquet, which at that time of day was dark and gloomy, and called to me to look with him at what appeared to be a human figure crouching on one of the seats, and presently said: "I believe that 's Booth. Come down with me and see him."

It proved to be as he suspected; there Booth sat, in the gloom and quiet of the theater, alone with his thoughts. We were introduced, and very soon began to talk of spiritualism, which at that time was occupying a large share of the public attention, and in the so-called manifestations of which Booth had had a great deal of experience, especially under the guidance of the celebrated Judge Edmunds, and his accomplished daughter, in New York. Booth at this time was a firm believer in the ability of the denizens of the world of spirits to communicate their thoughts and messages to friends in this world through so-called "mediums," and he related to us many strange and moving experiences which had come to him in the course of these investigations. Our conversation was long and interesting, and when I found that the time had passed too rapidly, and that I must go up town again, Booth of-

fered to walk up with me, and we went together as far as the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. John S. Clarke, where he was then staying.

Just as I was leaving him he asked me to come and see him, and named the following Sunday morning when he would be at home. I did not need any urging, for my first interview had so strongly impressed me that I was but too glad of the chance of another, and so when Sunday came I went to Mr. Clarke's house, and passed the whole morning with Booth. During this second interview he told me a great deal about himself, his early history, his life with his father in traveling together about the country, his Californian and Australian experiences, all of which was deeply interesting and increased my admiration of him, for it was all told in the most modest manner, and as a looker-on rather than as the one to whom the events had happened. During this engagement in Philadelphia I saw him nearly every evening, sitting with him in his dressing-room at the theater, and when the play was over either walking with him to Mr. Clarke's, or rambling through the quiet streets, smoking and talking of all sorts of things, and there was something so magical, so mysterious, in his conversation that I gladly listened as long as he was willing to talk.

For the next year I saw him constantly, either in Philadelphia or in New York, where he was then playing at the Winter Garden, in those marvelous revivals of Shakspeare's plays which made his fame as a stage manager only second to his fame as an actor. Then came the horror of the event of Good Friday night of 1865, and Edwin Booth was stricken to the ground. Nothing but the love that was poured out for him by his friends saved him from madness. For days his sanity hung in the balance, and we all were fearful of the result, but nature and friendship gained the victory, and though his very soul was torn with anguish, his clear strong brain reasserted itself, and he was himself again.

But for nearly a year he withdrew from the stage, and it was only when the call of the public for his return became too strong to be longer withstood that he consented to play again. During the time that he was in retirement it was my great privilege to pass nearly every evening with him. I had come to New York to live in the spring of 1865, and being alone here could follow my inclinations in being with him as much as he desired. We used to sit in his library on the first floor of the house he occupied in Nineteenth street, east of Broadway, where his mother, his sister Rosalie, and his little daughter Edwina were with him. Often we would talk so late that when we were ready to go to bed (we were never ready to stop talking), it was too late for me to go to my lodgings, and he would insist on my turning in with him, which I would do, sharing his room and bed. Often in the evening we would stroll through the dark streets, for it was only at this time that he would venture out, hardly knowing what kind of a reception would be his if he were recognized, for, to its eternal infamy be it said, one of the leading (?) papers of New York had denounced him in the most bitter manner, and had said that neither he nor any of his name would ever again be permitted to appear upon the stage of any theater in the United States. It is a singular comment on this that the only vote ever cast by Edwin Booth for president of the United States was for Abraham Lincoln in 1864, and that he saved the life of one of Abraham Lincoln's sons. Booth himself told me of this occurrence. He had started for Philadelphia from New York, and while he was standing on the platform of a car, still in the Pennsylvania railroad station at Jersey City, and just as the train was about to move, a young lad, going from one car to another, stumbled, and would have fallen between them, had not Edwin caught him by the collar of the coat and landed him in safety by his side. The boy, whom Edwin had never seen before, evidently recognized him, and holding out his hand said to him, "That was a narrow escape, Mr. Booth," and thanked him warmly. Two weeks later Edwin received a letter from General Adam Badeau in which the latter mentioned that Robert Lincoln had told him that it was his life that had thus been saved.

Hoping to give him some mental exercise while he was in retirement, I persuaded him to begin his autobiography in a series of letters to his little daughter, thinking that he might be able to continue them if his interest was once aroused in the work, and knowing that they would be invaluable at some time in the future. Once or twice a week he would read to me what he had written, and it was intensely interesting. His experiences were so often amusing, and he showed such a keen sense of humor in his ac-

count of them, that we had many a good laugh over his stories, and I was greatly in hope that this beginning would be followed up as years went on, and that some day the manuscript would become a book. But when in 1866 he returned to the stage, all his time and mind were filled with the preparation of the various plays which he revived with such magnificence, and this so absorbed him that he discontinued his writing and put his manuscript aside, till one day in a fit of disgust with his own work he destroyed it.

After Booth's return to the stage, one play after another was produced by him at the Winter Garden in the most complete and sumptuous manner, no cost being spared to make those revivals perfect. I saw a great deal of him during this period, but nearly always at night, sitting with him in his dressing-room at the theater when he came out after an act, smoking, and drinking black coffee, which used to be made for him in great quantities by his colored man "Jim." Sometimes after the play his brain would be so full of excitement that instead of going at once to his house in Nineteenth street he would want to walk through the streets for an hour or two, and so we would wander about, not knowing or caring where, till he grew quiet and was ready to go home. Then again he would like to drive, and we would go about the park for an hour or two in a Boston buggy, in which he was very fond of driving.

In 1867, while he was in the midst of a most successful season, the Winter Garden Theater was burned down, Booth's losses being great and irreparable. I heard of the fire during the day, and as early as possible went up to Nineteenth street to see him. I found him perfectly calm and cool, and when I asked him if it were true as the papers said, that he had lost his entire theatrical wardrobe, he replied, "Yes, I have not even a wig or a pair of tights."

For many years one of his dreams had been to build a theater which should be the home of the legitimate drama and a school of acting, where the plays of Shakspeare and the great dramatists should be presented in a style of splendor and perfection such as the world had never seen before, and where the most eminent members of the stage would have a pride in playing, and in being permanently established—in short an American edition of the Théâtre Français. We had often talked about this, and now the time seemed to have come to realize his dream. The history of the building and management of what was known as Booth's Theater may some day be written by one who was more intimately connected with all the details than I was; it is sufficient to say here that by the time it was ready to open, which was the night of February 3, 1869, the

ground and building, and the scenery and dresses for "Romeo and Juliet" and "The Winter's Tale," had cost Edwin Booth about twelve hundred thousand dollars, every penny of which he had earned by the practice of his profession, exclusive of a mortgage on the ground, and not one dollar of which was paid in by any other person.

During the period of the building of this theater Mr. Booth traveled very extensively, and in one of his engagements in Chicago was supported by Miss Mary McVickar, whom he married in the summer of 1869. His plan in constructing this beautiful home of the drama included on the Sixth Avenue side an apartment for his own use, and studios for artists, and for several years after the theater was opened he resided in this apartment. It was charmingly arranged in two stories, being what was known as a duplex apartment. In the theater itself there was a very convenient and pleasant ante-room to Mr. Booth's dressing-room, where he would sit between the acts, when it was not necessary to make any change in his dress, and receive his friends. Many a night I have sat there with him while he puffed great clouds of smoke from his pipe, which was his one comfort in the intervals of his work, and friends came and went in quick succession. It was a veritable levee, made picturesque by the fact that our host was for the time *Othello*, *Richelieu*, *Hamlet*, or *Richard III*.

At these times he was in his very best mood, and would tell story after story of his life and adventures, and of his meeting with famous men and women — all of the deepest interest, and told in the most vivid manner. One story of his trip to the Sandwich Islands remains with me. He had gone there in 1854 in company with his comrade, Mr. David C. Anderson, *en route* to Australia, and they were to play in the Royal Hawaiian Theater. They had hired a native to paste up the bills announcing the performance; this had to be done with a preparation named "poë-poë," made from a vegetable called "tara-tara" which is a favorite food in Honolulu; but the poor man was so hungry that yielding to temptation he incontinently ate up the paste, and to their surprise no bills appeared. When the reason was ascertained they feared to trust another native, and it was therefore agreed that as Booth was the younger he should act as bill-poster, and it came to pass that every night after the performance Edwin went about the city with his play-bills and bucket of paste, and put up with his own hands the posters announcing what the company would play on the following night. And he assured me that he did this honestly, and did not eat any of the paste!

Another story related to a skull which Edwin had in his room. It was that of a noted horse-thief named Fontaine, *alias* Lovett, whose case had aroused the interest of Junius Brutus Booth, who had unavailingly tried to save him from the gallows, whereupon Fontaine had bequeathed this to him as a token of gratitude. But Mrs. Booth was horrified by it, and at once sent it back to the physician to whose care it had been intrusted for delivery to her husband. Years after this, one day when Edwin was in Louisville, preparing for his work at night, a small negro boy made his appearance with a basket covered by a white cloth. "What's that?" said Edwin. "Dunno, sah," said the boy; "guess it's a present from massa." "Take the cloth off," said Edwin, and the boy did as he was told, but shrieked aloud and fled quickly from the room. On looking in the basket, Booth saw the skull, and with it a note from the physician saying that he was restoring it to its proper owner.

Booth's interpretations of difficult passages in Shakspeare's plays were most clear and convincing. I remember his telling how he first came to understand the real meaning of *Hamlet's* saying to *Polonius*, "Yourself, sir, shall grow as old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward." He was walking on the seashore, I think near Long Branch, and suddenly saw a crab come out of the water, and watching it attentively saw it walk out *backward* from its shell, which it left on the sand, thus proving Shakspeare's marvelous knowledge of nature, for this crab was what is known as a "shedder," and in leaving its old shell regained its youth, and entered on a new career.

The early years of Booth's Theater were most successful, and money poured in on him, but his expenses were enormous, and in the production of his plays no money consideration had any weight — literally nothing was done to see how cheaply results could be accomplished, but everything that money could procure in the way of scenery, dresses, and appointments was obtained, and the results were beyond anything ever seen in this line anywhere in the world. Very often, however, it was impossible for the audience to imagine that these plays had cost so much to produce, for the effects could have been obtained just as well with much cheaper material, and when the crash came, as it did in a few years, people wondered where the money had been spent. It was because Edwin Booth worshiped Shakspeare, and was determined that in the production of his plays everything should be as nearly real and perfect as art and money could make them. He did not always succeed in getting such actors as he wanted. I remember one night when he was playing *Hamlet*, and when his *Horatio* was a par-

ticularly bad one, I went into his dressing-room after the first act, and criticized somewhat severely the actor who had undertaken the part, ending by saying in a moment of heat, "It is too bad that you should have such a *Horatio*. I am almost tempted to play the part myself." Booth, who had been sitting quietly in his great chair smoking a huge meerschaum, sprang from his seat, and taking me by the hand said, "It's a bargain — you shall do it. You shall go on to-morrow night. Will you?" For a moment the impulse to do what he wanted was almost irresistible, but in another I recollected myself, and laughingly declined, on the score that I could not mix up a business man's life with the work of an actor. He often referred to this episode in after years, and said he would have put me on as his *Horatio* if I had accepted, as he was in earnest, and knew I could have done it. Thus another bad actor was not added to the stage.

The winter and spring seasons of 1869-70 of Booth's Theater were wonderful successes, and it seemed as if the future was secure. In July, 1870, a son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Booth, but lived for a few hours only. No other child came from this marriage; his daughter Edwina is his only child, and she, as is well known, is the daughter of his first wife, Mary Devlin.

The summer of this year he passed at Long Branch, in a very lovely place which he had bought. The house was a pleasant, comfortable one, and was surrounded by pine woods. The change was a good one for both Mr. Booth and his wife, and when autumn came he decided to make a western journey, hoping to earn money enough to pay off the indebtedness remaining on the theater, and thinking it was not wise for him to play at Booth's Theater too much of the time.

The first letter I received from him while he was on this tour is as follows:

CINCINNATI, November 6, 1870.

I PROMISED you when last we met in the woods at Long Branch a letter from some place at some time; and being at present domiciled with those who are your acquaintances as well, I am reminded of my neglect. Living in a trunk, and flying about from place to place with daily rehearsals, and the fatiguing constant nightly labour, render me unfit for "literary pursuits," and so my letters accumulate and stand in hideous heaps, reproachfully reminding me of far-away friends neglected thro' sheer lack of energy to write a mere "how d' ye do."

I shall be at home at Xmas (God willing), and will follow Jefferson at Booth's in January. This is rather unexpected, tho' I'm rather glad of it, for I am sick of traveling, and it is not the thing for Mary, who has been confined to the house for a week past. We are stopping with Macauley,

who is keeping house here, and very kindly invited us to stay with him during my engagement at his theatre. . . . My business has been excellent, and I have accomplished a great deal toward the liquidation of my indebtedness on the theatre; a few years more and I will feel at ease, if I don't kill myself in the West. I tell you it is not child's play rehearsing two and three hours a day, and acting the same at night. The strain upon the nervous system is terrific. I can't get rest enough in one night to revivemy energies. William! when that pile of granite is paid for, I'll retire and act only once in a while by way of recreation.

Drop me a line. I go to Pittsburg after this week — thence to Philadelphia. . . . With affection hold me ever yours,
EDWIN.

The other letter received from him during this engagement is dated .

PHILADELPHIA, December 18, 1870.

THE sad news of Mrs. M——'s death reached me two days before your letter came — from my mother. It was not unexpected. I knew I had seen her for the last time, yet the shock was none the less sudden and painful. I have written M——, but of course one can give no relief in such cases. I shall be in New York the day after Xmas, to remain, I trust, many months, though not for rest, which I so much require. I hope I shall see you soon and often during my sojourn, and play numerous billiards on a smaller table than the one you beat me on. . . . I sort o' miss you here. Philadelphia seems almost strange to me not seeing your face in it. But I presume you despise the provinces now, and seldom visit this humble burgh. My business is as good as it usually is here; you know the prices are lower than elsewhere. Throughout the West the prices charged for admission are always raised to the New York scale, but here the same old rate is asked, and it does not count up so furiously at the week's end.

. . . I am sorry I will not be home at Xmas; we had such a jolly time last year. Santa Claus gave me as much delight as the children had, and though I got no *bon-bons* I took an active part, and afforded Mary much amusement by "the old man's friskyness and jollity."

The early village cock will soon remind me that I have a rehearsal at 10½ in the morning, and that, you know, is an unusual hour for my appearance, so I'll bid good-night and say my prayers. Wishing you a merry Xmas and happy New Year, ever yours,
EDWIN.

On his return to New York he resumed his work in Booth's Theater, playing with very great brilliancy and fire, and reviving several of Shakspeare's plays with unexampled magnificence, and with great pecuniary success. At the close of the season he went to Long Branch. In June of 1871 I went to Europe, and just before I sailed had the following note from him:

LONG BRANCH, June 17, 1871.

I REJOICE at the opportunity you have to "see the sights owre the pond," yet grieve at thy gone-

ness. I'll sit here and pine amid the oaks till your return. Dr. C — will lose *un autre élève*. I was compelled to discontinue my study under him, for, tho' I acknowledge the value of his system, it requires too continuous practice, far more than I can give it, and his coming always upsets our family arrangements somehow; we felt tied down to certain days, and that mars one's enjoyment of the country, you know. My wife's head is always too full of household duties, and mine with theatrical matters to give any attention to school books now. I have not heard from him since I notified him of my resolution, but trust he does not feel hurt at it. I'd like to see you ere you go, but know not when I shall go to town. Write me from Europe. Ever yours,
EDWIN.

I remained abroad till the autumn of 1871, and on my return to New York resumed our close friendship, and saw much of Booth. The season of 1871-72 was another series of artistic successes, and one play followed another in as perfect form as it was possible to produce it. In the autumn of 1872 I was again in England, and on my return home went into the country to live for the winter. The season was a severe one, and as I was always out of town in the evenings my chances of seeing Booth were very few, but I heard constantly that matters were going very badly with the theater, and that it was getting into deep water. Edwin had no business education, and had had to trust everything to others, and they, to speak very mildly, mismanaged his affairs terribly. But the result came at last, and in February of 1874 his paper went to protest, and the theater had to close. Booth was then playing in Detroit, and I wrote to him very hurriedly. His reply is dated

DETROIT, February 15, 1874.

... "If I were tedious as a king" I could but thank you, my dear boy, for all the good things you say to me. As it is "I am not of many words, but I thank you," briefly, but sincerely, with all my heart. You were almost the first to send me words of sympathy, tho' I am sure all my friends feel it. This is by no means the heaviest blow my life has felt, and I shall recover from it very shortly if my creditors have any feeling whatever.

My disappointment is great, to be sure, but I have the consciousness of having tried to do what I deemed my duty. Since the talent God has given me can be made available for no other purpose, I believe the object I devote it to to be worthy of self-sacrifice.

I gave up all that most men hold dearest, wealth and luxurious ease; nor do I complain because that unlucky "slip 'twixt the cup and the lip" has spilled all my tea.

With a continuance of the health and popularity the good Lord has thus far blessed me with, I will pay every "sou," and exclaim with "Don Cæsar," tho' in a different spirit, "I have done great things—if you doubt me ask my creditors."

Of course I see some years of hard work before

me, all for a "dead horse" too, not a very cheering prospect. But I'll "worry" it thro', and thank God with all my heart when I can cry "quits" with my neighbor. Adieu! Ever yours,
EDWIN.

As a simple matter of record I will mention that he gave up everything he had,—literally,—books, pictures, furniture, and various pieces of property he owned, and everything went to the creditors of the theater, the theater itself passing into the hands of the mortgagee, Mr. Oliver Ames of Boston. In due time Edwin received his discharge in bankruptcy, and once more faced the world a poor, but upright man.

From 1874 till 1878 I remained in the country, and during this time our intercourse was necessarily interrupted. I saw him but rarely, as he did not live in New York, and passed most of the time in traveling, and acting in places out of this city. But in the autumn of 1878 I resumed my residence in town, and renewed my close friendship with him. He was then recouping his fortune, and was living in an apartment in Madison avenue above Twenty-seventh street.

In April of this year he started on a professional tour through the West, sending me a few lines just before he left New York. His note is dated

TUESDAY, A. M., April 1, 1879.

I HAVE been waiting for the note you wished to send to Whiffen, but must send his music to him this A. M. else I'll forget him, and therefore I wait no longer.

I inclose the check for \$50. Whatever else is required,—I mean for the draft,—enter it against me. In rapid transit, yours ever,
NEDWIN.

This signature of "Nedwin" was in consequence of my having given him this name in one of my notes, and it seemed to take his fancy. The check he sent me was to pay for some work that had been done for him by Mr. Richard Sims, Assistant Keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum. The next letter is dated

RUSSELL HOUSE, Detroit, April 6, 1879.

I HAD N'T an opportunity to acknowledge your note before I left. I am truly sorry for the loss of H——'s little one, *his* loss, rather, for surely the "little one" has gained by the exchange. 'T is a sad blow to the parents, and we must mourn for the living, not the dead.

If the check was not enough for the draft, make a *mem.* of it and I'll "settle up" with you. I sent the "Moods and Tenses" with a note of thanks to Whiffen by my man Henry Flohr, but know not if it reached him. I sent it to the penciled address on the back of the sheet of music. Please ask him, if you should meet him.

Did you want Sims' letter? I have it (I think) "safely stowed," and will either keep it or send

it to you. Hope soon to hear some report from him; meanwhile Dr. John B. (Booth), of — somewhere West, will send me some account of the family *deadheads*. We encountered snow-storms, and lots of the stuff hip-deep along the route hither, but here it is clear and quite warmish. I begin my "walk" to-morrow, and shall try to keep the track till after Friday night; then, on Saturday, start for Chicago. Have not yet seen C. and to tell [the] truth I don't know him from t'other ones (there are three of 'em), and I "pheel phoolish" not to be acquainted with those I've known so long. When I distinguish C. from McC. and W., I'll deliver your message to him. Ever yours,
EDWIN.

In July of this year he went to Saratoga for his wife's health, and his next letter is dated

SARATOGA, July 20, 1879.

. . . ONE is kept too busy enjoying life here to think of so much exertion as writing requires. . . 'T is my first experience, and it far surpasses any previous one at other summer places. I mean in the easy, home-like, happy-go-luckyish life one *can* (if he likes) have here. There is really less dress and show than I've found at Long Branch, to say nothing of Newport. . . I hope to see my Newport place, if but for a day's glimpse, this summer, but we are so well, and so well suited here, that I doubt if we'll leave till the very last rose of summer. . . Races, hops, electric lights, illuminated fountains, and music, . . . constitute the delights of our lazy life. That's about all we do, aside from the labor of eating and dressing, the latter of which I, of course, do a *heap* of! Adieu, ever yours,
NED.

But in the course of another month they tired of Saratoga, and went elsewhere.

CONTINENTAL HOTEL, Philadelphia,
October 26, 1879.

I FAILED to see you during my brief sojourn in the city, after my Saratoga and Lake George tour, although I made several resolves to do so. When I return, after this week, I hope to see you "frequent."

I found it necessary to abandon our contemplated trip to Newport, which I still regret, for I'd like much to see my grove. (I'm passionately fond of trees, especially when near the water.)

I have acted two weeks in Baltimore to tolerable business only,—folks still out o' town,—and I begin my second week of this engagement to-morrow night, with business thus far about the same. After a rest of one week I shall begin a tour of four weeks in New York at the Opera House. Could I have foreseen the fate of Booth's I should have taken my chances of an engagement there instead, but that may come later—in the early spring, perhaps. . . . Ever yours,
NED.

The next letter was written during his following engagement in New York.

VOL. XLVII.—18.

NEW YORK, November 27, 1879.

I INCLOSE my card for admission and check for seats, and hope they are good ones and that you will enjoy the play. It is a favorite of mine, and I like to act the part of Richard II. when I'm in the humour.

After my engagement is ended will be the time for sociability; when I'm at work the whole household is at "sixes and sevens." Yours ever,
EDWIN.

In the autumn of 1879 Booth resolved to go to England in the following spring, and as I had had several good voyages on the Cunard steamship *Gallia* I recommended that vessel to him, and we had made an engagement to take Mrs. Booth down to see it. This explains the note that follows:

ON DECK, June 22, 1880.

BISPHAM AHoy!

Monday be it—8 bells, sharp! "Meet me at the *Gallia* when it strikes twelve." Latitude 40. Naughty-cally yours,
NED.

I had begun to make an itinerary for him, and before they sailed had completed it for England, France, Belgium, the Rhine, and a portion of Germany; and this he used, as will be seen from some of the succeeding letters written during his tour in Europe.

On the 15th of June, 1880, just before he sailed for England, a testimonial in the form of a breakfast was given him at Delmonico's. A more notable gathering of the most celebrated men in art, literature, the stage, and other professions, it has never been my lot to witness. Music and flowers helped to make the occasion most brilliant.

The next letter is from Dublin.

SHELBOURNE HOTEL

(you know where, be jabers!),

July 4teenth, Ateen hunder an' 80.

. . . . I DETERMINED that when I reached Dublin I'd stop several days to breathe and write letters, but somehow I have not been able to accomplish more than a few necessary London notes in reply to those received. Well, here we are, both in health, and well pleased with our experience, both by land and sea, thus far. But barring the antiquities and the beds and the civility and gouging and the weather, all that I've yet seen falls behind America. Spread-eagleism has always disgusted me, but during the past few days I have felt my tail and wing feathers sprout awful.

I find myself pooh-poohing everything I see, taste, or smell, and comparing them with what we 'av at 'ome, you know. The gap of Dunlo—some place at Killarney—was wild and very picturesque, with its views and peasant ghouls, but the lovely lakes are but a feeble hint of what Lake George affords. By the by, how delicious the Irish are in Ireland!

We have been here since Monday night (after the

only pleasant day we've yet had, and which was spent in the cars); 't is now Wednesday; on Friday we start toward Belfast, breaking our journey by two or three stops *en route* to visit ruins, battle-fields, etc., and to distribute shillings. The rain is pouring at present, and if it continues thus to-morrow we will have a dull drive to Kingston, whither we go to see the swells of Ireland.

Our passage over was simply disgusting in its monotony of canal-like calmness; not the suggestion of a sea till the last day, and then it barely reminded us that we were not on a North River trip. The conveniences and general comforts were too much like luxury, while the propriety and good feeling among the passengers were horrid in their sameness. Still, I hope we will find the same nuisances when we return. I've already been solicited by two London managers, but I shall wait till I get on the ground before I pitch my tent. We have followed your guide thus far, but shall depart a little from it as we go onward. I was afraid to *drive* from Cork to Killarney, the distance was too great. At the latter place the proprietor knew me, had seen me in Booth's Theatre, and even here I've found myself well known. The consul called before I had been here an hour. All this is comfortable enough; hope it will continue. Will write you again from point to point, as we go. . . . No more to-night. Adieu, till further notice, etc. Ever yours,
NED.

BAILEY'S HOTEL, GLOSTER ROAD,
KENSINGTON, August 25, 1880.

YOU have brought us at last to London. We followed your lead tolerably close, with here and there a switch off, or, as they say here, a "shunt," to some place off the level line, reaching here the day before yesterday, earlier than we anticipated. After a few days' rest we shall start for Ammergau, but I fear with small chances for any decent accommodations, for hundreds are daily telegraphing for rooms and seats. We shall probably know to-morrow when we'll go. My engagement at the Princess' will begin about the middle or close of October with "Hamlet." From all I hear expectation is rife: I hope I shall not disappoint, I should say *blight*, it. Your little book was of great service to us, and of course it kept you constantly with us on our winding ways thro' abbey ruins and castle dittos. We were doing Tunbridge Wells, when suddenly we determined to start after dinner for London, which we did. This hotel is all I could desire, save its location, which is too far from the theatres, but otherwise desirable. . . . The family health is good, excepting my wife's bad cough, which still distresses her. I fear, when fog-time comes, she will suffer worse; at present we have sunshine, a new device, and [it] works very well. I hope they will continue the use of it while I am here, it seems so homelike and Yankee.

Most places have pleased us; some were disappointing. One great objection is the body of sight-seers one meets. To think of my being paraded in Shakspeare's home by a lot of Americans! I went there to reverence and dream, not to be lionized and puffed and introduced. To enjoy such a visit one should be alone, or with one or two sym-

pathizing spirits. Then the "blarsted" guides who gabble their shilling's worth of twaddle at you — bah! Well, old boy, we are at last in the great world, where I shall soon be known or lost in the fog. A few weeks will decide. I wish I could feel as hopeful and confident as my friends do. I can't get up an ounce of steam, try as I will. I've often thought, while driving through these English lanes, that I was foolish in not having a hedge set out at Newport; it would have been in fine condition now. If you have occasion to communicate with P — (I forget the name) ask what can be done; the cost, etc., of a holly hedge or Osage Orange, — by no means an arbor vitæ, I don't like 'em, — and if this English thorn could be obtained. Ever yours,
NED.

The next letter is dated from

ST. JAMES HOTEL, PICCADILLY,
October 4, 1880.

. . . OF course you received, after you wrote, a letter from me relative to my change of programme and London engagement. It was so sudden a spring upon me that I can yet hardly realize it. I begin when the theatre is ready, perhaps November 17. . . . In the mean time I shall be flurried and worried with numberless bothers, and all in a fog.

Did I tell you of the P. P. at Ammergau? I forget to whom I've written since then. We had a wretched time, and were, in one sense disappointed with the affair. As a theatrical performance it was remarkable; as a dramatic performance it fell far below the expectations raised by the exaggerated letters published, some by distinguished people. The effect produced was that of sincere interest, but I could perceive no devout or religious feeling manifested by any, auditors or actors. I believe that Biblical subjects, well acted, if kept within the bounds of reverence (I mean if they do not come too near the point of sacrifice), would be of great good service. These people, strange to say, do not shock you, but I hardly believe their performance serves any purpose. Altho' I'm glad I've seen it, I would not care to go again.

I've already written more than I thought I could, for my head is stuffy and aches. My wife is under Dr. Mackenzie's treatment, who speaks encouragingly of her case, but she has a terrible cough and is very hoarse. We have seen nothing here. Paris tired us in a very few days, and its horrid smells and filth marred our enjoyment of what we saw there.

We had to skip the Rhine, because of arrangements made for us at Ammergau which required haste. So we went along it by rail, and "pooh-poohed" all the way from Cologne to —, where we left it, like truly disgusted Yanks. By the by, I smelt no smell in Cologne to equal those of Paris. But of course Paris leads in everything. Coquelin's acting at the Français was excellent, the best I saw in Paris; Croisette and the rest were of less account. . . . Good night, with love to all of yours,
NED.

In this letter came the following written in pencil on a card:

I have just rec'd a N. Y. "Mirror" full of Abbey's intentions regarding the Passion Play at Booth's. See Winter, if you can, and ask him to use his influence for me, as one of the leaders of the "stage-coach," and selfishly (perhaps) because my name is associated with the *outrage*, as well as for the sake of Christendom, against this sacrilege. As for the pious peasants — well, that may be all right, but I notice they charge full fare for wretched accommodations, and sell their photographs in character at a higher rate than you can get them in the Munich shops! But I shall write Winter as soon as I can. A "Herald" man interviewed me in Paris. I told him just what I've said to you (in fewer words), and Kate Field told me that *he* told her a contrary version of my opinion. Let America know that I deprecate any such

attempt as Abbey proposes. I think he is misled; he is a good fellow, and I am sure he would not for the sake of gain and popularity give such a damning blow at the drama, which can do good work, if properly directed, without resort to such unnecessary methods. I scribble this in haste to catch the mail.

NED.

As is well known, Mr. Abbey's proposal was not carried out, and the "Passion Play" was not given at Booth's Theater. The feeling was universally against it, and as soon as Mr. Abbey perceived this, he with characteristic good judgment abandoned the idea. Thus far, though several attempts have been made to play it, it has never been produced here.

(To be continued.)

William Bispham.



COMBATANTS.

HE seemed to call me, and I shrank dismayed,
 Deeming he threatened all I held most dear;
 But when at last his summons I obeyed,
 Perplexed and full of fear,
 I found upon his face no angry frown —
 Only a vizor down.

Indignant that his voice, so calm and sweet,
 In my despite, unto my soul appealed,
 I cried, "If thou hast courage, turn and meet
 A foeman full revealed!"
 And with determined zeal that made me strong,
 Contended with him long.

But, oh, the armor he so meekly bore
 Was wrought for him in other worlds than ours!
 In firm defense of what he battled for,
 Were leagued *eternal* powers!
 I fell; yet overwhelmed by my disgrace —
 At last I saw his face!

And in its matchless beauty I forgot
 The constant service to my pledges due;
 And with adoring love that sorrowed not,
 Entreated, "Tell me who
 Hath so o'erthrown my will and pride of youth."
 He answered, "I am Truth."

Florence Earle Coates.



ENGRAVED BY R. G. TIETZE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH MADE IN 1853 BY SIDNEY BROWN AT THE GALLERY OF J. H. FITZGIBSON, ST. LOUIS, MO.

Franklin
1853

handy she was becoming in transferring her motherly curttness of speech and peremptoriness of manner to the unlucky heir of the ancient house of Driscoll.

She took occasional rests from practising, and absorbed herself in calculating her chances.

"Dey 'll sell dese niggers to-day fo' stealin' de money, den dey 'll buy some mo' dat don't know de chillen—so *dat's* all right. When I takes de chillen out to git de air, de minute I 's roun' de corner I 's gwine to gaum dey mouths all roun' wid jam, den dey can't *nobody* notice dey 's changed. Yes, I gwineter do dat till I 's safe, if it 's a year.

"Dey ain't but one man dat I 's afeard of, en dat 's dat Pudd'nhead Wilson. Dey calls him a pudd'nhead, en says he 's a fool. My lan', dat man ain't no mo' fool den I is! He 's de smartes' man in dis town, less 'n it 's Jedge Driscoll or maybe Pem Howard. Blame dat man, he worries me wid dem ornery glasses o' hisn; I b'lieve he 's a witch. But nemmine, I 's gwine to happen aroun' dah one o' dese days en let on dat I reckon he wants to print de chillen's fingers ag'in; en if *he* don't notice dey 's changed, I bound dey ain't nobody gwine to notice it, en den I 's safe, sho'. But I reckon I 'll tote along a hoss-shoe to keep off de witch-work."

The new negroes gave Roxy no trouble, of course. The master gave her none, for one

of his speculations was in jeopardy, and his mind was so occupied that he hardly saw the children when he looked at them, and all Roxy had to do was to get them both into a gale of laughter when he came about; then their faces were mainly cavities exposing gums, and he was gone again before the spasm passed and the little creatures resumed a human aspect.

Within a few days the fate of the speculation became so dubious that Mr. Percy went away with his brother the Judge, to see what could be done with it. It was a land speculation as usual, and it had gotten complicated with a lawsuit. The men were gone seven weeks. Before they got back Roxy had paid her visit to Wilson, and was satisfied. Wilson took the finger-prints, labeled them with the names and with the date—October the first—put them carefully away and continued his chat with Roxy, who seemed very anxious that he should admire the great advance in flesh and beauty which the babies had made since he took their finger-prints a month before. He complimented their improvement to her contentment; and as they were without any disguise of jam or other stain, she trembled all the while and was miserably frightened lest at any moment he—

But he did n't. He discovered nothing; and she went home jubilant, and dropped all concern about the matter permanently out of her mind.

(To be continued.)

Mark Twain.

MEMORIES AND LETTERS OF EDWIN BOOTH.

(SECOND PAPER.)

ST. JAMES'S HOTEL, PICCADILLY,

November 24, 1880.

. . . YOU have doubtless heard, or rather read, of my change of bill. "Richelieu" is on, and sets the audience all agog—but the critics keep up their fire at me. When "Othello" comes won't they rake me o'er the coals—my! . . . My engagement only extends (unluckily) till the beginning of the regular London season—the very time I should have commenced; but it may be prolonged. Everybody seems to regard it as an unusual "go." . . .

I am happier than dollars could make me in knowing that my countrymen feel such interest in my success, and that they rejoice at it. There is a large and still growing party in my favor here. The purity of my English is invariably praised, and even admitted by the carpers. Think of a "blarsted Yankee" speaking English! . . . Perhaps I 'll do some little service in cultivating

a respect for their mother-tongue! Wish I could speak as good English off as I do on the stage—don't you?

I cannot pass this letter without bearing my testimony to the fact that in spite of his remark about wishing to speak as good English off as on the stage, he always spoke his native language perfectly, and with less accent of any kind than any other American I have ever met.

ST. JAMES'S HOTEL, PICCADILLY,

January 9, 1881.

. . . MY success continues to grow in the estimation of all classes, and were it not for one of my usual blunders in business I should feel quite satisfied. My engagement, unfortunately, must close just when it should have opened, although it has been already extended six weeks beyond

its original term, and I fear I shall be cut off in the very blossom of my success. It seems strange that in this great city there sh'd be but three theatres at all adapted to my class of performance; the rest (some thirty odd) are tiny little holes, devoted to vaudeville, comedy, and farce; the three, the Lyceum, Drury Lane, and the Princess', are all I have to choose from, and arrangements made long ago preclude the continuance of my acting in London beyond March. Perhaps some lucky sprite may upset something for me, and open one of the doors now closed against me. Irving called yesterday, and spent (to me) a most agreeable hour in social chat. I am to meet him again at luncheon on Wednesday at Baroness Burdett-Coutts' house. This lady was in front last night, and seemed to be much impressed by *Bertuccio's* agony. After this week I shall alternate *Othello* and *Iago* for a fortnight, then produce "Macbeth," and afterward "King Lear," which will probably close the engagement. I shall remain in London, however, for the "season," as my wife and daughter have formed many pleasant acquaintances, who are very attentive. . . . Mrs. Booth, unfortunately, cannot enjoy it, for she is really a great sufferer. Her continued throat trouble and great loss of flesh are very distressing, yet her indomitable pluck keeps her up in spite of it all. . . . I fear your fairy notions regarding an old English Xmas are but notions. I think the romance of English life passed away with "the good old times," whose departure even our Elizabethan ancestors deplored. You know Shakspeare speaks of "the time of good neighbours" as of an age long past. Adam and Eve doubtless did the same. No, I have no idea of returning, but do still hope to visit Germany first, though I hardly see how I can arrange to act there; the expense and risk of taking a company would be very great, and there's a doubt in many minds whether an "Anglo-German" performance would satisfy. . . . The winter has been most propitious, and Parliament being in session unusually early I have all the advantages, you see.

I forgot to say, apropos of Xmas, that my sister and I passed it at her house together, the first time since our childhood! . . . Every Sunday evening we dine out, and we have met *some* very charming people. . . . The press will tear me, or rather press me, to death when I appear as *Othello*. I hear it in the air, so look out for splinters.

ST. JAMES'S HOTEL, PICCADILLY,
January 30, 1881.

. . . AFTER a three-weeks' pull with the "Fool," *Othello* and *Iago* began with "the beautiful snow," which froze out several theatres, and thinned my numbers fearfully. Not till Friday night, after a two-days' thaw, did I have more than a corporal's guard to act to; the two nights past, however, have bettered my condition, and the play will be allowed to run a week longer (two yet), in consequence of its not having had a fair show till now. . . .

There is no doubt about my strength holding out; it's true I want to establish my claim per-

manently here; in time I could do all that my friends at home believed (though I did not) that I would accomplish at a bounce, but unfortunately time enough is denied me. In six weeks I shall be shelved, and not, perhaps, until next winter shall I again be seen in London. During the fall I shall make a brief tour of the provinces,—there are but half a dozen towns worth visiting,—and then, perhaps, some other chance may be offered here. After two weeks of regular American winter, such as England has not seen since 1856, the thaw has cleaned the streets and brought "muggy" weather back to us. During the intense cold my wife seemed to be improving, but the damp and warmth have renewed her cough. . . . I jog along in my old hermit way, seeing few and staying most of the time indoors. Having met Irving several times, I like him better every time—he seems a very pleasant fellow. . . .

ST. JAMES'S HOTEL, PICCADILLY,
March 24, 1881.

. . . I OWE you acknowledgments of several letters, two I'm sure of, but the gloom of my household, and the dreadful pains of dyspepsia, have prevented me from writing more than semi-occasionally.

Poor Mary has been insane for two weeks, and the doctors give no hope for her life beyond a few weeks. Her pulse rallies now and then; today, particularly, it is quite strong, but her brain has not for a moment given a sign of improvement. The anxiety has brought on my old complaint in its severest form. You can imagine how I agonize through my "splendid success" here, which really means, *entre nous*, half-filled houses, and no share of the small profits. Newspaper praise or abuse (as the writer feels) is the chief reward of a tragedian in London. In the provinces I *may* pay expenses. As for the Irving-Booth combination, it has created great excitement in the kingdom, and will pay well, but much as I'd like to have you here, I would not advise your coming so far to see so little. He [Irving] has done a friendly thing, and I hope he will reap a good reward for it, here and in America, if he should ever go there. . . .

PORTLAND PLACE, Good Friday,
23 Weymouth street.

(Postmarked April 7, 1881.)

. . . TO-DAY's like Sunday here—shops and theatres closed, and all but *me* at church. Your letter of March 29 has been with me some days, but I've not had much heart for writing. S—'s account of Mary's condition was incorrect. She has become worse, nor shown any signs of improvement since he called. I told him that her doctors gave no hope for her recovery. For the past month she has kept her bed, and has been utterly insane, and is now just hovering 'twixt life and death. Last night we thought would be her last, and to-day she is barely able to swallow the little nourishment offered by her nurses. Three days ago we thought she would rally and linger a long time, but yesterday the

reaction came, and I doubt if she 'll last a week, if half so long. . . .

You see I've left the St. James. The doctor advised a change on account of noise, but we've lost the sunlight by following his advice.

My *private* rehearsals with Irving begin Tuesday, and he tells me that already £1200 are booked, and nothing done to "post up" the engagement. He considers it very good; I suppose it is for England. In America such sums are not regarded as remarkable for any unusual attraction.

23 WEYMOUTH [St.], May 16, 1881.

. . . CHANGES have occurred that may compel me to return, for a few weeks only, to New York in June. I have taken passage by the *Arizona*, for the 18th, I believe, and hope to come back by the *Gallia*, August 17. Will you please book me for that date—two rooms for Edwina and self. If the Captain's room can be used for father and daughter I'd prefer that. The McVickars are here, and we have concluded it to be best to take Mary home (if she lives so long) on June 18 (my engagement with Irving terminating June 10), and have the parting in New York rather than here. She is a surprise to her doctors—being quite strong, though a mere shadow, and at times is as sane as ever. . . . The doctors say, however, that she may die at any moment. . . .

The Lyceum business is still great, and creates as much excitement as at first. I've not done myself justice yet, being so depressed by my domestic troubles. Irving is very kind, and is a splendid fellow, as well as the best director of stage-art I have ever met. . . .

They came home in June, bringing Mrs. Booth with them, and on their arrival in New York went at first to the Windsor Hotel; but as time passed, Mrs. Booth's condition became so terrible in many ways that Mr. and Mrs. McVickar deemed it best to have her in a private house of their own which they had rented near the hotel, and Edwin remained at the Windsor all summer, in order to be near her.

On November 13, 1881, while Edwin was playing in Philadelphia, he received a telegram informing him that Mrs. Booth was at rest. He at once came to New York, and accompanied by some two or three friends went with Mr. and Mrs. McVickar with the body to Chicago, where she was buried. That sad duty performed, he returned to Philadelphia and resumed his engagement. My next letter from him is dated.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 20, 1881.

THE long and mournful journey is ended, and I am here again, in the very room where, one week ago to-night, I received the news of poor Mary's death. . . . The strain of nerve as well as body has almost exhausted me, and I am in no fit mood to write. Still, a line to let you know just where I am and where I am to be next week will not overtax my strength.

Now, what next discomfort? "What more sorrow claims acquaintance at my hand which I know not?" It will come, I doubt not. . . .

. . . "Thou shalt know ere long
What 't is to suffer and be strong"

has been ringing in my ears (my mind's ears, Horatio) these many months past. Winter says they're Longfellow's lines; I know not just how they came—I think from a calendar that once stood on my desk. Well, I have tried to be strong in all my sufferings, but I fear that I have been most feeble. Having bit my lip hard enough, I've "given it a rest" as the Arabs say, by letting it too loose a little. But it's hard to ache and not to groan occasionally, and good healthy swearing is a great relief; some one in an old play says, "T is like flannel to bruises!"

THE VENDOME, Boston, Dec. 17, 1881.

. . . ANENT a certain friend, a poor player, who struts, etc., but one I love with all the tenderness a son might bear for a father—one of the oldest and the dearest old duffers the good God ever made! Perpend! —(beloved by his kind) approacheth now the time when the oil burneth low and the wick waxeth brief. He wants to settle in New York—his dear old wife and he—in apartments, in a good location on an economical plan, and loaf out the rest of their few winters. The thought struck me that you could give me all the points touching the subject. Say, if he wished to buy the furniture of a flat of perhaps five or six rooms, in some neighborhood you know, can you give me an idea what it would cost for rent?—say a lease of several years, cozy and plainly furnished, and one servant, a cook for example. Do you know of such a chance for next year, and can you give me an idea of rent, cost of furniture, servant's wages, and other little details requisite for the comfort of a dear old couple of antique babies? Let me know as soon as possible, for they contemplate selling their house and retiring on a small income, and I want them to settle near me.

BOSTON, Dec. 23, 1881.

. . . MORE anon about my "flat" friends. I want to locate them in New York next year, say after April, for the balance of their earthly sojourn, which can't be many centuries longer. This *entre nous*. I thought I'd find, say, four or five cozy rooms and furnish them comfortably, rent the place for several years, and relieve them of all cares for the future. No one but you, they, and I are to know the *facts*, and even you must be ignorant so far as they know.

I have thought it only right to my friend to print the foregoing letters concerning his two "antique babies," as it is truly representative of the kind actions he was continually performing for the benefit of his old or distressed fellow-players. No one in real distress ever appealed to him in vain, and the number of his benefactions was legion. To my certain

knowledge he gave away in charity more than most men would consider a fortune, and he did it in the sweetest, gentlest manner, hardly letting one hand know what the other did. Indeed, he was so anxious to help any one, or any institution in need, that I feared ever to mention such to him, not knowing what his charitable impulses might tempt him to do, and almost dreading that he would give more than he ought to for his own sake.

PITTSBURG, Jan'y 13, 1882.

. My business everywhere has been very fair—but oh! but oh! travel is beyond all recompense. The d—d must surely be doomed to railway torture. I have every convenience and modern appliance in my special car, but I can't sleep, or read, or think while the confounded thing is on the go, and am as tired and jaded at the end as though we had trotted over a corduroy road. . . . 'T is very late, and I am very tired, so good-night! With love and prayers (when I'm holy), Thine ever,
EDWIN.

In the summer of this year Mr. Booth went again to England, playing for two months in London, and making a professional tour in the provinces, beginning the latter about the first of September.

LEEDS, November 1, 1882.

THIS is the eighth week of my country tour, and, with the exception of two or three old-time towns, such as York and Dundee and Edinboro', of course it has been dull enough. To be sure I've had applause sufficient to satisfy the most ambitious, but as I shall never revisit these places I consider it a waste of time and labor. In Germany, as in London, I look for nothing but approval, and shall be satisfied even if I fall short of my expenses a little. However, if we get through it with health and no accident I shall be grateful. . . .

The theatre in this place is the most complete, the handsomest, and in many respects the best I have seen in either country; it is very large, and truly deserves its title, "The Grand." All it lacks to make it perfect is full seats, which, they tell me, it sometimes has for some fashionable "catch."

BERLIN, January 7, 1883.

I ARRIVED a week ago, and found the manager had a successful play running which he hopes to keep on for many weeks. He resorted to a paltry quibble to defer my engagement a month: I consented, as all other places were shut to me, being occupied by other attractions. Finding the fellow inclined to trick me again, I set my German agent to work, who came to me the next day in rapture: a lady star was ill, and could not fulfill her contract with the Residenz Theatre—a very small but more fashionable house than the Victoria, which is a large and cheerless place. The chance came like a miracle, and matters were amicably arranged for me to shift my quarters, and on Thursday next I open with "Hamlet."

To-morrow my rehearsals begin, and as several of the actors speak a *little* English, and have already acted the parts they will play with me, I may not have such trouble as I expected.

. After ten or fifteen performances here I go to Hamburg, thence to Bremen, Cologne, Bonn, Hanover, Leipsic, and perhaps Vienna—it is not yet settled: a few nights only in each place. If all goes well by that time, the close of March, I shall *tour* a little in Italy for recreation, and go home for "good and all."

Herr Ludwig plays *Hamlet* at the Royal to-morrow night, and maybe I shall see him. . . . I'm told that "great expectations" are on tip-toe. Oh, if I tumble, what a fall will there be, my countrymen!

BERLIN, February 7, 1883.

. I HAVE scored a fourth notch in my alpenstock as *Othello*, although I acted badly last night, being all out of sorts, and missed the text in many places. However, the result was five recalls after the third act, and four after the fifth. I have six more nights here, then go to Hamburg. Have had a severe cough and hoarseness ever since I began work, and daily rehearsals have deprived me of rest. I am very tired. The old Prince's death put a stop to my royal visitors coming to the theatre, but the audiences are good in quality and quantity too, but, as it is in England, no money is to be made here; that, however, I did not expect.

LEIPSIK, March 16, 1883.

. I HAVE nothing new to tell you—the same good luck attends my appearance in each city I visit, and all ask me to return.

Mr. Booth's meager account of his German experiences was like his intense modesty in relating anything that concerned himself. On his return to this country I succeeded, by cross-questioning him, in learning something of the wonderful enthusiasm his acting created wherever he went. They gave him several beautiful silver wreaths (which are now among the treasures of "The Players" in Gramercy Park), and lavished personal caresses on him in a way that almost frightened him.

I remember his telling of the last night at one of the theaters. After the play was over, he was long in dressing for the street, and on emerging from his dressing-room found, to his astonishment and horror, the whole company of the theater drawn up in line on each side of the passage by which he must go out, and as he passed each caught him by the hand and shook it; many kissed him on the cheek, and those who could not do this took his coat or portions of his dress in their hands and reverently kissed them! As he described it, his distress at these marks of admiration was almost ludicrous. Indeed, I never knew a man who had such an aversion to being caressed as he had. He shrunk instinctively from any

physical manifestation of personal affection, and while his friendships were strong, they were almost always unaccompanied by any outward demonstration save the grasp of the hand, and the hearty welcome shining through his glorious eyes.

I have omitted the letters I received from him through the summers of 1883, '84, '85, and '86, as they are all so filled with the details of his life at Boothden, the estate he had purchased at Newport, and where he built a most attractive house. He spent many months there, and enjoyed his country home very greatly. He called it Boothden, because he said it was "Booth's Den," and the "Den," or room, in which he passed most of his time was extremely charming and cozy. There were about ten acres in the place, and he had great pleasure in getting it in perfect order; his lawns were as fine as any in Newport. At one time he kept a small yacht, and enjoyed sailing in it; he drove and rode a good deal, and his fondness for the country was very marked.

On his return from Germany he had decided to settle in Boston, where he had hosts of friends, and his next letter is dated:

29 CHESTNUT ST. [BOSTON],
Nov. 27, 1884.

. . . YOUR idea of using the Hennessy picture is superb,¹ and I will send it as soon as possible. But the *arms* I am not so enthused about; I rather think that contrary to my "Demo-Repub." principles. I hardly care to place myself within the reach of those persons who would consider it snobbery. Such things are very interesting and good to have indoors, but to "hang out our banners on the outward walls," as it were, would excite unpleasant comment at least. No, we 'll leave out that part of it and keep to the simple, saint-like subject — most appropriate for the purpose. Nothing could be better! . . . Business grows larger every night, and still shows signs of increasing, if there's room to put the people in. I am hard worked with long rehearsals with a company unused to my stock of plays.

29 CHESTNUT ST. [BOSTON],
Dec. 14 [1884].

. . . THE engagement was successful, but not more so than all my engagements here have been. Each new one is declared by the press to be "unusual," etc., but I note no difference save in the pecuniary result, which is regulated by the size of the theatre at which I act. This is not in boast, but such has really been my experience in Boston — yet I rather shun the large houses and am satisfied with less pay to be nearer my audience. . . .

¹ This refers to a suggestion I had made to have a picture of the first Mrs. Booth, painted by Mr. W. J. Hennessy, reproduced in glass in a window which Booth presented to the Berkeley Memorial Chapel on Indian Avenue at Newport. The original picture was idealized, and had, as he writes, a saint-like appearance.

BOSTON, Dec. 28, 1884.

. . . WINTER sent me a queer little book called "Tobacco Talk," very interesting, and contains the verses you suggested for my smokery, which, by the by, were forgotten by us all — I mean the intention to decorate my "vestry"² was "disremembered." That's a "vile phrase" which my father liked, because it is so *utterly* American, and he (as was his father) was so rabidly Republican. Good night! Happy New Year for you all.

29 CHESTNUT ST. [BOSTON],
May 21 [1885].

. . . SINCE I left New York I have felt and acted better than at any time during the entire past season, and here a perfect ovation was given me every night. In Philadelphia the size of the house chilled the audience and actors, and although the business was excellent, it was not so great as here or in New York.

The Philadelphia critics (justly, I think) rather condemned the polyglot business.³ By the by, I had a worse fall there than in New York — a very dangerous one, too. In the last scene, when I was brought on with hands tied behind me, my foot caught on the door-sill and I pitched headlong to the stage — it might have broken my neck. . . . The first night here, as I ran into *Iago's* dark house, — after stabbing *Cassio*, — I tripped and fell again, but 't was behind the scenes: about the same time young Salvini flopped flat on his back on the stage. It must be the Italian School of acting, I suspect! The elder Salvini remarked after my second fall, "The public seem to like to see you fall!"

I gave him a breakfast, and invited an Italian whom I thought his friend; afterward I heard that they were foes — but all went well at table.

During the summer of 1886, while on a visit to Mr. Lawrence Barrett at Cohasset, he proposed to Mr. Booth to make a tour through the West, and that he should be the manager, providing the company and making all the engagements for place and time.

To this Mr. Booth assented, though he had not absolutely decided before this to make such a journey, because he wished to play less and less every year; for he had been on the stage nearly forty years, and was weary of its hard work. Besides this, he was sufficiently well-to-do not to require the pecuniary return; but he was finally persuaded to make this engagement, and the letters which immediately follow were written during its progress.

CENTURY CLUB [NEW YORK],
Friday, September 10, 1886.

. . . THIRTY-SEVEN years ago to-day I made my first bow to the public — 't was Monday in

² This was his smoking-room at Boothden, and he named it his vestry because the Bishop of Rhode Island and other clergy had vested there when the Berkeley Memorial Church was consecrated.

³ This was his engagement with the elder Salvini.

those days. I rehearse at the Academy, and drop in here for lunch, and to cool off on milk and soda. . . .

THE GENESEE, BUFFALO, N. Y.,
September 16, 1886.

. . . I FORGOT to tell you that I wrote to Collier and requested him to send his portrait of me, as *Richelieu*, to your care, and he replied that he would soon do so. You kindly suggested this, and said you would send it to the Art Museum, you remember.

Thus far all goes finely except my voice; a heavy cold, and the strain on vocal chords (or cords?) which have so long been unused, make me very hoarse, but to-day my "organ" seems clearer. Business great and audiences enthusiastic. After the play ("Hamlet") to-night, at 12.30, I start for Detroit—rather hard work.

THE SOUTHERN, ST. LOUIS,
October 19, 1886.

. . . THUS far (5 weeks) my gross share has been \$34,900 (and odd), and the indications are fair for continuance. Hotel and other expenses come from this, but I have not figured 'em up. Financially, this is about the greatest engagement I've acted, and in other respects it has been unusually successful.¹ The weather, with the exception of two very wintry days in Chicago, has been sickly hot, and I have suffered in consequence. A severe cold, not yet broken up, has tormented (and twice almost disabled) me for several weeks, and I have constant headaches—neuralgia, I think. Not much fun in play-acting, altho' it does pay in ducats. . . .

ELMIRA,

Wednesday, December 30, 1886.

AM glad Lay is pleased, and I only hope he has n't sent you a "white elephant" (there's a little room adjoining your den—just the place for it if 't is in your way); you seemed to like it, and I knew Lay would n't object, and so to please both I did the horrid deed—forgive me!²

LOS ANGELES, March 3, 1887.

. . . LAY is very enthusiastic, and it gives me much pleasure to know that what I did makes him so happy; I must write to him when I get to San Francisco; can't do much in that way while traveling. You do not say what the Collier picture was appraised at. Have you Collier's address? I must write in acknowledgment of the picture, but I left his letter in Boston. My three days' passage through the desert, from San Antonio to this place, was very wearisome, but it afforded some interesting general effects, particularly the mirage, which I had never seen so perfectly: a lovely stretch of water, in which were reflected the snow-hills near by, and other objects close at hand; the water was imaginary, of course. It lasted for several miles; many other sights

¹ This applied only to the St. Louis part of the engagement, and not to the whole tour.

² This refers to an ideal head of himself painted by the late Mr. Oliver I. Lay, and which Booth had sent me during my absence from home.

worth seeing were passed—during the night, of course, as such interesting points on railway journeys usually are. It is nearly always my fate to miss the beauties of travel, and to be prevented from enjoying the places I visit through some mischance.

My tour has been an unbroken triumph, and I could have filled most of the houses two or three times, in some places for two weeks instead of one, the demand for seats everywhere has been so great, and the towns crowded with people from surrounding towns,—many quite distant from my point of action,—while requests from various places to visit them come to me daily. It is amazing, even to me, who have had so many years of success. You'd be surprised to see the fine theaters (most of them I've used) and the excellent quality of my audiences.

Near San Antonio there are some large farms owned by English people, who pass much of their time there, and I had a couple of live lords and some British officers with their wives and daughters in my boxes. In several places the lower part of the house was in full dress, no bonnets, and not much upper clothing, beyond flowers and jewels. I'll send you a sample of the programmes used in several places for the parquette and boxes. Bernhardt and I passed each other near El Paso, but did not meet, as it chanced at night, of course.

The car ("David Garrick") is commodious and comfortable, but the incessant jerks and the vibration are terrible. I resume the torture Sunday for 24 hours *en route* to San Francisco—then a stop of four hours. I have just concluded Hugo's "Shakspeare," and I have already begun Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe"—both very interesting.

PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO,
March 14, 1887.

. . . MY success here is phenomenal! Except my occasional headaches, my health is good. The wonders of this country are amazing—especially to one who knew it as a mere sandhill thirty years ago. Last night I visited the Chinese theaters, tragic and comic, the former funny, the latter doleful. Then to the opium dens, to see some things that I'm sorry I saw. I wound up my journey, however, at a very respectable and superbly decorated restaurant, and drank tea, ate lychees, roasted almonds, and preserved limes till my wits whirled, and my teeth ached. As for my heathen co-workers in the mimic art, I think they are about as deficient in the delivery of their *very* blank verse as are most of our "murderous mummies"; their costumes were gorgeous, their voices hysterical, their faces hideous, and their odor sickening.

Love to all the boys. This month's "Atlantic" gives me a "boost" as a "literary person!"

His reference in this letter to the "Atlantic Monthly" was to the article concerning the papers he had written on his father and Edmund Kean, which had appeared in the series of "Actors and Actresses of Great Britain and

the United States." A writer in the "Evening Post" said of them: "It cannot be a matter of ungracious comparison to any of the others to say that in literary quality as well as in the subtlety of personal charm he is out of range with the rest."

DENVER, April 21, 1887.

I FORGET when I last wrote you,—from Frisco, I think,—since when I've had a pleasant and profitable "picnic," and find myself luxuriously entertained in one of the best hotels in America. The theatre is decidedly the best we have in all respects. It recalls "Booth's" in many ways. The dressing-rooms are comfortable (mine has hot and cold water, with every convenience), and, indeed, it is just what a first-class theatre should be. It ought to be in New York. After the play to-night I shall take a few of my folks to Manitou to see the wondrous Garden of the Gods, some sixty miles distant. My car is too wide for the track, and consequently I have hired a director's narrow-gauge coach. We shall spend to-morrow there, and return in time for the play at night. By giving my girls and boys a treat now and then I have succeeded in making them all miserable in contemplating the early termination of what to them has been a perfect season; and, indeed (if it were not for the acting every night), I should like to continue the tour indefinitely; it has been generally jolly. . . . Today a blizzard is on us, yesterday was a heavenly calm.

Houses crowded, and audiences very quiet, refined, full-dressed (so far as heads go—no many hats among the groundlings), and very appreciative. The high altitude affects my voice, and causes me to gasp at times during the play. . .

In July of 1887 Mr. E. C. Benedict placed his steam-yacht *Oncida* at Mr. Booth's service for a trip as far north as Labrador, and Mr. Booth invited some of his friends to make the voyage with them. The start was made from Greenwich, with Mr. Benedict, Mr. Booth, and myself. At Cohasset Mr. Barrett came on board, at Boston Mr. T. B. Aldrich, and at the Isles of Shoals Mr. Laurence Hutton.

This voyage lasted about a month, and on account of fogs the yacht did not go farther north than St. John, N. B.; but it was on this memorable occasion that Mr. Booth talked to us of his plan of establishing a club for his profession, the details of which will be found in an article on "The Players" in *THE CENTURY* for November, 1891, written by Mr. Brander Matthews. In the autumn of this year Mr. Booth started out in partnership with Mr. Barrett, acting together and alternating parts.

CHICAGO, October 6, 1887.

THE Booth-Barrett boom is immense, and from the looks of our box-sheet, 2 weeks ahead, there seems to be a perfect cyclone of success in store

for me. Everywhere, so far, we have swept our way clean, and the prospect is clear and encouraging in the extreme. . . .

Barrett and I get on easily; he is very considerate of my old bones, and saves me a lot of trouble and anxiety.

KANSAS CITY, October 24, 1887.

. . . ARRIVED this A. M. to find the theatre unready for us, unroofed, and full of scaffolding, so the opening is deferred till to-morrow. The hotel is also partly new, and our rooms are gorgeously cold and handsome. . . . Yes, it has been generally announced that we are to have a theatre, and have engaged Miss A. [Anderson], but we know no more of the matter. The success of our combination, however, ought to result in our having a Shakesperian theatre in New York, unless Donnelly succeeds in overthrowing our idol. B. [Barrett] is writing an excellent article on the Baconian theories for the "North American Review." I have concluded to continue our partnership another season. . . .

CLEVELAND, November 15, 1887.

. . . BARRETT and I were regretting that we had not commissioned you to buy the Academy for us, when your letter came congratulating me on the falsity of the report anent my buying or building a theatre! I think Barrett will have one in New York, but I do not think I shall take any financial risk in another such venture. It seems, however, that I ought to make an effort, before I quit, to establish some abiding-place for my profession, where the "legitimate" may find a home. Something may yet be accomplished. . . . I've just wiped out my 53d score and am fairly on the 54th stretch for the home run: it's all down hill and rapid travel now, slow as the old nag is.

PHILADELPHIA, December 8, 1887.

. . . A WILD letter from "Mark Gray"¹ (Keokuk) says he's tired of being hunted by detectives, and asks a loan of \$1000 (on good security) in order that he may leave the country, to rid me of anxiety (which I've never felt on his account) and himself from the annoyance of being watched.

NEW ORLEANS, February 6, 1888.

. . . DON'T be alarmed. I have no intention or wish to risk my health or wealth in management again, but Barrett has a laudable desire to construct a theatre in New York (on conditions that will insure his safety), and several parties have been after him, some with tempting offers. If he carries out his plans, I shall be associated with him professionally, not otherwise; that is, for certain work, every season, my services as actor only will be devoted to his theatre.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 14, 1888.

. . . I'M pretty sure Lawrence will do nothing idiotic in the way of theatrical ventures, and you may be sure that I will not; I've risked

¹ This was the man who had shot at Booth in Chicago some years before.

my last risk in that direction. But I'm after something else, and shall ask your aid in the furtherance of my desire. In response to your good advice anent the club, I will now tell you that from the first I've had a wish to make a donation of a suitable house (on certain conditions, of course), and with such a start there is no reason why we "Players" can't spread our sails. . . . This will not prevent the carrying out of my original scheme anent the Actors' House for charitable purposes; on the contrary, with the club an established success, the other institution will be encouraged. I have given the subject full and careful consideration, and am safe in doing what I propose.

DENVER, April 6, 1888.

I wired you on receipt of yours "Yes," anent the suggestion you made for our domicile. I do not think a house less than forty feet wide would be convenient—it should be fifty feet. I have not told any one *all* I wish to do. You are the first to know it; and I have calculated the costs, etc., well; I have not lost sight of the Actors' House, but have kept a longing eye on our Century Club house [then in Fifteenth street] for that organization while figuring on The Players. The Century Club house is just what and where the Actors' House should be, somewhat retired, yet not out of the way. If that could be obtained for \$50,000 and a suitable house for The Players for \$75,000 or \$80,000, I can do both without interfering in the least with what I intend to do for some worthy ones whom I have always helped. . . . The two institutions would have a powerful effect on the status of the coming actor; a decade would work a wonderful change in him and for him, and I don't see any higher aim I can have during my last years. I have not yet mentioned this to Barrett or to any one but you, and I want you to keep an eye on the Century for me, as well as the main object, "ye Players" house.

Suppose, in all, the two houses should cost me \$150,000. I can spare it, even if I should "peg out" while I now write, and I would have ample means left to provide for my other bequests.

OMAHA, April 11, 1888.

. . . BARRETT and I think *location* should be seriously considered; it will have great influence on the character of the association: it should have a cheerful aspect, or prospect rather, and not be on a by-street or too retired. . . . I am sure that \$150,000 will get a commodious and pleasantly located house for The Players. The *second*, or Actors' House, can wait awhile—not a very long while, if my health holds good for another year or two.

After the play to-night we start on a tour of nearly three weeks, one-night stands; hope a letter from you will catch me on the road.

ST. JOSEPH, MO., April 17, 1888.

. . . I AM here on time, and, having read your letter, telegraphed you at once. I do hope the location,¹ etc., will be as agreeable to the rest as

¹ The present location of "The Players" in Gramercy Park.

to you, to Barrett, and myself. It is one of the spots B—— and I have thought of as desirable. The Actors' House can be deferred for the present; it will keep. I wish my despatch could have reached you before the meeting to-day.

. . . Your letter has given me an appetite, and dinner is in the air. . . .

CEDAR RAPIDS, April 19, 1888.

. . . YESTERDAY I wired my thanks for your congratulations to the *President*, who received your greeting late the previous night. I confess I was somewhat prepared for the compliment, yet 't was none the less "thrilling"; but in sincerity, notwithstanding that I appreciate the value of my name in connection with the office, I wish that a more competent man had been chosen for it; one of a more positive nature, which mine is not; besides, I know nothing whatever of parliamentary matters, nor have I the faculty of learning. I am so easily bored and confused even by the business immediately connected with my profession. . . .

I do hope that Barrett was not forgotten, but that he was made a director as well as yourself.

INDIANAPOLIS, April 27, 1888.

. . . THE trust deed for the donation must be carefully worded, and not so confoundedly complicated as are most legal documents. Can it embrace the books, pictures, etc., which I may give? I mean in its disposition of the property in the event of dissolution of the Club. There are, no doubt, other points that should be insisted on in the deeding of such an estate: to whom or for what purpose it should be devoted, if hereafter it should be deemed advisable to sell for other, larger, or more desirable property. . . . This may require time for careful study of the subject, and perhaps it had better be taken in hand at once. Let us suppose The Players should cease, and at that time there should exist a benevolent theatrical fund. I think I'd prefer it to benefit by my gift to letting it revert to my descendants, who will have the bulk of my estate. Whatever articles of historic or histrionic value there may be of my donating should, in such an event, be placed in some New York museum, rather than sold, or given to any theatrical collection.

. . . We are impatient to see the house; our engagements have lost interest for us in the more absorbing matter of our house. I'm mighty glad you are treasurer, and that Daly is vice-admiral.

NEW YORK, November, 1888.

. . . WILL this do for the main hall fireplace? An effusion of my own. I will also send some quotations. Do you select some anent tobacco. I have not the copies you sent me some time ago for Newport. Get if you can the true reading of Sancho Panza's "Bless the man who first invented sleep" for my bedroom; for Barrett's, "Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care," or "Our little life is rounded with a sleep," or "We are such stuff as dreams are made of"—indeed the three could be used in our two, and the three front rooms above—but I hardly think the upper rooms need be considered. In my

composition I am doubtful about the spell of *Friendship, tongue*, and *here* in Shakesperian form. Refer to Furness's variorum edition of *Merchant of Venice*—"When did friendship take a breede of barraine mettall," etc., Act. 1, Sc. 3 (I think). *Antonio* asks it of *Shylock*. If Mr. White can put this in old English lettering, large and distinct, above the main fireplace (under the shelf, of course), it would meet the eye on entering and be as good a bit of doggerel as the famous epigraph warning, if I do say it myself, who ought not to say it myself.

"Goode frend, for Frenship's sake forbear
To utter what is gossip'd heare
In social chatte, lest — unawares —
Thy tong offend thy fellowe-Plaiers."

. . . Work in the quaint spelling as much as possible and take a liberty here and there, just for effect: no one will care a "rap" for the right or the wrong of such a trifling matter. I like "chatte" and "tong." I inclose a few selections for the library: use what Mr. White and you think best, part or all of 'em. They may be painted: I think 't were better in case we sh'd some day wish to change any of them.

Sat to Weir yesterday—to-morrow I go to Hartley and next week alternately to both. Weir's Gilbert is fine. Adieu!

BALTIMORE, Jan. 14, 1889.

. . . WE arrived last evening, and begin our eng't here to-night. The outlook is very fine, and if the business continues as it began in Pittsburg and promises here, I shall soon clear The Players. Clarke cabled me of seven superior pictures, Kemble, Mrs. Inchbald, Macready, and others I can't recall, for £150, the first worth the price of all. I have directed him to buy them. The Kemble will be just the thing for the side of our large fireplace, instead of the Richelieu. I'd never feel at ease with a portrait of myself in pose in so conspicuous a place; besides, I think a striking pose becomes very wearisome, good as it may be for the moment, if placed ever before one. Kemble's pose is very subdued, and the Mary Anderson (*Perdita*) not obtrusive—these two will fill the spaces well, I think.

. . . Albaugh says he has sent a large picture of the Kemble family in the trial scene of "Henry VIII.," and promises other gifts. We shall soon lack room, I fear. Would like to see books come in as rapidly.

I long to return to my cozy rooms, and hope to have most of next Sunday there, *en route* for Boston.

DENVER, April 30, 1889.

. . . TO-DAY, I presume, you are having a jolly crush; I'm glad I am not in it, but wish I could have a bird's-eye view of New York just now. You may be sure that I am anxious to have some report of "Ladies' Day." I hope it was successful. Why did we not set the natal day (April 23) for that purpose? Let's fix it so for future holidays, and in the evenings we might have banquets, not for ladies, but for ourselves, in honor of the occasion. . . .

When I was last in this room The Players' Club was but a dream—'t is now one of the solid facts and scarce a twelvemonth gone! All the seats are sold, with only standing-room left for the guests from "way-back." A full house and a fine performance! . . . By-the-by, I hope that project of a statue will be allowed to rest until time has diminished the full length to a bust. I do not think actors should be "statued": of all "heroes" they should be, with writers, most unostentatiously honoured. Very great writers may stand full-length among the statesmen and warriors, but as a rule, they, with artists, especially actors, should be permitted only an occasional bust in some quiet corner.

. . . My daughter has the cylinders of a phonograph into which I spoke some passages from several plays, and she took them to an agent of Bell's company in Washington who unsealed them, and she says it was delightful to hear her father's voice repeat the verses from so far away. . . . I doubt if I should like to hear the voice of a dead loved one reproduced by a machine, but if to-day we could hear the voice of George Washington! "The rest is silence!"

BOSTON, January 31, 1890.

. . . I THINK Sargent will make a great success with my portrait—'t is unlike any I've seen of myself as regards its expression. I see nothing of the actor in it. . . . A white dove (pigeon) sits every day on my window-sill, and so long as I remain here at my desk the little creature stays—rain or shine—and seems to wink at me. I wonder who it is—or was!

THE STRATFORD, PHILADELPHIA,

February 16, 1890.

. . . I HAVE had a superb head (crayon) of Boker given to me by Z—, the manager, here. It seems to me a place in the main hall should be made for it by placing some of the old prints in the lower (visitors' or billiard) room. . . . Salvini bade me a loving good-by last night in my *tiring-room*, while I was dragging through "Macbeth." . . . There is something very lovable about the man. . . . My health is good, and business is great; 't is remarkable how the old nag draws in his decadence! Perhaps 't is his last "spurt" on the home stretch!

BALTIMORE, Friday, February 28, 1890.

. . . HOW gets on the Cooke tomb?¹ Did I tell you that some fellow wrote me that he was almost sure that he had Cooke's skull—found in the ruins of the (recent) Park Theater and wished to restore it to "the original bearer!"

[BALTIMORE] March 5 [1890].

. . . I INCLOSE my help for—, but don't let it get into print. Aside from the indelicacy of publishing such things, you've no idea how many requests from all sorts of people and places it calls forth.

¹The reference to Cooke's tomb was on account of the fact that Booth had undertaken to restore it, and I was attending to it for him. It is in St. Paul's churchyard, New York.



DRAWN FROM LIFE, DECEMBER, 1889, BY ARTHUR JULE GOODMAN.

EDWIN BOOTH AS SHYLOCK.

Since the public mention of something I did for Mrs. —'s hospital (in which, by the by, Phillips Brooks is deeply interested) I have been availed, inundated, by heart-breaking appeals. It's all well enough to talk about y'r *lights* under a bushel, but one's *liver* must be considered likewise, and these constant appeals for help stir one up. Besides it deadens the pleasure of doing good by stealth. I am notified that I am eligible for the "Club" without initiation fee. What am I to do? Is this another honor heaped on me? My days of jockeyhood are with the dusty dead: my pastern and fetlock joints are stiff and creaky—I

could n't "ride a cockhorse to Banbury Cross" now.

CHICAGO, March 18 [1890].

. . . MY daughter writes me that at a fair at the Ponce de Leon a phonograph is the chief attraction. People long, of course, to hear the voices of distinguished persons, and it seems to pay very largely. The lad in charge said that he had left the voice of Edwin Booth in Jacksonville, where he had taken \$1250 for that voice alone! What swindling! It is not *my* voice — if they have *any* that pays so well. . . . My health is good, but the chronic lethargy prevails and unfits me for

any day work. At night I wake up and act with considerable vigor. The business is very fine.

THE STRATFORD, Philadelphia, Sunday
[November 23, 1890].

. . . HERE I am! I really don't know what has become of me lately. With my spinning head and shaky legs I have staggered through the past week or two in a sort of daze, but I am on deck still, and feel much steadier than I've been yet this season. I am better every way. . . . Yes, the feeling for my 57th lap was genuine and is very gratifying, but 't was more quiet than the papers would lead you to suppose. No banquet, no speeches; a lot of notes and flowers—with congratulations from all sorts of people from all parts of the U. S. The portrait I sent to my "legal colleagues" for the Bel Air Court House was liked by some; better than the one by Sargent—it is similar in expression. Would like very much to have Furness see the Garrick¹ "Hamlet"—he is still in Wallingford, but comes to town occasionally. I hope to see him Wednesday or Thursday. Send it, please. Three weeks after this one and I shall have a month's loaf at the club.

NARRAGANSETT PIER, August 1 [1891].

. . . I AM heartily shamed by my neglect of you, but really I have made many attempts to write, when some sudden change in my condition would unfit me. Once in a while I'd have a spurt of vigor and I'd scribble a few lines, but the fit would pass and I'd be helpless again for several days. You'll hardly believe me when I tell you, without exaggeration, that I injured two lovely sheets of club paper yesterday before I got your letter in vain efforts to write you. I deferred the attempt till now when your 2d comes with the Quaritch quarto bill,² for which I inclose my check. As for the Folios, let me know when cash is required, and I'll advance the amount and take our "recoup" as you propose. How about the Baker book [a first-folio Shakspeare]?

My general condition is improved immensely, but indigestion still affects me. My legs and head are steady—no cane for six weeks past, few headaches, and unusual vigor.

Two letters to-day from different points, one offering a *sure cure* for the tobacco-habit, the other containing a corn-cob pipe-stem, and recommending a harmless tobacco; which horn do you prefer? I really do not smoke so much since I left home; the desire is subsiding, I am confident.

NARRAGANSETT PIER,

September 10, 1891.

. . . THIS night in 1849, at the Boston Museum, I made my first gawky bow to a large audience assembled to witness my father's *Richard III.*, in which play I made my *début* as *Tressell*,

¹ This was the manuscript of Garrick's "Hamlet with alterations," which I had procured for Booth in London.

² He had purchased Furnivall's facsimiles of the Shakspeare quartos from Mr. Quaritch, and given them to "The Players."

and—I still live! I am in most respects a fairly well body. When I determine when I shall go back to J. J. (if at all) or to the club, I'll wire or write you a line. This is but to let you know that I am with you all still. With lots of love, but can't tell you so as often as I would wish.

THE PLAYERS, January 5, 1892.

. . . YOUR greeting on Founder's night added zest to the pleasure of The Players' enjoyment, which all pronounced superior to all our previous "good times"—it was very enjoyable and well attended. M—— spoke well, but some thought that I *surpassed* him! Before you know it The Players will transform me to an orator! . . . My health is about the same. I go as far as the grill-room during the day, and several nights a week I tea or dine with my daughter. . . . My lassitude is such that I'm not equal to giving you a decent letter. Mentally and physically I am about "played out," but I am in so much better *trim* that I feel encouraged to hope for steadier pins and a clearer head in the near future.

NARRAGANSETT PIER, August 14, 1892.

. . . MANY days have faded into weeks since I have written you, but not since my many attempts to do so, dear boy; they have been many and frequent, but all failures, desperate—the oft reminders that come during my sojourn here that I have a dear and anxious friend elsewhere awaiting a response from me, but I have vainly tried to give you a fairly decent note—all my efforts have been senseless, and even now it is with difficulty I manage to scribble in desperation this bungling scrawl—with a "blooming" headache and other pains at hand.

I won't attempt a recital of my many aches, etc. Inertia is my chief trouble, the worst in my case being the same old vertigo added to all my other ailments. . . .

I have made a plunge at last, and may succeed in my epistolary attempts before night, and it may encourage a change in me. I'll try my "best" while daylight lasts. . . . 'T is still daylight, but some hours or so have slipped away since I dipped for the ink, during which W—— came for a chat—but I can't report, he will see you to-morrow or next day, and tell you all there is to know of Boothden. I shall go there in a few days just for a visit. . . .

God bless you, old fellow! My love to you all. . . . I have become fixed, and have daily visits from Dr. H—— *about* every day. Much improved, but can't go away yet.

This was the last long letter he ever wrote to me. The autumn and winter of 1892-93, with the exception of a month at Lakewood, were passed by him in his beloved club, and there he died on the 7th of June, 1893.

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

William Bispham.