

Illustrated Interviews.

No. XL.—SARAH BERNHARDT.

By EDWARD JOHN HART.



From a Photo. by]

THE STUDIO.

[Reutlinger, Paris.

NOT *adieu, mon ami*; but *au revoir!* Never *adieu!*—the parting admonition received from Madame Bernhardt when I last bade her farewell at the Savoy Hotel in London, came into my mind the other day as I entered the studio in her well-remembered Paris home on the Boulevard Péreire.

The appositeness of this correction may appear from the fact that I—forgetting that we generally again meet with those whom we wish to meet—had prematurely bidden Madame Bernhardt *adieu* (as the French understand it, an almost final expression of good-bye) twice in Melbourne, once in Sydney, twice in London, and three times in Paris.

To find Madame Bernhardt at home is one thing; to find her at home alone is quite another. But a friendship of years' standing had steeled me against any surprises in this direction, and though I had called

upon her by previous arrangement for a special purpose, I was in no wise disconcerted to find her surrounded by a throng of visitors, while yet other callers crowded on one another's heels in the ante-rooms.

A warm greeting from my hostess, and an intimation that we could have our long chat later, was all-sufficing, and I disposed myself to watch and wait—the latter a process which all who care to see much of Madame Bernhardt, more especially when she is in Paris, have to learn.

An Ambassador (now dead), representing one of the greatest of European Powers, used to cheerfully wait through whole afternoons for a chat with the actress, on her return from a drive or from fulfilling some engagement; and if waiting in this interesting mansion was tolerable under such circumstances, it was even pleasurable while one's hostess was constantly in evidence, and afforded opportunities of studying a personality which is never commonplace.

Standing on the white bearskin in a

characteristic attitude, or moving from group to group—always displaying a sympathetic interest in what chiefly interested each visitor—she appeared like a Royal personage giving audience to her subjects. Some of those who surrounded her bore names well known in contemporary annals; while, among others, one noted dramatists submitting the scenarios of their plays, poets producing suspicious manuscripts from breast-pockets, artists opening portfolios of sketches, actresses who were there to congratulate and envy the greatest of their calling, writers and journalists of varying status and opinions, besides merely social friends and visiting acquaintances.

After the company, the chamber claimed attention. The large studio, almost too luxurious for work; the gilded cage, once inhabited by those tiger cubs which made so much capital for journalistic pens; portraits of the great actress; pictures and sketches by artists celebrated and obscure; paintings, busts, and statuettes, the work of her own hands; weapons, curios, and mementos from almost every land she had visited, spoke forcibly, though silently, of nearly every episode and era of Sarah Bernhardt's career.

Only, I failed to note any memento of the siege of Paris, when the Théâtre Français was turned into an ambulance, and Sarah

Bernhardt, who had not then reached the first height of her celebrity, worked as one of the nursing staff in attendance on the sick and wounded.

I had never succeeded in getting her to speak of that period but once out in Australia, when she indignantly refuted the suggestion of a visitor, that it was during that period she studied her death-bed effects. She admitted that she had studied death-beds in hospitals, "but," she continued, "when I was serving as a nurse in the Comédie ambulance during the siege of Paris, I had no thought of making my experiences in any way subservient to my future work. It was not possible to me, because, first of all, I only met men there, and besides, the scenes at which I was present were so awful, that I had something else to think of besides art. Believe me, an ambulance, where you see your countrymen suffering and dying, is not a place in which to study art. I was in Paris during the whole time of the siege and the Commune, and yes, it is true, I was awarded a gold medal by the Government."

The throng of visitors was fast dwindling, and by their manner of addressing and taking leave of their hostess, it was easy to determine the degree of her intimacy with each. To the world in general she is



From a Photo. by]

THE LIBRARY.

[La Photographie Nouvelle, Paris.

Sarah Bernhardt; to her acquaintances she is Madame Bernhardt, while her intimate friends invariably address her as Madame Sarah.

When we were at last alone we discussed—as usual on meeting after an interval—mutual reminiscences of Australia: the genuine and wild enthusiasm of her audiences, and of the crowds who mobbed her whenever she appeared in the streets; the scenes on her arrival and departure, and her long excursions into “the bush,” for it was her pleasure—more particularly while playing in Melbourne—to go off in a drag to the country on the termination of her Saturday night’s

truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!”

“Where shall I begin?”

“At the beginning.”

“No, I will not go farther back than my schooldays—that is quite far enough. You know very well I was born in Paris, and that on my mother’s side I am of Dutch-Jewish descent—I was baptized—and that my father occupied a good position in the *Magistrature*. I was educated at the Convent Grand Champ of Versailles, where I had as a fellow-pupil one whom I afterwards met as a fellow-actress at the Théâtre Français—Sophie Croizette, who afterwards became Madame Stern. I



From a Photo. by]

THE DINING-ROOM.

[La Photographie Nouvelle, Paris.

performance, and camp out, shooting, fishing, and exploring, till it was time for her to return on Monday evening, which meant, usually, an arrival in town only an hour before the curtain drew up.

“And now, Madame Sarah,” said I, “I have come to take your life. Not,” I hastened to add, as she assumed an expression of demure horror, “not to cut short your actual existence, but to take an account of it from your lips, for the further enlightenment of the thousands of readers of *THE STRAND*, who desire to know you better. And, remember, to your biographer, as to your lawyer and your doctor, you must tell the

was a very nervous child, and had even then a craving for the theatre. When leaving the convent, at the age of fourteen, I remember I said: ‘I shall be either a nun or an actress,’ and a year later, on the 29th November, 1859, I entered the Conservatoire. Before entering the Conservatoire I had to pass the usual examination, and at this I recited a fable out of *La Fontaine* with much success. When I was asked to recite something else, I broke down and cried, but they found me so *gentille* that I won their esteem and was admitted, notwithstanding my failure. At the Conservatoire I studied under Samson and Provost

—Provost, you know, was Rachel's master—and gained the second prize for tragedy in 1861, and the following year the second prize for comedy; and this led to my engagement at the Français. There I appeared for the first time in 'Iphigénie,' but no one noticed my *début*. I was only a little *ingénue* whom no one remarked—whose future no one thought of. Then I left the Français—the formal atmosphere of the place seemed to oppress me; and then the director of the Gymnase—Montigny—who had seen me play,

engaged me for parts of *ingénues*. I was given a part in 'Deslandes'—a *comédie bouffe* of Labiche and Raymond, and in this I had little else to do but to continually burst into laughter. You can understand that this did not suit me very well. I knew I could do more than laugh, so at the end of the first performance I left the Gymnase, and never went back to it."

In connection with this abrupt departure the following story is told. The morning after Madame Sarah had left the Gymnase, M. Victorien Sardou was breakfasting with Montigny at Passy, when a letter was brought to the director of the Gymnase, which he read through and cast away in a fit of temper.

"What is it that annoys you?" asked Sardou.

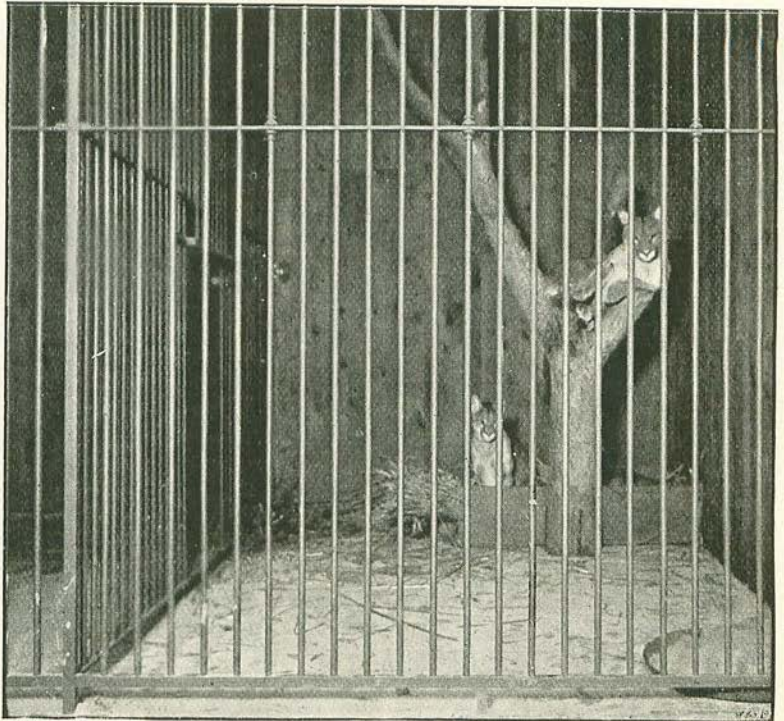
"Oh, nothing," replied the director. "Only a silly girl throwing up her *rôle* at the second performance. You see in her one who will never do anything in the theatre!"

A fresh exemplification of the truth of the saying: "You should never prophesy before you know."

"And what did you do, Madame Sarah, after you left the Gymnase?"

"Oh, in about 1866, I was acting at the Porte Saint Martin in 'La Biche aux Bois.'

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From a Photo. by]

THE TIGER CUBS.

[La Photographie Nouvelle, Paris.

The actress who played the part of the Princess failed to appear at the last moment, and the *Kégissuer* knowing me, and knowing that I was weary of being out of an engagement, offered me the part, and I accepted it. My family would not have permitted this had they known of it, and they had never consoled themselves for my leaving the Théâtre Français; so in order to get away to play my part of the Princess, I used to say I was going to study the plays at the Français. But on the fourth evening a friend recognised me on the stage of the Porte Saint Martin, and told my family, and after that I was not allowed to continue."

"And then you went to the Odéon? Was it not so?"

"Yes, it is true. M. Camille Doucet, superintendent of theatres, interested himself for me, and recommended me to MM. de Chilly and Duquesnel, the directors of the Odéon—the second theatre of France. M. Duquesnel felt that I had talent, and wished immediately to sign an engagement with me, but De Chilly refused absolutely—do you know for what? Because he considered me 'too thin!' Yes, it was extraordinary, but that was his objection, and the associates maintained their several opinions, and disputed hotly as to whether I should be

engaged or no, till at last M. Duquesnel finished the discussion by engaging me for a year at his own cost."

This was really the commencement of Sarah Bernhardt's dramatic career, which may roughly be divided into three periods, viz.: The six years from 1866 to 1872, when she played the parts of *ingénues* on the stage of the Odéon. The period of eight years, 1872-80, at the Comédie Française, during which she played not only *ingénue* parts and the princesses of classical and romantic plays, but created or re-created the rôles of several heroines. And the last fourteen years, when, having attained to a knowledge and command of the full powers of her genius, she has made not only Paris, but the whole civilized world ring with her fame and re-echo to her golden voice in the chief rôles of dramas written purposely for her.

"And what part did you play at the Odéon, Madame Sarah?"

"Oh, I played in a great number of diverse pieces. Amongst them you may mention *Armande* in the 'Femmes Savantes'; *Anna Danby* of Keane, in which my acting greatly impressed Dumas père; *Cordelia* in 'Lear' (translated by Jules Lacroix), in which I made a great success; 'L'Autre,' by Georges Sand, and *Zanetto* in 'Passant,' by François Coppé.

"This rôle, *Zanetto*, was a great thing for me, as it was said I played the part with a delightful originality; but when I played in 'Ruy Blas'—the date?—19th February, 1872—my reputation was so greatly increased, that an engagement was offered to me by M. Perrin, the administrator of the Comédie."

"Which you accepted?"

"Yes; because at the Odéon I was then only receiving 1,000 francs a month. I asked M. Duquesnel to increase it to 1,500 francs, which he refused, though later on he paid me that sum for a single night's performance during hundreds and hundreds of representations at the Porte Saint Martin.

"At the Comédie I played *Aricie*, until by chance an opportunity presented itself of playing the heroine of heroines—*Phædre*, in Racine's immortal tragedy. Mademoiselle Rousseil, whose part it was, refused to play at the last moment. In this, as you know, my success was instantaneous and decisive."

"Now, can you give me the names and the dates when you first appeared in some of your most famous rôles at the Comédie?" is my next question.

"I played *Andromaque* on the 30th August, 1877; *Donna Sol*, 'Hernani,' 21st November, 1877; on the 2nd April, 1878, *Alcimène*, in 'Amphytrion'; *Zaire*, 30th May, 1878; *Le Sphinx*, 20th October, 1878; and *The Queen*, in 'Ruy Blas,' 4th April, 1879. Then, also, I played *Miss Clarkson*, in 'L'Etrangère'; *Posthumea*, in 'Rome Vaincue'; *Chérubin*, in 'Mariage de Figaro' and 'La Fille de Roland.'"

"Can you remember any other English pieces in which you have played, besides those mentioned?"

"Yes; in 1869, the 16th of April, I played *Lena*, in 'As in a Looking-Glass.' It was translated into French by M. Pierre Berton and Madame Van de Velde."

"When was your first American engagement?"

"June, 1879. Yes, for leaving the Comédie Française, I had to pay a fine of 45,000 francs, and 100,000 francs damages."



From a Photo. by

"PHÉDRE"—(Phédre).

[Nadar, Paris.

"But you have earned far larger sums as the result of a single tour—is it not so?"

"When I returned from one American tour on the 31st July, 1887, I brought with me 800,000 francs clear profit; 800,000 francs—and a tiger cat!" is the answer.

But in spite of her enormous earnings, Madame Bernhardt is far too open-handed, generous, and charitable to be a really wealthy woman.

"Yes, I am very fond of animals; but of those you remember I got in Australia—my St. Bernard, 'Auckland,' the opossums, the 'native bear,' and others, but few long survived the change of climate."

As all the world knows, Madame Bernhardt was married to M. Damala, in London, in the spring of 1882.

"I love travelling," she says, after a pause, and we have started on another topic, and, indeed, during the past fourteen years, the number of journeys she has taken is almost fabulous. Just to give one instance: after an exhaustive tour through the United States in 1891, she went on to Australia; acted through the three leading Colonies; returned *via* America, acting all along the route; landed at Havre on the 1st of May, 1892; and, after a few days' rest, opened her season in London; on the conclusion of which, without the slightest intermission, she commenced a professional tour of the whole Continent of Europe. Small wonder that her countrymen called her "*Juive Errante!*"

"Do many of the enthusiastic receptions you met with in foreign lands live in your memory, Madame Sarah?"

"Ah, yes, all of them!" she answers, with

animation. "The one, perhaps, I remember with the greatest pleasure was in Hungary, where, as you know, the French are exceedingly popular. I was most heartily welcomed there by the Tchèques, who turned out in great numbers in their splendid national costumes to meet me. I was welcomed as a Frenchwoman, not only as an artiste—and that always touches me. What pleased and affected me most in my reception at Melbourne was the audience singing 'La Marseillaise' on the first night, before the curtain rose."

I remembered the incident perfectly. Some youngsters started it in the gallery, whereupon the whole audience joined in the National Hymn of France with a will—an instance of spontaneous enthusiasm, the like of which I believe an Australian theatre had never before witnessed.

On another occasion, in Sydney, the writer was accompanying Madame Bernhardt from a theatrical performance, a few nights after the conclusion of her own season. The crowd in the street rushed to the carriage in order to shake

hands with the great actress, and seized her hand with such good-will, but misplaced energy, that on arrival at her hotel it was swollen almost beyond recognition. "But at Montreal," she says, "I once had to be carried over the heads of a crowd in order to be put in my carriage."

But we have not yet completed the list of Sarah Bernhardt's creations and performances, and have strayed from the subject.

Besides the names of pieces already given, she has, by turns, at the Vaudeville, Porte



From a Photo. by]

"DONNA SOL"—(Hernani).

[Nadar, Paris.



"THE QUEEN"—(Ruy Blas).
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.

Saint Martin, Variétés, and Renaissance theatres, and on tour, appeared in "La Dame aux Camélias," "Phédre," "Adrienne Lecouvreur," "Nana Sahib," "Macbeth," "Frou-Frou," "Francillon," "Fédora," "Théodora," "La Tosca"—produced for the first time at the Porte Saint Martin, 24th November, 1887—"Jeanne d'Arc," "Cleopâtre," "Pauline Blanchard," "Leah," "Izeïl," "La Femme du Claude," and "Gismonda."

"I think that about completes the list, Madame Sarah. And now, can you tell me anything about your methods of study? How you succeed in getting your effects and in identifying yourself with the personality you wish to portray?"

"First of all I study the intellectual composition of my rôle. I read every analysis and criticism of the character I can get hold of. If the character is historical, I read all the memoirs and biographies—every scrap of anecdote—all the legends of the poets. I saturate myself with the literature—the atmosphere of the epoch—until I feel that I am of it. I have a great gift of assimilation and intuition. If the artiste cannot experience in actuality the sensations of the character she is portraying—be it

sorrow, despair, or the pangs of agony or of death—she can give out the effect that the study of any or all these have had on her intelligence and sensibility; and by the degree of her sensibility is determined the greatness of her representation. The Latin orator was right, 'It is the heart and the vivacity of intelligence that render eloquent'; and from me," she goes on to say, "extends an influence of sensibility which on the fiftieth—the hundredth night of one of my rôles communicates to the spectators *un frisson particulier*. Sometimes the situation may exalt me, or the state of my nerves—some personal souvenir of remembrance—may cause me to rise to a still greater height, or predispose me to a more intense sincerity. But, you have seen me playing to audiences knowing but little French; yet, wherever I go, the public always understand me. Then, I am always studying character. Everyone I meet is a new study. I am always studying people!"

On more than one occasion the writer has seen Madame Bernhardt, when about to perform in the rôle of *Phédre*, sit in her dressing-room for an hour before she was due on the stage, absorbed in the contemplation of the tragedy in which she was about to perform. Sitting ready dressed for her



"FÉDORA"—(Fédora).
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.

part, by some curious system of introspection and mental concentration on the pathos of her rôle, she had so wrought upon her nerves and emotions that silent tears coursed down her cheeks involuntarily, and it is seldom that she can get through the evening of this most exacting play without fainting more than once.

"I am always nervous," she says in answer to a question, "because I am always afraid of falling below my previous standard of acting. Yes; I have met with unsympathetic audiences in my time, but I don't know that an unsympathetic audience has much effect on me. I am not sure that I don't rather enjoy it for a change, for it is then a battle between me and them, and I always win.

"In France I would rather play in the poetic drama; but in foreign countries where the French language is spoken either very little or not at all, I prefer playing in prose works."

"You have very definite opinions about stage accessories, and about dress, Madame Sarah, have you not?"

"Ah, yes, very definite," she replies, readily and almost excitedly.

"I have a great horror of shams on the stage—of what will not bear close inspection—of what is not real. I never use spangles, tinsel, and cheap theatrical glitter—it offends my artistic sense. I always employ hand embroideries in bullion and silk, and will have nothing to do with the generally used appliqué embroideries on the stage, and I have found that what *is* best always has the best effect, whether looked at from a distance or near at hand. My freedom of movement, the lightness of my step, the suppleness and flexibility of my body, I

attribute to having definitely abandoned the corset, for an actress should wear nothing that is calculated to hamper and impede her movements."

"Your wardrobe is reputed to be a veritable museum of Royal costumes," I next suggest, "and that in the number of your dresses you surpass our English Queen Elizabeth, who was credited with the possession of a fabulous number. What can you do with such a quantity?"

"It is not possible for you to know how many dresses are necessary for an actress with a large répertoire. My wardrobe is worth about half a million francs—and, yes, I keep it here in my hotel, installed in an upper story."

Then, as only a woman can, she waxes eloquent over the costly velvets and furs, and the silk-embroidered stuffs, all of which are of the rarest quality obtainable; and of the brocades and tissues of gold and silver, all woven for herself and after her own designs.

"But while speaking of dress," she continues, "I may tell you that my *couturier* is not alone the author of my costumes,

for I myself have much to do with the making of them. I select the design and then give orders as to the form and general arrangements. The modelling and draping I do for myself, and then I take a great pair of scissors and make all the alterations that appear to me requisite. Sometimes I wear a new costume for a number of rehearsals with the material only pinned together, and will not allow a stitch to be put in it until it falls softly and becomes quite moulded to the lines of my figure."



From a Photo. by

"THÉODORA"—(Théodora).

[Nadar, Paris.

We left the subject of dress, wherein I felt painfully "at sea," and commenced speaking about the innumerable calls on her time and the division of her day, in connection with which is told the following true story:—

Sarah Bernhardt wished to learn English, a knowledge of which would prove useful in her long journeys across America and Australia. She was recommended to a teacher of English, who possessed a great reputation for the rapidity and excellence of his methods, and who, on meeting her, said, "I have many pupils, and my time is much occupied. Will you receive me at nine in the morning?" "No, that is not possible," she replied, "for at that time I am resting or studying my *rôle*." "Do you prefer the afternoon?" asked the professor. "Then I am rehearsing—and in the evening I play." "When shall it be, then?" "Oh, half an hour will do for me.



"LA TOSCA"—(La Tosca).
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.



From a Photo. by]

"IZEÏL"—(IzeÏl).

[Nadar, Paris.

Will you give me from two till half-past in the morning?"

"From Friday till Monday during the fêtes," she goes on to tell me, "it has often happened that I have played seven times—or twice a day—pieces that rest entirely on my personality. In one day this would be my programme. In the morning I would play 'Phédre,' not a verse of which but must be given at the cost of some vital wear and tear to the artiste in the title *rôle*, and of which at least three acts make the most exacting demands on one's store of nervous energy; and then, in the evening, I would play 'La Dame aux Camélias.'"

"She is still able to write a book, write a play, sculp, and paint," says Jules Claretie, in writing about Sarah Bernhardt. "She has spent ten fortunes and the existences of twenty women. A robust circus girl would long ago have died of *anæmia*! With Sarah, on the contrary, the nerves communicate to the whole body a

kind of electric activity. Repose seems to her like another death. That which is not paroxysm, seems to her lethargy."

"Yes, it is quite true," says Madame Sarah, as I read her the passage. "If it hadn't been for my determination I should have died long ago!"

During Madame Sarah's last season but one in London, I was privileged to see much of her home life at her house in Alpha Road, Regent's Park, and I never knew which to wonder at most—Sarah Bernhardt at work, or Sarah Bernhardt at play. I have seen her finish a game of croquet, but half-played out, through a drenching shower of rain, and she played the game with as much earnestness and concentration of purpose as if her professional reputation were at stake. For choice she was always surrounded by young people, but she herself was the youngest of us all. Amongst other simple pastimes, that of "dressing up" seemed to afford her great amusement, and I remember one afternoon when, our hostess having been suddenly called indoors, we were all rather surprised to see a shabby-looking woman strolling towards us across the lawn. Her face was partly hidden by a black veil, and she wore a musty-looking, black gown and carried a bag; her whole appearance, carriage, and demeanour being suggestive of a free distribution of tracts.

She came up to us and stood still, without the slightest show of embarrassment on her part, though there was much on ours, for we resented the intrusion and waited, with much impatience, for our hostess to reappear and send this unpleasant female to the right-about. Thus we remained silently staring at one another for some ten minutes, when a silvery laugh from behind the veil discovered to our astonishment its wearer to be Madame Sarah herself—but as far as it went, and in every detail, the deception was perfect. In her amusements, as in her work, Sarah Bernhardt must always be thorough.

We now commenced chatting about her



"GISMONDA"—(Gismonda).
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.

own theatre; and the great actress tells me of the improvements she has effected since its management has come under her hands. "Amongst other things," she says, "I have suppressed the *claque*. It never saved a piece yet, and it is an unfair attempt to lead the opinion of the audience. I have, also, suppressed the *surtaxe* on tickets—the extra prices charged for booking seats in advance—and I have done away with the *ouvreuses*, those too-officious women attendants to whom foreigners object so strongly. In a word, I have formed the Théâtre Renaissance on the

best English models."

"And the new play, 'Gismonda'? Are you pleased with it?"

"Ah, yes, it is splendid, as you will say when you have seen it! It gives me great opportunities, and it ought to have as prolonged a vogue as 'La Tosca.' My rôle is *Gismonda*, widow of Nério, the second Duke



THE LATEST PORTRAIT OF MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT.
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.

of Athens—and she is an historical personage. The scene is laid in Athens in 1451, just prior to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks. It is all but an unknown epoch, and the drama is most curious—most interesting. Most people associate Athens with classical times and traditions, but this represents it in the intermediate period, between the classic and the modern. It takes a Sardou to conjure up a Greece of the Middle Ages, and the drama is thoroughly after Sardou at his best—nervous and concise—and the action is extremely rapid, *vive* and *entraînante*. I wear some very splendid costumes in the play, and—ah! yes—certainly I shall play it during my forthcoming London season!”

“Have you not written a play, and, besides other literary work, did you not publish a book in 1878?” is my next question.

“Yes, ‘Dans les Nuages, Impressions d’une Chaise,’ was its full title. It was an account of an aerial journey I had taken in a balloon—and the chair—that was myself! My play, ‘L’Aveu,’ was produced at the Odéon, on the 27th March, 1888. It was a prose drama in one act, and was played by MM. Paul Mounet and Marquet, and by Mesdames R. Sisos and Marie Sumary. It is an episode of married life, and while some thought it too melodramatic, others were much pleased with it, and M. Amand Silvestre said, ‘It is a work interesting through a true knowledge of the stage, expressed in eloquent and vivid sobriety of language.’ Then, also, I once wrote a criticism on the Salon for ‘Le Globe.’

“Yes,” she admits, after I had prompted her memory, “I drew the frontispiece of an album of autographs of the members of the Comédie Française, which my comrades of the Théâtre had the idea of offering to the Prince of Wales. My design was the Spirit of Glory crowning the busts of Shakespeare and Molière, and I wrote beneath it: ‘*L’être intelligent fait de l’égoïsme une vertu, l’imbécile en fait un vice.*’”



My best
 wishes to the
 Strand Magazine
 Sarah Bernhardt
 15 1896

WRITTEN BY MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT FOR "THE STRAND MAGAZINE."

“And now, Madame Sarah, have you nothing else you can tell me?”

“My friend, it is not possible! One version at least of everything I do or have done is known and written about. Everyone who interviews me asks more or less the same questions. I go over the same ground repeatedly, and what answers I don’t give they invent for themselves. The moment I intend producing a new play, all the French papers want to know about it.

“You know, I must reserve a few secrets for my memoirs, which I am bringing out shortly. In them I shall simply content myself with telling the story of my life, clearing up what is obscure, and setting right much that has been written and said about me, and which was not worth while contradicting in detail, or which at the time I had no opportunity of refuting, and so it has become a tradition I have not at this moment the leisure to rectify.”

This concluded our long interview, and I took my leave of unquestionably the greatest actress of the day, and one of the kindest-hearted and most extraordinary women of our time.