

Wm. H. P. Keiser



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MY LIFE'S STORY

No. 295

MY GRATEFUL THANKS I GIVE TO ALL
THOSE KIND FRIENDS WHO HAVE SO
UNSELFISHLY HELPED ME WITH THIS
BOOK ALL ALONG THE WAY.



My favorite photograph
Walter. Stewart.

MY LIFE'S STORY

NELLIE STEWART

JOHN SANDS LTD.
SYDNEY

MY LIFE'S STORY
NELLIE STEWART

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TO THE MEMORY OF
A GREAT AND GOOD
MAN.

*“There’s rosemary,
that’s for remembrance;”*

HAMLET, Act IV., Scene V.

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MY LIFE'S STORY

CHAPTER ONE.

BABYHOOD.

The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible, and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched.

THOREAU.

FOR a long time before I thought seriously of it myself, people had been asking me why I did not write my memoirs. That insistence of kind souls did in the end nerve me to the task, maybe; but now that I come to the actual writing I find that I have a better reason.

The life that one lives is itself a book that one writes; and as one turns back to transcribe and edit it, to take here a page and there a paragraph, it is a book of absorbing interest. There are pages too sacred and intimate for general publication. There are pages that might touch other people too cruelly, people still alive and to be considered. There are personal pages too painful to bring into the light, pages stained with the bitter acid of remembered tears past sweetening. There are pages of moment, and pages that somehow don't seem to matter very much.

In this book of one's life there are many books,

and it is my task now to choose and cull from the many the stuff of one. I shall do my best, and you, my friends, will know that I have at least one qualification for such a writing—one, I mean, apart from the dear fact that so many of you have been good to me. I have sincerity. I have always been a very sincere woman.

So I offer you myself pretty much as I am. I shall talk of things as they come to me. It will probably be found that in the telling of the tale I often drop into a style casual and informal, even a bit disorderly. I want it to be a quiet talk at evening. I don't want to bore or weary you with any trivialities. I want to recall the most vivid impressions of my life, the things that have meant most to me, the things most productive of happiness and content, and the things laden with pain only as they are essential to the honest story. If at any point I am critical of others, you will acquit me of malice.

I am only looking simply back over the days of the past, unrolling the panorama as best I can in an effort to make you understand what has happened to me.

I am an imperfect creature, and I don't expect anybody to be perfect. I agree quite unaffectedly if you say that when any man has been unkind or unfair to me, he has done the best he could. In a world of many pitfalls and desert places, business is business. If I ever seem to suggest defects in a business man or a business corporation, you business folks may put it down to my ignorance of business. I am just a woman talking to her friends. I don't mean to tell a conventional tale, with strictly ordered lists of dates and appearances, and all that.

I have seen much of life, and had much pleasure in it, and I have known pain and suffered as much as a woman may; but the thing that stands first and foremost in my life as I look back upon it, the thing of all

things I am most thankful for, is the great gift God has given me of loving and winning the love of my fellow-creatures, all of them. In my life there has been no little atom or faintest thrill of love that I now regret. Love is no mere stuff of dreams: it is the food of the soul, the music of heaven on earth, God's strength behind our frailty; so that where love is not there must be starvation, misery, death.

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

So now you may come with me, or here you may stay. If you come, you know—I have warned you—that you take your part in a little journey with a woman who knows that love is the greatest thing in the world. Once again, I am thankful for that.

Next, I am thankful for that magnetism in me, that powerful, elusive, not-easy-to-suggest something which has made all my successes intimately personal.

And I am thankful—oh, more thankful that I can say!—to those tens of thousands of good people who have made my success possible, and who long ago adopted me into their hearts, and who have kept me there. It is a great joy and consolation to me to feel that the people I have given so much of my life to entertain and amuse and enliven still think so sweetly of me. It is the greater joy to me because so many of them have been women. It always hurts me when I hear that such and such a person is a man's woman—meaning by that that she is indifferent or hostile to fellows of her own sex. Times beyond count I have been helped over rough places by the unobtrusive sympathy of women.

With Australian girls I know that I am among

friends; it has always been so. This goodness of women to me has helped me to understand women when I have had to act this part or that.

People have told me before now that my Nell Gwynne was not like the original—too rosily idealized and so forth. But if you think that, you don't know the real Nell. She lived in rough times, and her early opportunities were few. She was probably not in the least genteel, as we understand gentility; and I'm not sure that she was any the worse for that. She was a King's mistress—true; but I am bold enough to assert and insist that England was none the worse for that, and that the King—but perhaps I must not hint at the possibility that the King was all the better for Nell's womanly comradeship and sweetness.

There is some thing in the common faults of humanity that keeps humanity sweet. I don't think one would love rare Ben Jonson so well if he hadn't that wart on his face.

So now, after all this preluding, to the Book of Me.

I was born in Woolloomooloo, and in Woolloomooloo Street at that—they call it Cathedral Street now—near to the spot which, now, must always be, oh!—such a sweet, sad, memory, to all good Australians;—“The Gates of Remembrance.” I was christened at St. James's, King Street.

And the date? No! I am not going to tell you. You must keep on guessing, and I shall keep on growing younger. It is one of the few unimpeached privileges of my sex. But be sure of this, I am not nearly so old as you think me.

I have known people say, “Oh, I saw her in the 'seventies.” They forget that when they saw me in the 'seventies they were, maybe, already grown-up, and I



*The birthplace of Nellie Stewart,
41 Woolloomooloo Street, Sydney.*

was still a child. Ever so long ago, when I only looked as youthful as in fact I was, my dear father used to say, "People are trying to persuade me that Nell was born years before I met her mother." I wasn't—you have my word for that. The other day a friend asked me, "How is it that you look older in your photographs at fourteen than in your photographs at twenty?" I told him I didn't know. I don't

Woolloomooloo in my baby days was still a rather jolly and picturesque waterside suburb, a place with a sort of foresniff of W. W. Jacobs about it. Roaring blades occasionally, I suppose; but nobody became hysterical over an occasional roaring blade then. People were rather more concerned with their neighbours' virtues than with their vices, more eager to help a lame dog over a stile than to push him into the ditch. I am not in the least ashamed of Woolloomooloo—don't think it. It lay on the lip of one of the gladdest little cities in the world. It overlooked the most glorious harbour I ever saw. It shone under a sky that beams in my memory always pellucid, and it still had all the soothing Conrad Marten glamour. You very young people cannot really imagine what Port Jackson looked like in the gladsome 'seventies. It was like a haven in Fairyland, and always when one looked at it it seemed to beckon and whisper and be on the point of song.

For the rest, I am not in the least erudite and lettered, or I might set out with facts and inferences to prove to you that I was born into a wonderful time. All that talk about the dull mid-Victorian period is fudge. I was content to be born in Woolloomooloo, and for good reasons—not that I minded particularly then where I lived.

My mother was descended from the great Mrs. Yates, of David Garrick's day. *I am proud of that

* Appendix A.

because everything I can discover about Mrs. Yates proves to me that she must have been very human and interesting. I confess I have always taken pride in the fact that I go back in a direct line to Mrs. Yates. She was one of the most distinguished actresses of her time. She acted a great deal with Henderson, and the fame of the two was unrivalled. The garrulous Mrs. Papendick refers to them again and again. "At Drury Lane the tragic performers were Henderson and Mrs. Yates; comic, Mrs. Abingdon and Mrs. Palmer, with Miss Farren second to both." It is worth noting that, having regard to the far different values of money, the prices of theatre seats were certainly not lower then than they are with us in Australia—seats in the boxes five shillings; pit two shillings and sixpence; galleries two shillings and one shilling.

Here is another reference:

"We went to Convent Garden to see Mrs. Yates as Lady Macbeth and Henderson as Shylock the Jew.... The King was a very great admirer of Henderson, and also of Mrs. Siddons, who was about this time appointed to teach the two youngest princesses to read and enunciate, and she considered him one of the greatest, if not the greatest actor of his day, and it was unfortunate that they were engaged by the two rival houses."

There is evidence that Henderson was an actor of genius, and that he preferred always to play with Mrs. Yates.

My mother's maiden name was Theodosia Yates. While she was still quite a girl, she taught the choruses at Drury Lane. At that time a step-sister was the only relation left to her alive, and presently my mother ran away from home because she was unhappy there.

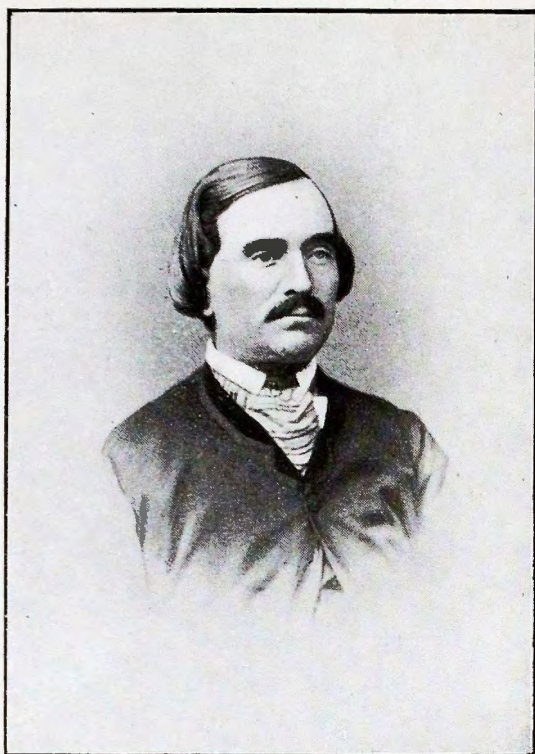
That is why, in 1840, she joined Mrs. Clarke's Operatic Company, which left London for Hobart



*Mrs. Yates,
ancestor of Nellie Stewart, in the part of "Lady Macbeth."*



Frank Howson.



John Howson.



Miss Emma Howson.



Rosina Carandini.



Madame Carandini.

Town, where she played under the name of Miss Yates Stirling.

In that Company were also the Howson's, Walter Sherwin, and a Signor Carandini, who later married a Hobart girl, the mother of the famous Carandini sisters. My mother and Madame Carandini were so much alike that people mistook them for sisters; this gave rise to the impression that the Carandinis and I were blood relations, which was quite wrong. A later Howson, Emma, was the original Josephine in "Pinafore," and her brother Frank was for many years conductor with Henry Irving at the Lyceum.

Mrs. Clarke brought her Company out in a sailing ship. It is customary in these days of speed and racket to talk of sailing ships with a shudder; but I am not at all sure that the shudder is justified. One may have had to rough it a good deal in the old ships, but the voyager got nearer to nature than he ever can do when he is beset by smirking stewards in a crowded hull that constantly rattles and shakes with the force of the huge engines.

And the sailing ship was delightful in herself. Circular Quay in Sydney used to be beautiful exceedingly, but romance sailed away with the clipper ships that once berthed there.

We forget De Quiros, Torres, Tasman, Dampier, and Captain Cook, to say nothing of those earlier navigators, Noah and the adventurous but disobedient Jonah; and so we have come to regard a ship of less than Cunard size as no ship at all.

If we want to cross the ocean we think a steamer of eight thousand tons is rather small; whereas our grandfathers went gaily round the world in ships the size of the Manly ferryboats.

In a world of change and progress the respected

and accepted things of yesterday are the joke of to-day.

It is so easy to laugh at the Victorian epoch, but I assure you that it was a good world I was born into; and I ought to know.

I'm getting right ahead of things, you will notice; because, as far as this narrative goes, I'm not really born yet.

The Operatic Company played in Hobart Town for four years, all those grand old operas such as "Lucia"—the score of which Mrs. Clarke had omitted to bring out, and the whole opera had to be taken down in its entirety from my mother's voice—"The Magic Flute," "Night Dances," "Mountain Sylph," and many others.

As I mentioned above, they played all these operas continuously for four years, and Mrs. Clarke doubtless made a fortune. It is equally certain that my mother didn't. Her salary as *prima donna* during those strenuous years was £3/10/- per week!

A story is told of a stage aspirant who applied to George Rignold for a start.

"Um!" said the great man, "What qualifications have you as an actor?"

"Well, Sir," was the trembling reply, "I can go a long time without food."

A very excellent qualification, one would suppose, if the stars in their courses were so poorly paid.

Social life in Hobart Town in those early days must have been quaintly unconventional, and society a piquant medley. There was the Government official circle, and the garrison set, of course. But there were others.

Many well-to-do *détenus* who had left their country for their country's good had been followed to Van Diemen's Land by their wives or husbands, as the case

might be. These husbands and wives—mostly wives, I fancy—settled down, and then had their dear ones assigned to them as servants. Most of the assigned husbands had been transported for technical or political offences and seem to have been accepted socially as quite *comme il faut*.

My mother had many amusing stories of those good old, bad old days. She used to say it was quite usual to be asked politely, "What were you sent out for, may I ask?"

It was at this time my mother married James Guerin, the leader of the orchestra of Mrs. Clarke's Opera Company, who later became the father of my half-sisters, Maggie and Docie.

He was probably Irish, but I never heard much about him. I have by me a silver snuff-box presented to him by his acquaintances in Limerick, with a very charming inscription expressive of their esteem and admiration. He was a man of education and refinement, a sound musician and a good man, and one can't say more than that.

My mother was a woman of character and good taste, who could be trusted not to bestow her hand and her affection on any man of the wrong sort, or on any man of a grade markedly inferior to her own.

From Hobart the company moved on to Sydney, and in that city my mother continued her operatic and dramatic work at the old Victoria Theatre, and was the original "Maritana" in Wallace's opera. There were many very versatile artists in that company, the most versatile of all being my mother, Madame Guerin. She also sang in the choir of St. Mary's Cathedral Sanctuary; this choir was, I believe, the finest ever heard, consisting principally of Madame Guerin, the Howson family (John, Emma, Frank, and Clelia), Madame Wal-

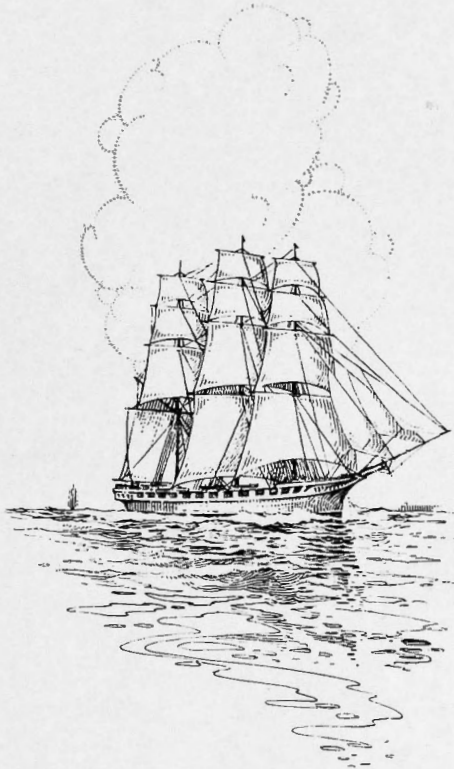
lace Bushell (sister of the composer of "Maritana"), Sarah Flower and Clara Harris, in addition to many visiting artists, Catherine Hayes and so on. And by the bye, Harry Leston, still with us, was one of the choir boys.

Mother made her first appearance in opera at the old Victoria Theatre as Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo," in 1845, under Wyatt's management. The Company at that time played grand opera three times a week, tragedy twice, and burlesque once. She would be one night Lucia, the next Lady Macbeth, with something in a farcical specialty the night following.

In those days all actors and actresses were experts of the stage, people of sound knowledge based on wide experience. A sort of thing that doesn't happen now as often as it might.

In November, 1856, Mrs. Guerin was appearing as Lucy in "Guy Mannering," with Kemble Mason; and a little later as Victorine in J. B. Buckstone's play of that name, with Rogers and Bellair. . . . On April 6th, 1857, at the Prince of Wales Opera House, Norma, Mrs. Guerin "shared the honour of an encore with Madame Cailley in the duet, 3rd act." On January 19th, 1857, Mrs. Guerin took a benefit at the Vic. " 'Presented at Court'—F. Stuart, T. S. Bellair, G. H. Rogers, Mrs. G., Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. A. Howard, and Miss Warde . . . Tickets to be had at Mrs. Guerin's, 41 Woolloomooloo Street, or at Box Office." In the Sydney Directory, 41 Woolloomooloo Street is "James Guerin, Professor of Music." In the Sydney Directory of 1858, at the same address is, "Mrs. Guerin, Actress." Guerin died sometime about 1855-6.

In the gold days Melbourne had altogether the best of it. When the gold days ended Melbourne slowed down, and Sydney came on. Still there has always



The Sailing Ship, 1840.



Royal Victoria Theatre, Pitt Street.



*Richard Stewart
in 1853.*



*Richard Stewart
in "Peep o' Day."*

been a little bone of contention between the two cities. I am sorry for that because I love them both—Melbourne more for some things, Sydney more for others. I have heard people say that Sydney audiences are more kindly and responsive than those of Melbourne, I never found that so, because I have found genial kindness everywhere.

My father, Richard Stewart, arrived in Sydney on the wings of the gold fever, about 1853. He spent some time on the Turon prior to that. I never heard that he made money out of gold digging, but it was so much experience to the good. He was English-Welsh, the Welsh a little predominating. Born a Towzey, he assumed the name of Stewart for professional reasons, and had it legally established. He had been in Sydney some time before he met my mother.

They were married in 1857, my mother being twelve years older than my father. When I was six months old they moved to Melbourne where father took up his permanent residence.

Until his meeting my mother, my father had never thought of becoming an actor, but he must have been predestined for the stage; it suited his tastes and temperament and offered a natural outlet for his abilities. He was a master of stagecraft. He had a keen dramatic sense, a fine endowment of personal dignity, and a genuine and cordial sense of humour. He loved music passionately, and had a hundred good stories of the opera.*

There! we have not got very far before a footnote happens. I hate footnotes, don't you? Well, I prom-

* On the 14th March, 1857, at the Vic. R. S. was with G. V. Brooke in "Henry IV." On May 10th, same year, Mrs. Guerin appeared as Emilia to Brooke's Othello. G.V.B. had a high opinion of her. She was the Abbess when he produced "The Comedy of Errors" at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, under the Edwards-Fawcett management. The first Australian mention of Richard Stewart was at the opening of the Prince of Wales, March 12, 1855, when he was Gaylove in "The Hunchback," Waller and his wife the stars.

ise that you won't be interrupted much by footnotes in this book of mine.

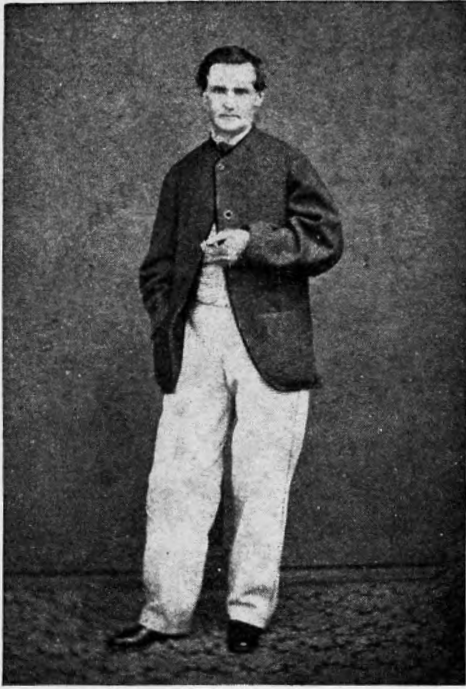
As H. M. Paull says:—

"A footnote, even when it is only a reference to an authority, is a drawback; but when it is extended to considerable dimensions it becomes a positive nuisance."

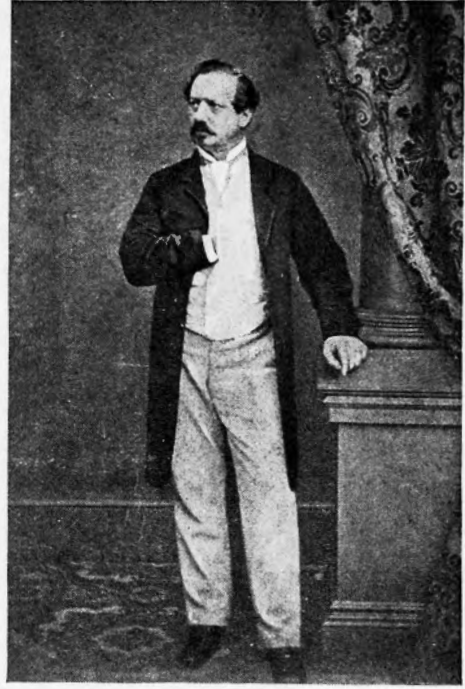
It is difficult to follow the history of Richard Stewart without risk of confusion in a rough summary. There are many facts and references to be found in old Australian files, many of them only accessible on a longer search than their importance to this story warrants. Thus in the *Empire* newspaper, July 24, 1856, noticing a performance of "The Bohemian Girl," we have: "Mrs. Guerin well greeted, playing, as she always does, well. Mr. Stewart was Devilshoof, very superior."

At the Royal "Vic.," January 17th, 1857, Richard Stewart is down for a song. Next day's paper has a good notice of Mrs. Guerin as actress, singer, and dancer. On April 18th, same year, Richard Stewart and Mrs. Guerin are mentioned together at the Vic. Going further back, Mrs. Guerin was playing at the Vic. in April, 1853, when Mr. and Mrs. Stark were starring there. The press has many references to Mrs. Guerin right on from that time. By June, 1857, Mrs. Guerin and Richard Stewart are mentioned as "distinguished artists" at a benefit given for widows and orphans by the Foresters' Lodge. A month or two later Richard Stewart is named as making a success in broad comedy.

Father's extraordinary versatility should be insisted upon. Once when Farquhar, the great bass singer, was ill, father sung his rôle in "The Enchantress," (Madame Lucy Escott was the *prima donna* at the time), and as Captain Macheath in "The Beggar's Opera," to the Polly Peachum of Julia Matthews, he was splendid.



Joseph Jefferson.



G. V. Brooke.



Barry Sullivan.



*Sir William Don and George Coppin
in 1861.*



*Fanny Cathcart
in "Peep o' Day."*



*Joseph Jefferson and Rose Edouin
in "The American Cousin."*



G. H. Rodgers.



John Dunn.

At one time my father managed the old Haymarket Theatre in Melbourne, which occupied the site where that faded Arcade now stands, close to the Victoria Markets, and later he appeared with Joseph Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle," under the management of James Simmonds. Father played Knickerbocker. In "Our American Cousin," he played Lord Dundreary, and in "The Octoroon" he was Uncle Pete. Also he was the original Myles-na-Coppaleen in Australia, to the Eily O'Connor of Rosa Dunn, in "The Colleen Bawn."

Father's striking success in these three widely different parts established his Australian reputation. When Charles Kean came out with his wife, Ellen Kean, Father took an engagement with Barry Sullivan, who was playing at the old Theatre Royal, Melbourne, under the management of Ambrose Kyte, who owned the theatre.

It was a long time after this that father went into management at the Royal. There had been a disastrous season with Hoskins, and the theatre was going to close, but some arrangement was entered into with the company, and a "Commonwealth" was established, with Lambert, Vincent, Harwood, Stewart, Hennings and Bellair. It was hard work and no profit for the first weeks, but the luck changed when the "Flying Scud" was put on. Things prospered then, and eventually Lambert, Vincent and Bellair withdrew, and the firm of Harwood, Stewart, Hennings, and Coppin was established, which lasted for many years.

CHAPTER TWO.

CHILDHOOD.

Know you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of to-day. It is to have a spirit still streaming from the waters of baptism. It is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to turn pumpkins into carriages and mice into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its own soul.

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

I was brought up in Melbourne almost entirely; a precocious child, I was so petted that I early learned to get my own way in most things. I shan't say I was 'spoiled,' because it is only a characterless child who can be spoiled. But there was love in the home, I was the only daughter of the marriage, and—well you can see how it was yourself. With a child like that, the years of up-bringing by parents are the first ten or twelve. After that she finds herself and must work out her own salvation. I think the special influence of parents, the disciplinary, ceases or loses much of its force when the child's character is determined. In the case of some children the character is formed early; with others it is much later. I developed young. All things helped me: I lived in the atmosphere of the theatre all the time. My father considered an actor's life a world of its own, a thing apart from the outside public.

Mine was a very happy childhood; my father and mother were well matched, and my brother Dick adored



Lambert.



Julia Matthews.



Hoskins.



Sir William and Lady Don.

me. Many of the people who so kindly take an interest in me, and my affairs get a little confused about my family relationships. I have no full sister, and Dick is my only brother. Docie and Maggie, my half-sisters, were born to my mother during the period of her first marriage to Mr. Guerin in the 50's, at a time when my father was not yet in Australia.

As I have already told you, apart from Docie, Maggie and Dick, "sisters and brothers have I none." Some elderly people have completely mixed me up with my sisters. They say they saw me in such and such a place, in such and such a part, when it was Docie or Maggie whom they saw. I have done some memorable things in my time, perhaps, but I simply can't date or think back to times before I was born.

In Melbourne, I went first of all to the old Model School in Nicholson Street. I learned quite easily whatever came my way, but right from babyhood my ambitions were all for the stage. There is a great deal in heredity, and I love the thought that my dear mother still lives in me. In my cradle I was a little actress just as another child might be a little American, or German, or Brazilian, or Chinese. The family of the Players is one family and it is independent of national barriers and distinctions; had I been born in Iceland I must have reached the stage just the same.

When I was three years of age I made my first public appearance in the theatre. That was with Charles Kean in "The Stranger," at the old Haymarket Theatre in Melbourne.

I told you just now that I was a reasonably precocious child. You may find evidence of the eagerness and activity of my brain in the fact that that first appearance of mine made such an impression on me that I can remember it quite clearly now, and have always

remembered it. My father was playing the light-comedy part, and I was the child. I can distinctly recall my father's dress and appearance; I can remember the frock I wore, and everything. I can remember running across the stage to my father, and distinctly across the years—oh, so distinctly!—I can hear his loved voice say, "Now, run off, Nell dear. Run off, Nell dear, to mother." And I can see myself, with a stick of barley-sugar in my hand, going with a sort of toddling rush to my dear mother where she stands waiting for me in the wings. I can get again even the old smell of the theatre, the scent of gas and cigars that seemed to hang about all theatres before the electric-lighting came in, a scent that you get still, in a more pungent form and with a metallic admixture, on some of the great English railway stations. I don't think cigars smell nearly as good as they used to, and I'm sure that the introduction of electricity has not been an unmixed benefit.

That first appearance did not determine my destiny: my birth did that: but it did set the seal of my calling and inclination. From that time on I never had any clear idea of my life or career apart from the stage. Always I knew that I was fated to the theatre.

Mind you, side by side with that, I had another vivid impression. I cannot hope to express this to you adequately at all. It is a sense of a something that overshadowed my childhood days, a something that insidiously and persistently whispered, "This isn't your life, Nell. There's something bigger waiting for you."

Nobody can explain those insistent girlish voices, but they are always very real to the girl. Comparing great things with little, it was such a voice that sent the simple peasant girl to save France on the way to her own martyrdom. These voices that come out of the everywhere—out of the Infinite, if you like—they must



*Charles Kean,
son of Edmund Kean.*



*Nellie Stewart,
aged 2.*

all mean something. I don't believe that anything ever just happens casually or comes about by chance. Still, whatever the insistent voices signify in other cases, in regard to mine they led nowhere; certainly nothing sensational happened. And they neither made me brood nor gave me any morbid tendency, I was saved from all that. The voices never worried me at all, though I heard the disturbing whisperings from the time I was three, right up to the dawn of young womanhood. I think it may easily be that the voices helped to make me happy. I lived in a wonder-world, and all the glamour of a dream-hued future lured me on.

I was never fond of dolls or playthings. I was, I mean, a rather earnest child. I took interest in real things.

For the rest, what we call accomplishments, the little acquired graces that so seldom accomplish anything, came very easily to me. French, music, riding, fencing, all these I mastered readily, and to these things instinctively I attached no special importance. The thing I loved above all things else was to mother my little playmates and to teach them to act.

I was a very happy child. My mother adored me, and let me see that she adored me. Spoiled? No. A child may be spoiled this way or that, but no child was ever spoiled by too much love. I was petted, and I suppose that, childlike, I presumed on that a bit.

Perhaps it was with the idea of settling and steadying me a little that my parents presently sent me to a boarding-school. The school was Grandtown House, Nicholson Street. I didn't want to go to boarding school, of course; I didn't want it in the least. But I was reconciled by the promise made me that I should be allowed to play in pantomime every Christmas, under my father's management.

It is a bit hard to make clear just how my parents ruled me; but it is essential to my story, if you are to understand me at all. I was petted, as I say, and adored by my dearest. But my father, whom I loved devotedly, was strict with me in all important matters; as my mother was, so far as it was in her gentle nature to be. They were kind as they were strict, and they were just as they were kind. They never made or implied a promise that they did not regard as absolutely binding. They played the game with their children, and I know that some parents don't do that.

My mother was a woman of ideas, very firm and serious ideas as to everything pertaining to the art of the theatre. She laid great stress on the necessity of thorough and systematic training. "The greatest geniuses require teaching," she said, "more so, indeed, than the ordinary artists; but a teacher can do more with a genius in twelve months, than with an ordinary artist in ten years."

Speaking of Anna Forde* she said, "Yes, she has gifts; but she requires teaching." She had no patience at all with the ideas that great natural ability can somehow dispense with technique or get it instinctively. She always taught me that, whatever the task in hand, the end desired, one should give all one's heart and mind to it. She was passionately fond of church music. Mr. Harry Leston remembers her once saying to him, "I would rather hear your boys' voices in a large cathedral than the finest female voices in the world."

Mother's ideas certainly served well in her own case. She lived to be ninety; and the children she bore and brought up—well, they don't do so badly.

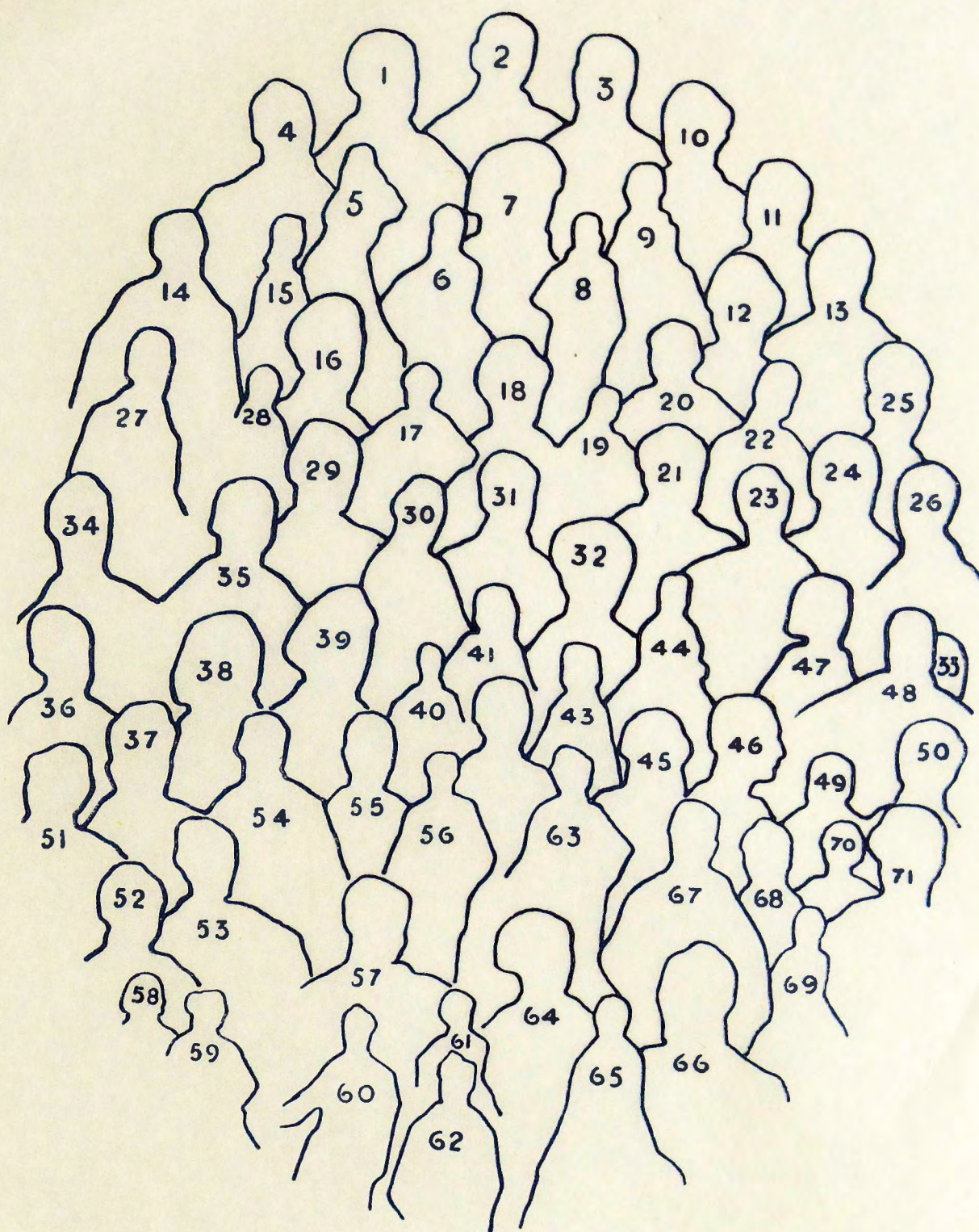
*Anna Forde had a beautiful singing voice and was considered the best principal boy in the seventies. One of her chief successes was a little curtain-raiser, "The Rustic Prima Donna," in which she sang excerpts from Grand Opera. She was a sister of John Forde, comedian, still in harness.

GROUP OF OLD IDENTITIES

(WITH KEY)

GROUP OF OLD IDENTITIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 <i>Walter Sherwin.</i> 2 <i>Tom Andrews.</i> 3 <i>Richard Stewart, Senior.</i> 4 <i>Gilchrist.</i> 5 <i>Adelaide Bowring.</i> 6 <i>Miss Cleveland.</i> 7 <i>Neri.</i> 8 <i>Walter Montgomery.</i> 9 <i>Tilly Earl.</i> 10 <i>Stuart O'Brien.</i> 11 <i>Habbe (Scenic Artist).</i> 12 <i>Georgia Hodson.</i> 13 <i>Henry R. Harwood.</i> 14 <i>George Fawcett Rowe.</i> 15 <i>Emma Howson.</i> 16 <i>Henry Edwards.</i> 17 <i>Charles Kean.</i> 18 <i>Barry Sullivan.</i> 19 <i>Lucy Escott.</i> 20 <i>Squires.</i> 21 <i>Hoskins.</i> 22 <i>Robert Heir.</i> 23 <i>Charles Young.</i> 24 <i>Charles Vincent.</i> 25 <i>Fitzgerald (played "McClosky"
with Jefferson).</i> 26 <i>Fraulein Fanny.</i> 27 <i>Julia Matthews.</i> 28 <i>Mrs. Charles Kean
(Ellen Tree).</i> 29 <i>Joseph Jefferson.</i> 30 <i>J. C. Lambert.</i> 31 <i>G. V. Brooke.</i> 32 <i>Mrs. Robert Heir
(Fanny Cathcart).</i> 33 <i>Eleanor Carey.</i> 34 <i>George Ireland.</i> 35 <i>Farquhar.</i> 36 <i>Imano.</i> 37 <i>Shute (Comedian).</i> 38 <i>Roslie Durand.</i> 39 <i>Fred. Lyster.</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 40 <i>Hattie Sheppard.</i> 41 <i>Catherine Hayes.</i> 42 <i>Rose Edouin
(Mrs. G. V. W. Lewis).</i> 43 <i>Jennie Nye.</i> 44 <i>Clelia Howson.</i> 45 <i>William Saurin Lyster.</i> 46 <i>G. B. Steele.</i> 47 <i>Marion Dunn
(Mrs. Marcus Clarke.)</i> 48 <i>John Dunn (her father).</i> 49 <i>J. Simmonds (Manager for
Jefferson at old Princess's).</i> 50 <i>Alfred Plumptre.</i> 51 <i>Chas. Wheelright
(“The Shaughran”).</i> 52 <i>Harry Jackson (comedian
with G. V. Brooke).</i> 53 <i>Heller.</i> 54 <i>Frank Howson, Senior.</i> 55 <i>Julia Edouin.</i> 56 <i>Everett
(actor with Charles Kean).</i> 57 <i>Clarence Holt.</i> 58 <i>Drummond.</i> 59 <i>Rose Evans.</i> 60 <i>Chas. Matthews.</i> 61 <i>Mrs. Clarence Holt.</i> 62 <i>Rainford.</i> 63 <i>Fred. Young.</i> 64 <i>Avonia Jones
(wrecked in “The London”).</i> 65 <i>Sara Flower.</i> 66 <i>G. B. Lewis.</i> 67 <i>Cathcart (actor with Charles
Kean; brother of Fanny
Cathcart).</i> 68 <i>Rosa Dunn
(Mrs. L. L. Lewis).</i> 69 <i>Miss Mortyne
(first Mrs. H. R. Harwood).</i> 70 <i>Leon (Samuels' Acrobats).</i> 71 <i>Busini.</i> |
|--|--|





*Group of Old Identities,
with key.*



Harry Leston.

Now to return. Before I went to boarding school my half-sisters were both on the stage. Maggie had been a very interesting infant-prodigy, wonderfully clever. Docie is with us still; she has had great trouble in her life, like the rest of us, but she has always stood up to it bravely, and bravely she stands up to it still.

I am not going to worry and weary you with any account of the boarding school. It was a good school of its kind, and one good school of the sort is very much like all the others. I am not sure that one can safely lay down a general rule, and say that it is best to send girls to boarding school. So much depends on the circumstances and the girl. Sensitive or timid girls are better at home in most cases, I should think. Other girls may be helped and strengthened by the rough-and-tumble of the little community-life. There are good things and bad about boarding schools, and I suppose that the good outweigh the bad in nearly all cases. But a girl is like a boy in this: that her real education begins after she leaves school. The things one learns to one's real profit are the things one learns of one's own free will and initiative. The world taught me far more than the school did.

I was taught as a child to be kind and tolerant, neither thinking nor speaking evil of any. My mother insisted that one's first social duty is to believe and speak the best about everybody, and that to impute motives, or pass harsh and hasty judgment on other people, is a sure sign of ill-breeding. So that all my life through I have trusted people as a matter of habit. I don't regret it now, though it has brought me some hard bumps of disillusion. The dear one with whom my life was linked so closely and so happily later on was like that too. He never lost his faith in men and women simply because individual men and women were con-

victed of ill faith. That by the way, because he doesn't come into the story yet.

Australia has known me since I was a baby, and quite often, as early memories have receded into the mist of years, Australia has mixed me up with other people. There are folks will tell you—probably in all good faith—that they were at school with me in Sydney. I never was at school in Sydney.

One writer in an Australian newspaper a short while back said he could remember me in pantomime in a certain year and that *I had very thin legs*. He was thinking of my sister Maggie, who came before me. I assure you—and who should know if not I,—I *never* had thin legs; more than that, as a child I always felt my legs were horribly big. Father was so proud of them that he used to buy me very expensive, high-laced boots, which necessitated very very short frocks, and the other children used to tease me and say I “stuffed” my calves with cotton wool. So they must have been big, for in those days the convention was for calves of an engaging fullness. As to whether I had thin legs when I grew up, my surviving public is the best judge.

In pantomime, when I first went into it as a little girl, there was always a big “children's scene.” As a rule, some sort of pageant based on English history was given, with pages, courtiers, jesters, kings, and queens, and all that. The first character I played in one of these pageants was that of William Rufus. I wore a very red wig, and was much freckled in those days, and when I was cast for Rufus I was, of course, thoroughly disgusted. A very young girl always dreams of excelling in the thing she is least fitted for, and some girls, on the stage and off, never grow out of that eccentricity at any age.

My best friend, Laura Wiseman, was an adorably



*Alice Deorwyn,
Aged 8.
(now Mrs. Charles Holloway).*



*Nellie Stewart
as "William II.—Rufus." Aged 8.*



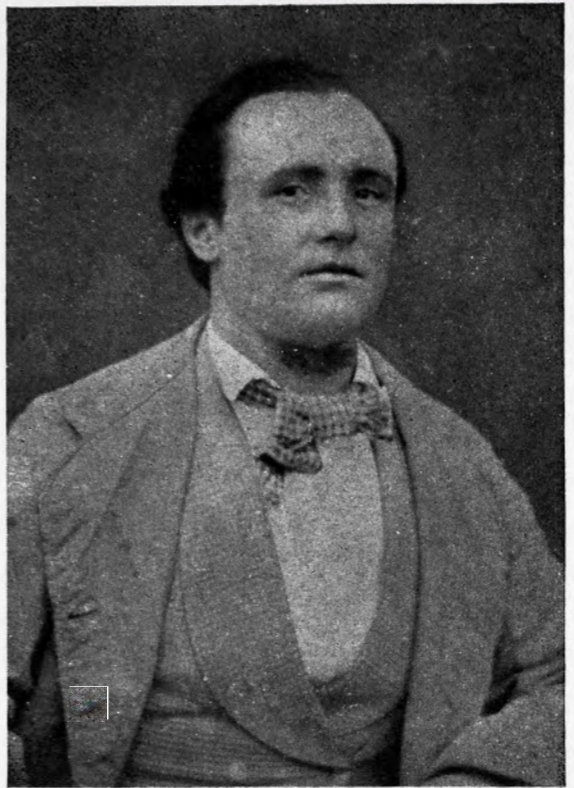
*Nellie Stewart
as she imagined herself
as "Jupiter."*



*Myra Kemble.
Aged 16.*



Henry Harwood.



Richard Stewart.



George Coppin.



John Hennings.

pretty girl, with beautiful long curls, and she was cast for Charles the Second. She wore a lovely red and white costume, a ravishing coiffure, and was altogether such a delectable thing to look at that I felt I never could forgive her for it.

She, I remember, had to sing "Champagne Charlie."

"Champagne Charlie is my name,
Champagne Charlie is my fame,
Good for nothing, day or night, my boys,
Always on the loose, or getting tight, my boys!"

The popular taste in songs changes constantly like the popular taste in nearly everything else, and "Champagne Charlie" would seem very poor stuff to a modern Australian audience. Then, and later, all comic songs embodied stories; they were not merely causally episodic and retrospective as they are now.

It was during this time that I attended my first fancy dress ball. The family held a consultation as to the character I should represent, and decided that "Amina" in "La Somnambula" would suit me best. This called for a beautiful, or very attractive child, and I am sure I was neither, with my high forehead from which the hair was tightly curled back, my small nose and round face. I hated my one and only partner, who was the ugliest boy in the room, dressed as a Turk, in sloppy, red trousers and hideous tunic; but I should have been grateful to him, for I had been left a melancholy little wall-flower until he rescued me.

The pantomime of "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son" was produced at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, under the management of Harwood, Stewart, Hennings and Coppin. The comedian was H. R. Harwood; my sister Maggie was "the girl," and my sister Docie "the boy."

In 1868 the burlesque, "The Siege of Troy" was written by Ackhurst, that very brilliant librettist, who

was responsible for the introduction of all the latest comic opera successes from Paris and London into the play, long before the operas themselves were even seen in Australia. The music of "The Grand Duchess" was used, almost in its entirety, in his burlesque of "King Arthur" and was indeed a very great novelty. It was in "The Siege of Troy," which caused a mild sensation at the time, that my father and John Dunn were the principal comedians. John Dunn was the father of Marion and Rosa Dunn (the latter afterwards became Mrs. L. L. Lewis) the former shared the principal parts with my sister Docie; they were the idols of the public. Marion Dunn later married Marcus Clarke, whose name as a Bohemian to kindred souls in Melbourne was as a glad shout in the dark.

The old order of playgoers may remember her as Susy, the waitress at The Chequers, in the first Australian production of "The Silver King" in 1883. She was the mother of Marion Marcus Clarke, who is still before the public.

The pantomimes then were written by such men as Garnet Walch, Teddy Finn, and, as I mentioned before, Ackhurst, and were brought up-to-date in every respect, introducing the topical events of the day and the latest compositions in music, which the principal Boy and Girl were expected and required to be able to sing. As an instance, I believe, in the pantomime of "Sinbad the Sailor," the sextette from "Lucrezia Borgia" was sung as one of the finales, and *very* well sung indeed individually. The panoramic transformation-scene each year surpassed the previous one, and was a birth of romance and a riot of colour; a thing of wondrous beauty and a triumph for the scenic artist John Hennings, and I can tell you he could paint. Remember that in those days we had no electric lighting effects to help us; gas was

THE STEWART FAMILY



Nellie.



Docie.



Maggie.



Dick.

all we had to depend on, and yet I venture to say that no pantomime to-day can approach those of my childhood for sheer artistic beauty and romance.

In one pantomime in particular the transformation scene presented "The Birth of Venus" and showed the canopy of heaven, with the planets in their courses, each planet, Jupiter, Saturn, Pluto, etc., being represented by a living child on *slotes*. (A "*slote*" is a movable wooden slide, working in a groove. It was one of the first "great mechanical effects" so dear to the heart of the publicity-man, and was then used for the first time). It speaks volumes for the training of those days that every word spoken by those mites of eight and nine years was clearly and distinctly heard in every part of the big barn of the Theatre Royal. Alice Deorwyn (the mother of Beatrice Holloway) was "Pluto" and I was "Jupiter."

Our costumes were wonderful to behold! To begin with, it was considered most immodest to expose *part* of the knee; it had to be entirely revealed, or else well covered, so our tunics were most discreet, limbs hidden in good old cotton fleshings (silk was prohibitive, as we had to provide our own, also our wigs and shoes), our poor little bodies encased in huge, *papier mache* breast-plates, which being made all from one mould (and usually for a buxom type of wench) had a more or less tortoise-like effect. At least I always felt like a tortoise in its shell with my round head in its *papier mache* crown (pushed well to the back) appearing over the top. My feet were encased in father's red sandals, for economic reasons.

As I mentioned above we had to provide our own shoes, but the *tout ensemble* must have been satisfactory, I presume, because, (let me whisper it), during the run of the pantomime, I had my first sweetheart. He was a boy who never seemed to be entirely straight with

me, for he was furiously cross-eyed. He used to present me with long striped peppermint lolly-sticks. For my part, I remember that I made him a bookmark—one of those old perforated cardboard affairs with the motto worked in silk by my fair but fumbling fingers, "True till Death." Ah!

Where is he now? Nay, where are the roses of yesterday? As Melanie Waldor sings:—

*Ne vous verrai-je plus! Me faut-il à jamais
Vivre du souvenir de tout ce que j'aimais?
Oh! que ne suis-je encor dans la barque furtive
Qui, glissant, comme un cygne, au milieu des roseaux,
Faisais courber sous elle à grand bruit, dans les eaux.*

Leur verdure captive:

*Enfants d'une autre sphère, anges, dieux or démons,
Dont le pouvoir s'étend à ce que nous aimons,
Venez, venez à moi..... Je vous donne ma vie
Si, dans ces lieux, empreints de bonheur et d'amour,
Vous pouvez rendre encor d'amour, fût-ce un seul jour,
A mon âme ravie.*

The Venus was Myra Kemble. I shall never forget the effect she made on me. She was phenomenally beautiful, with her gorgeous red hair, cream-and-peach complexion, and superb figure. We have no Myra Kemble now. On the Australian stage to-day there is no woman comparable to Myra Kemble for beauty, charm, or distinction, none who speaks so exquisitely, or carries herself with such perfect grace.

The old pantomime audience was the jolliest in the world. The children revelled in the show, and the elders—what is it takes the elders to pantomime? Well, there is nothing more picturesque and romantic than the spectacle of a young and pretty girl in tights, given the right setting. In my young days legs off the stage were very sedulously hidden. The woman who would wear the lowest evening dress would faint at the idea of showing more than her ankle.

I do not think that the Australian leg has improved during my time. Female legs were more charming five and thirty years ago than they are now. That was largely because ankles were more slender in the late eighties than they are in 1923.

I have never been able to get a satisfactory explanation of that. The average girl on the stage used to have the slender ankle that now only the exceptional girl can show. And though she heightens her Louis heels till they look like stilts, the miss of to-day can never get quite the fascinating quality of foot-prettness that the girls used to have.

You may think, perhaps, that I am labouring the point a bit; that I am—in the gothic slang of the moment—"pulling your leg" a little. But in these days when leading actresses are insuring their nether limbs for large sums, just as famous pianists insure their hands, the subject is important.

As one charming burlesque "boy" put it to me, "If you don't cover 'em with skirts, you must cover 'em with an accident policy."

An extra pound avoirdupois, at the ankle may mean a depreciation of thousands of pounds sterling in attractiveness.

I remember as I lay hidden in an old-fashioned tester bed, in Lord Verney's rooms at Bath, in the second act of "Sweet Kitty Bellairs" (period, George III), the rakish officers of the Inniskillings, who were carousing in the apartment, used to sing:

O, the beauties of life always fade,
Old Time never winked at a maid!
But when all other beauties have passed,
Well, a leg is a leg to the last;
O, everything else may go beg,
But the style and the cut of her leg!

So you see my point of view is backed by highly critical, if not very respectable authority.

But please remember this, in all seriousness. One of the things that has always struck me on my return from journeys abroad; from going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it, is the conspicuous neatness and daintiness of the Australian girls' feet and ankles. And I hope I may be absolved from even a suspicion of flattery when I assure you that this also applies to the men.

CHAPTER THREE.

GIRLHOOD.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm;
the way of life is wonderful.

EMERSON.

YOU must be content to let me loiter on, glad of your company, made happy by every backward glance over the wonder-years. So far, I have been dawdling on without much attention to precise detail, coming gradually from child to little girl, and from little girl to something more important in her own esteem.

I took myself very seriously, you understand. So that I need hardly tell you that it wasn't very long before I escaped from the bondage of school, and had private tutors. In those benighted days much stress was laid on the necessity of decent education and refinement in the player. So I learned this and that, as time permitted. Pretty soon it seemed to my childish vanity as if there was not a thing I couldn't do.

The first thing father taught me was fencing, with the French foils. He was a wonderful fencer in his day, but I could disarm him when I was eight years old.

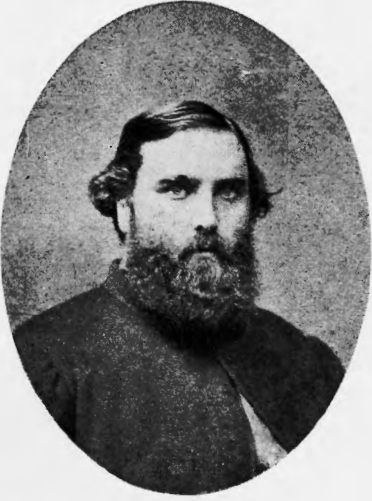
Nothing then was at all like the world as we see it in 1923. I cannot in honesty insist too strongly on the remarkable difference these few later years have made. It is true that the professional moralists, who are always with us, lamented the wickedness of the times then, just as they do now; but people lived more slowly, and

were content with simpler joys. Even the old dancing-schools were different from any we have in this day. My dancing-master was Henry Leopold, the elder, who was married to Fraulein Fanny, the famous ballet dancer. A son of his is now a conductor of one of the theatre orchestras, and he has toured with us a good deal in that capacity.

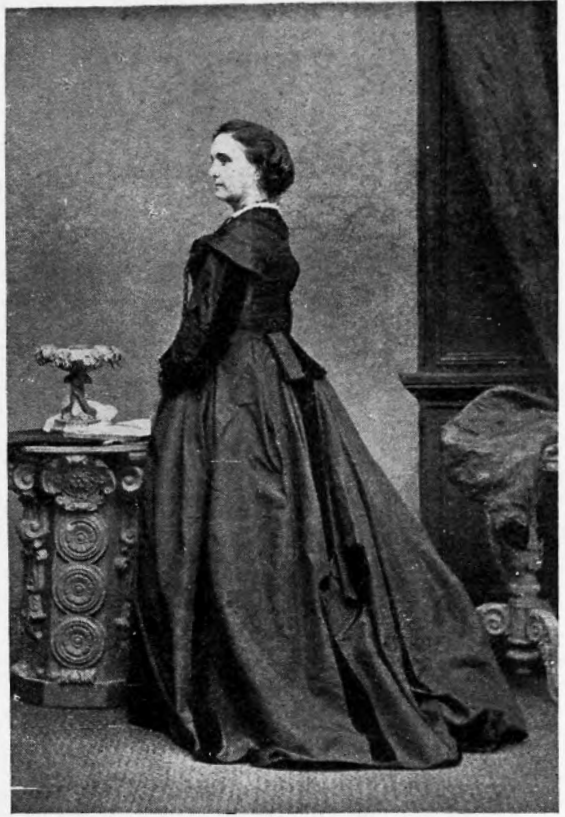
From Leopold I had a real ballet training. He taught me to dance with the face as well as with the feet, and the arms danced in proper time and balance with the legs. Girls then danced sweetly, and not as they do now, when a tendency to masculinity is the inevitable result of an unfortunate craze for acrobatic dancing. I don't believe in acrobatic dancing for girls. The dance should give perfect expression to the dearest emotions. You may say that the Russian ballet is acrobatic. If you think so, you have missed the track altogether. The Russian ballet often burns to a pure frenzy of wonderful movement, but it is all movement harmonious to the intent of expressing passion on a very high crest of emotion. It is dramatic poignancy expressed in movement: a thing altogether different from ordinary acrobatic dancing, which expresses nothing, unless it be a determination to do something especially dislocating in the field of muscular exercise. There is room in Australia for a great revival of pure ballet; but I see no hope for it yet.

A girl can have no better training for stage deportment and physical grace than that in natural and beautiful dancing, but the exponent of beauty in this art must dance with her brains.

Then, the use of the foils, on the French method, is a remarkable aid to deportment. The experts of the old school among whom I was brought up insisted constantly on that first essential of natural beauty in one's



William Saurin Lyster.



*Mrs. W. S. Lyster
(Georgina Hodgson).*



Armes Beaumont.



Fred. Lyster.

work. In that sense they were far more truly artists than the great majority of those of our day are. They had consciences and ideas not solely governed by considerations of sensationalism and lucre.

Very different from the present were our conditions of living in those days. Plain wholesome home-cooked food, with few injurious condiments and indigestibles. Reasonable exercise in the morning to give zest and appetite for the midday dinner. It was no question of parsimony or any sort of mean living. My father and mother were in comfortable circumstances, though father was impoverished a few years later by the gigantic bank-smashes, which also ruined Coppin, Harwood, and many others who had retired. Our simplicity of living was a mere matter of wise judgment and common sense. I was always expected to help with domestic duties when I was home from my weekly boarding-school. The type of modern girl who makes it a sort of boast that she is perfectly useless about a house, had not yet evolved. Many girls were still so old-fashioned as to be proud of their domestic efficiency.

Please don't let anybody pretend that I am assuming that household tasks should be the sole pre-occupation of young girls. That would be silly, just as silly as the average girl who feels herself superior when she says that she "hates housework." If woman's proper place is the home, so is man's. Home is the proper place of all of us—at the proper time. I only urge that while the care of the domestic side is still chiefly left to the wife, every girl who anticipates wifehood should strive to acquire some skill in home-keeping, or at least, not pretend that household tasks are "menial." Love has no menial duties, and in normal cases when a girl gives herself to a man in love she should be capable of looking after his simple creature comforts. To quote Emerson:—"No-

thing is beneath you if it is in the direction of your life; nothing is great or desirable if it is off from that." My happiest days were those I spent as a busy home-woman in London.

There is a queer idea prevalent that the players of forty or fifty years ago were all bohemian in the bad sense—reckless and riotous people. I never found them so. There was sound comradeship among them, and with that an honest joy and pride in their profession. They were far homelier than we of the theatre are now. It was a lovable old world.

In 1870 William Saurin Lyster opened the old Theatre Royal, Melbourne, with "Ernani," Barrati, Dondi, Neri, and Contini were the artists—Seide being conductor. Lucy Chambers made her debut as "Maffeo Orsini" that season.

And it was in this year that Charles Matthews came out to Australia with his beautiful wife. He played under father's management, and my sister Docie was in the company.

I have just found, in a book of Press cuttings, this anecdote of Matthews' farewell speech at the Royal.

He said he had been delightfully surprised in his travels throughout Australia; his trip had been full of pleasure and profit.

Someone in the pit interjected: "How about Bendigo?"

"Ah, yes," continued Matthews, "I had forgotten Bendigo. There I enjoyed what Sir Charles Coldstream would call a new sensation, the odd novelty of playing to a single individual in the boxes. After the second act he went out for a drink and never returned, leaving me to play to empty benches. A Bendigo paper explained the fact by suggesting that I was an impostor, and adding that Bendigo was not to be humbugged like



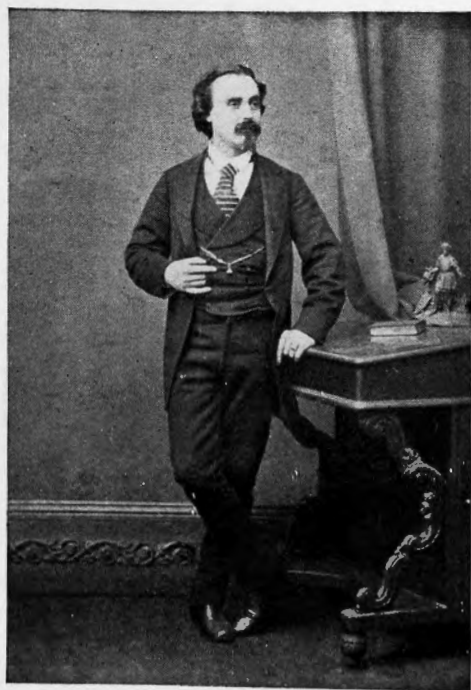
*Signora Tambourini Coy,
Lyric Soprano.*



*Signora Barratti,
Dramatic Soprano.*



*Dondi,
Basso.*



Signor Coy, Lyric Tenor.



Signor Rosnati, Tenor Robusto.

other places, but as no one came to see me, I don't know how they got that opinion."

My frocks in those early days were all mother-made; little cotton print dresses, sun-bonnets of the same material, lilac, buff, pink, or blue, little dresses that were put on clean every day. Clean every day was everything we wore from top to toe, what didn't show as well as what did, with wee prunella buttoned-boots at the earthward end. My people were sticklers for the daintiest personal cleanliness. We did not powder our faces or carmine our lips, except on the stage.

I was so thoroughly a home-bird that it distressed me to be separated from my own folks. It was only when I became unhappy at school because of the recurring separations that arrangements were made to carry on my education entirely at home.

To help in my training for the stage, once I was at home again, I saw everything that was produced under my father's management, and by this means I was always ready, so far as my own feelings and ambitions went, to play any part in any production. I was burning to make a real beginning.

The first preparatory chance came during a season when Mrs. Garner (Blanche Stammers) was playing the leading part. One night she was taken suddenly ill, and I, who was watching from the wings, was permitted, child as I was, to finish the performance. Mr. Harwood thought well enough of what I did to express and cherish the belief that there was the making of a tragedienne in me. My father had not much faith in the idea—he believed it was safest to hasten slowly, for when he collaborated with Saurin Lyster in a season of *opera bouffe* at the old Princess's, and produced "Orpheus aux Enfers," with Alice May as Eurydice, Charles Lascelles as Orpheus, Armes Beaumont as Actaeon, and

Mrs. Fox (his sister) as Diana, Mr. Lyster had me cast for the part of Cupid, with a solo. My father, who thought I had at that stage more audacity than talent, would not have the part entrusted to me, so my sister Maggie played Cupid, and I had only a few lines as Mercury.

In the next production, "Barbe Bleu," I was cast for a page, with two lines—"He is here! He is here!" Well, maybe he was—but as to my two lines, the paper was very encouraging next morning; it advised Armes Beaumont, the leading tenor, who was playing Barbe Bleu, to mark the way in which I delivered those two short phrases. When a young girl is starting out in the first flush of her enthusiasm, a few words like that help a lot. I don't think anything ever written about me has given me greater pleasure. I don't know what Armes Beaumont thought.

About this time J. K. Emmett came to Melbourne and his wonderful success was a triumph of personality. He came out under contract to William Saurin Lyster, and played in a piece called "Fritz." He was a singing comedian of the Chauncey Olcott type—a forerunner and model of all the Andrew Macks and Allen Doones. We were all in his company; Maggie played a part and I walked on as something or other. When he had been playing a week, he was taken suddenly ill one night when the Governor was in front. He went away to Lyster's farm to recuperate, and renewed and clinched his triumph when he returned.

It was during this break in the J. K. Emmett season that we put on "The-Ticket-of-Leave-Man" at a moment's notice. Mrs. Garner (Blanche Stammers) played the girl, and I think that Mr. F. C. Appleton, gentleman and scholar, was in the cast. I played Sam Willoughby.



*Signor Cagli,
Partner with
W. Saurin Lyster.*



*Signor Giorza,
Conductor and pianist with
W. Saurin Lyster.*



*Caricature
by Charles Lascelles.*

*Alberto Zelman.
Conductor with
W. Saurin Lyster.*

Mrs. Garner was a very beautiful and accomplished English actress; she was exceptionally refined and intelligent, with a striking gift of pathos. Her mother came out later and played old women parts. Mrs. Garner died in Melbourne very suddenly in the mid-'eighties; at that time she was appearing as leading woman with Bland Holt at the Theatre Royal there.

When J. K. Emmett resumed his interrupted season I played a very small part indeed, but glad to be with so fine an artist, I thrilled nightly to his delightful singing and acting. A beautiful lullaby he sang was an especial joy.

Then it was that I began singing-lessons under Miranda, Lalla Miranda's father. At that time little Lalla would occasionally delight her father's pupils by singing up the whole scale with the piano to F in Alt—doing it perfectly, though she was then only a tiny tot of five or six.

I have insisted for a long time that it would pay to revive some of those comic operas and opera-bouffes of the long ago, with discreet use of modern effects and conveniences. I think that if Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh had remained in management (I shall have a good deal to say about him and his great heart later) something of the sort might have been possible. In those comic operas there was a consistent quality of music and humour that nowadays is far to seek. They did not depend on interpolated numbers—they were works of art.

It would be about 1875 that J. C. Williamson and his wife, Maggie Moore, came out from America and appeared under the management of Harwood, Stewart, Hennings, and Coppin in "Struck Oil." Time turns the old days to derision, if you will; but shall I ever forget the bewitching triumph achieved by dear Maggie Moore in that play! I don't think that anyone else has

ever attained such a height of stage-success in Australia, and I doubt if anyone else ever will. She was in every way entirely delightful. She was at high tide of her exuberant, modest youth. She had all the womanly graces, without so much as a trace of anything sordid or questionable. Her voice drew tears and laughter together, and all the people loved her. She deserved no less. There was a frank girlish heartiness in her work that was a glowing source of comfort and sheer enjoyment to everybody who had the happiness to see and hear her. A pretty and *petite* Irish girl she was then, a mere slip of a girl with her bright hair coying at her temples and falling all about her merry face. That smile of hers, with the mirth and the tears in it, was so cordial, and unaffected and human!

And what a wonderful thing it was, that "Struck Oil"! Let me tell you of a queer thing. I can vouch for the facts, for I heard my father and others speak of them many times. Mr. Williamson badly wanted to open in "The Fairy Circle," but he was overruled by the management's better judgment, and it was just as well. "The Fairy Circle" was the next production, and it failed badly. The defective judgment that would have put on the failure first, to discount the coming assured success, was oddly characteristic of the imported actor-managers as we have come to know them. A man is apt to estimate the possibilities of a play with strict relation to the importance of the part he himself plays.

It was Maggie Moore and *not* J. C. Williamson who made J. C. Williamson in Australia. Let us remember what we owe her!

She has been, and remains, a personality, and her influence has been consistently for good. She has never done base or unworthy work. She has befriended many,



Maggie Moore as "Lizzie Stofel" in "Struck Oil."

and injured none. She has lived her brave life honestly in the sight of us all. She is cheery and true; never whining, never posing, never bearing malice. A very fine woman, and an honour to the theatre. If any woman in Australia deserves to be honoured with a national benefit in Melbourne and Sydney, that woman is Maggie Moore. The suggestion should be worth considering.

Directly and indirectly, I was associated with J. C. Williamson's management for many years. I saw the firm he led grow from small beginnings into a great business corporation. I shall discuss the firm, as apart from the man, in due time and place. I feel, however, that Mr. Williamson's career was in a sense so distinguished and successful that I cannot in honesty withhold tribute from the good woman who first made that career possible. Mr. Williamson was a very sick man for a long time before he was taken from us, and late in life he dictated his autobiography to a Sydney journalist. After his death the little book was published as the authorized account of his life. There is evidence that his memory was already failing when he wrote it. *Maggie Moore is not once mentioned in it.* and I put it to you: Could you imagine George Musgrove, big man and straight man, writing his biography and leaving *me* out of it? Nor is the account given of the Melbourne beginning strictly in accordance with fact. You see, I know. I heard my dear father talk of it many times. The facts are as I have stated them, and not exactly as Mr. Williamson's fading memory recalled them.

De mortuis? oh, I know all that. I have not a word to say against Mr. Williamson. He later developed a remarkable power of personality and generalship. I am speaking of him now strictly with regard to his early days of actor-management. I speak

as I found him, and I know that he, could he make his ideas felt now, would ask for nothing better. Dear Maggie Moore is a friend of us all, and it would be a false loyalty to J. C. Williamson that would cause me to withhold from her her meed of richly-merited praise.

J. C. Williamson was not a great actor. He was a comedian who characterised his parts with great pains and consistency, a precise and fastidious observer of what he accepted as the rules of the comic style. But he had nothing comparable with his wife's absolute genius of personal attraction and compelling human warmth and sweetness.

Here is a note by Emily Soldene concerning Maggie Moore just before she came to Australia with her husband. Soldene writes in San Francisco:—"At this time Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Williamson (Miss Maggie Moore) were playing 'Struck Oil' in San Francisco. Maggie was the bright particular idol. I went to see the piece, and found her charming, *chic*, full of fun, but also sympathetic.

"I always thought Mrs. Williamson was Irish, but she tells me she is Irish-American, born in 'Frisco—a 'Frisco girl who always wanted to be a 'Frisco boy—stage-bitten from when, as a tiny tot, she used 'to get inter' Jimmy's pants and go 'wid Jimmy' into the 'cul-lered pusson's Paradise'—the top gallery of the theatre. And when she first played parts, she wore 'Jimmy's pants' till 'Jimmy's pants' fitted 'too snug,' and she had to have a pair of her own. 'And who's Jimmy?' says I. 'My! don't you know Jimmy?' says she. 'Why, me brother, to be sure. I thought everybody knew Jimmy Moore.'"

Jimmy Moore was very well-known in Australia and New Zealand for many years after that, a good chap, nobody's enemy. He went over a few years ago.



*Nellie Stewart.
Aged 13.*



*Hattie Shepard.
The first of the "Vamps."*



*Eleanor Carey.
A leading lady at 18.*



*Nellie Stewart.
Aged 15.*

I can speak without hesitation of that time, for every memory remains vivid. When I ask you to take me as I remember myself, I am, in simple truth, trying to show you little Nellie Stewart as she was; I am not drawing on my imagination or anything like that.

It says a good deal for the wholesomeness of the stage atmosphere that I was as innocently ignorant about things concealed as any child of my age could possibly be. I was just an average, contented Australian girl, with the instinct and prompting in me to be an actress. And the family ties were as strong as ever; whenever a discord came to the Stewart family, or cast a shadow between Stewart and Stewart, it came from outside. We Stewarts loved each other and lived in harmony.

It is strange how easily people believe nonsense regarding walks of life not familiar to them. Somebody complained to me once that stage children have no childhood. There never was a more preposterous idea than that. I have found that the children of the stage as a rule are so happy and glad that very many of them never grow up at all. If you go into any theatre that is staging one of these big musical shows or spectacles, you will find that the children are merry as children well could be, sometimes too merry for the harassed stage-manager.

My own childhood, as I have tried to show, was happy absolutely, and it was lived always in close touch with a theatre. Everybody did his best to spoil me. A point too often overlooked is that the players are a very kind people with a deep-rooted love of children. They all feel a certain personal responsibility for whatever little ones may be about the theatre. My experience convinces me that among the player-folk there is less deliberate unkindness to children than you will find among any other class.

All players take delight in helping children: a fact that sometimes children take advantage of, with curious results.

As my own childhood merged insensibly into girlhood there was nothing to retard my natural development along the right lines. My parents were strict without a thought or suspicion of unkindness. The people I met were interested in me. In whatever I did that seemed worth while or of good promise I was generously encouraged. At the threshold of girlhood the woman first begins to stir in the child, and it is a critical period. It carries the first premonitory thrill of adolescence. Every delight is accentuated, and every little trouble grows to a mountain. I think that many lives are spoiled because of young children being ungently or stupidly handled at the brink of their girlhood. My own good fortune was such that my happiness continued without a break. I was petted, but with that I was hedged round against all irksome and disturbing things. I learned nothing of evil. And yet I was a daughter of the stage, and people still talk of the stage as a sort of main street in Babylon.

Other things being equal, the hard and democratic life of the stage should bring out loyalty and comradeship, all that is best in a woman, all that sane men naturally most desire in the woman or women of their stories.

The beauty that is skin deep fades soon and matters little, but the deeper beauty of personality and trustworthiness, of sweetness and sympathy, lasts, thank God, and that is the beauty that best lights one's toilsome way all the journey through.

Some of the most charming and seductive women on the stage are not of marked physical beauty; their beauty, the beauty which attracts and compels, is a

thing rather of the spirit. I am not going to set up examples, because for a woman to discuss with any detail the comparative beauty of women seems, somehow, a little tactless. The point I have been trying to make is that the attraction of the actress for the average man is rather a special attraction of good fellowship. The actress is independent of spirit, largely free of prejudices; she has out-spoken enthusiasms, and is what is called a good fellow.

The qualities that attract men invincibly to women are the human qualities, those of heart and mind. I don't mean by that that men are drawn by what are called brilliant women, because they are not. In my life I have known one lover, and only one, but I have had many splendid men friends, and I never set up to be a brilliantly witty woman, or anything of that kind—this by the way.

His knowledge of the harmony of the Stewarts helped Garnet Walch to the proposal he brought my father, who at this time was out of management through the old Theatre Royal having been burned down.

In 1877 Mr. Walch suggested that he should write an entertainment for us on lines broadly similar to that in which the Vokes Family in England had won such success, and that we should tour Australia with it. My father liked the idea, and Mr. Walch wrote "Rainbow Revels."

From its inception "Rainbow Revels" was so successful that Mr. Walch wrote another medley, called "If." Father, Docie, Maggie and I were the entertainment, with brother Dick in front of the house. Maggie was very good in character-impersonations, Scotch and Irish; Docie had a very beautiful voice and a delightfully winning manner. I was enabled for once to sing and dance my fill, playing seven parts—school girl, Dutch

girl, Irish girl, pantomime boy, and so forth. To me it was indeed, rainbow revels! The original scheme had only provided for Australasian tours, but the Stewarts and their entertainment travelled far.

My father had very strong ideas on the wisdom of girls understanding and appreciating the value of money, and independence, and tried to impress upon us the benefit of saving, but in my case, I fear, without much success, for I was always seeing some attractive article that I simply *must* have. I was therefore continually over-drawing the salary which father allowed me, and being in debt to my more thrifty sisters.

At one time, I remember, it was a sealskin coat I coveted, and *that* took many, many months to repay. At another time it was a horseshoe bangle, just then the vogue, and without which I could not live. I had seen one in a jeweller's window and rushed home to borrow the price from one of my sisters. In the middle of luncheon the awful thought crossed my mind that perhaps it might be sold before I could get back, so I dashed from the table and down to the shop, returning breathless and triumphant half an hour later, with a bracelet on my arm and a debt on my head.

I have always been impulsive and impetuous and tremendously keen on the work in hand. Once, in a New Zealand hotel, I had bought a little sewing-machine, and for lack of space, as our room was small, and the one table being prepared for a meal, I placed it on the window-sill and went furiously to work on some underwear. I was getting on famously and feeling quite elated with my progress, when without a moment's warning, the whole lot toppled out of the window into the street below, almost on the head of a man who was passing. He glanced up, saw my startled face, gathered up underwear, machine and all, marched in, enquired



*Maggie Stewart
in 1878.*



*Richard Stewart, junior,
in 1878.*



*Docie Stewart
in 1878.*



*Nellie Stewart, aged 16.
Her first long dress.*



*Nellie Stewart
in "Rainbow Revels."*

for my room, and, a moment later, much to my embarrassment and confusion, with an elaborate bow presented me with my p loons!

Once the "Rainbow Revellers" seemed to be regarded as a funereal band of mummers. The entertainment was about as frolicsome as an inquest with a particularly dejected jury. This was in Gippsland, Victoria, at, I think, the little town of Rosedale.

A noted pugilist, Tom Curran, had settled down there as publican at the only hotel in the place, and he was also proprietor of the hall where we appeared. Tom was exceedingly kind and considerate to us, regarding us as *confrères* in the bidding for public support. He rigged up an old shed for us to dress in, and laid sheets of bark for us to cross the muddy yard to the stage. Tom himself was auditorium manager, and took the tickets. He realised the importance of his office, and donned white cotton gloves for the occasion.

But all our efforts to raise a smile from that solemn audience were unavailing. They were unmoved by our brightest sallies. Nothing could make them laugh. It was worse than playing to an audience of owls. When the ordeal was over Tom congratulated us.

"A splendid show," he said; "mind ye, I had a devil of a job to keep that audience quiet. I know what they are here. Before the curtain was hoisted I warned 'em all. 'Ye've got to keep order to-night;' I ses, 'the first galoot that stamps, or claps, or even laughs, goes out on his d——d head quick an' lively!' They know me, so they behaved themselves. But it was a tough job. Why, I nearly laughed *myself* once or twice."

When we had at last completed our Australasian tours, Edwin Kelly (afterwards in comic opera with me in the '80's) and Leon, who had been associated with him in minstrel entertainments, had the rights of

"Pinafore," Gilbert and Sullivan's first opera. In those days, international copyright was a morass of the most confusing kind, and I don't know how they got the copyright of "Pinafore." I am content to state the fact. My father's interest was aroused, and we produced it at St. George's Hall, Melbourne, at the same time as Horace and Alice Lingard were playing it at The Bijou, opposite. I played Rackstraw, the tenor part; my sister Docie that of Josephine; Dick, Captain Corcoran; father was Sir Joseph Porter; and Maggie, Little Buttercup.

It was in 1879 that we left for India with the Entertainment. So that in my life that date marks another epoch. That year of my first setting out into the big world was a year in many ways otherwise remarkable. Gladstone made his great attack on "Dizzy" in his Midlothian campaign. Davitt formed the Land League; looking back upon my life, I can't remember a time when something sensational wasn't happening in Ireland. Germany concluded a defensive alliance with Austria—a move far-reaching in its effects, even on Australia, though nobody then would have thought that possible. It was quite a big year. Edwin Arnold published his "Light of Asia," though my appearance in India had nothing to do with that. Zola gave the world "L'Assommoir." Isn't it a strange thing to remember, that in those days Zola was regarded as an immoral writer, and was not easily to be found in moral bookshops!

There we were, launching out into a world of movement, anyhow.

We played Calcutta and Bombay, three months each—long seasons then—long seasons for the Indian cities even now. I don't know whether any other family with one entertainment has ever again played such



*Nellie Stewart
as "Ralph Rackstraw,"
in "H.M.S. Pinafore," 1878.*

seasons in those cities. Friends from India tell me that it has not been done.

In Calcutta we appeared at the Corinthian Theatre, where we were the first visiting company to play every night; prior to that the rule had been three nights a week. We met with great kindness from the Anglo-Indians, though always, while we travelled as a family, we kept very much to ourselves; my father, being strongly conservative in his opinions, insisted on the preservation of the home ties, the home atmosphere.

Girl as I was, I remember that Calcutta made a deep impression on me. It was so utterly different from all I had known. The great city that muttered even in its sleep, the great sinister river that growled as it slouched mightily along. The multifarious, multi-coloured native life. The queer exotic buying and selling. The foods that were in some ways so new and so interesting. All the mystery of Asia was there, and I felt it. When, ever so many years later, I read "City of Dreadful Night," it all came back to me. I don't suppose that any other writer has so adroitly expressed the main effects or appeals of a country as he has. I am not a literary critic, and I don't know remarkably much about books; but after all these years I find the real India again in Mr. Kipling's pages.

From Bombay, where I had other thrills (for Bombay and Calcutta are different in many ways from each other), we went straight to London and appeared at the Crystal Palace, because father decided that having been so successful with our Indian tour he could well afford to take us girls home and let us see London, and all the interesting sights, and then travel to the Continent, and feast on all the beauties and wonder of the old world.

It is strange that all my vivid impressions of London are of later years. I suppose that after India and

the voyage home my young head had about as much as it could carry, so that London left me merely dazed. I know that in my clear memories we don't really reach London yet.

We went over to the United States, and set out from New York on a protracted small-town tour. I mean to say that the tour would have been protracted, had circumstances not interfered. But the tour was hardly begun when George Coppin, then manager of the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, cabled, urgently asking us to come back to Australia for the pantomime of "Sinbad."

I don't think any of us was in the least bit keen to go back, at the outset. The young Stewarts were enjoying life. We had seen strange new countries. Our imaginations had been well fed. We knew that we should never forget the kindness and enthusiasm of India, the cordial kindness that made the stage into a flower-garden every night; and we were looking forward with zest to our American tour.

But father was controller of things in those days. In the cable I was offered the part of principal boy in that Melbourne pantomime of "Sinbad," season 1880, and the offer chimed with my ambitions. Father and my sisters were to be in the cast also. Father thought things over, came to his conclusion, accepted. So we crossed the big ocean and came back home to Melbourne.

The pantomime made a record financial success, and a record run—fourteen weeks. I enjoyed a measure of popularity that I found very delightful. I had found myself and realized a part of my ambition. I was a star.

CHAPTER FOUR.

MORE GIRLHOOD MEMORIES.

No Fate seemed fair as mine,
No happiness so great.

Mabel—"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."

AND then circumstances shaped themselves to mark another epoch. I heard few voices now, and I was maturer in my thoughts, but I was still pretty much the simple home girl I had always been—pretty much the home woman I have remained.

It was this Christmas of 1880-81 that Mr. George Musgrove put on his wonderful production of "La Fille du Tambour Major" at the Opera House. That was opposite the house where we were playing, and his production and ours made a joint sensation. Nothing like his had ever been attempted in Australia before, and I know of no other example of such enterprise in a young man of twenty-six. He brought out his complete company from England, and every member of it had scored at least one individual success on a big scale.

"Daddy" Halliwell was in the cast, straight from London with the others. For years after that he was a familiar figure on the Sydney block. It was seldom that all the leading people of any company were brought from England, but Mr. Musgrove carried his innovation still further; he was the first Australian manager to import and introduce show-girls. He brought out eight,

all most beautiful, among them the famous Consuelo, nearly six feet of blazing loveliness. She was not exactly an ascetic, but all eyes that were not beauty-blind fed on her. I am sorry that no photograph does her justice; with her, much depended on poise and colouring. She was vivid as a bacchante, agile and untrammelled as a faun. Johnnie Wallace, who came out as producer, had his hands full at times with all these beautiful girls. With the company was the *prima donna*, Patty Laverne, a very beautiful actress and singer, and Fred Mervin, Albert Brennir, George Deane, and Van Ghele, the conductor. There was not one weak spot in the splendid production.

Of the local people the best known was Harwood, and Jessie Grey, who was the original Drummer Boy. I remember Harwood as a comedian of a very old type, ponderously unctuous. He never moved with the times; he would have scorned the idea. Anything that was good enough for 1840 was good enough for him. Much later, when he played with us in "La Fille du Tambour Major," it was still the same old type of acting. In the intervening years he had not made the slightest effort to bring himself up to date—I don't suppose he had ever thought of it. In "The Siege of Troy" he played "Cassandra," a very heavy performance, but the typical comedian of burlesque plays in those days was mostly very heavy, very dry, seldom buoyant, quick, and alert.

We enjoyed it because it was the convention, and because we had learned to expect a certain stolid steadiness of effect. Time turns the old days to derision, but let us remember that Shakespeare achieved his immortality, though the first Juliet was a boy. Enjoyment lies chiefly in the faculty of enjoyment.

In George Musgrove's production of "Tambour Major," which had the record run of 101 nights in Mel-



*Hy. Harwood
as "Duke Della Volta" in "Tambour Major."*

bourne, the original Drummer Boy was Jessie Grey. When she retired for private reasons, he approached me for the part. The offer made me was a good one, and naturally I was very keen about it. Evrything was done properly and in order, and I shall never forget my excitement when I had to go for a voice trial. It was thus that I first met George. I sang "It was a Dream," a song made popular a few years later when Miss Marion Hood sang it with the first Gaiety Company.

By this time I had plenty of stage experience, but for some reason or other that voice trial worked me up to a pitiable state of nerves. The world swirled about me, I lost my head rather, and when I sang, it was a dream in dire earnest. I know that I sang dreadfully. I think George saw the plight I was in and took pity on my agitated girlish eagerness. He was, as always, wonderfully kind. Don't make too little of my ordeal; I was a very young girl in every way; I had never left my father's side; I had never been in the least independent.

Father had decided ideas. He would never allow us to dine at a public table in hotels when we were on tour. We took our meals privately, and (so far as that was possible) our recreations. If ever a man believed in the saving virtues of the family life, that man was my father.

Kismet! Sang I well or sang I badly, I was given my chance.

Despite my nervousness at that trial, I think I may say that by this time I was fairly well equipped for the part; I mean that I had had about as wise and complete a training as any girl of my age could have had. Those years of travel with the Entertainment had formed and broadened my mind. Our tours of Australasia—including two of New Zealand—had given me a better idea of our own people than I could ever have gained in one

Australian city. And then India, Europe, and America had opened up the world for me. I was in perfect physical form, and the pink of condition, and the world itself I loved with all my heart. I have always enjoyed a sense of close intimacy with my audience and that helped.

Salaries in Australia and elsewhere were still what in 1923 we should consider small, and the demands on the player's private purse were much greater than they are to-day; we had to buy all kinds of things that are now provided. In some ways the life was simpler and more natural in those days than it is in these. The lights were softer, giving opportunity for softer and more natural make-up. In my girlhood a dab of dry rouge sufficed us, and my dear mother was content with a touch of violet powder; a little, a very little, Chinese rouge was allowed for the lips. So made up, a young girl, even seen from the front stalls, *looked* like a young girl. I can quite understand that in producing an Oriental play the producer should insist on getting all the light he can for his street scenes; he wants the effect of tropic sunlight among walls that cast dense shadows, while his players are wearing a brown make-up that can stand a crude blaze of white and searching light.

It is interesting to note here that the fierce glare of light on the stage is a modern innovation. There were no roofed theatres in London even as late as 1600 or so, and up to that time all acting was in daylight. I don't know, but I suppose that the seating of a few privileged spectators on the stage arose, in part, from the dim lighting. Wax and tallow were expensive in the old days, and it is probable that penurious managers did not care much for this new-fangled idea of artificial light. So to-day, with the harsh glare of electricity running to excess—electricity is cheap and convenient—there is

evidence that the wax and tallow lights in the old theatres were not dependable. Sometimes they gave a reasonably good light, and sometimes they didn't. The intervals were by this time brightened at most theatres by song-and-dance fixtures, and in a bad light the effect of these was lost.

With George Musgrove our rehearsals were arranged from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily, principals and chorus rehearsing separately until both were perfect, and it was not until a full rehearsal was called of each act that we were brought together; a much better system than the present one of keeping all concerned hanging about the theatre in expectation of being wanted some time soon.

We had to provide our own shoes, stockings, undergarments, tights and wigs, whereas even the undies are provided by the management now. Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh used to say there was only one garment, he didn't provide; he thought it was a garment, but wasn't sure because he had forgotten the name of it, and rather thought he should keep quiet when he found out what it was called! There is a serious fact behind Mr. McIntosh's jesting humour. The fact is that managers now have to meet heavier outlays than in the old times, and players are put to much less cost. Needless to say, players are not so careful of their stage costumes, and so forth, now that all is found for them, as they were when they had to provide their own.

As to salaries—why the modern player doesn't know how well off he is. There were no unions in Australia then; one had to depend for recognition entirely on one's own energy and ability. I may tell you that at my best, even when they brought me back from London as a star in comic opera, I was never paid more than £25 a week. In drama it was different. I

had £80 for "Zaza," which was a huge salary then. As principal boy at Drury Lane I had £50. Theatrical salaries have gone up so during recent years that there is some risk of the profession of acting being one of these days swamped by the merely mercenary.

When Lavinia Fenton, who afterwards became Duchess of Bolton, made her wonderful success as the original Polly Peachum in the "Beggar's Opera"—*circa* 1728—an offer of *double* the amount of her previous salary presented to the young actress an income so truly magnificent that she was dazzled into a prompt acceptance of—*thirty shillings a week!*

Coming nearer our own time, we may take the case of the King's Theatre in London, then paying operatic stars of the first magnitude the largest theatrical salaries in Europe. In 1821 the salaries paid *for the season* were:—Angrisoni £600, Romero £410, Composese £1,550, Zara (scene painter) £189, Spangoletti £250, Dragonetti £150. All these salaries were exceptional, paid to singers of European repute for an entire season. Composese was the Melba of her time, and even her salary was such as a vaudeville star of 1923 would hold in contempt.

So you see me starting out on what was really my first independent adventure. Prior to that I had been nowhere without my mother, my father, and my half-sisters. I opened as Griolet in Adelaide, April, 1881. My sister Maggie was with me. I was, as we say now-a-days, up against a pretty big thing by way of test, for almost every member of the company was English, and they were nearly all strangers to me. But people helped me cordially. In especial, I owed much to the kindness and sympathy of Van Ghele. He was a very fine man—and such an artist! It was he who was mainly responsible for the fact that the production attained such



*Nellie Stewart in 1881,
at the beginning of her Comic Opera career.*



*Nellie Stewart
as "Griole" in "La Fille du Tambour Major," 1881.*

a high aesthetic standard, and an effect of pure beauty.

He and John Wallace, the stage-manager, worked together in such a way—they were both so wise, so charming, so tireless—that nothing has been seen in Australia since to equal that production from the standpoint of art in the theatre, and nothing remotely comparable with it had been seen before. The opera was a terrific success, right from the beginning, everywhere.

I remember a funny incident which happened during a performance at Adelaide. As I have mentioned previously, George Musgrove brought out eight very beautiful girls to impersonate the officers; these girls were stormed by the men folk. Their dressing-rooms at the old Theatre Royal had windows overlooking a sort of lane. Well, one night while the big eight were dressing a man's head was seen appearing at the window, with others below, and in a moment the water jug was out of the window—water jug and all, with the men underneath—which I think served them right, didn't it?

We left Adelaide, opening in Sydney with the first production there of "Tambour Major," in the middle of the year 1881.

After a tremendous run, "Madame Favart" was next produced. Pattie Laverne charming in the name part, and Fred Mervin as Favart. These two parts were originally played in London by Florence St. John and Marius. Oh how lovely! What artists! It was a big success in London, and no one has ever taken the place of Florence St. John in the eyes of the London public. Ah, her charm—her liquid voice! She was the reigning idol for years, and yet her dying request was to be cremated, and her ashes to be thrown to the four winds. So soon forgotten! I wonder if that will be my last wish?

"Madame Favart" is one of those operas which would bear revival now. It shone with the strange romance of the Favart's life, and left out the sordid element of her adventure. "Le Geurre en Dentelles" has been exploited very little on the English stage, which is a surprising thing, for it was almost uniquely rich in stimulating and picturesque material. An introduction to the fascinating study of the Favarts and their period is given in "Memoirs de Jean Monnet, Directeur due Theatre de la Foire," and there are many references in other Memoirs of the time. Madame was apparently faithful to her husband for some considerable time after their marriage, but in the end succumbed to temptation and her circumstances. Favart took it ill. Grimm has an affecting note on her death in 1772:

"The theatre of the Italian Comedy has just lost a celebrated actress, Madame Favart; she died within a few days, of a very cruel and painful inward complaint, but she bore her sufferings with great patience and fortitude. One day, recovering from a fainting fit, in which she had lain for a long time, she perceived among those whom her danger had collected in haste round her bed, one of her neighbours, dressed in a very grotesque manner; she smiled, and said she thought she had seen the straw figure of death; a characteristic idea in the mouth of a dying actress. Never could the priests engage her to abjure the stage; she said she would not perjure herself, that it was her profession, and if she recovered she would be obliged to resume it, consequently she could never with any sincerity abjure it, she would rather be refused the Sacraments. When she found herself expiring, however, she said, 'Oh, at present I do abjure it!' These were her last words."

A war that went on casually and politely, with an occasional break of months for rest and refreshment, a war in which the great commanders carried afield their own companies of famous comedians, and sometimes lent a company to the enemy commander to lighten an inactive spell! Can't you see how rich in material such a war must have been? Fought, too, in those Flanders

fields where more than a hundred years later German brutality sent a white flame of anger across the world.

The performances of the comedians must have been exceedingly delightful, for they were all people of brains and wit, even though they may not have been invariably respectable. I never pretend that I can hope to run all humanity into my own personal mould. I know in fact that some of these casual lovers were very sweet and gentle people—people who made great sacrifices for friendship's sake, and were sometimes redeemed from cheapening memories by the dawn of a master-passion that endured.

However that may be, in Sydney "Madame Favart" was not a financial success. It was too subtle, too quiet, following "Tambour Major" which had so much brilliance in music, dialogue, and situation. I was cast for Suzanne (played in London by Violet Cameron); it was a small part, but with a charming song which suited me to perfection, requiring refinement and delicacy of touch.

I succeeded so well that when "Olivette" was chosen for the next production, Van Ghele cast me for the big singing part of *The Countess*, with that beautiful ballad "Nearest and Dearest," in the last Act.

In his reminiscences, Sir George Reid tells this little story, which is in the nature of a very graceful compliment:

"Very many years ago a young Australian artist, Miss Nellie Stewart, in one of her performances—I think it was 'Olivette,' or 'The Two Admirals'—introduced the song 'Nearest and Dearest,' which she sang delightfully. More than a quarter of a century later, as the train that was taking me from London to Liverpool on my road home was gliding out of the station, a London pressman called out to me, 'Will you give me a farewell message to England?' I called out, 'Nearer and Dearer.' Then Madame Soldene, representing an Australian journal, called out, 'Have you no message for Australia?' I cried out, 'Nearest and Dearest.' When the first call came, the song

flashed into recollection, but thinking of the land of my adoption I altered it to the comparative 'Nearer and Dearer.' When the second call came the superlative was ready. If I had never heard that song about a quarter of a century before, I do not think I could have responded so promptly and tersely in both cases. Just consider how many millions of mental impressions that one had to flash through on the spur of the moment."

And oh, how good Van Ghele was to me! He overlooked nothing, he helped me most generously, and all his help was in the nature of direct encouragement. I was only a thin slip of a girl in those days (all my dresses had to be padded), and had been in Comic Opera but a few months, yet I was chosen for the most important singing rôle! Everyone was so kind to me; the press notices were wonderful, and I think from that moment my success was assured.

The part of The Countess had been played in London, like my previous Suzanne rôle, by Violet Cameron.

The dresses were marvels of beauty; nothing like them had been seen before in Australia; everything was brought out from London by George Musgrove. Little wonder it was such a huge success. Nothing was forced; the play depended on its own distinctive merits.

Sydney then had most of the initial productions, for, by importing the wardrobe there, a lot of Customs charges were evaded, and when the worn costumes went into Victoria they were no longer dutiable. Theatres seem always at the mercy of the Taxation Commissioners.

It must have been my gift of characterisation and extraordinary versatility which struck Van Ghele and caused him to select me as the exponent of the part. From Griolet, the saucy, vivacious drummer-boy, to the aristocratic school girl Suzanne, and then the singing rôle of the regal Countess—you will admit that required versatility.

Characterisation is very rare, nor do the managers now seem to want or understand it. A very short time ago I was coaching a promising young beginner in her first part in comic opera, that of an educated school girl. She had responded very well and made a success. The next rôle was that of an Italian singing-girl of *no* education, where characterisation was necessary to depict the several changes of type during the opera. Going on the lines I myself should have followed had I been playing the part, I completely transformed her appearance; this would have helped her performance considerably. At the dress rehearsal, however, word was sent me that the managers would not have it, as they wished the lady to be "herself." Can you wonder at an audience tiring so quickly of artists who *always* look like themselves? So much for a young beginner's chance of gaining experience and the manager's perspicacity.

But what really constitutes versatility? To play a dozen different characters without characterisation is not versatility. There are very few exponents of versatility in acting. I could name them on my fingers. It emphasises the necessity for thorough training, for without it, the words "actor" and "actress" have no meaning. Characterisation—the art that conceals art—hence the triumph of Henry Irving, Ellen Terry and Beerbohm Tree, and such great exponents of the art of acting—that allied to magnetism, for without magnetism an actor is a poor being.

Very often we get the art without the magnetism, and the result is not profitable to a manager. Sometimes we get magnetism without art; this invariably succeeds for a time, but the success does not last, the public see quickly what is missing. I never could define magnetism properly, unless it is a compelling will-power one has, allied to a "giving-out" of one's personality,

which must, of course, be alluring, fascinating and appealing.

"It is hard to appraise charm," says Maggie Wylie in Barrie's delightful "What Every Woman Knows,"—

"Charm? Oh, it's—it's a sort of bloom on a woman. If you have it you don't need to have anything else—not even education; and if you don't have it, it doesn't much matter what else you have. Some women—the few—have charm for all, and most have charm for one—and some—have charm for—none!"

Just lately I read this passage in a book of Winifred James, which seems to me to illustrate my meaning:—

"We went to all the theatres that were open, and to most of the music-halls, and I thought I had lost my heart once or twice, till I saw one night someone I hadn't seen before—only heard of—and then I knew that I had never really lost it at all till that moment, and when it went it went so completely that I have never been able to look at anyone with unprejudiced eyes since."

"Why should one person, who is apparently made of the same mixture as a great many others, simply walk right in and take possession of your heart and brain and understanding with the first word she utters."

"How is it that one, by saying words that have been said charmingly and sweetly scores of times before, suddenly made you feel—in the middle of Winter—that the sun is shining, the grass is growing, and the children are playing, and it is sweet to be alive, and you *are* going to conquer the whole world before you have grown much older?"

"How is it that one who has smiled across the footlights out into the audience generally, has managed to convey to you the knowledge that that smile was intended for you individually, that she knew you were there and looked for you out of pure comradeship that you and she might enjoy the jest together, for if anyone would see the point and appreciate it, that person was you."

"Why should she make the laughter come to your lips and the tears catch in your throat at the same time for no explainable reason at all, and why should you want to stretch out your hands with your heart big and tender, and say, 'You dear!' to a woman you had not even seen five minutes before? I don't know."

* * * * *

It was ELLEN TERRY.

With my love of work and indomitable will to overcome all shortcomings, no detail was left undone.

I was never satisfied myself with my performances; each night brought fresh efforts for improvement, and it was my delight when it was noticed and commented upon by Van Ghele, Johnnie Wallace, and my management.

I suppose my temperament, which seemed to adapt itself to everything in all circumstances, helped. I loved the life and my father's training never lost its hold on me. "You belong to your public from 8 till 11 nightly. Give them your best. You must *work*; work and rest, no play." So that now when I see young, would-be artists flying round, toying with cocktails, dashing about in motors, at times when rest should be taken to freshen their energies for performances, I get a curious little feeling as of instinctive surprise, and it comes to me that I, who have been before the public so long, never in my life had a day's racket, or a day's dissipation. So what about Babylon now?

I played thirty-five comic operas in thirteen (13) years, and cannot remember making two rôles alike; each was a characterisation in both acting and make-up. I think this is one of the things that helped me to hold my public for so many, many years, with that elusive something which we call magnetism.

CHAPTER FIVE.

YOUNG WOMANHOOD.

To love, is to be made all faith and service.

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER Sydney, we played all the repertoire in Melbourne, I appearing there for the first time as the Drummer Boy, Suzanne, The Countess, and Germaine. After Melbourne most of the English importations returned home, their contracts ending.

Emma Wanganheim and Elsa May (wife of Boothroyd Fairclough, the tragedian), were the *prime donne* for a short time, and it was not till later in the year that I became the *prima donna* of the company. Strange to say, George Musgrove had never considered me in that capacity, and it was only at the urging of Mr. W. H. Woodfield, the tenor, that he consented to try me. So now I played Stella in "Tambour Major" with Fannie Liddiard as Griolet, the Drummer Boy; Woodfield as Captain Robert; Edwin Kelly as the Tambour Major; and Ida Osborne as Claudine.

It was towards the end of this year that the partnership of the famous triumvirate—Williamson, Garner and Musgrove—was formed.

"Les Cloches de Corneville," in which I played Serpolette, followed "Tambour Major." Then "Olivette"

THE TRIUMVIRATE



Arthur Garner and daughter, 1883.



J. C. Williamson, 1883.



George Musgrove, 1883.

was revived. Then "La Mascotte" was produced in Sydney on November 24, 1883. Maggie Moore played the *title rôle*; I was Fiametta; Verdi was Pippo. Miss Moore's beautiful voice was at its best then, and she had extraordinary sympathy and magnetism; her Bettina (La Mascotte) was wonderful. Dear, gentle, inimitable Maggie Moore!

It was on November 3, 1883, in "Tambour Major" that electric light was first used publicly in the theatre in Sydney.

I am strongly of the opinion that gaslight is to be preferred to electric light on the stage. I think I said so just now. *N'importe*. Electric lights are hard and cold, but the lucent amber of gas lighting gives an atmosphere of warmth and naturalness, and softens the harsh and sometimes crude outlines, an effect which the electrics can never give. I am not alone in this opinion, by any means. Sir Henry Irving tried electric lighting at the London Lyceum, but he soon restored the old gas "foots," and used gas limes, and these were retained until he gave up that theatre in 1902.

In Sydney, on December 6, 1883, I made my first Gilbert and Sullivan appearance on a big scale in "Patience," after Alice Rees, the original Patience in Australia, had married. The opera ran right up to Christmas, when I appeared in pantomime as Principal Boy in "Jack and the Beanstalk." Another success for me.

I was nothing if not thorough. I climbed the Beanstalk always as if my life depended on it. One night I reached the top and then carelessly fell and broke my arm. Dr. Cox was in the theatre, he came behind, set the broken limb, and I went on and finished the performance. My understudies never had much luck, I was too keen. I was my mother's daughter—she

taught me that one's success depends on one's individual work, a truth I can assure all young players is very well worth remembering.

My mother dated from the time when they wore Empire dresses of black velvet in Shakespearean productions, voluminous stuff draperies and full velvet petticoats, and all that sort of thing. What does it matter? The productions would have succeeded if they had been played in pyjamas, because people played their parts with their brains, in those days. Clothing is at best an adventitious convenience, a cover for the dish. Hasn't one of the great Flemish painters a picture of the Flight into Egypt in which Joseph and the Holy Family are dressed as good Dutch burghers?

During the rehearsals for "Jack and the Beanstalk" we had rooms in Hunter Street, and we girls, Maggie and I and Fannie Liddiard and her sister, used to sit by the window sewing all day, happily laughing and talking. I was very busily engaged in sewing thousands of spangles on to my armour bodice, which was a long and tedious piece of work, for each spangle overlapped the other, and when finished gave the effect of one shining whole. But we did not think anything a trouble, we were a light-hearted, contented band, interested in our work and the various happenings in the street outside.

Many a time we had visits at the window from members of Parliament who used to pass on their way to the Clubhouse Hotel, I think it was, for lunch. It stood in a garden at the corner of Castlereagh and Hunter Streets, and attracted no doubt by the bevy of happy, laughing girls, the Ms.P. would pause to look in and chat with us. Sometimes they would throw in sweets or flowers, and on one occasion a thimble. Sometimes, too, one or another would invite themselves in to have tea with us, and I recall that amongst those who did so



*Nellie Stewart
as "La Mascotte," Act II.*



Nellie Stewart in 1883.



*Emily Nathan in 1881.
Costumiere to
George Musgrove.*



*Nellie Stewart
as "La Mascotte."*



*Nellie Stewart
as "La Mascotte," Act I.*

were Sir Edmund Barton, Sir George Reid, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Horton and Sir Daniel Cooper.

We had never heard of cocktails and cigarettes for girls, and were just glad of the innocent little interlude in our day's work. Our visitors would stay for half an hour, perhaps, and then continue on their way to deal with affairs of State.

Did I tell you my mother was very beautiful when young, with liquid blue eyes that swam like stars in a night sky; lustrous black hair, a perfect Grecian nose, and most adorable limbs? She was born in Dublin and had a marked strain of Irish in her. You must forgive me for this constant harking back to my mother; every little while I love to think of her—I have been doing it all my life.

January 26, 1884 and January 21, 1916 are perhaps the two most tragic days in my life—the first my marriage with Richard Goldsborough Row. Just a girl's mad act to repent of at leisure afterwards—no love—but pity for the big, noble man who told me that without me he could not live, and would not. So I married him. I sailed for New Zealand with the Comic Opera Co. on February 6th, 1884, while he sailed for England—that was all! I never loved Dick, and when in later years his poor, bruised heart learned to forget, he married a sweet girl, and died in 1915, leaving two sons. Of the other date I will write later.

“And if I drink oblivion of a day,
So shorten I the stature of my soul.”

MEREDITH.

After “Jack and the Beanstalk” we did a tour of New Zealand with the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, under the management of Williamson, Garner and Musgrove, and were back again in Melbourne later in the year. There, at the Theatre Royal, we first produced “Iolan-

the." Robert Brough, Florence Trevelyan (Mrs. Brough), and Emma Temple made their first Australian bow on that occasion. Brough was the Lord Chancellor, his wife being the Fairy Queen, and Emma Temple a leading fairy. Emma Chambers was the Iolanthe, and Signor Broccolini the Strephon. I played Phyllis.

It was during 1884-5 that "The Merry Duchess," "Estrella" and "La Petite Mademoiselle" were first produced. "Estrella," at the old wooden Princess's, lives most in my memory. The music by Luscombe Searelle was very sweet. I remember I had a sobbing song, and a little ballad called "I'm weary of the Sorrows," which became the rage in Melbourne and Sydney. We afterwards found out that the number had been a little quick-step dance-tune of Searelle's, and, re-written in 6-8 time, it became one of the most pathetic and singable little numbers I had ever sung.

Just at that time I was having my own first little sorrow—it seemed very big to me then—and all the romance of my young life seemed stirred up by that number. So perhaps it was no wonder it went so well.

Phil Day played the Doge in "Estrella," a very fine performance, but I did not care for him in anything else. That is, in comic opera or pantomime. But in drama and comedy he was inimitable. He was the first Daniel Jaikes in "The Silver King," and was imported from England to play that part. And he played it well, too, though he *did* wear knee-breeches and silk stockings in the last two acts.

What a capital cast that was, for the first production of "The Silver King" in Australia! (Theatre Royal, Melbourne, on October 27, 1883). It is so good that I give it here. To begin with, no one played a double in a cast of over 30 characters. And every part, even to



Robert Brough.



*Alice Barnet and Nellie Stewart
in "The Sorcerer."*



Prince Poutiatine.



*Howard Vernon
as "Bunthorne," in "Patience."*



*Nellie Stewart
as "Mabel" in "Pirates of Penzance."*

the smallest, was played by an experienced performer, or one time "Star."

Wilfred Denver	G. S. Titheradge
Captain Skinner (the Spider)	Arthur Garner
Henry Corkett	Hans Phillips
Elijah Coombe	Arthur Redwood
Cripps	W. H. Leake
Daniel Jaikes	Philip Day
Samuel Baxter	Stirling Whyte
Geoffrey Ware	Frank Cates
Tubbs	H. Evans
Belcher	Olly Deering
Leaker	W. D. Bates
Detective	W. Maloney
Tipsy Passenger	Charles Brown
Mr. Parkyn	H. Sefton
Brownson	W. Marshall
Binks	Harry Daniels
Newsboy	Master Williams
Gaffer Pottle	W. H. Hoskins
Cabman	John Bryan
Teddy Cobb	J. Lawson
Old Gentleman	J. Harrison
Railway Porter	Mr. Carson
Olive Skinner	Jenny Watt-Tanner
Tabitha	Mrs. H. Taylor
Susy	Mrs. Marcus Clarke (Marion Dunn)
Mrs. Gammage	Mrs. J. P. Hydes
Cissy	Marion Bridger
Ned	Miss J. King
Lady Passenger	Miss Wilson
Nellie Denver	Annie Mayer

Both Phil Day and Arthur Redwood died within a few years of that production. Many well-remembered

names are in that list. George Titheradge's memory is still green. Arthur Garner was one of the triumvirate, Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove. W. H. Leake was a tragedian of note, who had starred in many parts. It must have been Mr. W. H. Hoskin's last appearance, I think. He was the famous Shakespearean actor and scholar, the man who taught Henry Irving his business, it is said. Mr. W. Marshall was an excellent comedian, brother to the more famous Fred.

I find I have missed one character. John Franklin (the Silver King) has a private secretary in one scene. This was played by Lance Lenton, but as the play wasn't over till after midnight on the opening night, the scene was omitted afterwards, and Mr. Lenton drew his salary every week for doing nothing.

We have had Wilson Barrett, the original Wilfred Denver, out here since then, with his own company in the "Silver King," but they couldn't give a performance of the old play to compare with that first production.

But I have been rambling away from my proper sphere of those days, comic opera. Let me see, I was speaking of Sorrow and Romance, wasn't I?

The soul would have no rainbow had the eyes no tears.

CHENEY.

Romance has ever played a strong part in my life. I have always tried to bring it into every part I created and played—that illusive something that means so much I think.....

Oh, I must tell you of my Romance of a Russian Prince!

A Russian prince—yes, a *real* prince—my mother was travelling with me then, and how hard he tried to persuade her to let me marry him! But I could not, Dick was alive and there was no divorce. I often wonder what would have become of me had I married the



Nellie Stewart
as "Yum Yum" in "The Mikado."

prince and gone to Russia. I heard later that he was killed in one of the squadrons during the war. He had never married. I had in my possession a brooch he gave me, an exact facsimile of the Russian crown, a beautiful thing, all pearls, rubies and red enamel. This went with my other jewellery after the disaster of the San Francisco earthquake.

Then came the production of "The Mikado." Shall I ever forget the success it was! The novelty was there too, the Japanese dresses and atmosphere. Oh dear, I had a bad time, though, over Yum-Yum until I had played it! Both the stage-manager and Mr. Musgrove were dissatisfied with the way I was rehearsing. I was always a bad rehearser in those days, but the Yum-Yum rehearsals were simply dreadful. I had only seen Japanese in circuses walking on swords—you know the sort of performances—and I didn't think the prompt-book was well marked. Anyhow when it came to the dress rehearsal, Mr. Musgrove stopped the performance to chide me, and told me I would simply ruin the piece if I didn't show him at once what I intended doing with the part. But I simply couldn't—I can't explain it. I only know that I knew I should be all right when the first performance came, and I *was*.

He and everyone else were astounded, from the moment I trotted on to the stage with my toes turned in—for I must tell you that in the original production *no one* turned their toes in until they saw *my* performance on the first night. And all my comic antics of fan, dress, feet, etc. came to me on that first night—particularly so in the song "The Moon and I."

Well, I don't think I ever had such wonderful press criticisms, and the performance altogether was a huge success. This in spite of the fact that our tenor Frank Boyle (Nanki-Poo), became ill just before the perform-

ance, and Mr. Harrison, the conductor (who afterwards married Aggie Kelton, the original Pitti-Sing here) had to play the part.

I should like to acknowledge here what help and advice I got from the Press, whose critics included the late Mrs. Carl Fisher, the late Dr. Nield of Melbourne, and Mr. Gerald Marr Thompson of Sydney. Their criticism was always genuine, and not to be bought. I have to thank them for helping me to correct the restlessness and mannerisms that I showed in the beginning of my career, caused, I fancy, by too much vitality. Criticism should be honest, and critics should be left to say what they really think, always provided that the critics shall be honest. Adverse criticism may be expressed kindly, and should always be couched in such direct and simple language as shall prevent misunderstanding of the sum of its purport.

I played with the Comic Opera Company, during the period 1884-7, without a break. I simply would not let anything interfere with my appearances. I remember one night when I was in much pain, I went on all padded with hot-water bottles. I would do anything rather than disappoint my public.

In those six years I played *prima donna* in the following comic operas and two pantomimes:—

“Tambour Major”: Stella; and Griolet, the Drummer Boy.

“Madame Favart”. Suzanne.

“Olivette”: The Countess.

“La Mascotte”: Bettina; and Fiametta.

“The Merry Duchess”: The *title rôle*.

“Les Cloches de Corneville”: Serpolette; and Germaine.

“Estrella”: The *title rôle*.

- "La Petite Mademoiselle": The *title rôle*.
 "Billie Taylor": Phoebe.
 "Patience": The *title rôle*.
 "Pirates of Penzance.": Mabel.
 "H.M.S. Pinafore": Josephine.
 "Iolanthe": Phyllis.
 "The Mikado": Yum-Yum.
 "The Sorcerer": Aline.
 "Trial by Jury": The Plaintiff.
 "Princess Ida": The *title rôle*.
 "La fille du Mme. Angot.": Clairette.
 "Cinderella": The girl.
 "Jack and the Beanstalk": The boy.

The first night of "Princess Ida" at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, is memorable to me because of an embarrassing *contretemps*.

Although we never mentioned such intimate garments, we wore petticoats (not only, but as well), in those demure Victorian days. Nowadays, I understand, they are not worn, but the up-to-date young lady will artlessly discuss undies in tram or train.

On my first entrance as Princess Ida I had to stand conspicuously on a raised bridge and deliver a 50-line, blank-verse speech, concluding with—

Let no one care a penny how she looks—
 Let red be worn with yellow—blue with green—
 Crimson with scarlet—violet with blue!
 Let all your things misfit, and you yourselves,
 At inconvenient moments come undone!
 Let hair-pins lose their virtue; let the hook
 Disdain the fascination of the eye—
 The bashful button modestly evade
 The soft embraces of the button-hole!

I made a dramatic sweep with my extended arms and—down came my petticoat! This was suiting the action to the word, and no mistake.

"The Sorcerer" didn't seem to make a hit. Frank Thornton, who has done such excellent comedy work in Australia, played John Wellington Wells, "the dealer in magic and spells." Thornton had begun as a chorister at the Savoy, and by his careful make-up, effective by play, and intelligent regard for the business of the scenes in which he figured, he caught Gilbert's eye and was promoted to the playing of parts.

Here is a little matter I overlooked. I should have mentioned that the most striking musical event in the Australian theatre before George put on "Tambour Major" was the arrival of Madame Emily Soldene and her company of Girls, who opened at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, September, 1877, in "Genevieve de Brabant."

Soldene and her company had played with great success right through America, after striking London successes. In Sydney they put up at the Oxford Hotel. To read Emily's memoirs now seems to take one back to the Old Red Sandstone epoch, so great a difference do a few years make. Next to the hotel was "a pretty cottage, covered with green creepers, standing in a garden full of glorious flowers." And now, as a hostelry, the Oxford Hotel is only a memory.

She and her party found the city very hot, and their first Sunday was spent at the hotel at Botany Bay. Coming back at night their coachman lost his way in the dark, so that he may have had some too. Soldene declares that she loved to go to Coogee and pick up shells; there was a racy and girlish quality in her, right to the end. She loved Coogee.

"No dirty, fussing, puffing, smoky trams in those days; no hotels, no houses, no aquarium, no embankments, no terraces, no improvements; nothing to be seen but the sheep-track, white on the farthest hill; nothing to be heard but the silver seas running up the silver sands."



*Nellie Stewart
as "Elsie Maynard" in "Yeomen of the Guard."*

The Girls made a great success, on the stage and off. Soldene says that she was very dignified in those days, and that she wasn't quite sure whether she liked to see her portrait done in soap on the windows of Gus Wangenheim's tavern opposite the theatre.

She would sit on her balcony on a Sunday morning and watch the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, going to church at St. James's opposite. "Sir Hercules always stood on one side to let 'me lady' pass; you see, the door was narrow, and her ladyship was not. There was a nice-looking aide too—a Captain St. John."

Lady Robinson was not enthusiastic about Emily and the Girls, and she was sensitive about her own plumpness. To hint that the main door of St. James's was a tight fit—well, Emily had a sense of humour far better developed than her sense of discretion.

The Soldene Opera Bouffe Company never failed to make a sensation. It had a big repertoire, ranging from "Mme l'Archiduc" to "Trial by Jury." In the company were Mr. Knight Aston, Mr. C. Campbell, Mr. J. Wallace, Mr. Dalton, Miss Clara Vesey, Miss Rose Stella, Miss Cissy Durant, Miss Florence Slater, and Mlle. Sara. Sara, who was a high-kicker, drawing the salary, prodigious at that time, of £50 a week, was afterwards married to Van Ghele, conductor of "Tambour Major" and the Musgrove repertoire.

Emily Soldene later spent some years in Sydney, and became known as a journalist. She was not beautiful when she brought her company to Australia (she never had been very beautiful of feature), but she had much of her fine voice remaining, and she was genial, audacious, and incorrigibly gay; in all ways a very merry and irrepressible good fellow.

When George Musgrove produced Lecocq's "La Fille de Madam Angot" I played "Clairette." Madame

Soldene was engaged for the small part of "Amaranth," and later, at her benefit, I played "Clairette" to her "Madame Lange."

That benefit performance marked Emily Soldene's last appearance on the stage. It was at the Lyceum, Sydney, June 5, 1895, while I was playing in "Mam'zelle Nitouche" and other comic operas. It was the second act of "Madame Angot" we played. Emily was Mdlle. Lange, and I Clairette. Minnie Everett was in the cast. Also Henry Bracy, Wallace Brownlow, Howard Vernon, Rosevear, Lissant, and Beetham. Other items were given by George Rignold's Company (an act from "Called Back"); Madame Charbonnet-Kellerman and M. Poussard; George Lauri and Marietta Nash; Dr. McDonagh; Ada Delroy and James Bell; Syria Lamont; Harry Rickards; Harry Roberts, E. B. Russell, and Linda Raymond; and the University Dramatic Society gave a scene from Sheridan's "The Critic," when Gegan McMahon made his first appearance on the stage.

And still back a bit. In this casual narrative you must expect to see me run back every little while and pick up something forgotten.

I think another word is called for as to management and producing. In a previous chapter, I mentioned that, under my father's early management, they had a sort of "Commonwealth," sharing profits with all the players. Then the foundations of the big firm were gradually laid. Coppin was a kind of sleeping partner; my father and Greville did all the work. Managers in those days, you must understand—stage-managers, I mean—were also the producers. Such men knew the whole game of stagecraft from A to Z. They understood every branch and detail of the acting profession, being themselves generally actors of wide experience and reputation.



Nellie Stewart
as "Princess Ida."

Everything was done decently and in order by men who knew perfectly well what they were doing.

I was never under anyone's management but father's until I met George Musgrove. George was a good man and a strong comrade; he was safe and sure in emergency; he never stooped to flattery; he was undemonstrative, and when he was pleased he seldom said so. He hated anything and everything short of the best, whether it was in performance or material. He was impatient in the presence of impudent mediocrity, and he had a way of saying that all bad actors would be far better and more honestly employed scrubbing floors or handing out soup; he would say this in a way that no bad actor liked. George loathed anything that was defective or inferior, and very heartily he loved everything sound or good. He so aptly fitted Wordsworth's beautiful lines:—

“Who is the Happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
It is the generous spirit, who
Come when it will, is equal to the need;
Who with a toward, or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays in the many games of Life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won;
Whom neither the shape of danger can dismay
Nor that of tender happiness betray.

When later George produced “A Midsummer Night's Dream” here it was not drawing big houses. Mr. J. C. Williamson came to the front one night and looked at the house.

“Why don't you take this thing off?” he asked.

George stood for a moment watching the beautiful scene, the delightful production, and then said, “Hmmmmm! Why should I take it off? I like it, I'm enjoying it myself.”

What a superb production that was! With Nora Kerin, Dora Rignold, Margaret Cellier, (a niece of Alfred Cellier, the composer), Croker-King, Alfred Bucklaw, Norman Partridge, Athol Forde, W. H. Denny—a fine company. And the mounting was a revelation. Robert Courtneidge personally directed the production.

That was in 1903. They also did "As you Like It," with Nora Kerin as Rosalind. Charles Kenningham sang "Under the Greenwood Tree," and "Blow, Blow, thou Winter Wind."

Speaking of Kenningham, he was Feste, the Clown in "Twelfth Night," and I remember Alfred Dampier saying that the two most artistic things he ever remembered seeing on the stage were Jefferson's awakening in "Rip Van Winkle," and Kenningham's "business" at the end of the Kitchen scene in "Twelfth Night." Charles Kenningham was that *rare avis*, a tenor who could sing and act too.

One thing George disliked very much was a way I had, whenever he began to talk of a new part, of straightway discussing the dresses I should wear. He used to say that that was most inartistic. Then I heard that Rejane always schemed out her clothes first when she tackled a new part, and the fact scored one for me. George grunted and kept his own opinion.

There was no man living more passionately devoted to the art of the theatre (a frightful handicap in a manager), but I think he only played a part once. It was in an opera with a skating-scene, "Le Prophète," and he put on a set of rollers and went scooting across the stage. Not much of a first-hand practical experience of acting, but his judgment in all matters was remarkably sound, and he had what I can only call an astonishing natural knowledge of music.

He came of a very musical family. His mother's



*Fanny Hodgson (Mrs. Musgrove), 1881.
Mother of George Musgrove.*



Mrs. Scott Siddons.

father composed "Tell me, Mary, how to Woo Thee," and at one time kept a big music-shop in Dublin. But it was not until their mother was quite old that George and the rest of the children (there were thirteen in all) knew much of her youth and origins. She had a seizure, and used to suffer periods of delirium during which she used to act and declaim whole passages from "King Lear" and other Shakespearean plays. And so the truth came out.

She had been an actress at Drury Lane, and was descended from the Kembles and *the* Mrs. Sarah Siddons. She had enjoyed a sense of mystery in concealing the fact from her children.

She wore a wonderful bracelet, and when the children asked questions she would nod and twinkle, but give them no information at all. She was the natural head of the family, a strong-minded woman of high character, who swayed and dominated all her children.

Her sister, Georgina Hodson, who was married to William Saurin Lyster, won a reputation in grand opera, having a fine contralto voice and an admirable figure. Saurin Lyster was the big Melbourne operatic manager of the time. Still another sister, Henrietta Hodson, won fame in a larger world. She graduated as an actress from the old King Street Theatre at Bristol, in which other such notable ones as Kate and Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendal, and Charles Coughlan served their novitiates. She made her first London appearance at Christmas, 1866, and won a personal success in Byron's most unsuccessful burlesque called "Pandora's Box," or the Young Spark and the Old Flame. Not long after that, in 1868, she married the celebrated journalist-politician, Henry Labouchere. Years later, in 1881, she coached the beautiful Mrs. Langtry for her first appearance, at a benefit for the Royal General Theatrical Fund.

I mention these things as showing where the Musgroves got their sound judgment and keen sense of the theatre: they inherited from the Hodsons. George's mother was Fanny Hodson in her stage days.

George Musgrove was a man of dogged faith and boundless energy. But he had also the imagination, without which all faith is apt to be impotent and void in this our world of the theatre. He started his career literally with *threepence*. He was in at the beginning of the rubber-stamp industry, and went to New Zealand to exploit it. When he landed he had exactly three-pence to begin operations with.

Death has been busy with us all, and the large family of the Musgroves is shrunken. Of the original brothers only Harry remains, and the male line is represented now by Harry George, and Vic. the elder Harry's sons, and Jack and George, Arthur's sons.

There was nothing petty about George. He had an enormous respect for brains, and an utter contempt for humbug. But there was not an atom of malice in him. When he misjudged a man and suffered from it, he took his losses philosophically. He would not listen to the man in the street regarding any matter demanding special knowledge. He had the knack of taking any man's opinion for just about what it was worth.

The Musgroves knew lean times enough when the large family was young. George used to tell how he would be set to keep the baby, Tripper, quiet, and how he did it upon occasion most originally by tying sugar in the corner of a handkerchief and soaking it in gin, but Tripper is alive to-day and none the worse. It is strange that Harry, the only surviving senior, should have been regarded in infancy as the most delicate of all the children. He was the only one of the family brought up on the bottle.

George first did theatrical work in connection with the operatic enterprises of Saurin Lyster. Then he managed in front of the house for Soldene. It was while he was with Soldene that he met the man who advanced the money with which George went to England and brought out that great "Tambour Major" company. I never met that man, never heard his name; I think he died quite soon. George always said it was like a fairy-tale.

CHAPTER SIX.

GOLDEN YEARS.

If you build castles in the air your labour will
not be lost, that is where they should be; now
put foundations under them.

BROWNING.

THE old wooden Princess's Theatre, Melbourne, a commodious and always popular old barn which had seen many stars coruscate, having been demolished, Architect William Pitt designed the present structure.

That is, Mr. Pitt was credited with the work, but George Musgrove really planned and imagined the whole splendid fabric, and personally supervised every detail. The acoustic qualities were perfect; the commanding view and seating wonderful; and the stage, stage appointments, and lighting, a revelation. Above all, when he built, he did not forget commodious dressing-rooms and a sumptuous green-room for his artists. For their comfort and convenience every consideration was shown.

Old playgoers rubbed their eyes over the grandeur of the new Princess's, while professing that the seating of the old place—a 3/- stalls, a 2/- "Parquette," and a 1/- pit on the ground floor, with a wide horseshoe of 5/- dress-circle above—was more to their liking. But I thought then, at its opening in 1886, that it was im-



*Nellie Stewart in 1886,
in dress worn at re-opening of the
Princess's Theatre.*



*Princess's Theatre, Melbourne
in 1886.*

T
 is not so long since certain sages wrote,
 And told the world that out in Austral lands,
 No native song-birds made the gum-trees gay—
 How much they perred these arm-chair travellers
 Has oft been shown—but you—dear lady—stand
 The latest and the best disproof of such a slur
 To you—Australian-born—Australia points
 With honest pride. In you Australians see
 A darling sister—dowered with beauty rare
 A thousand graces, and the gift of Song;
 To which high culture adds the charms of Art
 In living pictures of dramatic power.
 Portrayed by you see Yum Yum trip and trill
 A breathing bit of porcelain from Japan—
 Quaint—delicate—delightful—maiden reared
 In daily view of Fusi-Yama's snows.
 Fair Phillis—pretty Patience—Mabel sweet
 And dainty Josephine; each in her turn
 Has won fresh homage at our willing hands—
 And Stella too, with mingled smiles and tears—
 These, and a score of heroines of the hour
 At Nellie Stewart's bidding live and love—
 But not alone upon the mimic stage
 Have you gained laurels that you wear full well.
 We who have met you in our daily work,
 Your fellow songsters of this gilded cage,
 Honour the woman, of whose private worth
 And kindly nature we have many a proof—
 And now farewell! or, rather, au revoir!
 A prosperous voyage—a happy holiday
 And then—come back! to find your place reserved
 Choice seat—front row—amidst Australian hearts.

Verses by Garnet Walsh.

*Taken from an illuminated address presented to Nellie Stewart
in 1887 by the members of Williamson, Garner & Musgrove's
Royal Comic Opera Company.*

measurably the best-appointed theatre in Australia. To-day, after it has had 37 years of occupancy, I am still of the same opinion.

The new Princess's Theatre was opened on Saturday, December 18, 1886, under the Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove management. Their managerial announcement ran:—

"It is anticipated that the opening of the New Princess's Theatre will mark an era in the theatrical history of Melbourne."

And who shall gainsay that confident prediction? The Princess's is very dear to me as the scene of many a memorable production and stirring first night.

"The Mikado" was the opening bill, with Alfred Cellier, the composer of "Dorothy," in the conductor's chair. He had a band of 25 musicians, and played by way of prelude, the overture to "The Merry Wives of Windsor." But the initial ceremony was the singing of the National Anthem by the members of the company and chorus, grouped on the stage in modern dress. The Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Brougham Loch and Lady Loch were present, and there was a brilliant "society" house. After the National Anthem, three cheers were given for the Governor and his Lady.

The theatre was much admired, and the sliding-roof—then a complete novelty—made a very favourable impression, as did also the "grottoes" with their miniature waterfalls, on either side of the proscenium.

The new act-drop painted by George Gordon was also much praised.

This was the cast for "The Mikado" on that memorable night:—

The Mikado	Albert Brennir
Nanki-Poo	W. H. Woodfield
Ko-Ko	Howard Vernon
Pooh-Bah	H. Benham
Pish-Tush	T. Grundy
Yum-Yum	Nellie Stewart
Pitti-Sing	Ida Osborne
Peep-Bo	Lillie Forde
Katisha	Alice Barnett

I remember while we were rehearsing "Mikado," I began Yum-Yum's song at the opening of the second act, "Moon and I," when Cellier stopped me. You remember the words,

The sun, whose rays
Are all ablaze
With ever living glory—

And so on.

Cellier objected that I was using a wrong tempo. "Not a bit like it!" he said.

Now, I had sung it *my* way in the first production, and didn't like the idea of altering it. At the Savoy, it seems, the song had been hurried along in strict tempo.

But Cellier wouldn't listen to my explanations. The traditions of the Savoy were sacrosanct and had to be observed.

George came to my rescue. "Would you mind hearing Miss Stewart sing it in her own way before you decide, Cellier?" he asked.

Cellier, politest of men, consented, and when I had finished, he said.

"Right. Let it go at that. I admit it's an improvement."

Which was a feather in my cap, don't you think?

This revival of "The Mikado," although it had been seen so recently—at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne,

during the month of March, '86, its Australian *première*—was successful in every way, and the opera ran until Saturday, January 8, 1887, when it was replaced by "The Pirates of Penzance." I then played Mabel for the first time in Melbourne, with the following support:—

Major General Stanley	Howard Vernon
Pirate King	Albert Brennir
Frederick	W. H. Woodfield
Samuel	Frank Ridsdale
Sergeant of Police	H. Benham
Ruth (her original rôle)	Alice Barnett
Edith	Ida Osborne
Kate	Lillie Forde
Isabel	Ada Walker

A fortnight later, January 22, "Iolanthe" was revived, with Howard Vernon replacing Robert Brough as the Lord Chancellor. Ida Osborne was Iolanthe, Alice Barnett in her original part of Fairy Queen, and I resumed my original rôle of Phyllis.

A week later I appeared as "Patience" with Alice Barnett in her original part of Lady Jane.

On Friday, February 4, 1887, the management tendered me a benefit, and "The Mikado" was selected as the attraction. This was announced, somewhat inaccurately and prematurely as events have shown, as

"NELLIE STEWART'S LAST APPEARANCE IN
AUSTRALIA."

"YUM-YUM FOR THE LAST TIME."

"'MIKADO' FOR THE LAST TIME."

Well, well!

I find, also, that this notification was made in my name: —

“Miss Nellie Stewart begs to inform her friends and musical patrons of Melbourne, that after six years of continuous daily labour in the exercise of her profession, an early retirement from the stage for a period of twelve months is necessary to enable her to obtain complete rest.”

There was an overwhelming house. Mr. W. H. Woodfield read some verses which had been written for the occasion by the brilliant Garnet Walch. These verses were most artistically printed by Troedel and Co. and the memento was presented to me with due ceremony, amidst great enthusiasm.

Mr. Woodfield also presented me with a diamond bracelet from the members of the company, and a crescent of diamonds and pearls, and a diamond bangle were other presents on that great night.

Mind you, complimentary benefits in those days were not very remunerative to the beneficiary. They were part of the showman's game. After expenses, the net profits were bestowed on a deserving charity.

The Comic Opera Company then carried on with Julia Sidney as *prima donna*, in “Billee Taylor.” “Billy” Elton, that versatile comedian, made his first Australian bow in comic opera in that production. “Billie Taylor” was supplemented by Cellier's “musical proverb,” “Charity Begins at Home,” in which Elton also appeared.

Revivals of “Pirates,” “Iolanthe,” “Mikado,” and “Patience” followed, with a benefit each to W. H. Woodfield and Alice Barnett.

On Saturday, February 26, 1887, that breezy melo-

drama by Sims and Pettitt, "The Harbour Lights," was presented at the Princess's, and the Comic Opera Co. moved on. Phil Beck and Isabel Morris were in the lead. Louise Davenport, H. H. Vincent and Herbert Fleming were also in the cast, and the play had a long and successful run.

Dear me! I must take care lest these wild and wandering recollections degenerate into a mere schedule of plays and dates. But the old playbills hold some dear memories for me, and, who knows? They may also stir some fond remembrances in my friends of yesterday.

In 1887, the Queen's Jubilee Year, I went to London. With me were George and his mother; and his aunt, Mrs. Saurin Lyster.

It was on this voyage that there befell a little accident that made it impossible that I should ever get over my loathing of rats. One generation gives place to another; officers of passenger ships reach the age limit and retire; pursers marry snug widows, or set up hotels in competition with retired chief stewards; but ever after the time of which I write every rodent that showed a questing whisker on a certain P. & O. liner was hailed as the "Nellie Stewart Rat."

One day when cricket was progressing merrily, I was sitting with George's mother and aunt having tea. Suddenly I felt something climbing up my petticoats, something that felt large and nimble. I jumped up and for one sickening moment stood petrified—the next, a huge grey rat ran down my leg and along the deck, to be promptly killed by a vigilant quarter-master.

Honestly, it was the biggest rat I ever saw. Scared? In point of fact the whole thing happened too quickly to allow me time to feel scared, but I had neuralgia for a fortnight afterwards, and what I hated almost as much was, that my adventure became the standing

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Honestly, it was the biggest rat I ever saw. Scared? In point of fact the whole thing happened too quickly to allow me time to feel scared, but I had neuralgia for a fortnight afterwards, and what I hated almost as much was, that my adventure became the standing

topic of conversation for weeks afterwards. If the rat had run up my sleeve I would not have minded a hundredth part as much, but I did hate to think that my legs were subjects of conversation within the narrow walls of a ship, to be discussed *ad nauseam* whenever I appeared or my name was mentioned. However, the rest of the voyage was uneventful and we reached London at last after a happy, delightful time.

On this occasion we went to England simply to see things, and it was then I first saw Miss Marie Tempest. She was playing in "Dorothy," and I shall never forget the impression her exquisite work and personality made on me. I suppose she is personally one of the most charming women in the world. She seems to live in a world of ideas of which she has made herself the mistress. She is able at any moment to talk brilliantly on any subject; she has been everywhere, and has met everybody—excepting the people she has not chosen to meet. This excerpt from "The Gaiety and George Grossmith" is an apt illustration of her *own* success:—

"Marie Tempest gave some idea of the years of drudgery and hard work which must be undergone by an actress who serves her apprenticeship to the business of Charm, when, as the gay little widow in Arnold Bennet's play, 'The Honeymoon,' she said with tremendous conviction, after seating herself in her own inimitable style: 'It took me exactly seven years to learn how to sit down like that, and in another seven years I expect to do it even better.'"

I hold firmly to my opinion that on the stage, as off, a girl can be just as good as she wants to. I wonder if it has ever struck you why Gaiety girls to-day so often make admirable marriages with those whom you call aristocrats? Permit me to quote once more from "The Gaiety and George Grossmith:"—

"Shortly after a strikingly handsome Gaiety actress had taken unto herself as a husband a winsome but not too opulent Irish peer, two prominent society ladies happened to talk together in Grossmith's

hearing of the manner in which the new peeress had acquitted herself while entertaining in Ireland at her husband's country seat. 'All things considered, I think she has been a success,' was the patronising verdict of one; whereas the other, who had met her out with the hounds a few days before, said that 'she carried so much scent they could not get on to the fox.'

"Naturally, this sally quickly went the round of the town. The best commentary on it has come since, for the erstwhile actress about whom it was circulated has fulfilled the duties of her new rank so well that she is to-day one of the most popular hostesses in society, while the kind lady friend who set it in motion, after being her severest critic, is now happy to be counted among the most devoted, if not the most servile, or her satellites."

Well, I saw everything, and, in such spare time as I could contrive to steal, I took lessons from Randegger; he was an admirable teacher with the courage of his ideas. It was part of his method to take some of his pupils to his own box at the opera and there point out the faults and merits of the singers as they sang. He was married to Adeline de Leure, who afterwards became Mrs. Hayden Coffin, a very beautiful woman who used to help him in his teaching. She also had been a pupil at the Academy, I think at the same time as Miss Marie Tempest and Miss Marion Burton. The latter was the original "Paul Jones" under Mr. Musgrove's management in Melbourne in 1889.

Another item, while I remember it. I saw Cora Urquhart Potter's first appearance in London. That was at the Haymarket Theatre in "Man and Wife," 1887.

Mrs. Brown Potter was very beautiful in her slender and somewhat sinister style, but I don't suppose that anybody now will seriously pretend that she was ever a great actress. Sometimes a notable personal success may be made on the stage in spite of very poor acting. Mrs. Brown Potter's was at best a success of singularity. Her voice, naturally husky (some husky

voices are very beautiful), she overworked to the point of stridency. She clothed her lithe body in such a way as gave an effect of snakiness. Long before the cinema, she was first of the vampires. She always had an eye for the main chance, and she always had the knack of making use of her social connections and acquaintance as aids to her theatrical success. Mr. Brown Potter I never met. They spent their honeymoon in Europe together, and then Mr. Brown Potter disappeared finally and completely from view—as they tell me, a good American husband should.

Says Dr. Charles S. Ryan, in *Under the Red Crescent*:—

“It is to Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett that I owe my first introduction to a very charming American lady, who has since become known to a wide circle through her career on the stage. When I first met her she was an extraordinarily pretty woman, and she and her husband were on their honeymoon trip. He was a very gentlemanly man, with a rather retiring disposition, while she was about twenty years of age, and a perfect model of youthful womanhood. Every glance of her brightly flashing eyes and every line of her finely moulded figure told of bounding life and vivacity. Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett and I saw a good deal of her and her husband for a week or two. We had lunch together often, and took part in several picnics up the Bosphorus, in that springtime nineteen years ago, when the blue waters of the strait and the bright eyes of La Belle Americaine laughed in harmony, while Europe was waiting with beating heart for the verdict—peace or war. I met the B—— P——s again on board the steamer which took me away from Constantinople. Then our paths in life divided, and I had almost forgotten this vivacious American lady, when one evening a year or two ago I dropped into the Princess's Theatre in Melbourne to see Sardou's great play, *La Tosca*. In the actress who was playing the name part I recognized my acquaintance of the stirring times of war. Mrs. B—— P——.”

Dr. “Charlie” was ever susceptible!

I am breaking all the rules in telling this story of mine. When I feel like digressing, I digress. When I think of an incident that bears on what I am saying, I introduce it. Don't be shocked if it is occasionally years

out of place. All I want is to loiter back with you over ways we have travelled so pleasantly together.

I know that I made no actual professional appearances in London when I was there at this time, but Arthur Sullivan heard me sing; Alfred Cellier took me to him.

I never could sing anything in a drawing-room; I was too shy to do so. But one night, when George and I were dining at the D'Oyley Carte's, Arthur Sullivan and Alfred Cellier were there. After dinner, Cellier went to the piano and played over some of "Patience."

Then he turned to me and said, "I want you to let Mr. Sullivan hear how you sing that passage in 'Love is a Plaintive Song.' "

I used to carry on the last note of the phrase into the next long phrase of the waltz refrain, *mezzo voce*, which I introduced a good deal into my comic opera work.

The result must have been satisfactory, for D'Oyley Carte offered me the *title rôle* in "The Nautch Girl," which they were about to produce, and I rehearsed the leading part under D'Oyley Carte's management. But Mr. Cellier was not satisfied with the way in which I was being treated, and in the end he would not let me play the part at all, although most of it had been actually written for me.

Jessie Bond and Rutland Barrington were great favourites at that time at the Savoy, and had become respectable traditions, therefore they rather resented the idea of anyone coming in from the outside world. This, indeed, was the general tone at the Savoy—I doubt if it was ever admitted there was any place on earth *outside* the Savoy.

Years later, when our friend Mr. Charles Workman came to Australia, he was regarded at the Savoy as

deceased. One grey and sedate figure of the company would turn in his sleep and murmur to another, "Think there's anything in this spiritualism business? 'Cause I've heard there have been communications from the late Charles Workman," And the other would say "It's all rot, dear old chap." After which they would both sleep more soundly than before.

The audience at the Savoy came to worship, and when anything that was not Gilbert and Sullivan was produced their contemptuous reception of it froze the poor thing to death.

"The Nautch Girl" was actually presented on June 30, 1891.

Punka	Mr. Rutland Barrington
Indra	Mr. Courtice Pounds
Pygama	Mr. Frank Thornton
Baliss Curree	Mr. F. Wyatt
Bumbo	Mr. W. H. Denny
Chinna Louis	Miss Jessie Bond
Sullie	Miss Saumarez
Cheetah	Miss Lawrence
Hollie Beebra	Miss L. Snyder
Bougan	Miss Louise Rowe
Kake	Miss Annie Cole
Tippers	Miss Cora Tinnie

I give this cast because, curiously enough, this seems to have been Miss Jessie Bond's last appearance at the Savoy. The piece was written by George Dance, with lyrics by Frank Desprez, creator of poor barbarously murdered Lasca. Of the players in the production, Mr. Thornton was afterwards well-known in Australia. W. H. Denny came to Australia later with George Musgrove's Shakespearean Company. His performance of Bottom was masterly and Mr. Courtice

Pounds paid us one visit. A sister, Miss Louie Pounds, was brought out by Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh for the original "Chu Chin Chow" company, a company that began to break up when Mr. McIntosh went out of management. Before "The Nautch Girl" at the Savoy was "The Gondoliers," and there were no striking successes in the old and dignified order afterwards.

It was on this visit to London that I first made the acquaintance of the Gaiety Company, "The Count of Monte Cristo" was the burlesque being played, with Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie heading a strong cast. And George did not lose the opportunity of inducing George Edwardes, difficult as it was, to send them to Australia at a later date.

A production that gave me much enjoyment before I left London was Henry Irving's "Faust." Miss Ellen Terry was Marguerite—oh, so beautiful and distinguished, so womanly! She was a revelation!! George Alexander was the Faust and Henry Irving the Mephistopheles.

While in London this time, I took dancing lessons from D'Auban, the greatest dancing master of the day. In odd moments I collected things I wanted, stage jewels and so on.

On our return to Australia we were to play a comic opera, "Pepita" (by Lecocq), and I bought all the dresses for it.

All through that long sojourn I had a busy time in London, in fact I always seemed to have a busy time there. First of all I learned to love London, as I discovered how lovable it is. One hears so much about terrible, cruel, desolate London, but I think it is the homeliest city in the world—always attuned to one's moods, always understanding. The joy of discovering her soon became a passion with me.

"If anyone wants Fairy Land,
A London street will do,
A street that windeth to the west,
Where sunsets do their heavenly best
For hearts that love the view."

It was not easy to see just how any place affected George. He was always gentle, quiet, amused, dependable, but he never made any display of his emotions. But he *loved* London, *that* I know. It was his home. He was born in Surbiton. Most of his leisure at this time was spent in planning new enjoyments for us.

We were taken to Paris and enthralled—it was my first visit, and I still feel the breathless wonder of it. Each day brought something. The trouble with George was that he was so rich in ideas and arrangements that one could not possibly see a great deal in the time we had. He even took me down to Monte Carlo and told me I might as well have a little gamble for the fun of the thing.

That was an experience I hated with all my being. When I got into that great Casino the expressions on the people's faces made me quite ill. That sensation of deep horror is with me yet, and I have found nowhere outside Monte Carlo so poignant a sense of something lurking, menacing and sinister. One sees vice everywhere if one looks for it, but in the Casino at Monte Carlo it is paraded, naked and snarling and hideous.

I saw human vultures, mouths hanging loose in their excitement, terrible, clutching hands, men and women brought to the level of treacherous and ruthless beasts of prey. Never again did I see humanity so stripped of the conventions and the decencies. Monte Carlo frightened me and made me ashamed. After I had seen those dreadful unmasked faces at the Casino, the golden air and blue sea outside, all the natural, win-

ning beauties of the place, seemed like ornaments benizening horrid death.

I tell you all this largely because I don't mind a bet or any little thing like that and it is odd that I should feel as I do about the casino at Monte Carlo; but if you are sensitive, as I was at that age, and if you go and watch those faces, you will appreciate at least some part of what I felt in that great market where vampires and cocottes traffic in souls. I love life so well that I instinctively hate everything that cheapens and degrades it.

I am at least innocent of any love of gain. I don't think I ever gave a serious thought to money; as long as I had a few shillings in my purse, I didn't care. I always knew when I was with George that I could order what I wanted, and my tastes do not run to extravagance. I can't understand the thrill of any mercenary ambition. There are people who get a lot of fun out of the sense of just possessing cash. I don't grudge them their satisfaction, but I don't understand it. And the idea of snatching chance gains from the teeth of that insenate wolfish misery that snarls beneath the gilded surface of Monte Carlo—that misery of savage passion and stark hate—simply horrified me.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

SUMMER MEMORIES.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN we returned home to Australia we found everything going as merrily as ever. Dear Australia! What a place of delight it was in those days. I find it changed in many ways now, and I am sure the change is not merely an effect of the changing years on my own perceptions and ideas. In the late eighties and early nineties Australia was the most joyous country in the world. Every night, with the sole exception of Sunday night in Melbourne, every city kept carnival. Life went to a whirl of amusement.

While we had been abroad Alfred Cellier's "Dorothy" had been produced. This was at the Princess's,



*Nellie Stewart
in "Dorothy," 1887.*

Melbourne, on Saturday, August 20, 1887. The original Australian cast:—

Dorothy Bantam	Leonora Braham
Squire Bantam	Albert Brennir
Mrs. Privett	Alice Barnett
Harry Sherwood	Federici
Geoffrey Wilder	W. H. Woodfield
Lydia Hawthorne	Aggie Kelton
Phyllis Tuppit	Ida Osborne
Lurcher	Billy Elton

Johnny Wallace was stage-manager, and Benham played a small part. Mary Weir danced in a ballet in Act 3, and Harrison was the conductor.

Alas! The production had been a huge failure. It was followed by one week of "The Mikado," and then "Les Cloches de Corneville" with Maggie Moore as Serpolette, and Elton as Gaspard, the miser.

Oddly enough "Dorothy" didn't make a success at the Gaiety, London, either, when it was first produced. The Press slated the management for leaving Hayden Coffin without a song, and an old Cellier lyric called "Old Dreams," with new words by B. C. Stephenson, was pushed into the second act as "Queen of My Heart." Then H. J. Leslie took the opera to the Prince of Wales Theatre, and engaged Marie Tempest and Ben Davies to strengthen the cast, and triumphant success followed.

So although "Dorothy" had fallen rather flat in Melbourne, we determined to give it another chance, and it was revived at the Princess's on Saturday, January 28, 1888, less than six months after its initial failure. This time it succeeded splendidly.

I played the title rôle and now the Wilder was Leumaine; Harry Sherwood, Knight Aston; and Alice Barnett, Ida Osborne, and Billy Elton in their old parts.

Does that sound egotistical? Perhaps. But on this occasion the opera had its brilliant composer, Alfred Cellier, in the conductor's chair.

I was eager to play the part, and especially to give my own rendering of "Tally Ho!" at the finale of the second act. The way I sang it was more brilliant, and with a more rapid tempo than in the original production. I sang with all my heart and soul, loving every note, and responding to the thrill of the hunting cry, so much so that as I swept down the stage cracking my whip, the audience would be worked up to the highest pitch of excitement, and after my last note would burst into vociferous applause and wild cheers.

How I loved it! But, oh my! didn't it take a lot out of one! For there was the quick dash to the dressing room with just time to swallow a cup of cold beef tea, the stripping off of dress, and the change into male attire for the last act. Ah, what comedy that last act was, and how I used to revel in it—fresh fun every night. The part suited me so well that it was no wonder the play was a gigantic success. Of course I had new dresses, as I invariably did, all made to my own design. I always believe in being picturesque, even if one is in rags.

Do you think we get more varied theatrical attractions nowadays? About the time that "Dorothy" was running in Melbourne, the brilliant Majeronis had just finished a season of comedy at the Bijou and were followed by Emilie Melville and Wybert Reeve in "Masks and Faces." George Rignold, who had been starring in "The Two Orphans" at Her Majesty's Opera House (now the Tivoli), and running Her Majesty's Hotel in Swanston Street as a side-line, was followed by the Brouchs with Fanny Robina and Teddy Royce in "Little Jack Sheppard." Wirth's Circus was at the



*Nellie Stewart
in "Dorothy," Act I.*



*Nellie Stewart
in "Dorothy," Act II.*

Alexandra in Exhibition Street (now Her Majesty's), and was succeeded by Carrie Swain in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Phil Day was playing "Mixed" with Dot Boucicault in the cast. The New Italian Opera Company under Hazon was just about to start at the Theatre Royal, where Maggie Moore and J. C. Williamson were farewelling once more in "Struck Oil." The Cogills were at St. George's Hall (next the Theatre Royal, now a picture theatre) and Frank M. Clark, a showman who is still appearing all over Australasia in the Selig films, was in his second year at the Victoria Hall. Clark, like George Rignold, also conducted a Swanston Street hostelry, "The Earl of Rosebery."

Mr. Cellier had been wielding the conductor's baton in Australia for Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove when "Dorothy" was first produced in London. Years before, his opera "Nell Gwynne," with a libretto by H. B. Farnie (who was also one of the librettists of Robert Planquette's "Rip Van Winkle"), had been a dismal failure at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. Farnie politely suggested that the killing frost was due to Cellier's music, but Cellier felt sure that it was because of the calamitous nature of Farnie's libretto.

Later on B. C. Stephenson wrote new words for the "Nell Gwynne" score, and the *réchauffé* was labelled "Dorothy." Cellier got back to London to find that during his absence in Australia he had made the big success of his life.

Somehow, I like to recall that the operas "Dorothy," and "Nell Gwynne" were really one, for both names are associated in my mind with happy successes.

Alfred Cellier was invariably "immaculately groomed," and always wore white kid gloves when wielding the baton—he looked a distinguished figure in the conductor's chair.

One imagines him to have been something of a night-owl. Certainly he was not an early riser, for I remember George telling me that when a travelling notice was posted on the theatre call-board, directing the Royal Comics to leave for Ballarat, or somewhere at 11 a.m., Cellier complained.

"Hang it all, Musgrove, I hate these early morning journeys! I'll have to sit up all night for fear of missing this d—d train!"

However, he was anything but languid as a composer, for it is an open secret that he was the musical "ghost" who compiled the overtures for many of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas owing to the inveterate indolence and indifferent health of Sir Arthur Sullivan. And Cellier told me himself that he was the composer of Mabel's famous waltz-song in "Pirates of Penzance"—Poor Wandering One.

After my success as Dorothy, Alfred Cellier was very keen on my singing Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust." We produced it at the Princess's on March 3, 1888. This was the cast:—

Mephistopheles	Federici
Faust	Leumaine
Martha	Alice Barnett
Valentine	Knight Aston
Siebel	Fanny Liddiard
Marguerite	Nellie Stewart

The scenery was by Gordon, and, of course, Cellier conducted the opera.

I think my notices were wonderful for this, the first grand opera part I had ever attempted. I was anxious and eager, and a little afraid—but anyway it ran for twenty-four consecutive performances, a record unprecedented in the annals of opera. This performance



*Nellie Stewart
as "Marguerite" in "Faust," 1887.
Opening of Act IV.*

is the more notable because I sang the spinning song in the original score, always omitted now by grand opera *prime donne*. I don't refer to the King of Thule number at the spinning wheel in Act 3, but another number in Act 4.

In the prison scene we sang the great trio in its entirety, a thing very seldom attempted, because of the exceptionally difficult passage—three ascending modulations, a tone higher each time. So naturally I felt tremendously proud of accomplishing this feat. I had been very much impressed with Ellen Terry's beautiful acting as Marguerite, and she was constantly in my thoughts. I copied her dresses and did the scene at the well which she had done in the play.

I think most people will remember the tragic ending of our first night when Federici, the Mephistopheles of the cast, died, with the last note he sang when descending under the stage.

The audience left the theatre knowing nothing of the ghastly tragedy that had been acted before their very eyes. To us of the company the effect was terrifying. We were stunned. When the newspapers told the story on the Monday it came as a profound shock to the community.

We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds.
What fame is left for human deeds,
In endless age? It rests with God.

—TENNYSON

By a strange coincidence, I, who had never had to do a back fall on the stage, was called upon to do so on that fateful night. When Marguerite died, my fall was so badly managed that I came down on the back of my head, with a fearful crash, which was heard all over the theatre. The next day was Sunday, and the flag of the Princess's being flown half-mast for poor Federici's

death, it was thought by some that it was I, not he who had died.

On the Monday (March 5) the theatre was closed out of respect to Federici's memory. The opera was resumed on the Tuesday night, with St. Clair as Mephistopheles.

The "Faust" season was followed by Charles Warner's appearance at the Princess's in "London Assurance," "Fool's Revenge," "Lady of Lyons," etc.

The Opera Company went on to the Theatre Royal, Sydney, where "Pinafore," "Princess Ida," "Dorothy," "Erminie," and "The Mikado" were presented.

A notable first night occurred at the Princess's, Melbourne, on Saturday, April 20, of the following year. This was the Australian *première* of "The Yeoman of the Guard," by Gilbert and Sullivan. Elton was Jack Point; Leumaine, Colonel Fairfax; and I played Elsie Maynard.

Then of course Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie were sent out by George Musgrove with the first Gaiety Company; such a constellation of stars as would be impossible in these days of high salaries. I saw much of them out here and they were all very charming people.

Nellie Farren's vivid personality had compelling magnetism and she could do whatever she chose with her audience. Fred Leslie was also a distinguished comedian who made a most engaging success of personality. He and several of the others had an intimate touch that was very unusual and delightful.

The company was astonishingly rich in dancers—Sylvia Grey, Letty Lind, Willie Ward, Fred Storey (whose daughter, Sylvia, married Earl Poulett in 1908, this was the seventh Earl Poulett, who had to contest his title with a presumptive organ grinder), and others.

The dancing of Sylvia Grey and Letty Lind was exquisite. We have brilliant dancing in Australia still, but the alluring grace, the subtle witchery, the magical allure of such dancing as this—where shall you hope to find it now? Both of these dancers had an air of personal distinction; they danced as a rule in a rich cloud of drapery and laces, without depending in the least on any suggested or actual exploitation of nudity.

With the company was Marion Hood, who had been the Mabel in "The Pirates of Penzance" in the London production at the Savoy. Blanche Massie was also popular. This is to mention only a few of the distinguished people in that wonderful show. The rush was so great in Sydney, the task of providing for all who wanted to be at the *première* so difficult, that the stalls were auctioned, which was, incidentally, a very good thing for the management.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

Keep your face always towards the sunshine,
and the shadows will fall behind you.

WHITTIER

IT was in 1889 that some sort of friction first occurred between Messrs. Williamson, Garner and Musgrove. I had been working so hard, and the continual strain of new rôles in comic opera and Gilbert and Sullivan—all being so successful—that my father thought I was entitled to some recognition in the way of a little more salary. For up to now I had been getting only £15 weekly, for *prima donna*, mind you, creating successfully most of the rôles. In fact I never remember one failure, and my newspaper criticisms were always very wonderful and kind.

Well, what do you think happened? This—Rather than give me a rise in salary, one of the triumvirate suggested two *prime donne* to take my place, their joint salaries amounting to £40 per week! I need not tell you that I fretted so much over this that my father had to go and see the firm and ask them to take me back.

I think that this must have had something to do with the friction which ended in George taking the Opera House and producing "Paul Jones."

It was strange how this bit of luck occurred, for of course everyone remembers the phenomenal success it was.



Nellie Stewart
as "Yvonne" in "Paul Jones," Act II.



*Nellie Stewart
as "Yvonne" in "Paul Jones," Act I.*



*Nellie Stewart
as "Fredigonde" in "Chilperic."*

Marian Burton (who had made quite a name with the Carl Rosa Company's operas in England in the 'eighties, in such parts as Frederic in "Mignon," Siebel in "Faust," Page in "Les Huguenots,") came out to Australia with her husband, Herbert Waterlow, and was persuaded to give concerts at the Town Hall. She had a very beautiful contralto voice with a mezzo range, and was a beautiful woman as well—young, and her poise and carriage were excellently suited to boy characters.

She had seen my performances out here, and on being introduced to George Musgrove told him of the latest big success in London, featuring a lady called Agnes Huntingdon who essayed the same boy rôles as Madame Burton had made her own with Carl Rosa.

It was she who suggested sending for the opera, which was "Paul Jones," that she should play the title rôle with me as Yvonne, the girl, and Snazelle for the comedian. Snazelle had also been in the Carl Rosa Opera Company and was a popular singing baritone, his Devilshoof in "Bohemian Girl" being indeed quite famous. George Leitch was The Insect, and Johnnie Gourlay, another character comedian and singer, played the dancing Governor. The cast was a strong one, and the success phenomenal.

We next revived "Boccacio," Madame Burton alternating the title rôle with me. After this we revived the old Hervé "Chilperic," with W. H. Woodfield in the title rôle and myself as Fredigonde. I loved the part and it suited me admirably. It was in this that we introduced some of the old Ackhurst burlesque effects from "King Arthur," or "The Knights of the Round Table."

I had a mad scene as "Fredigonde" in which, with my knowledge of Shakespeare's Ophelia, I was able to do much. Here again, I want to emphasise how necessary it is for a stage aspirant to know his Shakespeare. In

every rôle one is called upon to enact, whether it be drama, comedy, burlesque, or comic opera, there is always some little situation or phrase that requires traditional treatment, if it is only an inflection in diction; enunciation; or declamatory powers, and one of the reasons of the modern actor or actress's non-success is that lack of knowledge of Shakespeare.

I cannot hope to pick up everything from the litter of these crowded years. Just here a bit, and there a bit, if you don't mind. I find I have not mentioned Essie Jenyns yet, though she made a very dazzling and spectacular success. People have forgotten that George Darrel's play "The Sunny South" was written specially for her. I saw a good deal of Essie and I liked her much. At one time she used to live next door to us in Powlett Street, East Melbourne. She was a beautiful girl who had little pleasure in the days of her adolescence—step-daughter's luck. Her Shakespearean successes were quite legitimate and genuine. She had youth and charm and intelligence. She married on the crest of her first big success, and left the stage for good.

Following this season came London again and our first reverses for poor old George. His luck was out and disaster after disaster occurred—the burning of the Theatre Royal, Sydney. Mrs. Bernard Beere's season, the failure of the second Gaiety Company.

My luck was out too; George Sims wrote a burlesque called "Blue Eyed Susan," because he thought my eyes were blue, (I wonder why I am always credited with blue eyes?), and under George Edwardes' management this was produced, with myself as Susan, Marian Burton as William, and Arthur Roberts as The Admiral. It was not any good. I myself did not do great things in it—in fact, excepting in "The Forty Thieves" at Drury Lane some years later, I never seemed to over-



*Nellie Stewart
as "Blue-eyed Susan," at the
Prince of Wales' Theatre,
London, 1892.*

Act I.



Act II.



Act III.

come my extreme nervousness, and certainly I never sang my best in London. It was climatic, I think—I seemed to miss the exhilarating air of my native country. I always felt so depressed, and my natural vivacity was always wanting. Anyway, it was a very poor edition of my real self that I gave. Marian Burton did no good either, and was replaced by Wallace Brownlow, who was brought from the provinces and made good in London—his voice was glorious.

It is thought by many that I never had reverses, that the opportunities I had were the means of helping me to big continuous successes in Australia. I say *No!!* And it was the very reverses I went through about this time that made my work grow in largeness and artistic merit.

I suppose some folk would smile if I tell them that I had known what it is to be hungry; that I have ripped and turned my old dresses and hats to hide their obvious shabbiness! Yet when the bank failures came, my father in Australia, and sister Maggie, lost every penny and in fact were left with only the few pounds in the house. At the time my father had retired to live with my mother and sister on his hard earned savings, which brought in an income of £10 or £12 per week—sufficient in those days on which to retire. George Musgrove saw to it at once that money was cabled out to them weekly. It was not until my father died in 1902 that it came to my knowledge that none of this money had ever been touched by them, but left accumulating in the bank in my name. Father went back to the theatre again as Treasurer for J. C. Williamson.

After this George visited Australia again, bad luck still pursuing him. During his absence I went to live with Mrs. Waterlow (Marian Burton), and her family in Devonshire at a little place about five miles from

Paignton, called Totnes. The cider apples grow there to perfection. And I am not exaggerating when I say that I have picked five clothes-baskets full of mushrooms, as big as dinner plates, in half an hour. Anyone who has not seen this part of England cannot realise the grandeur and beauty of an English country life. It spells Romance all the time.

A little incident happened while I was living with the Waterlows, which I give only as a tiny illustration of an Australian girl's pluck and reckless daring. Late one night Mrs. Waterlow was taken suddenly very ill; she was in agony; there was no doctor nearer than Paignton, five miles or more away, and no hired man on the premises. The horse which drew the phaeton had been turned loose in the fields, and had not done any work for months. Mr. Waterlow himself was nervous of horses and did not know how to harness one.

Something I knew must be done, and it was up to me to do it. I caught the tail of the horse, and holding on till he stopped, which he did suddenly after careering madly with me behind for some distance, the harness was on and we were in the phaeton driving towards Paignton in less than 20 minutes—no lamps, no lights but the stars.

The doctor I brought back was not a young man, but I think he knew more of Australia during our little return journey than he had ever known, or cared to know in his life before. The "Why's" and the "Wherefore's" he asked me egged me on to many little tales and jokes of my beloved Australia, all harmless, mind you, but some—well—perhaps imaginative should one say? Anyhow, he enjoyed them, and to this day he writes to me as "The Little Plucked'un."

Talking about horses reminds me of a funny incident which occurred during one of my early New Zea-

land tours with the Comic Opera Company. I have always enjoyed horseback, and rode well, one of the presents from George being a first-prize winner jumping hack, although I never attempted jumping contests myself.

On the occasion I write of, while in Christchurch in the winter time, the hounds met weekly. I accepted a mount on an old-time hunter called Patience, who was declared to be quite past any desire to join in, so I felt safe. I dared not risk an accident, with no understudy, ("La Mascotte" was the opera we were playing), so off to the meet I went and all seemed well for a while. The trail was scented, the hounds were off, and old Patience with me on her back; one or two other stragglers followed, riding easily at a distance until—Whoop! the hare had doubled back and crossed under old Patience's nose, the hounds after the hare, and oh!!! Off we went, helter skelter—Patience, old Patience, as frisky and fit as any two-year-old—over fence and ditch, through ploughed fields, oh! And me? Well, I didn't come off—I hung on somehow—but oh, my! I have never since accepted a mount on either an "old"-timer, or a "young"-timer.

Patience must have felt as I do always when I get a sniff of the footlights—everything is forgotten, excepting that I am *there*, with my beloved public in front of me, and the desire to give my best—to please—to hear their appreciation—and to deserve it all. Indeed, indeed, I feel just like a two-year-old.

George was in Australia for some months on that visit, and he arrived back in London, where I joined him from Devonshire, in August 1892. Money was still scarce with us, and for ten months I lived quietly in a little village called Chingford, in Essex, very humbly, and with very little pleasure, as George was away in

America most of the time. And so it was there that Nancye was born.

Those were dear days. I used to go and sit in the delightful old church at Chigwell. Mr. George Edwardes had a beautiful country house at Wingfield and we saw much of him and his family. He had a little girl named Nancye, after whom my Nancye was named.

I remember that the popular song of the moment was "Daisy Bell," and I used to croon her to sleep with "a bicycle made for two."

In the meantime George, who was now in partnership with Mr. J. C. Williamson again, had made arrangements for my rejoining the Firm.

George had to leave for Australia ahead of me. Nancye was born in June, and the Red Sea was impossible for us at that season. But you will see that, as I had to appear in Australia in August, mother had to take her place as actress again in a very short time.

So Nancye and I went out by the Cape route, and oh, what a voyage it was! The "Doric" was the name of the ship, and I had a very trying time on her. Here I want to say how kind Judge Innes' son, Reg. Long-Innes was to me. I don't know how I should have got along during the voyage but for his extreme thoughtfulness.

I arrived in Melbourne the day Nancye was three months old, and was hurried off to Sydney to open a season of all the old operas.

We commenced in September and played a repertoire of nine operas. Nine operas in nine weeks, with eight performances each week. Every opera represented a new, or comparatively new, study for me, since I had not played in these for nearly three years. Also the cast was new throughout. Yet it was not till now that I realised and interpreted these rôles satisfactorily to



Nancye, aged 2 years.



Nellie Stewart and Nancye.



Nancye, aged 7 years.

myself. My voice had grown in volume. We did "La Mascotte," "Olivette," "La Cigale," "The Mikado," "Pirates of Penzance," "Dorothy," "The Gondoliers," "Yeoman of the Guard," and "Les Cloches de Corneville." I was Gianetta in "The Gondoliers," and I assumed the title rôle in "La Cigale."

About that time, too, we did "The Mountebanks," a comic opera by W. S. Gilbert and Alfred Cellier. "The Mountebanks" awakens memories. Cellier was staying with us at our home, "Braeside," Sunningdale, near Ascot (England) when he composed the music. He had me in his kindly eye to create the part of Teresa. At that time Alfred Cellier was a very sick man, and it was only by a supreme effort of will that he kept his mind concentrated on his work. The peevish Gilbert kept the invalid's nose to the musical grindstone very persistently. He worried and harassed poor Cellier over the slow progress he was making with the score so much that I honestly believe he hastened his end.

Be that as it may, Cellier never saw this, his last opera produced.

The circumstances of his death touched me nearly, and when I was playing in "The Mountebanks," in Sydney, I mentioned to a pressman that in my opinion Gilbert's impatience had been contributive to the composer's death. This was duly printed, and my carelessly-spoken words must have found their way to England.

Some time later we were in London and George took me to a reception given to Sir Charles Wyndham. Gilbert was present, and until then I had never met him, although I knew Sir Arthur Sullivan.

Gilbert asked to be introduced to me, and afterwards took me into supper. Turning to me suddenly he snapped viciously.

"So you're the talkative young woman who has

been telling the people in Australia that I murdered Alfred Cellier, eh?"

I explained what had really occurred, and added—he seemed so angry—that although I didn't weigh my words at the time the statement was substantially true.

Said he acidly, "You ladies will never learn how to keep your mouths shut."

There was an awkward silence. Then, "Well, why don't you speak—What are you thinking about?" he demanded rudely.

"I was recalling a remark of one Dick Deadeye," I said.

He seemed interested. "What's that?" he asked quickly.

I quoted, "'From such a face and form as mine the noblest sentiments sound like the black utterances of a depraved imagination. It is human nature—I am resigned.'" Gilbert laughed heartily, and the tension was relieved.

I did indeed enjoy a wonderful measure of success in those strenuous days, and through it all I fed my baby, working continuously, rehearsing these and other operas.

One can only achieve real success on the stage—that is a successful career extending over a considerable span of years—by hard, unceasing work. Success doesn't come by chance; it is due partly to a thorough training, partly to good health and a robust constitution, but most of all to an iron determination to "get there," to give only of one's best—and that of course connotes a strict rule of private and public conduct.

By this time my repertoire of operas had counted more than thirty. I had made a success, and I can say without any affectation or false modesty that I was now a warm favourite with my audiences. It is not always

easy to explain just how success is won, or just in what success consists. I always considered, and I still think, that half my success in the creation of comic-opera roles and all that class of work was due to the fact that I gave tireless attention to what we may call the picturesqueness of my appearance, even on occasions when I had to appear in rags.

For the first "Cinderella" pantomime we did, in 1885, I copied my dress from the celebrated Cinderella painting by Millais. I was the first Australian *prima donna* to go on the stage with bare feet. I believe in getting as near to the apparent intention of the author as possible, and in that effort to take infinite pains. To be a pretty woman is not nearly enough. By far the greater number of actresses of the highest charm and distinction have not been pretty women at all. Charm is always rather an effect of the mind than of the body.

Mere prettiness without character is a snare. No girl can make any real and lasting success in the theatre unless she puts all her mind and wit into her work and consistently sacrifices everything else to it. I think that rule is without exception.

I don't mean by that to assert that the young actress must have no social ties and alleviations, no fun. I think that society and fun (both of the right sort) are very good and necessary for her. But all these things must be secondary to the real aim of her career, and even in the enjoyment of her leisure she must keep that aim constantly in mind. She loses sight of it if she makes friends or forms habits that interfere with her work to hinder it. She loses sight of that aim if she reads trashy books or runs after any sort of trashy entertainment. The good God gives us every chance of doing well. It is quite as easy to form a good habit as a bad habit—I am not sure that it is not easier. Bad

habits of any kind are a terrible handicap to the young player of either sex.

In this regard I cordially agree with Jane Hume Clapperton in "Scientific Meliorism and the Evolution of Happiness—"

"It should never be forgotten that habits once formed are perfectly easy, and that good habits are quite as easy to follow as are bad habits, rather, I should say, *easier*; for good habits in good surroundings minister so directly to happiness that they suffer no check, whilst bad habits cause discomfort to others, and bring to the perpetrator more or less of resistance and punishment."

I owe much of my success to my own sex. Right from the beginning, girls and women were always delightfully kind to me. The exceptions are only just about numerous enough to prove the rule. But people generally are so helpful and kind that I hold to the doctrine of original goodness with all my heart, and if you find comfort in the doctrine of original sin, I gladly leave you to it. I never in my life got the slightest pleasure from the defects and misfortunes of other people.

While I remember it. I suppose I was the first actress in Australia to give the Gallery Girls a tea—though I'm getting right ahead of my story, right on to 1908, when I mention it. It was in Melbourne the opening of "Sweet Kitty Bellairs." I had not appeared in that city for years; and the Gallery Girls were along quite early in the morning to make sure of their seats for the opening night. In the afternoon, George said, "That pack of girls must be jolly hungry," and so he provided tea for the whole lot of them, in my name. Very characteristic of George.



*Nellie Stewart
as "Mam'selle Nitouche," Act III.*

CHAPTER NINE.

SORROW AND SONG.

KING: What is this child of man that can conquer Time and that is braver than Love?

EZNARZA: Even Memory..... He shall bring back our year to us that Time cannot destroy. Time cannot slaughter it if Memory says no. We shall often see it though a little far off, and all its hours and days shall dance to us and go one by one, and come back and dance again.

LORD DUNSANY.

TOWARDS the end of that Sydney season Wallace Brownlow came out from England and joined us, and with him I played in "Ma Mie Rosette" and "Mam'zelle Nitouche."

We have never had anyone like Brownlow in Australia since. The only man in light operas who ever approached him for merit was Charles Riley. He made a great success, in which I took hearty pleasure.

Unhappily, like some other genuine artists of the stage, Wallace Brownlow had no balance. He was much courted in Australia. The women turned his head. I don't know whether you can blame them altogether. In "Ma Mie Rosette," where he had to play the King, he *was* the King. He made-up and dressed the part perfectly. I have known actors who would not wear a beard when a part demanded it, or who wore such a silly little beard as made the effect ludicrous. Quite recently in Sydney I saw a man on the stage wearing the silliest little beard in the world. Nothing of that for Wallace

Brownlow. He wore a beard such as the King of Navarre did actually wear. He studied the literature of the time and carried himself like a king, behaved like a king, had the ease and grace and dash of a king.

And so the women ran after him, and he gave them every encouragement to run. When he enjoys that sort of popularity, an actor needs a very level head. Pretty soon Brownlow formed a habit of drinking too much. In a few years that habit got the better of him. For a little while he managed a hotel, the Palace in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia,—about the silliest thing he could do. Then he got over to America, and went from bad to worse.

A few years ago Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh found him somewhere in California, derelict. Hugh D., being Hugh D., took the prodigal to his heart—wonderfully prodigal of promise was the prodigal—fitted him out, helped him back to comfort and self-respect, and brought him over to Australia under contract. But in Australia, among old scenes, Brownlow speedily lapsed to his old habit, and some time later died very miserably in Melbourne. It was a sad end for the man who was the greatest success in comic-opera that Australia ever knew; but life is fairly full of just such tragedies, and I think that we've all reason to hesitate before we "cast the first stone." My association with Wallace Brownlow was happy. I found him vividly intelligent, consistently amiable, and at all times a very good fellow.

I think that at this time I was in better form than ever before. My voice was fuller and bigger, and whatever comeliness of person I possessed was at its height. Happiness is the finest of all stimulants.

We played right on for two years without stopping, a tour which included all the States—they were "colonies" then—as well as New Zealand.

NELLIE STEWART AS "MA MIE ROSETTE"



NELLIE STEWART AS "MAM'SELLE NITOUCHE"



Act I.



Act II.

When I had been here two years I returned to London again. That was in 1895, and I don't think I appeared in Australia after that till 1900.

In that last Australian company with Wallace Brownlow we had Violet Varley. She was a very charming actress with a most original appeal of personality, and she became a warm Australian favourite in a very short time. She was the wife of Joseph Tapley, who then played what we afterwards came to regard as Charles Kenningham parts. The little woman was only twenty-four when she died in childbirth. The baby died too. Vi was an Australian, and had a beautiful voice with a full thrush-like quality. There has been no voice like it on the comic-opera stage in Australia since. Before that time, the only one comparable to it was Alice Rees', which was rather better. Alice Rees was the original "Patience" in Australia in 1882.

We say that distance lends enchantment, and that the roses of yesteryear have an artificial or sentimental sweetness merely. It is not so in all matters. I am perfectly sure that in comic opera we have no women to equal those of the days I am talking of. Vi Varley had been singing and acting in Australia for years before my return that time, and she had won her wide popularity by work of quite exceptional merit. She had personality.

It means so much, personality, and nowadays we see it so seldom. I don't think that any skill in technique or any intelligence in conception can avail much, without personality.

Nor in the actress is personality enough. Personality must be feminine in her case; it must be vital with charm. It is only so that you can get really good effects. In comic-opera or musical comedy the actress should have a beautiful voice, some beauty of person, and a

truly endearing charm of personality. What *is* the good of offering a woman as a lovable and exquisite creature in the play, if no man in the house is inclined to fall in love with her? I am not talking of grand-operas. In grand-opera, according to the tradition, the voice is everything. Juliet may be stodgy, and a hopeless dowd, if she has the voice. Marguerite may be any age, and quite devoid of charm, if she has the voice.

I remember George storming at an operatic agent once, who had sent him on a wild-goose-chase from Marseilles to Vienna to hear a wonderful grand opera *prima donna*.

"You're a—a—humbug!" spluttered George, "And your *prima donna's* an impossible freak. She weighs 280 pounds if she's an ounce. She squints outrageously, and she can't act for nuts!"

"Ah! c'est vrai, my friend, I know it!" said the agent. Then kissing his fingerrrs in ecstasy, "Mais, 'cre nom! The voice!"

But I insist that in comic-opera and musical-comedy the actress should act, and should have charm, and in addition to that, should be able to sing.

Dear Florence Young could sing, she could act, and she had a driving force of personality that carried all before her. We first came together, long ago, in "Boccacio," "Chilperic," and "Paul Jones." In the first of these plays she was a young girl of eighteen, with a very beautiful voice. She made an emphatic hit in the finale, "It is the Prince," and from that time on her success was assured. It was all due to her voice; she could not act at all in those days. Later—she had gone to Europe to study under Marchesi—she played a small part in George's production of "The Scarlet Feather" in London. In Australia, through all her mature years, she was a striking example of the success of personality.



*Flo. Young
as "Madame Sans Gêne," "Duchess of Danzig."*

When I came out in 1893 with Nancye, Flo was in the same company with me. She was singing beautifully and acting much better than when I had been with her previously. So she found herself, and became an established Australian favourite of the first rank, winning great success in "The Gondoliers" and "The Duchess of Dantzic."

Oh, yes—in 1888 pantomime of "The Sleeping Beauty" Flo played principal boy, and I was the Beauty. She was a woman of very positive character, strong likes and dislikes. She was magnetic. Poor Flo died a year or so ago, and she died virtually in harness. Her memory is cherished. Life did not always use her well, but she was a loyal Australian and a most conscientious worker.

Another brilliant Australian in the bygone company was Flo Graupner. She was astonishingly versatile, and could sing and act any rôle, in any class of work. She died not long ago, after being laid aside many years with grievous sickness.

What is badly needed in Australia is a more systematic way of training young women for the stage. It would pay the big firms to combine and have their own school, a school to which only young people of genuine promise would be admitted, and in which they would be afforded every chance of developing their talents.

Immediately we got back to London in 1895 I went over to America with a George Edwardes' company to play the leading part in "The Artist's Model." But I was gripped with a dreadful bronchitis and had to return to England. America was not to blame for my trouble. The English climate had settled me before I crossed the Atlantic. Truth to tell, the English climate never did agree with me, and I never could sing well in England. I suppose that I had been too long accustomed to cordial Australian suns.

When I got back to London, slowly recovering from my bronchial trouble, George put on "The Scarlet Feather" at the Shaftesbury. Decima Moore was with us. I only played a page's part, a part written for May Yohe. The play failed. I did my best, but I was not nearly up to form, and I knew it.

Spurred by his setbacks (that was his way), George set off across the Atlantic again to get an American production. Never was such a man. His determination was always at its fiercest when the tide seemed to be running hardest against him. I have never known him manifest any gushing enthusiasm over a success; but given a half-success or a comparative failure—oh, look out! He never had two failures running; he was not that sort of man. Had he been Bruce's spider, the second try would have landed him at the top of the web. He had a grim way with him, but his unfaltering strong faith, his unwavering loyalty, his dear sweetness of understanding that never failed me once in all our years together—these things made him in my eyes always the most lovable man in the world. I think he believed in himself so doggedly because he believed so persistently in other people. Time and time again he was tricked and cheated, but he was never soured, and he was incapable of visiting the roguery or incapacity of one man on the man who came next.

There he was, then, away over the big water, while I stayed in London and nursed my bronchial tubes.

George always had a very charming belief in me, and it is good to feel deep down that one is wanted. I don't think that love ever lasts long unless it is solidly based on comradeship. The woman who succeeds with her man is the woman who learns when to stand firm and when to make concessions, when to help hold up the place and when to get from under, the woman who



Edna May.

*Nellie Stewart
as "Pippo"
in
"The Scarlet Feather."*



Crayon drawing by Mabel Webb.

Arthur Collins,



*Manager of Drury Lane
Theatre.*



Nellie Stewart



*Nellie Stewart.
in "The Scarlet Feather."
at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London.*

knows that between herself and her loved one is all the difference of sex, and that he may often be at his best when she is least able to understand or agree with him. There was one strong element in the tie between George and me—we were always keen on serving each other, and we were always eager to make allowances.

Well, after a while George came back from America with a little musical play called "The Belle of New York." In his thorough Musgrove way, he brought a whole American company over with him, including the chorus.

And yet George had, or pretended to have, no faith at all in the prospects of the Belle in London. He thought that the ranked opposition might beat him. In those days London managers, or some of them were capable of using hired clagues to break a rival's show. If anything of that sort was attempted this time, it failed pitifully. The Belle was destined to success, and nothing could stand against it. In two years "The Belle of New York" brought George a clear net profit of £37,000.

Edna May was the star, of course. I shall never forget her as she was then. She was a very demure and delicate beauty, straight from the chorus; and when she reached London she had nothing but what she stood in—which wasn't much, certainly not adequate. It's a very interesting thing, that, and I want you to take note of it. Edna May, straight from an American chorus to take the lead in the production of an American play in London—a girl beautiful and sweet as spring morning—came to us with no wardrobe, came short of everything, even of strictly necessary underclothing. So much for the rapacity of the gilded sirens of the stage. She might have got money from George in New York, but her resolute independence and gentle pride wouldn't

allow her to ask a favour of a manager. She was as good and simple a little creature as ever stepped. When the *jeunesse dorée* and the sly old satyrs came with gifts presently, Miss May simply declined them. This is the truth I'm telling you—no lures of Babylon for Edna May! She was gentle and tender, but she was an honest little American puritan, straight to the core. Her work was exquisitely delightful and fresh. Fresh?—why, she *was* the very Belle, a perfect little angel, a little saint, fresh as Eden dawn.

It was a great joy to me, that success of Edna May's. I was out of it for the moment, out of George's own company, but I loved to see her doing so well, and so richly deserving her remarkable success. To this day I enjoy the success of a sister-woman as much as if it were a success of my own.

As for the audiences—well, for once London did sit up and take notice, I can assure you! The swiftness of the action was a startling innovation. The word is not strong enough: it was a startling revelation. That American chorus went like a sunbeam chasing away gloom, and the way it moved made London wonder what this new thing was. I think some of the people came three times before they properly got their breath. I enjoyed it hugely.

There is nothing funnier to watch than an insular Englishman in the clutch of surprise. He is not accustomed to being surprised, and he is pretty certain that he doesn't like it. As to actually showing surprise—the very thought is horror! But the Belle shook those staid English out of their ancient antediluvian calm. They would watch that lightning chorus with goggling eyes for a few minutes, and then they would forget all their traditional ideas and begin to applaud like Australians.

I have watched dear old dowagers blink in positive



"Mia Mia," George Musgrove's Home, Kingston Vale, England.



Nellie Stewart.



*Nancye Stewart.
Aged 7.*

distress to see those American girls take hold and go; but in a few minutes the dowagers were as happy as anybody, though quite convinced in their dear old hearts that anything so unusual couldn't possibly be proper. Oh, a great time!

It must not be thought that I approve of all rapid American stuff. It is simply that this chorus worked as a team with remarkable swiftness and intelligence. I have seen cheap American chorus-work, and cheap imitations of American chorus-work, in which this swiftness of action has degenerated into a sort of confused or indiscriminate wild scramble. It is a first essential that all team-work shall be perfect in detail. But when the Belle went to England chorus-work had got into a certain rut of convention, even at the Gaiety, while at the Savoy all team-work was a sort of ceremonial procession. In the Belle the work was the best America could show and at that time England could not approach it.

With Edna May looking like a little unsophisticated angel and singing and acting like a little angel with brains—with that chorus going ten times quicker than anything London had been accustomed to—the Belle had the old village a-buzz. George, as usual, waved no flags, but I knew that he was content, and that made me very happy.

We had our home now, "Mia-Mia," a dear big place out at Kingston Vale, near Wimbledon Common, and commanding a view of Richmond Park, from the back. George being George, I had a lot of entertaining to do.

The Belle was George's own affair, but out here in Australia he was still in partnership with J. C. W., and I think that in the end he shared his spoil with the Australian firm—I don't definitely know, because he didn't tell me. In his home he was always as close as an oyster

about his business, and I was never intrusive. A wise woman, as I hinted just now, does well not to attempt to force her shoulder under whatever burdens her man wants to carry alone. To come home, out of the storm and stress, and then to have to talk back into the thick of it again at his own fireside—I suppose there really is no comfort in that for a man. George and I meant everything to each other, and were the closest friends in the world, but I always respected his reticences.

I had plenty of things of my own to look after in that dear home at Kingston. There was Nancye basking in the joy of it all, a wise little woman already. I had to confer with her about pretty well every subject under the sun, and some others. There was the constant troop of friends. I don't think that ever before or after we had so many friends as in that joyous time of the Belle's success. I have known twenty to sit down with us for lunch on a Sunday, and another and different twenty to sit down with us for dinner, and sometimes part of one twenty would lap over into the other twenty and make it twenty odd. We had thirteen servants in the house. They were all kept busy, and I was kept busy looking after them.

Following the Belle came "The Prince of Pilsen." Here's a curious thing. The biggest success of the Belle was the German part, and exactly the same thing happened again in "Pilsen." In Queen Victoria's fading prime to be German in England was to be popular and respected.

"The Prince of Pilsen" was not the stunning success that "The Belle of New York" had been, but George did very well out of it. It was played by the same company. Meanwhile, he had three or four provincial companies out with the Belle.

George didn't make all the money he should have

made out of that enormous and continuous boom, then or later. I never heard precise details, but I think that the pirates got the better of him here and there. For a man of business, the great man of business that he unquestionably was, he had some extraordinary habits. He would generally take a man's word on the most important transaction, not bothering about a contract. I don't think he ever had a contract, if he could help it. He would not have done anybody out of a halfpenny; but people "did him in" often enough.

He loved his comfort, his horses and garden, the company of his friends; he never considered expense. I was just about as casual as he was. Often he would hand me a round sum of money as a gift, telling me that it was mine, and was not to be bitten into by any ordinary expenses. But I would put the money into my current account at the bank, and draw on it for house-keeping purposes as a matter of course and of habit. It wasn't because I thought deliberately about it, but merely because I didn't think at all. Money never meant anything to me—when I had it. If I had held on to all that George gave me in that way, I should have quite a lot now.

Mind you, I think no more of money than I ever did. I pity as a poor blind fool any man who thinks that his money entitles him to respect and a sort of reverence. It was Bill Nye, I think, who once said, in reference to a great, gross American railway-king, that money doesn't seem to care who gets it. I have an infinite respect for brains, but I have no more respect for money than I have for haystacks or heaps of coal. If a man makes a good use of his money, I can respect him for that. If a man does good to others with his money, I can love him for that.

Since my great loss came to me, and life became

more difficult, I have never been cheated out of money by people who have little, but I have been swindled out of money by corporations that have much. I'm perfectly sure that to have very much money is bad for any man.

CHAPTER TEN.

OLD DRURY.

Some day they will open those doors to me, and all London will come to see me, and say that I act just as well as Mistress Barry or Mistress Saunderson.

Nell—"SWEET NELL OF OLD DRURY."

SO, in that good old town of London, we went on with our jolly and prosperous life, every day busy, but every day glad. Now I knew joy of which my gir^lhood and first youth had no conception, joy of love and joy of service. It is, I think especially true in this matter of service, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. There is nothing more delightful than to help people, even though so often they never forgive you for it. Anyhow, I had George to serve, and the imperious small person Nancye, and the host of friends that flocked about us. It was a wonderful time.

Then, Christmas, 1899—George being in New York after "The Prince of Pilsen" (we're going back a bit again)—I signed a contract as principal boy in the Drury Lane pantomime of "The Forty Thieves." Dan Leno and Herbert Campbell were the comedians, and Amelia Stone was principal girl. The dresses were positively *le dernier cri* in sheer gorgeousness. Alias attired me wonderfully; it was the first occasion in which I wore a jewelled snake round my fleshings. I loved the glow and the glamour, the rush and the stimulus of it all.

In "Jimmy Glover, His Book," Mr. Glover, (musical Director at Drury Lane), says:—

"Nellie Stewart had made a success in a previous pantomime, as Ganem in 'The Forty Thieves.' From New York on Boxing Night George Musgrove sent her a telegram:—

"As you come on, for heaven's sake smile and look pleasant."

I have a recollection of something of the kind. "If you want to be convincing, look happy," he said once "A lot of so-called personality depends on that."

They do you very well at Drury Lane. Two performances a day, of course; but such comfort that the work seems very light to a girl accustomed to the hard driving work of Australian comic-opera repertoire. I can't remember that I ever felt particularly tired at Drury Lane. I had my own beautiful room and attached bathroom, every convenience and luxury. Delightful meals were served to me, at the cost of the theatre. All trouble and bother were kept far off from me as possible. Arthur Collins was manager at the Lane then; one of the dearest and most charming fellows in the world, always thinking for others.

Arthur Collins, when I knew him—I saw a good deal of him for a long time—ranked with George in my estimate as an ideal manager. He knew when to be firm without vain display, and dignified without ostentation. He was the soul of courtesy. He was very conspicuously what is (or used to be) called a gentleman. He was assiduous in helpfulness. Really one of the few, the very few, great managers.

The pantomime ran as usual, two shows daily, right up to Easter. I had £50 a week; more money than, up to that time, I had ever had in Australia.

I always felt that there was a special charm in working in a house with such rich historical associations as those of Drury Lane. I would sit in my room during



*Nellie Stewart
as "Guncie" in "The Portly Pirates" at Irving Lane, London.*

the brief spells off, still all thrilled with the cordiality of those happy London audiences, and think of the long procession of plays and players that had passed that way.

Not only players, either. The palatial mansion of John Holles, second Earl of Warwick, used to stand at the end of Clare Court, hard by—he of whom Clarendon says, “He was a man of honour and of courage, and would have been an excellent person if his heart had not been so much set upon keeping and improving his estate.” That is very neatly put. I have known in these later times men whose whole hearts were set on keeping and improving their estates, but they only had the courage of cornered rats when their hoards were threatened, and their honour was as imperceptible as a mole on a bee’s knee. That great mansion of the Earl’s was turned into tenements very early in the eighteenth century. It was this second Earl who founded Clare Market, of which great Hogarth engraved a picture.

It was here at Drury Lane that Garrick made his last appearance, playing Don Felix in “The Wonder.” Garrick’s address of farewell had little in it apart from the customary commonplaces, but he spoke it with deep feeling. “Here his voice failed him. He paused till a great gush of tears relieved him.” My ancestress Mrs. Yates was in the bill, playing Violante in “The Wonder.”

Nell Gwynne lived in Drury Lane, and here it was that Mr. Pepys saw her on a memorable occasion standing at her door, “a mighty pretty creature in her smock-sleeves and bodice.” Shortly after that she moved to Lincoln’s Inn Fields, where her first son to the King was born, and so another great aristocratic family founded. She must have been as lovable a baggage as any in the world.

Among Robert Browning's good stories was one of Drury Lane. He told how an old stage carpenter, fifty years at the Lane, gave advice to a young man who said he would like to get an engagement there, but his voice was not strong enough. The advice was that he should get a pot of XXXX ale, and put it on the stage beside him. Then, taking care that he had the stage to himself, to put the pot of ale down beside him, and "holler" as loud as he could. Then take a dip at the pot and holler again. So to the finish. The young man did as directed. I forget what the result was, but I think he lost his voice altogether. I remember a simple village girl in England telling me that the vicar had clergyman's sore throat, caused by coming out of the pulpit and drinking port wine on a cold stomach.

Old Drury! what more moving and stimulating than for a young Australian actress to think, "I have come half way round the world, and I am acting here where the mighty ones of the past have acted."

Here David Garrick held the mirror up to nature, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, "the Diana of the stage," took London by storm.

She was an alluring brunette—not beautiful, but with rich equipment of that *beaute de diable*, which is far better, a woman all charm and seduction. Colley Cibber calls her the "darling of the stage." In a day when proposals of honourable marriage were so rare in the experiences of actresses that they seldom spoke about them, lest someone should think they lied, Mrs. Bracegirdle had many. She died at eighty-five, and like her contemporary, Garrick, she was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Curious, too, to reflect that when these vanished great ones had "soared above the morning lark," my own dear native land, Australia, was unknown, and

that Londoners knew more about the planet Jupiter than they did of the apocryphal Terra Australis. Captain Cook was reconnoitring the unknown New Holland when Garrick was thrilling London. They both died in the same year, 1779.

There were moments when I seemed to hear all those dear ghosts whispering about me; Mrs. Betterton, Mrs. Susannah Mountford, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Elizabeth Barry, Mrs. Oldfield, Lavinia Fenton, Kitty Clive, Peg Woffington,—I know not how many more.

Of course Nell Gwynne played at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Great names come thronging at the mere mention of Drury. Colley Cibber, Betterton, Laurence Lacy, David Garrick, Macklin, Sarah Siddons, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, John Philip Kemble, Edmund Kean, Spranger Barry, Macready—the procession of immortals is unending.

Here, too, my ancestress, Mrs. Yates, had played and George's mother, Fanny Hodson. And coming to our own times, and the days of "Druriolanus," (Sir Augustus Harris), there is George Rignold, Sheridan Knowles, Dion Boucicault, Madame Ristori, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry—all the Big Chiefs of the stage have fretted their hour at old Drury.

Ah, me!

"And my Melpomene replies,
A touch of shame upon her cheek;
'I am not worthy ev'n to speak
Of thy prevalling mysteries.' "

And so enough of sidepaths. Let us again go dawdling down the way.

Herbert Campbell and Dan Leno made about as strong a combination of comedians as any pantomime could show. Both depended on personality, and Dan

did whatever he pleased as any moment's whim took him.

Through 1900 we lived still in London, while George was getting together his English-Italian grand opera company for Australia. I was cast as principal boy at Drury Lane for the next pantomime also, and I rehearsed right up to the end. Unfortunately, I was unable to appear at the opening, owing to a very severe and painful attack of laryngitis. I was sorry, because I did enjoy Drury Lane, and everybody was so cordially kind to me there that I just hated to cause inconvenience or trouble.

In his book, Mr. "Jimmy" Glover tells of this:—

"The present management has really had some first-night trials with artists, which would have soured a different temperament, but they have been stolidly faced and conquered, all with a charitable good humour and optimism. We rang up one Boxing Night without a 'Principal Boy.' But the lady in question, that clever, conscientious artist, Miss Nellie Stewart, insisted on coming down to show herself to the management and personally explain her hoarseness and offer to 'pull through,' but her own representative, Mr. George Musgrove, stood in her dressing-room, insisted that she was ill, and refused to allow her to go on. And she did not, her part being taken by Miss Molly Lowell at a moment's notice, who was handed, as she came off the stage, fifty pounds that same evening by the grateful manager for her opportune services."

So we came back to Australia with the grand-opera company—after the first, one ocean voyage is pretty much the same as another. On arrival, I opened as the Prince in George's gorgeous production of "Cinderella."

George didn't like my throat-attacks, and he preferred to keep me busy in our domestic concerns; he wouldn't have let me open in the part, were it not that he could get no other principal boy he considered good enough. To get the best he could for his public—that was the consideration which with him outweighed all others.



Nellie Stewart
as "Prince Charming" in "Cinderella," in 1901.

The grand-opera company was a success. Slapoffski had been brought out to conduct, and Ella Russell, Jansen, and other fine artists were in the company. George loved to have a grand-opera company under his direction. As to his personal tastes, he was the aristocrat of his business. I really believe that at heart he would sooner have lost a little on a grand-opera company than made a little in what he considered a cheaper class of business.

Slapoffski seems to me to be one of the most musicianly and fine and sympathetic conductors I have ever heard conduct. I have known him to be made positively sick by a discord at an unfortunate time. He lives his music. The best of good fellows, the staunchest of friends, he is at all times a little too sensitive for his own comfort in a world that gives *all* of us rather more kicks than ha'pence. There is never anything wooden or stiff about Slapoffski's conducting. He is himself so intensely alive that he pours life through his orchestra. He is a man of great modesty, and he hasn't the slightest idea of how much Australia cares for him.

Having a more intimate first-hand knowledge of the genesis of George's Grand Opera venture, Mr. Slapoffski has been good enough to contribute the following:—

GUSTAVE SLAPOFFSKI'S NARRATIVE.

August, 1897, saw me travelling to Dublin to re-join the Carl Rosa Company after our usual vacation, when George Musgrove was pointed out to me, and little did I then think how much he and I would work together in the very near future. He was then, so a mutual friend told me, about to produce "The Belle of New York" for the first time in Dublin, with Nellie Stewart

in the *title rôle* This musical comedy was still running at the Shaftesbury Theatre, where it was one of the greatest London successes.

In 1900, after a tour of the English provinces with Ada Crossley, I returned to London, and Madame Slapoffski, who was fulfilling an engagement at the Palace, Shaftesbury Avenue, introduced me to the Musical Director, Alfred Plumptre, who, on learning my name, remarked: "Oh, you're the chap we've been looking for to go to Australia with George Musgrove for Grand Opera."

A day or two after this Plumptre introduced me to Musgrove, whose first remark struck me as very peculiar.

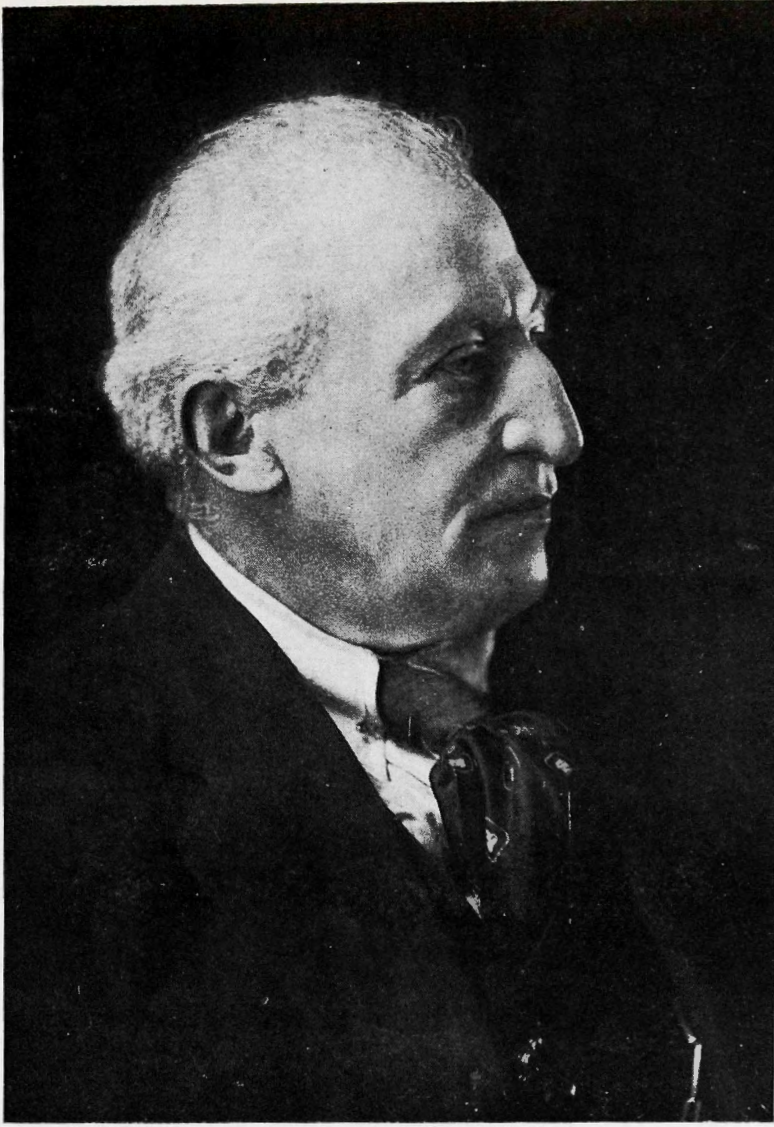
He said, "They tell me you know all about English Opera—do you?"

I replied, "Well I ought to know something about it. I have been many years with the Carl Rosa Company."

I lunched with him that day, and was impressed with the way he questioned me with regard to artists and operas likely to be successful, and the general working of English Opera. I gathered that he wished me to produce Wagner's music-dramas in Australia, but it was evident to me that his friends were trying to influence him against this course.

However, he talked Wagner to me day after day (by this time he had engaged me to assist him in organizing a company for Australia) and took the Palace Theatre for three days a week for auditions.

The searching trials he gave candidates, and the knowledge and instinct he displayed caused me to come to the conclusion that he was a very remarkable man, quite worthy to be classed with Carl Rosa, Colonel Mapleson and Sir Augustus Harris. I had worked for



Gustave Slapoffski.



Charles Kenningham.

long periods with these operatic giants so was able to make comparisons.

After a mass of detail had been most carefully gone into, such as correct costumes, properties, furniture, and almost entirely new orchestral parts; a Company was engaged that had been most carefully selected from former members of the Carl Rosa Company. Musgrove was so particular about the artists he engaged that he insisted on seeing them on the stage, and often had special performances with different travelling companies at considerable expense. His determination and enthusiasm were inspiring, and he was so set on producing Wagner in Australia, that he told his friends that if the Australian public did not like Wagner, he would be like Ludwig of Bavaria, Wagner's great patron, and listen to them "on his own."

The Company eventually selected consisted of Cecile Lorraine, Lilian Coomber, Agnes Jansen, Louis Ahrens, Umberto Salvi, Charles Tilbury and Max Eugene. I went ahead of the company to choose and rehearse a chorus; George Musgrove had a great opinion of the choral material available in Australia. The repertoire comprised the following operas: "Lohengrin;" "Tannhauser;" "The Flying Dutchman;" "Il Trovatore;" "Faust;" "Carmen;" "Maritana;" and "Bohemian Girl."

In 1901 our first season under George Musgrove commenced in Melbourne at the Princess's Theatre, which had been re-decorated for our visit. What a beautiful, comfortable theatre it was!

"Il Trovatore" was our first Opera with Cecile Lorraine, Agnes Jansen, Umberto Salvi, Max Eugene, all former members of the Carl Rosa Company, and John Crooke conducting. We had an orchestra of 40 and had brought from Europe a leader, cboe, bassoon and

double bass. The rest of the players were picked from Melbourne, but at this time Professor Marshall Hall was alive, and that genuine enthusiast took great interest in the whole scheme; we had many of the students from the Marshall Hall Conservatorium in the chorus. Carl Pinschoff and his wife, the late Mme. Wiederman, by their patronage, kindly interest, and generous hospitality in their beautiful home, Studley Hall, made the artists of the company very happy. In fact the whole atmosphere was thoroughly artistic.

The first performance of Wagner's "Lohengrin" was an immense success, the gorgeous costumes and armour were archæologically correct, and the choral singing, especially the female department, was really beautiful. I myself conducted, and had a most flattering personal success.

Although our season in Melbourne entailed much serious work, there was a lighter side to it all, in those days; there was more personal sympathy between manager and artists; the theatre had not yet attained the factory atmosphere.

There were among the friends of George Musgrove a great many "leg-pullers," as they are called in this country. Now, our two principal tenors, although speaking and singing English quite fluently, were both foreigners, one Italian and the other Hungarian. Being tenors, of course, they were somewhat wrapped up in themselves, and consequently laid themselves very much open to practical joking.

During the Melbourne season, one of the tenors stayed at Menzies Hotel, and a terrible life the leg-pullers led the poor fellow. They used to give him all sorts of advice, write him alleged love-letters from admiring ladies, make him go through all kinds of contortions as physical culture, and bombard him after an opera with

the most widely differing criticisms on his performance. One would say how well he had sung, then another would say he did not like his singing on that particular night, and so on until they had the poor fellow in such a state of mind that he came to me in the greatest distraction, and it took me all my time to convince him that he really could sing at all.

With the other tenor, the great joke was to telephone him from different parts of Melbourne making appointments with lady admirers who never turned up to meet him, and it was surprising how long this joke was kept up before he, so to speak, "tumbled" to it.

After a very successful season in Melbourne, we journeyed to Sydney. George Musgrove, who always did things well, had a special train for the company (we travelled after the performance), and a splendid supper was served on the station for the principals, and the members of the chorus and orchestra were given well-stocked lunch baskets. We carried the entire Melbourne orchestra to Sydney, and opened our season to a tremendous house.

During this season we produced Wagner's "Tannhauser" and played it eleven times in three weeks to capacity audiences.

At the termination of the Sydney season we went to Adelaide and again had a wonderful success. We then played a return season in Melbourne, for which Ella Russell, a very beautiful woman and fine singer, was engaged to create the part of Senta in "The Flying Dutchman." Baron Berthald, a very handsome American tenor, appeared in the Wagnerian tenor rôles with great success, and Lempriere Pringle as Mephistopheles in "Faust" made a great impression with a powerful voice and magnificent appearance.

The season was lengthened, and we went to New

Zealand for fifteen weeks, where we had a triumph. No such organization had ever before visited the Dominion, and we could certainly have filled every theatre twice over. At the termination of the tour, the company disbanded, but as a last incident of this most eventful tour, the "Monowai," on which steamer we were returning to Australia, broke down, and we were helplessly drifting for ten days until picked up by the "Mokaia"—there was no wireless in those days.

During the return season in Melbourne a great function took place, namely, the opening of the First Federal Parliament. Their Majesties, the present King and Queen, then Duke and Duchess of York, performed the opening ceremony in the great Exhibition building in the presence of a vast concourse of people.

George Musgrove had been appointed Director of Amusements for the Royal visit and his arrangements were magnificent. The Princess's Theatre lent itself to the most impressive arrangements—on each of the four columns of the external balustrade George Musgrove had poised trumpeters in full regalia who sounded the fanfare as the Duke and Duchess passed the building; and during the intervals of the ceremony at the exhibition, a magnificent orchestra of 100 picked instrumentalists, under the joint direction of myself and Leon Caron, the much respected musical director of the Williamson firm, performed a selection of high class instrumental music. The vocal items were given by Mesdames Ella Russell, Slapoffski, Dolores, Jansen and Nellie Stewart. Miss Stewart was selected to sing the opening ode "Australia," specially written for her by Charles Kenningham. At night there was a gala performance of "Tannhauser" at the Princess's with Mesdames Ella Russell, Crighton, Lorraine, and Messrs. Salvi, Pringle and Tilbury. The whole arrangements were most digni-

fied and artistic, and George Musgrove was presented by the First Parliament of Australia with a splendid silver inkstand as a mark of appreciation of his services in arranging it all.

On the last night of the Opera season in Melbourne Sir Samuel Gillott presented George Musgrove with a gold cigarette case and an illuminated address from the citizens of Melbourne, thanking him for his efforts in providing high class entertainment. He deserved it all, and more, but it was not until his German Opera season, later, that he proved himself the great entrepreneur he undoubtedly was.

At the termination of this season we entered into other arrangements for the Princess's Theatre, also tours of the Commonwealth and New Zealand.

In 1902 Madame Melba decided to return to her native land (this being the first visit of the great artiste since her world triumph), under the direction of George Musgrove. She made many concert appearances, delighting vast audiences, and ultimately appeared in selections from "Faust," "La Traviata" and "Rigoletto," at The Princess's Theatre, Melbourne, and the Royal, Sydney, assisted by Madame Slapoffski, Louis Ahrens, Lempriere Pringle and De Bensuade, accompanied by a magnificent orchestra, I myself having the honour to conduct those memorable performances.

Thus Mr. Slapoffski.

For me, having no part in the triumphs of Gand Opera, this was an average happy year of work and comfort, Australia kind as ever. The honor that fell to me (of which I shall always be very proud) was the singing of the Memorial Ode at the foundation of the Commonwealth of Australia, already referred to by Mr. Slapoffski. It was a most impressive and memorable ceremony, the

Duchess filling the eye and the imagination completely, a very fair and gracious royal lady.

I cannot imagine a royal event without a woman in it. Edward VII. was a great king and well-beloved, a wise king and a master of men, but somehow even he could never thrill the hearts of the people as Queen Alexandra did—and does, God bless her!

And so you shall see us off and away to London once again, in search of other attractions. It was on this trip that George bought "Sweet Nell of Old Drury."



Nellie Stewart as "Sweet Nell."

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

SWEET NELL.

The King may rule at Whitehall, but Nell Gwynne rules in Old Drury!

Nell—"SWEET NELL OF OLD DRURY."

IN *Charles II. and His Court*, A. C. A. Brett writes thus of Nell Gwynne:—

Her impudence and unfailing good humour recommended her to the King, and she endeared herself to him by the real honesty of her nature and her love for him as a man, which was perhaps not shared by any other of the mistresses. She was an admirable mimic of the King and others, and utterly fearless of rivals or of great men, being annihilatingly quick in retort. She called Monmouth "Prince Perkin"; and on his calling her "ill-bred," said, "Was Mrs. Barlow any better bred than I?" When the Duchess of Portsmouth went into mourning for her alleged cousin, the Prince de Rohan, Nell did the same for the Cham of Tartary, and when asked what relation he was to her, answered: "Exactly the same relation that the Prince de Rohan was to the Duchess of Portsmouth."

I never attempted to portray the rough side of Nell—why should I? Manners have changed. There was a freedom of conversation and style under Charles II. that would not be possible now. All I tried was to suggest the Nell Gwynne of my dream to the people here in Australia. I wanted to present her sweetness, her tenderness, her camaraderie.

Let me confess at once that I wanted with all my heart to play Nell Gwynne. I didn't care what the medium was. I had read every scrap I could find about the real Nell. I had gone round London on Nell Gwynne

pilgrimages. Long before we bought "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" I had wanted to play Nell; I had felt that there was rich material in her. Morals come and change and go, like the fashions in frocks. I never felt it necessary to be the keeper of Nell Gwynne's conscience. But I had always felt that Nell in her time and place was a very good woman—that she did stand, in fact, for something exquisite and permanent in the life of Restoration England; that England, still hardly able to believe that the dawn had come again after the black and heavy fight of Puritanism.

And I have thought sometimes that it was hearty Nell, roguish Nell, Nell of the tender eyes, who took that dark and variable Charles II., biassed in all sorts of ways by his continental wanderings and misfortunes, and made and kept him English. The common people loved her. Imagine what the position would have been if such wealth of love and trust could have gone to a veritable Queen of England!

"Sweet Nell of Old Drury" was written by Paul Kester. How I loved it! And yet George never for a moment thought it was written in the Book of the Fates that I should play that part. You will have discovered that by now he was beginning rather to grudge me to the public. He felt that I had, as we should say nowadays, "done my bit," and that I now belonged exclusively to him and Nancye. Had not circumstances warred constantly against his determination, I should have retired for good after "The Scarlet Feather," that time. But no man can stand up against the Moving Finger. George got the Nell Gwynne play, and then he began to look round in London for a principal boy for his next Australian pantomime.

By this time the definite break with Williamson had come, but George still controlled and held the Princess's



Nellie Stewart
as "Sweet Nell," Act I.



Nellie Stewart as "Alladin," 1902.

Theatre in Melbourne. He bought other plays—"Mice and Men," "A Country Mouse," and one or two more—but he didn't get a principal boy to suit him. At the last moment, he came to me and said, "I can't get a principal boy worth a hang, and I can't get anybody to play Sweet Nell. What am I to do?"

I knew my George. I was afraid to say, "Oh, I'll do it." So I contented myself with saying nothing. It has always been my rule to say nothing when it didn't seem that there was anything that must necessarily be said, and it is a rule that has saved me a lot of trouble, times out of number.

So George looked at me, with that twinkle of his, far back, so far back that one could never quite decide whether it was a twinkle or not.

He said: "If you play Nell, you can't go out with the pantomime. Can't possibly do both. Must be one or the other. Which is it to be?"

I said I didn't care. But I knew that he knew better, and I knew that he knew that I knew he knew better. We left it at that.

In the end, of course, I did both. I was principal boy in "Aladdin"—Melbourne only. Right on top of the pantomime we put on "Sweet Nell of Old Drury."

It was on February 15, 1902, that Sweet Nell made her bow at the Princess's, with this cast:—

Charles II.	Harcourt Beatty
Lord Jeffreys	Albert Gran
Lord Rochester	Webster Lawson
Lord Lovelace	Sydney Stirling
Roger Fairfax	Ernest Imeson
Percival	Alfred Tapping
Rollins	Gordon Bailey
Lacy	Harry Hill

Lord-in-Waiting	John Bouchier
Captain Graham Clavering	Mr. Bailey
First Alderman	Claude Flemming
Second Alderman	Mr. Walters
Mercer	W. Beresford
William	John Wemyss
Nebuchadnezzar	Jeff Ormond
Lady Castlemaine	Alice Farleigh
Duchess of Portsmouth	Emily Levettez
Lady Olivia Vernon	Minnie Sadler
Tiffin	Edith Stewart
Lady Clivebrook	Edith Berry
Nell Gwynne	Nellie Stewart

You musn't think that the success of the Nell Gwynne play was immediate. It wasn't. For the first fortnight business was indifferent.

The fact is that at the outset people associated me with comic-opera and the singing stage, and they were quite unwilling to believe that I could possibly make a success in a speaking part. It was sheer friendliness at bottom; they liked me, and they felt miserable at the possibility of my making a failure of a part which was, as they supposed, quite out of my ambit.

After the first fortnight, George was very much inclined to withdraw the play. Harcourt Beatty saved it. He said, "This is the right stuff. Give it a chance."

George liked Beatty, and he gave it a chance. The judgment was proved sound. Receipts after that second week began to climb, and so we played it for a season of five weeks and two days. The closing week jumped right over the others. Then we went to Tasmania.

Tasmania has always been very kind to me. I have friends there a-plenty. Besides it was in Hobart that my mother made her first successes, and where she



*Nell Gwynne.
Act II.*



*Nell Gwynne.
Act II.*



*Nell Gwynne.
Act IV.*

was such a favorite, and little "Tassy" has a sentimental interest for me on that account.

But I want to make a point clear at this stage. The little States do not always understand the manager's difficulties. They complain that they do not get the best shows. I have heard them express great offence when a part has been played by an understudy. Now the Nell Gwynne play succeeded to admiration in Tasmania, so far as its popularity went; but in plain fact, it never paid to take a good company to Tasmania—the population is not large enough, and what I may call the theatre-going population seems to be relatively smaller than in any other State. Young Tasmania loves to walk the streets at night in summer, and in winter to sit over the fire and go to bed early. So that Tasmania is well treated, really, considering the financial disabilities affecting a season there.

Followed three weeks in Adelaide—very profitable indeed. Give Adelaide a show it can enjoy, and the support is always excellent. Further, there was an idea in Adelaide that Nell Gwynne was a most improper person, and in a little place rather given to the outer observances of religion, that always helps the receipts. But nowhere in Australia will you find an audience more intelligent and cordial.

The five weeks' season of Sweet Nell in Sydney was all good solid profitable going. After that, the play was an increasingly profitable money-maker right along the line. I loved the part, as I told you just now, and people loved me in it. This was a great joy to me.

We played the English version. In Paul Kester's original American 'script there were passages not calculated to please an English audience.

I forgot to mention that when George bought the Nell Gwynne play in London that time, he also bought

"Dolores" from Haddon Chambers, and made arrangements to buy certain other forthcoming plays of his. This agreement was sealed with a substantial payment. "Dolores" we had, but the forthcoming other plays never forthcame. If ever there was a casual Australian, Haddon Chambers was one. George took it all philosophically, as he took everything. There never was a less mercenary man. He had setbacks enough, but I never once saw him seriously aggrieved over the loss of money.

A few words about our friend, Harcourt Beatty. He was and is a man, every inch, every atom. When I heard that he had been through the Great War and won distinction as a fighter, though well over military age, I was not in the least surprised; it was just what I should have expected of him. He is a sound actor of the most acute intelligence, and a stauncher friend and comrade never stepped on leather. When George engaged him, Mr. Beatty had an excellent provincial reputation, but was unknown in London. Bluff and hearty he was, and honest to the core. He said, "Understand, Musgrove, I'm not a lover. I can't be a Romeo on the stage. You have to take me as you find me, for what I am."

For my part, I never had a finer stage-lover than he. His work was positively sincere. He played no tricks. He was virile and convincing, not in the least actorish. He was a good sport. When any minor actor had a scene with him which had possibilities, Beatty would invariably efface himself as much as possible to give the other man every chance of making his little bit stand out, and so secure any applause forthcoming. I have seldom met another leading man who would do this, never one who would do it so kindly and generously.

One thing about Mr. Beatty's stage technique was his utter disregard for the conventional "taking the



Harcourt Beatty.

stage" attitude of nearly all leading men and leading women, and of most of the stars. If your leading actor has but to say how-d'ye-do, he must get to the middle of the stage to say it; and he must be well up-stage from the footlights, so that all the other characters must turn to him, and give the audience their backs. This stupid convention doesn't really enhance the importance of the central figure, and it is a distinct disadvantage to all the other people on the stage, but it is done constantly, none the less—I noticed a glaring case only the other day. I have seen two rivals sustaining a dialogue on the stage, and each endeavouring to get above the other, till what with their backing and filling, side-stepping and jostling, they have seemed like demented keep-to-the-left pedestrians in a busy street. Harcourt Beatty was above all pettiness of that sort.

He had worked a good deal as leading-man to Miss Fortescue, and his stagecraft was remarkable. He was never at a loss. He never let anyone down. We all loved him, and he and George were pals from the first.

Off the stage he was one of the most entertaining companions we ever had. His talk was consistently brilliant and original, without a shade of affectation.

He knew something about everything, he was always creating new heavens on a new earth, and nothing could possibly depress him for longer than five minutes. Harcourt Beatty is one of the dearest and most stimulating men I have ever known in all my life of the theatre.

When my dear father died in Melbourne in 1902, I felt the blow terribly, and had to rest for a fortnight. Time has mellowed that sorrow, but it remains. My father was as good a father as he was a man; praise of my dear one cannot go higher than that. I have not one harsh memory of him. He was an absolute master of his profession. He had played every conceivable

sort of part, and I never knew him to fail in any. Dear Mother, twelve years his senior, stayed with us for yet a little while.

With the original cast of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury," we put on "Mice and Men." It was a great success. Then George gave me a very long part to study for "Dolores," thinking the hard work would take my mind off father's death a little. It was because of my good fortune with a dramatic scene in "Dolores" that they secured "Zaza" for me. In "Zaza" I had what I think was the longest part ever written for a woman, excepting "Du Barry." George secured "Zaza" from the firm of J.C.W., and it was in "Zaza" that I drew my largest Australian salary—£80 a week, a jump of £30 over my next biggest, the £50 I had as principal boy at the Lane.

Well, we went on, and toured all the States and New Zealand. Nell was our trump-card everywhere, still. In Melbourne, Christmas season, 1902-3, we played "The Country Mouse." It went splendidly. After that to the West, and then right round and about again. All the plays. We returned to London in 1904.

Rapidly as I have run till now over the actual events of my life, you will realize that though there had been ups and downs, shadows and griefs, I had enjoyed continual happiness—continuous happiness, indeed, apart from one or two deeper shadows, one or two griefs that burned to agony.

I am sensitive, and the road is as a rule cruelly rough to the tender feet of sensitive people; but I have always thought that it is wiser to be happy than sad, and to that end always wisest to look persistently at the best side of things. Mind you, I don't want you to misunderstand. I don't mean to say that the quest of personal happiness is the aim or end of any life worth living, because it isn't. True happiness consists in giving hap-



Nellie Stewart in "Mice and Men," Act I.

piness, more than in taking what happiness one gets. But I have found the world a singularly appropriate place to be happy in. There is so much beauty in the world of men and things, if you will open your eyes to see it, that it must ever be the worst and meanest of policies to spend one's time looking about for the nasty bits. Beauty is the essential food of happiness, beauty that calls to the eye, and that deeper beauty that makes the heart thrill.

I think my quiet life has been in the main so happy because I am by nature so sensitive and responsive to beauty. I don't remember a time, look back as far as I will, when I did not get solid satisfaction from a rich sunset, the singing glamour of dewy morning, the face of a beautiful woman, the stalwart grace of a real man, the uplifting nobility of good music, the perfect keying of words to emotion in a great poem. Beauty! why, the world is full of it! Beauty never fades and never palls. The more intimately and simply one lives with it, the more wonderful it becomes. It may be gay beauty, or it may be sombre.

I can still recall with a catch in my throat a glimpse I had of grey dusk drenched with rain above the Hooghli. I can think of individual great moments of beauty at sea, each moment an imperishable possession that makes for happiness. One may lose one's money and one's youth, one may even see one's dearest dreams flounder amid the stern gales of reality; but happiness that is born of beauty one cannot lose till life flickers out, and one goes to face the great adventure. And it may be that even in that dim remote, one's happiness will last.

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep

Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
'Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.....

I have travelled far, and seen many things and people. I don't think that I am prejudiced, but to me Australia has always seemed to be the most beautiful country in the world. Its so various scenery is always perfectly endearing.

Its people are delightful. Taking them as a body, there are no more beautiful women on earth than the Australian, nor do I think that there is anywhere on earth a more comely population of men. I know that some men of the Latin races come nearer to the classical ideal. Who cares! I have seen a Greek loafer with the features of the Apollo Belvedere; but there was no visible glow of soul through the carnal envelope. Australian men are virile, and the toughest and roughest of them is redeemed by some enthusiasm. Nowhere else on earth is the habitual relationship of the sexes so sane and fine. Australians are at heart thoroughly good people, and all the broadly human virtues are beautiful. I have gone on to my balcony on a recent morning, early. Nothing to see but a few pleasant houses, a few pleasant gardens, a pleasant road; but the glow of beauty over it all, so that I have felt inclined to cry out in sheer rapture of delight.

And I, who have lived so much in cities, know the bush, too; and know and love the sun-tanned faces and wiry frames of the hardy sons of the Outback.

I think that Miss Dorothea MacKellar gets a more

sincere and passionate and discerning love into her verses of Australia than any other Australian woman singer:—

“I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror—
The wide brown land for me!
An opal-hearted country,
A wilful, lavish land—
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand—
Though Earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly.

Ah, but the songs I could sing of my dear Australia, if I could only sing like that!

And so you can see back to me, maybe, when I went to London again in 1904. My love of my dear public had been justified in my success, I had found myself with the one man who meant all the world to me, and I had the unending delight of Nancye.

More than all, apart from the intimate joys of home, the successes that I had counted best had all been made in Australia. No other country in the world so joyous, no other country so dear; I insist on it. There is nothing perfect under the sun; but among countries to live and work and be glad in I put Australia first.

I know all you can tell me about historical associations in the ancient lands, all you can tell me about the marvels of modern progress in young America; but I have found no other people who, in the main, love each other, and in that respect fulfil the law of Christ, quite so heartily as Australians do; certainly no other country,

as I hinted just now, in which the sexes meet on so healthy a plane of frank comradeship.

I always left Australia with regret, and I always came back to Australia with satisfaction. Of some individual friendships and enthusiasms I shall speak more at large in later chapters, or later in this—I don't know yet.

Oh—Bother! I shall use my woman's prerogative and change my mind. I shall leave this ordered catalogue of dates and doings, and talk for a little of other matters.

Through all the years that counted most with me, I was under George Musgrove's management. He was the ideal manager, and he must have spoiled me very thoroughly for any of the other sort. He was quite devoid of fuss and protestation, but he was the most considerate man in the world, and in the way of unpremeditated simple kindness he stands unique in my experience. Under all the ruggedness of his external nature, his contempt for humbug and devious ways, there was a deep well of tenderness that for ever started in him a desire to be good to somebody.

Let me take you back in thought to the terrible bank-smashes of 1893. We were in London when we heard of the collapse. All Maggie's money went, and all Docie's. My father, who had retired, lost all his. Poor Harwood was ruined. So was G. B. W. Lewis, Rose Edouin's husband, who had made most of his money in India. (Later, Mrs. G. B. W. Lewis was the original Natalie in our production of "Zaza," and she won an enviable success in the part).

I am not a commercial person, and I don't pretend to know how these things happen. But I still feel that it is an infamous and unpardonable thing when hard-working folk who entrust their savings of a lifetime to a bank are suddenly thrust into penury. I could tell



Nellie Stewart as "Zaza," Act I.

you of so many tragedies connected with the bank-smashes of 1893; and I can't overcome my feelings that somebody high up should have been hanged for them, and that the Governments of the various States should have done something for the victims. When the Bank of New Zealand was on its last legs, the New Zealand Government succoured it, and incidentally saved an army of its depositors from ruin. In Australia the ruined *were* ruined, and that was all about it.

Be that as it may, just before we went to London that year, prior to the smash, father tried to persuade me to withdraw the little money I had from the Bank of New South Wales and put it in his bank. I have told you how careless I have always been about money, but luckily that time I was not persuaded—partly because I didn't want the bother of it, and partly because the Bank of New South Wales had treated me considerately and courteously, and had so won me to a solid unreasoning faith in the safety and general excellence of the institution. That faith has survived till 1923. It was abundantly justified in 1893, for the Bank of New South Wales was the only one that didn't fail. If you want an excellent example of the value of feminine intuition, I give you that one in for the price of this book.

Maurice Houber, in *Remarques sur l'Amour*, says, "Certains animaux prévoient les orages avec une assurance qui tient du prodige; certaines femmes pressentent la trahison avec une intuition qui tient du miracle." So there you have it.

When the news of the disaster came to George and me in London, money was by no means very plentiful with us. But the first thing George did, without consulting me at all, was to raise a round sum somewhere and send it to father as from me. It was done in such a way that father thought I was earning the money he

received; and, in fact, I knew nothing whatever about it. It was one of those big things that George was always doing and never talking about; a characteristic good deed of his; one of those sweet, sweet things I was constantly discovering about him during all the happy years of our life together.

But to resume as to managers. Being so closely taken up with George, so continuously cared for by him, I saw little of other managers.

But never mind that. I think that what you call a gentleman is always an asset in a big business, whether the business be staging plays or selling shovels.

It is so strange that people can't discover that a good manner counts for vastly much in modern business success. Americans know that. If you go to see a man in an American business, and he is not immediately available when you call, he sends out a courteous message. He will be half-an-hour, an hour, two hours; can you call again at such and such a time? or what time will suit you better? He does not give orders that you are to wait, and on that leaves you vaguely sitting about his outer-office for a time that seems an eternity, till you get to hate him in all your bones. I don't know why it is, but some men in big business positions in Australia seem to think there is a certain virtue in making themselves inaccessible. The Americans know better. If you are in Washington and want to see the President of the United States, there is no difficulty about it. And when you do see him, you find yourself, as a rule, immediately put at your ease by a charming, courteous, considerate man of affairs. That is how it should be.

In Alexander Francis's *Americans: An Impression*, he says:—

Americans are pre-eminently accessible, and to meet them requires nothing more than easy travel. Their houses lie open to one another

and the road, unenclosed by wall, fence or hedge, as if in token of the neighbourliness and friendliness of themselves; and during the year that I was in their country I lived literally *chez eux*.

But other countries, other manners. In Australia, in the offices of some theatrical managers who should try to know better, I have found impoliteness and bad manners, and a display of *brusquerie* which is fondly supposed to be "business-like."

When any man, I don't care who, sends a message to a woman, "Tell her to wait," it is a gross impertinence, and it marks that man as a boor. It occurs often, I know, but in my own case I have found that courtesy and consideration are invariably extended to me.

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CHAPTER TWELVE.

ON THE ROAD.

I've sometimes thought, John, that the difference between us and the English is, that the Scotch are hard in all other respects, but soft with women; and the English are hard with women, but soft in all other respects.

Maggie Wylie—"WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS."

GEORGE and I were in London—July, 1904—when news reached us of the death of my dear mother in Melbourne. She was over ninety, and we had long known that the end must be approaching, so that this sorrow was softened to me, grieved as I was to be so far away from her at the last.

She was a wonderful woman, and always a wonderful mother. I have tried to make you understand how great a comfort and stay the home-life had always been to me. For that my mother was largely responsible. She was twelve years older than father, but they had lived always in concord and very deep affection. For her part, she had lived through nearly the whole of that amazing nineteenth century, and every moment of all that time she had lived abundantly. Right to the last she kept her faculties alert and keen. She was, I think, one of the kindest women that ever breathed, and certainly she was one of the wisest. She was a true house-mother. When she married father, she was on the crest of a very genuine success as a player; but it was his wish that she should retire from the stage, and she retired.

The decision must have meant much to her, but she



Nellie Stewart's Mother.



Nellie Stewart's Father.



The Grave of Nellie Stewart's Parents.

accepted it with the sweetest directness and simplicity. I was to discover later how extraordinarily safe and sound her judgment was as to everything connected with the theatre. She had the insight of a true artist, and as to technique—there was nothing she did not know. But it is still as mother that I must always remember her—contented and tender and all-providing little mother. I have already told you how, until I was well into my teens, everything I wore was made by her tireless hands, everything but my shoes. Her activities went much farther than that. She was the perfect housekeeper, the perfect helpmate: two of the principal qualifications of the perfect wife. She and my father were true friends and comrades, knit together by the love that lasts beyond the age of lovers.

She had nothing in common with the irritable woman, the self-righteous woman, the scandal-loving woman, the impatient woman, the evil-thinking woman, the scolding woman. I never detected in her the slightest symptom of intolerance; I cannot recall a time when she stooped to a word of harsh judgment of another woman. She based her conduct in that regard on the assumption that before one can form an opinion on the behaviour of any other person one must come to perfect understanding of her temperament, her temptations, her circumstances. She believed that the saying of the Master, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone," was laid down just as much as a command, as a rule of life, as any other passage in Holy Writ.

She shrank from all slanderous tittle-tattle as a nastiness. So she was ever our chief home-comfort.

I wept to know that she had been taken from us; but I knew that she had lived a long and happy life, and that she had been a weary and lonely woman since father died. I was content that she should find her rest.

To her memory this little spray of cypress—I quote Richard Watson Dixon—

I am here for thee,
Art thou there for me?
Or, traitress to my watchful heart,
Dost thou from rock and eave depart,
And from the desolate sea?.....

I am here for thee,
Art thou there for me?
Spirit of brightness, shy and sweet!
My eyes thy glimmering robe would meet
Above the glimmering sea.

My little skill,
My passionate will
Are here: where art thou? Spirit, bow
From darkening cloud thy heavenly brow,
Ere sinks the ebbing sea.

My mother's mother died when at forty. Her second husband, mother's step-father, was related to the Earl of Delawarr. After grandmother's death her husband began to look about, and finally paid unmistakable attentions to his young step-daughter. It was that unpleasantness that led to mother's leaving home, and to her final big move across two oceans. Her half-sister was that Mrs. Daly who played so much with Charles Kean. Mrs. Daly's daughter, Maria Daly, was well-known on the British stage for a long time. The more I examine my ancestry, the more histrionic it seems—I mean, the more intimately it seems to be connected with the theatre. With the Musgrove blood intermixed, that strain should be intensified in Nancye.

On our return from London that year, we brought out "Pretty Peggy," with Mrs. Maesmore Morris in the company. She was a daughter of Dr. Wilmot, of Melbourne, and had nursed stage ambitions from her childhood up. Yet she never attained any great skill as an

actress, being of pallid temperament and devoid of magnetism; but she was beautiful in a rather proud, cold way, and Australian audiences took a curious interest in her.

Through the remainder of 1904 and 1905 we went on our accustomed tour and played "Pretty Peggy" and our own repertoire. I liked "Pretty Peggy." It was a play of opportunities, written round Peg Woffington, and used to finish with the last scene of "As You Like It," dialogue complete. It is one of the regrets of my life that I never had a chance of broadening my experience and scope in Shakespearean repertoires; but I shall come to that again, later.

Harcourt Beatty was a very poor Orlando—the only part in which I ever knew him to fail—a thing the more remarkable because of his fine intelligence, his wide reading, and the fact that in real life off the stage he and the dear Orlando had very much in common; there is no accounting for these things. But in "Pretty Peggy" he gave a magnificent performance of the part of Garrick, and I loved my work as Peg Woffington. The woman herself I could never love as I love Nell Gwynne, but Peg was attractive, and one cannot escape a great fondness for her.

In the plays she was, of course, sugared very sweetly. These American costume-plays are often charming, even if they do take liberties with historical fact and sequence, the fact being that for historical truth and atmosphere the Americans have no reverence at all. My part as Peg had been played in America by Miss Grace George. I frankly confess that I cannot realize any characteristic American actress as Peg. I loved the part for its variety, and because there were some big dramatic scenes in it. If you insist that the real Peg was rather different, I can't help it. It may be that Garrick *was* a

rather mean little man, and *volage*—who cares? The play's the thing.

I remember Emilie Melville as Peg in Reade's "Masks and Faces," at the Melbourne Bijou in the 'eighties. Wybert Reeve was the Triplet. But the accomplished Emilie's *metier* was *opera bouffe* rather than comedy.

On this tour we found ourselves frequently running in competition with Miss Tittell Brune. It was so when, following "Pretty Peggy," we played "Camille." That was about the time, or just before the time, when Miss Brune was starred in "Leah Kleshna."

During the period of this tour I was left by myself a good deal, George being away in America arranging for our coming tour of the United States. But for years he had been like that, backward and forward all the time.

We were playing "Pretty Peggy" in Auckland. George was away in England, but I had Nancye and her French maid with me. We were staying at the Grand Hotel. My bedroom was at the front, and one of those old-fashioned fire-escapes—little iron ladders that run up the outer walls, and which are a feature of all the hotel buildings of New Zealand—gave access to it. One night I went into the room and put on my hat to go to the theatre. When I got back that night I missed some trinkets, with a little silver bag containing my keys and some very important papers, which I had left on the dressing-table. I rang the bell for the landlord and told him that there must have been a thief in the room. The stuff stolen was of no great value, but the papers were of the utmost importance and could not be replaced.

We rang up the police, and I told them that I simply must have the keys and the papers that were in the silver bag. "Get those," I said, "and the trinkets can go."

So they published an advertisement saying that Miss



Nellie Stewart as "Pretty Peggy," Act I.

Nellie Stewart had lost her bag, and would be glad if the person responsible for her loss would let her have back her keys and papers. In reply, we got a newspaper, with a paper scrawled with printed letters wrapped inside. The thief said he was very sorry to find it was my room he had been in. He said he would return the keys and papers, and was grieved that he could not immediately return everything, as he was very hard-up. "By the bye," he added, "your maid has very pretty ankles, which I saw when she was standing on a chair to light the gas and I was under the bed." As it happens, it was I that had stood on the chair. The printed note was signed *Bill Sikes*. It told us that we should find the papers and keys stuck under a certain log down by the railway station; and there we found them. I hope that Bill is not as hard-up as he was.

And yet—really as the last at this time—one more. When we played at Hamilton, Waikato, I was rather run down, and I had to take at regular intervals the juice squeezed from so many pounds of beef. We only got to Hamilton in the morning, and had to show that night. My maid was very busy, and I said that I'd run along to the butcher's myself and get the beef. The butcher could not give me just the piece of meat I wanted.

I said, "It is for Miss Nellie Stewart."

"Are you with the company?" he asked.

I said, "I *am* Miss Stewart."

He looked me critically over and said, "Oh, I suppose you are the daughter of the old 'un."

But I got the beef.

New Zealand has many things in common with Australia, but is also in many ways quite different; and although New Zealand is a small place—just a couple of biggish islands with a little island dangling on in the rain—people in different parts of the Dominion differ

from each other far more than people in different parts of Australia do. Auckland is sub-tropical (you mustn't say that in Auckland), and the people are very much like Queenslanders on a holiday—very easy, very genial, a bit lazy, quite contented. If the time ever comes when we are Bolshevized, and the triumphant communist unions send round a labour "boss" to produce all plays, I shall be glad to live in Auckland, because I think that even a Bolshevik in Auckland would be a good-tempered and smiling soul.

Andre Siegfried, *Democracy in New Zealand*, London, 1914, p. 246:—

Auckland appears, lying gracefully by the blue water, and overshadowed by the dark hills to which its suburbs stretch. Were it not for the glitter of the brilliant sunshine, the incomparable clearness of the air, and the thoroughly colonial aspect of the houses buried among the trees, one might well take it for an English town..... The town boasts of at most eight or ten lifts, and these travel with the slow wisdom of our provincial lifts. In the streets reigns a calm, expressive of the peace of this little town. People do not go about their business with that excitement, that "rush" which marks the new world. Good Englishmen as they are, the inhabitants of Auckland never seem to be in a hurry, and in all circumstances one may see and admire their British calm.

In Wellington everybody is proud of the local style (the big shops are more expensive than any in Sydney or Melbourne); everybody is determined to shout down the wicked suggestion that Wellington is a windy place, and everybody is obstinately metropolitan. They will tell you in Auckland that the Wellington man rehearses being metropolitan every night before he says his prayers and goes to bed.

The Aucklanders are rather inclined to lean against things and let the old day creep by. The Wellingtonians are all for activity and a great show of business. Auckland has an emolient climate, and the climate of



Nellie Stewart as "Camille."

Wellington at times is rough and searching enough to give a barnacle a cold on the chest. Mind you, I do think that the talk about Wellington winds is sometimes a little overdone. I think Harcourt Beatty exaggerated a bit, for instance, when he said that all he had to do to get a clean shave was to tie a towel tightly round his hair, lather his face, and stick his chin out of the window. I don't believe a friend's story about the careless man who forgot to keep his mouth tight-shut on Lambton Quay and so had all his artificial teeth blown away to Karori. I have seen dairy-farmers from the out-districts walking about Lambton Quay with their mouths open, admiring the beautiful buildings. Still, Wellington is without question sometimes breezy.

Christchurch, again, is quite different. Christchurch prides itself on its culture and its Englishness. All the streets radiate from the central Anglican Cathedral—and all the lines of thought, too, I think. Every woman there—no matter though she has never travelled farther than Timaru or Lyttelton—speaks of London as "Home." Everybody thinks that the Avon is exactly like the river Will Shakespeare wandered by when he went poaching and got himself all tied up with elderly Anne.

Everybody thinks that Christchurch is the high seat of civilization in the Pacific. In Christchurch the social cliques take their pre-eminence more seriously than any other social cliques in Australasia do. They are all consciously very superior and refined.

In Dunedin we are again among different people. Dunedin is very solid and thorough, and I think it quite possible that, having regard to its size, Dunedin is the most intellectual city in Australasia. The local university is crowded with "swotters." There is a big crowd of medical students, whom I love, because they are all, and

always were, very good to me. In Dunedin there are all sorts of what the Americans call uplift-societies. It is Scotland shifted across the oceans, the Scots' dialect everywhere. In its solid and compact way, Dunedin is a very beautiful little city, and the environing hills are an inspiration.

Invercargill is dour. I don't mean the people, but the place. It is frightfully cold in winter, and it seems very exposed. It is not what can be called a good show town, because its whims and preferences are so uncertain. My history is a trifle vague, but I think Invercargill was discovered by the late Sir Ernest Shackleton about the year 1902, and certainly the South Pole is just across the way.

I remember Invercargill as a jolly, little place before it went "dry," but now the "hotels" and boarding-houses are dreary-looking caravansera. A brewery works overtime in the town, however, and lorry-loads of corpulent barrels are daily carried outside the "dry" boundary, where they are decanted into jars, bottles, and other convenient vessels, and then solemnly transported back to arid Invercargill again, like the morning milk, for local consumption. Invercargill is intensely Scotch, but who shall say it lacks a keen sense of dry humor?

At the Bluff they tell you that their post-office is the southernmost in the world. It isn't, of course; but the dear thought comforts them.

Jesting all apart, New Zealand is a wonderful country, and the New Zealanders are stalwart and straight and fine. The standard of intelligence is relatively very high there, and plays still a little beyond the Commonwealth often succeed in the Dominion. "Peter Pan" succeeded to admiration, after failing in Australia. "The Blue Bird," another Australian failure, succeeded in New Zealand. Miss Marie Tempest has a great vogue

there. Bernard Shaw plays succeed there as they cannot yet succeed in Australia. The English spoken in New Zealand is, on the whole, far better than the English spoken in Australia; in Wellington and Christchurch, most admirable. Family life, home-life, seems to me to be more cordial in New Zealand than in Australia. That idea of mine may be due to the fact that during a large part of the year in New Zealand the climate tends to keep people indoors. We returned to Sydney from New Zealand, and played a farewell season which included "The Bishop's Carriage," before sailing for America with "Sweet Nell" on Christmas Day, 1905.

In passing, an odd note on origins. This is how the Nellie Stewart bangle first came into being. When General Gordon was killed at Khartoum they decided to erect a monument to the dead hero in Melbourne. George gave a great benefit *matinée* to help the fund, and it succeeded so well that the money raised was more than was needed. So George gave me the twenty-five sovereigns, which Mr. Drummond, the jeweller, melted down and made into the bangle I still wear from George's design. It was large and of a new style—it was forced on my arm and has never been removed since. I daren't think how many other Nellie Stewart bangles, of all qualities, have been made and worn in Australia since then. There was a time when no really smart girl would be without one. A friend tells me that he counted over three hundred on women going into a theatre in Sydney one night.

Another scrap from memory's uncertain page. In 1894 a certain shade of colour had gone right out. I always used to try and scheme to have something new for every production. We found a little old snippet of cerise, and I adopted the colour for "Ma Mie Rosette." From that time on, the particular shade has been called

"Ma Mie Rosette" in Australia. Queer how things happen.

While we were producing "The Belle of New York" in London, Lady Randolph Churchill raised a fund to equip the hospital ship *Maine*, which went out to South Africa to the Boer War. There was a great bazaar in aid of the fund, held at Claridge's Hotel, and at Claridge's George put up a special performance. The late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, was among the guests. Mrs. Brown Potter was there. Edna May waited at the Prince's table. A pearl necklace was to be given to the woman who collected the largest sum for the fund on that occasion.

The programme-sellers seemed to me to be the likeliest money-getters, but I determined to have a try for the necklace. Before the function I called on the firm that supplied the Prince of Wales with cigarettes, and when I told them my plan they gave me all the cigarettes I wanted for nothing. When "the day" came round, I offered the Prince a cigarette.

"Your favorite brand, Your Highness," said I.

"How did you know?" he asked with a smile, so I told him all about it.

"Bravo," he said, and paid me five sovereigns for one.

"Have you a light?" he then asked.

"Certainly, Sir," I replied, "and it will cost you another sovereign!"

He laughed—and paid.

After that Mr. Frank Gardiner, who had been out in Australia, and who was the husband of Carrie Swain, who made such a success as "The Tomboy," gave me a cheque for £50.

"Australia is bound to come out on top," he said, by way of encouragement. Australia did, too, for



Nellie Stewart
as "Rosalind" in "As You Like It," Act II.

Pencil sketch by Miss Webb.

though Edna May did remarkably well, my takings were more than hers, and I got the necklace.

Oh! and I've just remembered another little incident that may appear humorous, but was very serious to me at the time. At any rate, you may think it a unique one. It was during our tour of the west (in Kalgoorlie, I believe) about the year 1909-10.

We were still working under the J.C.W. banner, and had been sent to the West with the assurance that Christmas time was really cool—but—the heat we experienced was frightful!

I felt a great deal of exhaustion playing such heavy parts as "Kitty Bellairs," "Zaza," "Sweet Nell," "As You Like It," etc., etc., and it was only with George's care and forethought that I "got through."

The Hotel was like the Infernal Regions—unbearable—so George used to provide a huge block of ice, place it in the middle of my room and have electric fans playing on it all night. In this way only was I able to sleep at all, for the heat. During the daytime arrangements were made that I should be provided with my meals and made comfortable on a couch in the great public refrigerating Company's works, and there I sat all day long, surrounded with frozen poultry, fish, meat, etc.—only driving from there to the Theatre in time for the performance at night—where George had eight electric fans placed in the wings around the stage, which at any rate kept the foetid atmosphere breathable. This heat lasted for three days—then on our last performance ("As You Like It") at 6 p.m. a "Willy Willy" blew up. Oh, shall I ever forget it! A hurricane of wind and red sand so that utter darkness prevailed—the sand lay inches thick on everything and everybody. Our make-up was ludicrous! We walked on the stage leaving our

footmarks deeply imprinted in the thick red sand now covering the boards.

For we played!!! Oh, yes! and the house was packed from floor to ceiling—and for Shakespeare too—the audience got there somehow.

It is at such compliments as this that my grateful heart fills with pride—for the position all dear Australians have placed me in.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.
SOME TALK ABOUT ACTING.

———and you shall say,
I'll prove a busy actor in their play.

Rosalind—"As YOU LIKE IT."

SHAKESPEARE made one of his characters say
of actors—

The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst
are no worse, if imagination amend them.

The immortal William knew what he was talking about, well enough, when he made Hamlet say,—

O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought that some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

I have heard an old actor admonishing a young and careless probationer, "Ah, laddie, laddie! Acting's not catching, like the measles!" So many stage aspirants believe that acting just "comes."

I'm going to say a few words about acting, although I subscribe to the sentiment of George Jean Nathan:—

Nothing is more aesthetically and artistically dubious and insecure than the appraisal of acting, for it is based upon the quicksands of varying human emotionalism, and of aural and visual prejudice. Were I, for example, one hundred times more proficient a critic of drama

and life than I am, my criticism of acting would none the less remain often arbitrary and erratic, for I would remain constitutionally anaesthetic to a Juliet, however otherwise talented, who had piano legs, or to a Marc Antony who, for all his historic power, presented to the vision a pair of knock-knees.

The woman who wishes to be charming on the stage must equip herself to be charming off it. She must furnish her mind, she must learn to be gracious and easy in her manners, she must acquire the style of a gentlewoman. Oh, I know it isn't easy. I know that in Australia the young girl naturally tends to become slangy and careless, to flatten or stretch her vowels into the hard and killing monotony of what we call the Australian accent—though accent really has nothing to do with it. But the conscientious young actress cannot afford to let herself go with the raucous crowd. She seeks success in a calling that demands meticulous care in the presentment of personality, and success in that kind cometh only by prayer and fasting.

I have had many pupils in Australia, and invariably the first thing I have to teach them has been to speak a tolerable sort of English. They come to me with their poor maimed voices, and they want to begin to recite at once, or to get on to the stage immediately. Sometimes they have already recited in public, for the poor dear suffering public stand much. But it's all no use. You cannot hope for success on any worthy stage, unless you learn to speak like a cultivated man or woman.

I am not a prejudiced fool, but even the most beautiful and accomplished American Juliet will leave me cold if she speaks American. If she speaks French or German—well and good. In the illusion, she is speaking her native Italian, if she knows how to speak and live the part. But I can never bring myself to believe that a Juliet speaking American is the very Juliet, be-



*Two Studies of Nellie Stewart
in 1908.*

cause American is a tongue somehow inimical to high romance and the divine illusions. Some American players in modern plays are delightful; but I can't see them in Shakespeare, or in classical English comedy. I can't imagine an American as Peg Woffington or Nell Gwynne. I may be entirely wrong, but I am simply telling you in an honest way how my own ideas run.

First of all, then, let the Australian neophyte learn to speak English—perfectly. Next, let his (or her) study of Shakespeare be thorough. The plays, apart from their high literary charm, are goldmines for the student of acting, because they make the mimic world of the stage burn and blaze as the mirror of reality. When the student is really familiar with Shakespeare, his education is already well advanced. Then he (or she) should be familiar with all Elizabethan and Restoration comedy and drama. Next, there should be a wide reading of good poetry, all the great English. And with that, the student should be reasonably conversant with modern fiction and *belles lettres*. Having done so much, if he has original talent as chief dower, he will have formed a good basis for success. It is quite a mistake to think that neglected opportunities and wasted time make a good foundation for success on the stage.

It has been a constant source of regret to me that I never had any chance of steady work in Shakespearean repertoire, because I think that is the most solid foundation of good acting in English. I know quite well that as a rule actors do not speak Shakespearean blank-verse correctly, or with any distinction. I am afraid that that defect is inevitable, because the first thing a teacher learns is that the average man, like the average woman, has no ear for that music. There is nothing more beautiful in English speech than blank-verse spoken not as prose but as poetry, with due regard

to metre and rhythm. I am compelled to say that I heard very little verse spoken beautifully when I was in England.

This, of course, sounds like rank heresy, but I am simply recording my honest opinion. To me many of the front-rank players were a disappointment. Perhaps I expected too much. There were brilliant exceptions, but often where I looked for music I found vocal mannerisms.

Take George Alexander, for instance. I know that Sir George Alexander did much for the theatre. But I could not conceive it possible that any man in actual life ever behaved as Alexander behaved on the stage. His mannerisms were mechanical and had an effect of being studied.

Beerbohm Tree believed in the virtue of noise in a setting of advertised eccentricity. Once he persuaded Sir Henry Irving to witness the first performance of one of those huge Tree spectacles. Sir Henry saw the play through, only blinking occasionally when Tree shouted loudest. "Well, what did you think of it?" Tree asked him later. "Ah, audible," said Irving, "audible." Tree had many amiable qualities and some of the marks of a distinguished man, but he could not conceive that there was anything on earth to compare for greatness with Beerbohm Tree and his works. In America they took him to see Niagara Falls. "Good Lord!" he said, "is *that* all?" In his youth he was invited to a great dinner at Cambridge. When the toast of "The Guests" was proposed, it was to be responded to by a famous Irish peer, but young Tree got up ahead of him and proceeded to give some very ordinary imitations of famous actors. Gentle protest was useless, he went through all his tricks before he sat down. Then the Irish peer was too angry and disgusted to say anything.

I only mention these things because they seem to be so characteristic of Tree's acting as I saw it. I say nothing of his singular skill as a producer and as a manager, nor of Alexander's ability in that regard.

In Australia neither Tree nor Alexander could have succeeded, except with people who accepted them blindly on their reputation. Australia hates heavy mannerisms in an actor. So do I. I don't tell the student to act naturally, because I know that nobody acts naturally, and that truly natural acting would probably fail to get over the footlights; but I still think that it is well to be as natural as one can be.

I saw some very admirable acting in England. Miss Lena Ashwell in her best days was very brilliant and very subtle, with a peculiar voice that grew on one. Mr. Dennis Eady, who began with old-man parts, acts delightfully, and is one of the least affected actors I ever saw in England. Mr. Gerald Du Maurier is a most accomplished actor.

If the young player hopes to succeed, he must begin in the right way. Proper training of the speaking voice is essential. I have three or four pupils, with beautiful singing-voices, who cannot speak words with the slightest suggestion of grace or distinction. I have met people—in grand opera more particularly—who were the victims of an absurd superstition that to speak lines injures the singing-voice. In point of fact, the singing-voice is hardly used at all in speaking, and there are hundreds of thousands of people with beautiful speaking-voices who can't sing as well as frogs. On the stage the most beautiful speakers are seldom singers. In opera the people who speak even reasonably well are very few, and the people who act well—you can look over the world at any time and count them on your fingers. I think there is a sort of feeling among Grand

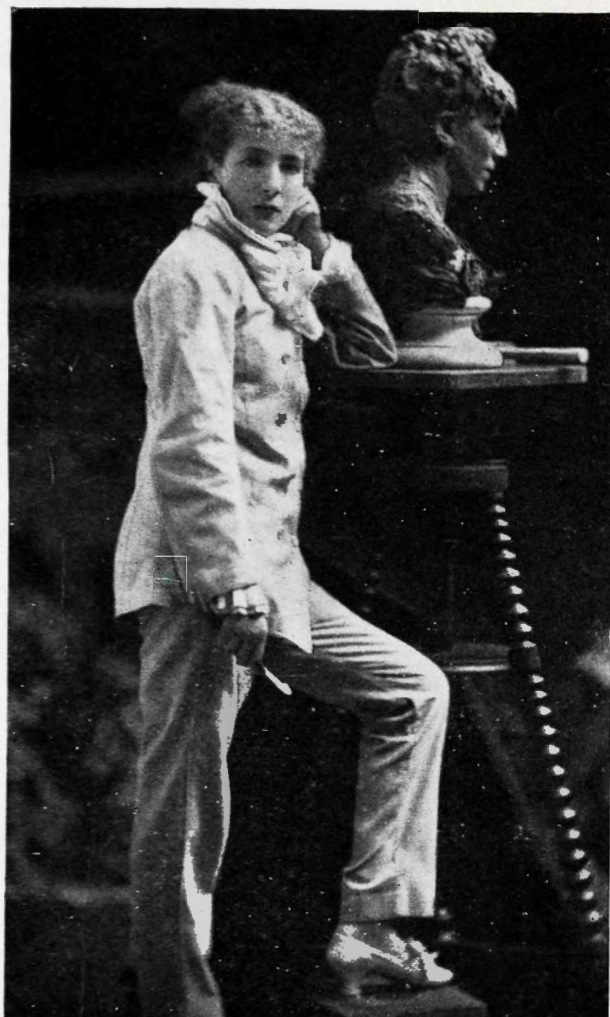
Opera people that to act at all well is frightfully bad form. The thing I always insist on with my pupils is that they cannot hope to act well or speak beautifully until they learn to sound with absolute purity the characteristic resonance of the vowels. I doubt whether five per cent. of Australian girls on the stage can pronounce *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* correctly. This Australian accent, as we call it, is terrible. On the stage it is unpardonable. It should be impossible to tell from one's speech what part of the Empire one comes from.

And the study of Shakespeare—one cannot insist too strongly on that. It not only helps the student to a useful appreciation of shades of personality in acting, but it develops the students' own personality, it makes for dignity and poise. Mind you, I am no idolater. I don't tell you to read Shakespeare and nothing else. You should read the later men—Congreve in particular—you should study Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Dekker, Vanbrugh, Shirley, all the dramatists and writers of comedies, right down to Mr. Bernard Shaw. But I still find that the best way to teach is to specialize in Shakespeare. It is well, of course, to master the ordinary rules of prosody, but if a student has no ear for verse-music the attempt to help him to the acquisition of one is always desperately vain.

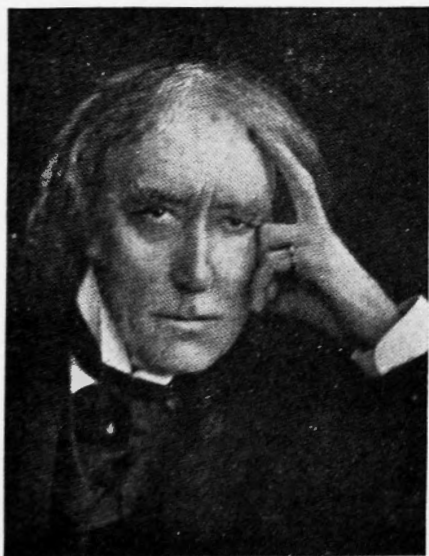
Then there is deportment, oh! how essential!

How few girls can walk properly—and why?

Do you know I can judge a person's character by the walk—(just as I can tell a woman's age from her arm). One has only to watch animals to learn the reason. Did you ever observe a cat walk and move its tail? All curves! Cats form the figure eight (8) in all their movements—and so it should be with us—the proper exercises for the arms so essential to poise and graceful carriage, should be learnt by girls in private life



Sarah Bernhardt.



Sir Henry Irving.



Miss Ellen Terry.

as well as by all stage aspirants. To walk well is such an asset for a girl and so much easier than *not* to walk well, it really only means using our brains, and careful daily practice for a time after once being shown; dancing does not help, to my idea, for it inclines girls to turn out their toes *too much*, which looks very ugly, and indeed flat footed. All movement with the legs and arms should be from the waist, not from the shoulder and knee as is so generally done.

Another thing. Young actresses should beware of vanity. I never knew a really vain girl who amounted to anything. Men are vain by nature, but even with them when vanity becomes inordinate it is a terrible disease. The people who have something in them that might seem to warrant or excuse a little vanity are never conscious of it.

I saw Miss Ellen Terry act many times. She was always perfectly adorable. Once I had the pleasure of appearing with her.

Oh, no! not at the Lyceum. It was down at some room in the East End, where some of us were giving an entertainment to try and brighten the drab lives of Darkest London. I'm sorry to say I forget what Miss Terry did—I know I recited "Barney O'Hea."

On the first night of "Du Barry" in Melbourne, at the King's Theatre, the curtain fell to shouts of "Vive-le Roi!" on the stage, and hearty applause from the audience. I hurried off to my dressing-room, but the cheers and plaudits kept up, increasing rather than diminishing.

Just then I heard a musical voice calling, "Where is she? Where is Nellie Stewart?" and a lady burst into my room and wanted to drag me back to take still another call. It was dear Ellen Terry.

In musical comedy and comic-opera the English

woman has no qualities that Australians need be jealous of, apart from the fact that she generally speaks refined English. Girls of positive quality, distinctive personal gifts, are rare on the English musical stage; whereas on the Australian musical stage they are fairly common. And some of the voices in England are of such sort as in Australia would assuredly get the fair ladies attached to them the form of criticism known as "the bird." Good English singers—by which I mean singers of English birth and parentage—are as rare in London as good French poets are in Paris.

The Australian girls are all of excellent promise. The trouble with most of them is that they are content to get a little rudimentary teaching from the dancing-mistress, and on that to get into a theatre in the hope of pegging along and picking up something. They don't take time to realize that English is as important as dancing, and that they can't hope to get English from a dancing-mistress, any more than they can hope to get English from a producer who quite possibly speaks no language but his native American.

It is very seldom that one hears English words mispronounced on the English stage; but on the Australian stage it is a very common thing indeed. I think that the Federal Government should invent an education-test for producers imported from other places. If they cannot pass a fairly stringent education-test, they should be refused admittance. I don't care what theatre he spoils things in, an illiterate producer is an unmixed evil, and why he should be admitted to a country that shuts out harmless Japanese chiropodists I have never been able to discover. But, so far as acting goes, nothing else seems to me to be so badly produced as Grand Opera.

I hate snobbishness, and I'm sure that you will not misunderstand me when I say that the young actress

should be fastidious in her choice of acquaintance. I'm not putting that on moral grounds at all, because I have never yet found any reason to worry over the morals of Australian girls, even if worrying over other people's personal affairs happened to be my business—which, thank God, it isn't. But young people, young girls especially, take the colour of their associates. If you mix with the wrong people you unfit yourself to mix with the right people. Have you ever noticed that if a stranger comes among an average Australian crowd and speaks in a low sweet voice, with pure and delicate intonation and a good choice of words, she is at once taken for a society-woman, or what is called a "Pommy"? The assumption that society-women in Australia speak particularly good English is gratuitous. What I mean is that if a girl speaking that sort of English in that sort of way gets adrift among average Australians, they think she is either imported or is "putting on side." Why should it be so?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN.
AMERICAN EXPERIENCES.

“Comfort, content, delight,
The age’s slow-bought gain,
They shrivelled in a night—
Only ourselves remain.”

RUDYARD KIPLING

WE left Sydney in the *Sonoma*, Christmas Day, 1905. George took over his complete company of thirty-six, with his own mechanists, electricians, and everything, and Gustave Slapoffski joined us in America as *Administrateur Musicale*. But when we reached San Francisco we found that we were up against the unions, who would not let our staff do anything at all. We might have foreseen that; but in those days, though everybody seemed as well-off as anybody is now, we had no theatrical unions in Australia, we were just a pack of poor benighted creatures depending on our abilities for our success. I suppose George thought that, as a visiting company, we could get through. We couldn’t. We had to engage an American staff. It was a great nuisance in some ways, and a great loss. George, being George, did not send our own staff back to Australia. He kept all our men on the salary-list, while the American staff did the work.

I’m not a politician, but it does seem to me to be an outrageous and idiotic thing that a manager cannot employ whom he chooses. We took to America a staff

pecially trained in our Australian productions, a staff of men who had become expert in our own requirements, and when we got to America we had to train another staff before we could do anything else, and finally to open with another staff not nearly as capable as our own, while our own stood by. I believe in paying every man whatever he is worth, and a little more. I believe that it is one's duty, as it should be one's joy, to do everything possible to help everyone else to a good time. But I do not believe that any gang or section of inferior workers should be permitted to dictate to a business man or a community. I believe that when such dictation is attempted it can only be because the workers concerned have no sense of the dignity of labour, or the grace of service. By their own act they drag themselves down to the level of grudging drudges, mere helots skulking along and tearing at each others' throats for chance ha'pennies.

Our success in San Francisco was immediate and emphatic. Right from the outset, "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" caught on. With the company we had Dora and Marie Rignold; and of course Harcourt Beatty. There never was a stauncher comrade or a more dependable associate. I have already made clear what I think of his acting.

We were left in no sort of doubt as to one thing. We had speedy proof that San Francisco thoroughly deserved its world-wide repute for hospitality. The people were kind beyond belief, and the audiences were warm and cordial as if we had been in Australia.

It is very difficult to suggest in writing the dear charm of San Francisco. The place is thrillingly exotic in some ways, and yet very homely. It is full of beautiful women, who have a quality of fascination distinctly their own. What I mean to say is that there are beauti-

ful and charming women everywhere, but that the women of San Francisco have an element in their charm and beauty that is quite peculiarly theirs. They are far more temperamental, I think, than the women of the Eastern States, more feminine, and more given to pleasure, truer lovers of joy.

They are queenly in their demands and their assumptions, and they take the homage of men as a simple matter of right; but they meet men on a broad human level of good understanding, and I think the Californian man has more reason to thank God for his womenkind than the average American in other States has. A man doesn't mind how much a woman demands, if she demands it in the right way. Those seductive Californian girls are capable of getting up in the night and rousing Clarence or Wilbur to rake down the Pleiades for them to play with; but they do it with such a richness of charm and grace that the men seem to love them all the better for it. There is in their manner nothing to suggest that almost sexless coldness that is sometimes so repellant in many other American women one meets. I can easily understand why so many young Englishmen who have resisted all the blandishments of the Eastern States come on to California and within a month are furiously eager to marry somebody.

Here's a glimpse of 'Frisco borrowed from *The Land of Contrasts*, by James Fullarton Muirhead:

The man who has stood on Inspiration Point above Oakland and has watched the lights of San Francisco gleaming across its noble bay, or who has gazed down on the Golden Gate from the heights of the Presidio, must have an exceptionally rich gallery of memory if he does not feel that he has added to its treasures one of the most entrancing city views he has ever witnessed. The situation of San Francisco is indeed that of an empress among cities.



Nellie Stewart as "Sweet Nell," Act III.

And Maurice Baring says, in *Round the World in any Number of Days* :

The climate is like champagne. There is gaiety in the air. The streets and the houses seem to radiate amusement and cheerfulness. San Francisco is essentially a night city; I should say it was the gayest night city in the world. I have met with a great deal of hospitality all over the world, but I have never met with people who take so much trouble for the stranger as the Americans.

The talk about San Francisco being a dreadfully wicked city in the days before the earthquake is all fudge. There is wickedness everywhere if you go out to look for it and imagine it. We found it gloriously gay and exhilarating. We found people taking frank delight in each other's company, people not afraid to laugh and make merry, very fine people.

The press was as kind to us as the people were, quite candidly criticising the play as to its historical accuracy or verisimilitude. (Odd, because in the whole production the play itself was the only American thing).

I print a few extracts from the San Francisco newspapers, as I am one of the very few actresses who does *not* scorn to read a critique.

" 'Sweet Nell of Old Drury' is a splendid play in which to invite attention to the ambitious and the artistic producer; it is less well suited to recommend the art of the player. An actress of great skill, of varied method and of unusually magnetic personality can find in it a variety of material, but not a sufficient variety to rest her reputation upon it."

* * * * *

"Nellie Stewart has a repertory of plays representing a wide range of characters and calling for great variety of treatment. If she dismisses each of them as well as she did Nell Gwynne, she will prove a representative actress in fact as well as in name, not only of Australia, but of any other country."

* * * * *

"Whether Miss Stewart's methods are those common to her continent, or peculiar to her, is not known here, but in either case there is in them a freshness, a newness, a blitheness, and a stimulating quality that makes her a welcome addition to our players.

Her training has not been of the 'hammer and tongs' sort, but has been wide in scope, thorough in detail, and particularly complete in the matter of impersonation as contrasted with characterization.

For a variety of interpretive facial expression she depends more than any actress we known upon the free and full use of her facial muscles, a use which usually results in meaningless grimacing, but in Miss Stewart's case is convincing rather than ridiculous.

In the second act, played in Nell's boudoir, in a scene with Charles II., Miss Stewart did the best bit of acting of the performance. Her perfect posure, well modulated speech, reposeful manner, interpretive gesture and dancing play of features, probably gave the best gauge of her ability of anything she did."

Most of all, however, I want to call your attention to this: that San Francisco grudges no amount of space to the adequate criticism, appreciation, or description of any theatrical production that is worth while. Australian papers are no longer like that.

I have nothing to say against sport, but where the Australian papers give the theatres an inch of notice, they give sport a mile. Take up any Sunday paper, and you will find the Saturday first night given very short shrift, while yards and yards of space are devoured by sporting events and little trumpery football matches in the forgotten suburbs. As to the theatres, the papers cater no longer to the public, but to the managers. They give more space to advance-puffs than they do to the actual criticism of productions.

As to America, the American newspapers know better. They seek to appeal to every class. They know that there are millions of people who love the theatre, and so they treat the theatres properly. The Americans are just as keen on sport as the Australians are, but the American newspapers know that the sporting public is not the whole public or the only public, and so they consider the more intelligent sections while giving to sport whatever is sports' fair due. The American newspaper that neglected the theatre would lose its public. The good American newspaper forgets nobody.



Nellie Stewart as "Sweet Nell," Act I.

With the Sunday edition of the *New York Times* there are whole big sections dealing with literary and dramatic art, books, intellectual movements, everything that interests people who don't care particularly or exclusively for gambling and prize-fighting, games and turmoil.

So it is with other representative American papers; their especial charm and usefulness lies in the fact that they cater for all sections of the public and issue a special entertainment number every Sunday, just the day on which people want to leave the grime and stress of the world behind them and be entertained.

I have often heard people speak contemptuously of the American newspapers, and I know that they are not perfect. They are not always very fastidious regarding accuracy, and they are sometimes grossly sentimental. They have vicious reticences and are often frightfully afraid of plain nature. The yellow press of America is very sensational; but it is surely better to be sensational than tedious or dead.

For the rest, the defects of the American newspapers are frankly admitted by the best American critics, so that there seems to be no reason why we should not admit in the American papers whatever qualities are admirable.

I suppose that in a city like Sydney about 400,000 people are interested in the theatre and attend theatrical productions more or less frequently. Surely such a crowd as that is worthy of the editors' attention. Sporting seasons come and go, but the theatrical season in Australia is all the year round. On the hottest night of summer any good play that has caught the favour of the public will fill its theatre. I am quite sure that the newspapers generally are a little dense in their perception of the place the theatre holds in the minds and hearts of

the people. Were it not so, the papers would treat the theatre more seriously.

I speak quite candidly about this, because the great majority of Australian newspapers have treated me with consistent cordiality and kindness. We are all glad to get advance-paragraphs into newspapers, because they tend to help business by stimulating public curiosity and imposing on public credulity; but I still think that advance-paragraphs are only justifiable in so far as they are *news*.

And yet, surely the main duty of a newspaper is to tell the public to the best of its judgment exactly what a play is like, exactly how it is produced, exactly what support it merits as an entertainment. I found in America that that is what all the representative newspapers try to do, or make a colourable feint of doing. Many of the criticisms are written in terms of extreme candour by men of international reputation. Men of that calibre do not have to consider the business interests of the management when they criticise a play; they are there simply as servants of the public, and when they make a mistake it is an honest mistake. I feel that that is as it should be.

I sometimes think that the public in Australia is so surfeited with managerial gush about shows that the theatre is being brought into a sort of contempt. For the rest, there may be, say, fifty thousand people at a race-meeting. But any play that succeeds will be seen by more than fifty thousand people. Why, then, should not the papers devote something like as much space to all the theatres as they devote to all the race-meetings? We hear a lot about raising the tone of the theatre and the quality of plays. Nothing would help more surely to that end than a generous and enlightened policy in the newspaper-offices. Discuss comedy and drama



George Musgrove.

scientifically, as you discuss horse-racing and prize-fighting, and you will immediately begin to educate your public and to stimulate a taste for dramatic and musical art. That is what the big American papers are doing all the time. On the stage, all the people who are worth while love good criticism.

Good players like to learn exactly how their work strikes the intelligent outside observer.

Let us now get back to San Francisco and the beginning, the so auspicious beginning, of our tour.

Well, the scheme was that we were to work our way over to New York. After the happy season in 'Frisco all looked rosy. George remained behind in San Francisco to look after some business in connection with our scenery and dates ahead. He was staying at the St. Francis Hotel, when the vast thing happened that shattered all our plans—the earthquake. He had a terrible time. The great hotel was full of people (the late Harold Ashton was there, I remember), and from what George told us afterwards I gathered that the panic was not at all exaggerated in the press. George was up on the twelfth storey, and he had to climb to it in utter darkness after the 'quake when he went to his room to get his papers. He spent all the cash he had with him on telegrams to us, which we never got. He couldn't get any money from the bank. He and others of the guests ate what they could find, which wasn't much. Excitement and fear had strange effects. An elderly woman of the best class who was in her room when the first bad shock came, and who ran down two or three flights in her terror, absolutely unclothed, carried a big pitcher or ewer in her arms as if it were a precious possession—too badly unnerved to notice anything, poor dear.

Finally, George got down to the Oakland ferry.

Now that happens to be something like a ferry, a ferry that a big city may be proud of. San Francisco is smaller than Sydney by a lot, but there is every possible convenience and comfort on the Oakland ferry. It doesn't matter how big the crowd aboard any Oakland boat may be, it can get on to the wharf from the boat in a few seconds. (I shudder to think what the effect might be if there were a panic on a crowded ferry-boat at one of our Sydney wharves).

There are excellent restaurant-saloons on the Oakland boats. George went in when he got aboard and made a wonderful meal. He told me that he didn't think he ever ate so much at one sitting in his life before. He was frightfully tired and very hungry, and he made a clean sweep. Then he had to explain that he had no money. He was a man among men, and he had no trouble about that. You see, at the hotel there had been really nothing to eat worth mentioning. One lady staying there, Mrs. Lawson, had been married on the very morning of the big shake, and the whole party of them lived for a day-and-a-half chiefly on her wedding cake.

George got away from Oakland. At Colorado Springs, quite seven days after the catastrophe, we were terribly anxious about him. Mr. Beatty had been telling us that he had done everything that could be done, but that there was no trace of him. The performance of "Sweet Nell" was just over, and Mr. Beatty was seeing me home. Then we heard Miss Amy Willard scream while we were still way down the street. She used to finish early and go home to keep an eye on Nancye for me. I heard her call out, "He's come! He's come!"

I never saw such another object in my life as George was that night. He was unshaven, ragged, and

battered, and thickly coated with grey dust from head to heel. He had had an awful time, and he knew already what that dreadful earthquake meant to our plans. But he was safely back to us, and that was the main thing.

The earthquake in fact made all our plans impossible. The Americans are a widely emotional people, and under the shadow of that calamity they turned from the theatres, and companies all over the States went scurrying back to New York. We knew that our tour now represented a dead loss. If we could have rested several weeks or months and then started out again, all would have been well, but there was simply nothing doing, and our expenses were going on all the time.

I am most eager to do justice to America, and I want you to understand that. The American people are kindness itself, but their emotional balance is never quite certain. Any bolt from the blue frightens and distresses them as a thunderstorm will frighten nervous children. Face to face with a big and unexpected disaster, they can feel, but cannot reason. They are the most feminine of all peoples. We had to make the best of it.

Before we went over on this tour I had, of course, seen many American productions. Belasco's shows are wonderful in their perfection of detail, their unfailing but uneven charm, their clear brilliance of effect; but there is always something wanting, there is always something to give colour to an idea that the Americans have more ingenuity than imagination where the art of the theatre is concerned. A Belasco production always strikes one as rather more of a spectacle than an interpretation; if you can get my idea.

I long ago forgave Mr. Belasco for his misunderstanding of me, for his suspicion that I had been guilty of a sort of disloyalty my soul loathes. I look upon him

as a genuine personality, one of the few dignified and original men connected with the American theatre. He is a good talker, but he differs from the average good talker in America in that his talk is quite without affectation. He also has a true sense of humour, which is much rarer in America than you may think. He has one story of a play that failed completely—fell down and died and decomposed, all in one night. The author sat in the front row, feeling a little down, for when a play in America fails so badly that the audience hisses it, it fails very badly indeed. Presently, as the author sat there, amid the derisive noises, a woman behind him leaned forward and said, "Pardon me, Mr.— but as I knew you'd written this play I took the liberty of snipping off a lock of your hair before the curtain went up. Will you permit me now to return it to you?"

As to the American people in general I can sound the loud timbrel with full conviction and great joy. I love playing to American audiences. They are keenly appreciative, cordially kind, intensely human. They do not conceal their emotions as things to be ashamed of, as we so often do; but they behave better than any other audiences I know. The courtesy of an American audience is a very wonderful thing, and it seems to be quite instinctive. The people never dream of disturbing the player at the height of any poignant situation, breaking in on a dramatic pause with a dreadful clapping of their hands. However much they enjoy the play, they wait until they can applaud without marring the effect or breaking the continuity. If they don't like a play, they say nothing; but if they do like it, their enthusiasm is admirable. They never make ugly noises in a theatre, they never stoop from their natural decency to make audible remarks about people coming into the house, they seldom spoil the pleasure of other people by

arriving late and causing a nuisance, and they never spoil one's enjoyment by talking during the progress of an act. Americans of reputable class are always most scrupulous in regard to the minor courtesies; it is second nature with them.

The manners of the American are in general very good, if a little too effusive. He carries chivalry to an almost pathetic excess in his treatment of women. He is fastidious about doing the right thing, as he understands it, so much so that his habitual earnest punctiliousness stiffens at times into a mechanical ceremoniousness. The increasing intimacy of the two nations can have no other effect than to draw the bonds of English and American friendship closer. I have known many people prejudiced against everything American to go to the States and become enthusiasts of America in a few weeks or months.

New York is Cosmopolis, and every writer of memoirs like these talks about it. For myself, I want to say a word or two about Chicago. I love Chicago. It is very young and vigorous and valiant and uncompromising. I think it is the intellectual metropolis of America. A very large proportion of the people who do things in art come from Chicago or live there. Chicago has a real passion for spiritual recreations and pursuits. In many ways Chicago is thrilling. It is a dour city that often flashes into pure beauty. It has indescribable effects of light. It is passionately alive*.

* H. G. Wells, *The Future in America: A Search After Realities* (London, 1906), p. 86.—Even amidst the sombre uncleanness of Chicago, the hopeful eye may see the light of a new epoch, the coming of new conceptions, of foresight, of large collective plans and discipline to achieve them; the fresh green leaves, among all the festering manure, of the giant growths of a more orderly and more beautiful age.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

MORE VICISSITUDES.

I never cared how hard the rain fell, nor for the bitter wind—nor all the splashing mud, and the black night, when I could reach my hand to touch yours in the dark—or when you spoke to me.

Mary Tudor—"WHEN KNIGHTHOOD WAS IN FLOWER."

WELL, there we were, stuck in America with our own production at a time when a profitable production was no longer possible. We heard of awful failures on all sides. When George went to see managers, he found all the time that they wanted us but did not want our production. Americans are very clannish and very patriotic on the side of their interests. Their managers do not want imported productions—productions controlled by imported managers and money—if they can by any means keep them out. They didn't like to hear of George's great success as a producer, of which San Francisco made no secret. Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger sent for us. They wanted us, they wanted the atmosphere we had; but they did not want us to produce our own play, they were not looking for rivals in that kind.

At Chicago we had definitely to abandon the whole tour. There was simply no possibility of our getting to a New York Theatre, and there was no other way of making money while the country was still in an emotional quiver over the earthquake.



*Nellie Stewart.
Private study.*

We were ruined. Everything was lost, all our scenery for the repertoire season that we had left in 'Frisco and paid £2,000 bond-money for—all our available funds. All lost.

It was at this period that George also lost the Princess's Theatre, Melbourne. I never knew exactly the facts, but the culmination of his ruin came then, and I remember poor George's words the morning the ill tidings came through from Melbourne—we were stranded in Chicago—"Where has the money gone, Mother? Who is responsible for this?" Those "responsible" had indeed stage-managed his ruin well.

And the Princess's Theatre, Melbourne, his dear Princess's, that he had imagined, planned, created; and into the building of which he had seen every nail driven—the thing nearest to his heart—Gone!

I felt bitter and vengeful, I confess it. Not because of myself. Oh, no! But because of this dear persecuted, wronged man who in all his life had never been guilty of a dishonourable or a mean action to any living soul.

I said, "We must sell our home, George, and you must go to England at once and send what money you can to enable the Company to return to Australia. I will wait here and share with them until you can send sufficient."

This was done. I sold every article of jewellery I possessed—some very dear gifts—and all the members were made comfortable and sent back as soon as possible. Nancye and I then got to New York somehow.

While I was in New York, Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger sent for me, and I saw their manager, Mr. Frank McKee. I entered into negotiations with them, and while I was waiting for a final decision and to sign my contract, word came that Mr. Belasco would like to see

me. I went along to his office. His people were playing "The Girl of the Golden West," and he was about to produce "The Rose of the Rancho." Everything was turning out very favourably. I would sooner have gone to Mr. Belasco than to Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger, even if with Mr. Belasco I had merely walked on. But I could not bring things to a settlement, because George was in England. Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger wanted me for stock in Philadelphia. Mr. Belasco never told me what he had in view for me but I think it was the big part in "The Rose of the Rancho." Miss Frances Starr appeared in the part afterwards. Up to that time she had been quite unknown. There was an idea in Australia that this lady was sister of Miss Muriel Starr. In point of fact, they are not related.

Matters promising so, with offers on either hand, things suddenly came to a crash with me so far as Mr. Belasco was concerned. I met the two Majeroni boys and Mrs. Bracy one day, and I happened to mention to them quite casually that I had just left Mr. Belasco. I may have added that I thought I might come to some arrangement with him, and that I'd sooner be with him than anybody else; though I don't think I actually said that—I have no recollection of it. But my friends must have talked, for the next day there were big headings in a newspaper:

NELLIE STEWART
HAS HONEYED WORDS
WITH
BELASCO.

Needless to say, that settled me. Mr. Belasco, I make no doubt, quite reasonably thought that I had been talking to newspaper-men or otherwise discussing his

private business with outsiders: a thing I could never have dreamt of doing. That is the misunderstanding to which I alluded a little way back. The only mistake I made was that of not asking my friends to refrain from talk, and I had not thought that necessary.

Things standing so, Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger rang-up for me to go and sign a contract with them, which I did. You may be sure that I didn't say anything about *that* to anybody; I had fully learned the ancient lesson that one does well to keep one's tongue behind one's teeth.

Curiously enough, this signing of a contract with Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger marked the end of my American experiences.

George cabled me to come to England and when I arrived, travelling second class on the big liner, with Nancye and Slap, who had stuck to us all through, George met us and took me to the little home he had got together from the remnants saved from our beautiful place, "Mia-Mia" after the sale. The little place was at Putney.

It was now time for George to commence his work on the German Opera Company, the syndicate for which had been formed before our departure from Australia for San Francisco.

GERMAN OPERA IN AUSTRALIA.

(CONTRIBUTED BY GUSTAVE SLAPOFFSKI.)

In 1905 George Musgrove was approached by an influential committee for the purpose of bringing to Australia a company to play Wagner (in German). I was at this time in the United States, when I received a cable to join Musgrove in San Francisco. After carrying out a phenomenally successful season with Miss Nellie Stewart as Nell in "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" at

the Majestic Theatre, 'Frisco, Musgrove, with ample financial backing, projected the building of a Grand Opera House, but unfortunately the great earthquake levelled San Francisco to the ground, and this, with many other people's big schemes, was abruptly brought down in a horrible catastrophe. Ultimately, Musgrove, Nellie Stewart and myself visited the continent of Europe to engage artists for the Australian Wagner season.

Hamburg was the first city visited; the Opera House there is maintained by the Municipality who engage a Director, he making contracts with the artists, supervising the productions, and being generally responsible for the whole arrangements. We heard some very fine artists and great performances. This theatre is celebrated for the number and diversity of its productions, all being sung in German. We became acquainted with several fine artists, none of whom, however, were available for Australia. In Hamburg we saw the "Merry Widow," which had so far not been produced in London or America, and were very much struck with it. What a performance! Such singers, actors and dancers, a magnificent orchestra and chorus, and the stage setting perfect. I myself directed the first performance of this opera in Australia some two years later.

From Hamburg we went to Berlin; Musgrove made arrangements for one of the principal theatres there to be at his disposal for auditions. When I remember the painstaking manner in which everything connected with this operatic scheme (like everything he did) was gone into by Musgrove, his artistic instinct, great and instantaneous judgment of an artist's capacity, his energy and determination in coping with all the difficulties that arise in the theatrical business, I come to the conclusion that such men as he are the only kind to be

ILLUMINATED ADDRESS BY BLAMIRE YOUNG
PRESENTED TO GEORGE MUSGROVE



Illuminated Address by Blamire Young. Presented to George Musgrove.

at the head of great theatrical enterprises. The so-called business men who are at the head of affairs to-day, though they may have largely extended the commercial side of the theatre, have certainly not improved its artistic status. Personally, apart from the affection I had for Musgrove, I shall always look back on him as a very big man whose great aim as a theatrical manager was to give the public the best of everything, exemplified by his operatic ventures, great Shakespearean seasons, and many other fine productions which will always be remembered in this country. Personally, he was a very quiet, retiring man, but those who were intimate with him well knew of his many generous acts to less fortunate friends in the theatrical profession.

A very fine opera company was got together; we purposed producing "The Valkyries," but found great trouble in getting the necessary permission to do so. Cosima Wagner, the wife of Richard Wagner, was approached, and a large sum had to be deposited in advance of fees. All the material had to be paid for separately to Schott and Co., the great music publishers, and we had to pay $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the *gross* takings of each and every performance.

We obtained all the costumes, scenery, etc., from the noted firm of Baruch and Co. of Berlin, which is nothing less than a huge factory for the production of everything pertaining to the stage. Beautiful scenery, elaborate costumes, furniture, armour, weapons of all periods, are turned out wholesale by the clever artists this great firm employs. Our visit to the continent certainly showed us that the theatre and music generally was looked upon there as a necessity of daily life, not merely a diversion, as in our part of the world.

I sailed from Genoa for Australia and engaged and rehearsed the chorus for what was, so far, the greatest

musical event in Melbourne. The company was received with the greatest enthusiasm. The season opened with "Lohengrin," and the audience was much impressed with the German artists—they were, as a matter of fact, quite remarkable personalities.

Among them was a very fine bass-baritone named Runger; this artist, in addition to being an exceptionally fine singer, was an excellent pianist and composer. Richard Oiser, one of the principal tenors, had been a member of the celebrated Meiningen company, and was a great actor. Emil Greder, the stage manager, was looked upon in Germany as the greatest living exponent of the extraordinary character of "Beckmeister" in Wagner's "Meistersingers." Unfortunately, his realism on one occasion in Melbourne placed him in a very unpleasant position. In one of the scenes in "Faust" (he was enacting the part of Mephistopheles) he came on in the skin of a black ram, with horns and hoofs complete; this is quite correct according to Goethe's "Faust," but it was too much for some wags in the gallery, who set up a barking, like dogs (he certainly did look like a retriever dog). The whole scene was turned to ridicule, and Greder, who like most artists was very sensitive, never was much good to us afterwards.

I shall never forget the production of "Die Walkure." In all my professional career I have never witnessed such a scene. The audience was absolutely spellbound, and as the wonderful music and drama progressed, culminating in the magic fire music, the curtain fell to thunders of applause. That night will always be remembered as the proudest of my life. The performance was worthy of any city in the world, and don't forget this was twenty-two years ago. Have we progressed? Musgrove's memory should be evergreen, if for that event alone.

Alas! the character and dispositions of the German artists was not on a par with their abilities. Jealousy and internecine strife became the order of the day—and night—and a great artistic scheme which had commenced so brilliantly was doomed, bringing to ruin a great man with splendid artistic ideals. I don't think George Musgrove ever recovered from this blow to his pride.

In conclusion to this chapter I should like to say that it is to be hoped that some day such another man as George Musgrove will eventuate and give the public the proper value for their money.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

CHRISTMASTIDE.

“Love’s strength standeth in Love’s sacrifice,
And he who suffers most has most to give.”

AS I begin this chapter it is nearing Christmas, always a sad, sad memory for me, and the second great tragedy in my life comes back to me so vividly with the joyous laughter and cheerful atmosphere all around me, making it a living death for me, and each successive year memories become more painful.

When the German Opera Company had nearly finished their season in Sydney in July 1907 my heart yearned for my girlie, who was still at school in Lausanne, so as I knew the season would end after the New Zealand tour, and that George would be in England at the end of the year, I left to see my Nancye.

This, I think, was one of the biggest mistakes of my life, as it afterwards proved.

Shall I ever forget that voyage home! It was in a German liner, then making her maiden trip to Australia, and how I was torn between leaving poor George, who was having such a trying time with the German artists, and my anxiety to see my girlie who was all alone in Switzerland.

I remember on my arrival at Lausanne I learnt that the children from the school pension “La Bergeronnette”

(kept by a perfect little English lady, Miss Nicholas), were in the Alps.

I started after them in a mule chaise, with a Swiss driver who could not speak one word of English and only a patois German-French. For seven hours we climbed and climbed, he leading the mule, and with steep precipices on either side of us. Eventually I got there, and in place of a little weakling I had left only a few months previously, a great, strong, ruddy-faced hoyden ran to meet me. Oh, what a change! and her perfect manners and contentment were lovely to behold.

I spent only a fortnight with her, for the altitude caused mountain-sickness very badly. So I went back to London to await instructions from George concerning his future movements and arrival there.

When he came I could see how the German venture had almost broken his heart—but with all his old pluck he was “ready to commence again.” This time it was to try an English Company with all the old favorite operas such as “Les Cloches,” “Madame Angot,” “La Boheme,” etc., in English. The selecting of the artists was difficult in London as he found. All knew the failure of the previous venture. I did not return to Australia with him, he did not wish me to, so I lived on somehow in London, always waiting for something to turn up.

Of all the so-called friends who flocked to our home, “Mia-Mia,” in the prosperous days of “The Belle of New York,” when money was lavishly spent, not one came near now. Of all the hundreds who had borrowed, not merely a few pounds but hundreds and hundreds, and were *never* refused, not one now came forward to help. George never said “No” when it was to help anyone down on their luck, and he never asked for help himself, like the plucky, silent, suffering, noble soul he always was.

How little his public knew him! He never complained, and no one knew what he suffered but I, although he never told me. He would not complain, but I knew, and was helpless.

At this time money became scarcer and scarcer. George's mother and sister had the beautiful little house he had furnished for me at Putney (out of our previous home), but unfortunately, I was never allowed to share it; it is an old story and could do no one any good to learn all the details. Suffice it to say that I renounced the ownership of this home for my poor George's sake, who idolised his mother, and from whom he wished to keep all the trouble, and I think did, to his own cost.

I was living in rooms in Warwick Square, and it was while here, and when George was struggling along, somehow, with the failure he had with the English Opera Co. in Australia, that I received a telegram from Mr. J. C. Williamson from Bournemouth to go there to see him, as it meant business. I went.

I remember I was rash enough to go first class (very expensive and extravagant for me just then); I thought I must put on a brave face, as I remembered George once impressing on me his dictum "never let your poverty be known or shown."

Mr. George Edwardes was with Mr. Williamson, and they gave me a glorious lunch; then J. C. asked me if I would like to go to Australia to play "The Scarlet Pimpernel," offering me £50 per week.

I said "Yes," but that I should have to cable to George Musgrove in Australia first. I had never had to act on my own initiative, and in those days didn't know how, besides which I was afraid that if I accepted straight away it might mean perhaps some mean advantage being taken of George, who was down on his luck in Australia.



Nellie Stewart as "Kitty Bellairs."



*Nellie Stewart
as "Maggie Wylie" in "What Every Woman Knows."*

J. C. Williamson refused to wait longer than 9 a.m. the next morning. I went back to my little wretched room in London to try and work it out.

But I must tell you that on leaving these gentlemen, Mr. Edwardes said to me, "What is he going to give you? It's worth £100 to him, as he wants you for the 'Merry Widow' also."

Now here was the chance I had been waiting for so long—so long, and yet I could not accept it. I wouldn't, if it meant that poor old George was to be dethroned, for it was to him I owed all my gratitude. So I refused, and Mr. Williamson left London two days later, having engaged Ola Humphries and Carrie Moore for these parts.

Then came Christmas. Oh! how wretched by myself in London—the silence for some weeks of George—no letters—what could it mean—then a cable, "Ask Courtneidge secure from Jordan rights 'Girl of the Golden West' for Australia."

Mr. Courtneidge was always kind to me, and at this time had possession of George's offices in Shaftesbury Avenue, so he cabled Jordan in New York (he was Courtneidge's agent and J. C. Williamson's agent, too, in New York).

There was a long wait, and then, when we were wondering at the delay, the reply cable from Jordan came, "J.C.W. secured 'Girl of Golden West.' "

Here was a blow. I knew why this had been done. The part was so essentially one to suit me, and I knew I could have succeeded with it—but there it was!

I at once cabled to George "Shall I secure 'Kitty Bellairs' instead?" This I had wanted also when I had seen Henrietta Crossman play it in America, and it was a great success there with her, but when it was brought over to London it failed miserably on account of being mis-cast. I saw it and know this was the reason. So,

after continuous cabling, George at last consented, and Courtneidge once more did his level best, with the result that we secured "Sweet Kitty Bellairs" at half the price of "The Girl of the Golden West."

Then what was to me a miracle happened. A big sum of money arrived by cable from Australia from George to "Get along with the costumes, music, etc., engage principals necessary, opening Melbourne, Easter."

I was once more at work—and out *to win* against "The Girl," you bet! *Work?* why it didn't matter to me what I did—the amount of work, the places I travelled to to get my cast of characters—and I left London with the company *via* Marseilles (principals *and* twelve baskets of wardrobe), with a light heart, and feeling once more in my teens.

We rehearsed on the voyage out, and when I arrived all preliminaries were ready, and we opened in less than three weeks.

Our success was gigantic, as you all know, and "The Girl" a dire failure.

But sorrow was linked with it all, for it was not until I arrived, and George met me at the Melbourne pier, that I saw and knew I should never have left him. What suffering he had been through! The free use of his left hand had entirely gone. It had been sudden, he told me afterwards, after a Christmas dinner at J. C. Williamson's house, and how he had to live in a room at one of the leading hotels in Sydney, with not a soul coming to enquire after him for three days—so much for friends. Oh! how ill he looked! I knew it was the worries and anxieties that were accountable for it all—poor suffering George!

Well, my arrival, and the subsequent enormous success of "Kitty Bellairs" helped me to nurse him back



Nellie Stewart as "Zaza."

to strength, but the doctor had warned him that if he had another such attack he could not survive it. But with the continued success of our tour, which realised £17,000 profit in nine months, he became almost his old self once more.

I must tell you that this tour was worked under the banner of the J. C. Williamson firm, consequently half the profits fell to their share.

Well, we worked continuous seasons right over 1910 with "Zaza," "As You Like It," "Kitty Bellairs" and "Sweet Nell."

Then came the motion-picture "Sweet Nell" under Spencer's management, which made such an enormous profit for him. A set of reels of this film is held, to be produced after I am no more.

But before that movie was made, there came the tour of the "Smalls" with "Sweet Nell of Old Drury."

The "Smalls" means all the little country towns; remote places where the bigger shows never go. The story of that unique excursion I leave to my friend Norman Campbell, who knows the details better than I.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

"SWEET NELL" ON TOUR.

(CONTRIBUTED BY NORMAN CAMPBELL.)

So just thy action with thy part agrees,
Each feature does the office of a tongue;
Such is thy native elegance and ease,
By thee the harsh line smoothly glides along.
At thy feign'd woe we're really distress'd,
At thy feign'd tears we let the real fall;
By every judge of nature 'tis confess'd,
No single part is thine—thou'rt all in all.

CHATTERTON.

THE stimulative, on-stage atmosphere, as well as the fervid palpitation of the prompt entrance, had been strange to me since pre-war days. But quite lately, at the invitation of Nellie Stewart, I took my place in the prompter's corner at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, to help make the wheels go round for the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet," while Nellie Stewart and her daughter Nancye played the immortal lovers at a matinée to help the Royal Hospital for Women (October 9, 1922).

Nellie Stewart was in the theatre by 10 o'clock in the morning to see the scene set. She must always have everything just-so. In her case success doesn't happen. It is organised.

We adjusted the exact angle of Juliet's balcony; we saw to it that Capulet's orchard was in full bearing; we tested everything. A small boy staggered in under a load of ivy to mantle old Verona's walls. There were

*A Private Study of
Nellic Stewart
in 1921.*



*As "Romeo," 1921.
Five-minute sketch by Miss Webb.*



Norman Campbell.

business talks with the mechanist, the property-master, and the electrician.

We experimented with the lights—borders, perches, foots, and the dome search-lights—till at last we had a soft blending of ambers, pinks, and blues, which suggested the warm Italian night, and the rosy dawn of day—and love.

Then there was the wall surrounding Capulet's garden to consider. "The orchard walls are high and hard to climb," says Juliet, for her fire-eating father was a suspicious old party, and on this occasion the height of the wall was no mere figure of speech.

The mechanist had provided a wall that was well over eight feet high, quite a formidable obstacle for even a masculine Romeo. But for a woman dressed in the silken *sine quâ nons* and Venetian shirt of the period, it seemed an insurmountable barrier.

But Nellie Stewart made light of it, when we shook our heads. "Nonsense!" she laughed, "Why, I could climb over the roof!" And I firmly believe she could, although it is a long, long time since I first saw her scale the convent wall as the *chic* drummer-boy, Griolet, in "La Fille du Tambour Major."

But in the afternoon, when the critical moment came, she climbed the wall with ease and supple grace.

What is the secret of Nellie Stewart's perennial youth? She laughs and says it is due to a lifetime of hard graft and rigid regimen. A wonderful woman!

And Gustave Slapoffski came to rehearse the orchestra in the music incidental to the scene, a graceful compliment to Nellie Stewart from an old friend and trusty collaborator in many a famous production.

At the performance that afternoon there was no mistake about the affectionate regard in which Nellie Stewart is held. The smiling Romeo got a tremendous

reception. The scene was played *con amore*. Perhaps the genuine ring of love in Romeo's voice was in a measure maternal, and Nancye certainly made a sweet, lovable, and appealing Juliet.

As Nellie Stewart got into her homeward-bound taxi after the show was over, smothered in flowers, an eager knot of admiring women pressed forward to catch a glimpse of "Sweet Nell;" one enthusiast kissed her hand. Through her long career she has always had a magnetic hold on her own sex. I have seen this exemplified everywhere she has journeyed. Which reminds me, I have a tale to tell of her peregrinations.

On Easter Saturday, March 26th, 1910, Nellie Stewart opened a season at the Princess's Theatre, Melbourne, in Sir James Matthew Barrie's brilliant comedy, "What Every Woman Knows." George Musgrove was the head and front of this enterprise, in association with J. C. Williamson.

This Scotch comedy is very "delicate and rare," and as was the case invariably under "Muzzy's" unsparing management, the play was generously staged; the mounting, and *mise en scène* generally, being unexceptional.

We of the company were very keen on this production, I remember, and were a little anxious as to how Nellie Stewart would succeed in a Scotch dialect part, the more particularly so as in this comedy the unfortunate fact is stressed that Maggie Wylie is a woman "without charm." Of course we, and everybody else, knew very well that charm is the most distinctive and arresting quality in Nellie Stewart's magnetic make-up.

As she always does, in every comedy role she essays, she made an appealing figure, and her performance was an immediate and emphatic hit. Her remarkable mimetic ability enabled her to master the Doric to

the entire satisfaction of even Dunedin itself—Barrie himself could not bestow higher praise.

Nellie Stewart had strong and artistic support at the capable hands of Harcourt Beatty. Born in Glasgow, Beatty was able to fill John Shand's shoes very convincingly, for that "bow-wow, public-park" demagogue was also a Glesca body.

Gaston Mervale produced the play, and a feature of his work was his clever handling of an election crowd which figured in the second act. This assemblage comprised nearly a hundred men, and they swarmed "on" each night just as they came in from the street, without make-up or change of dress. They made the most natural-looking mob that ever hoorayed itself hoarse over a successful candidate—real or theatric.

I recall that in Adelaide we had such a variegated rabble of electors that a couple of detectives used to go on the stage with them every evening, not necessarily for professional reasons, but as a guarantee of good faith.

Following "What Every Woman Knows" came a romantic drama of the Henry VIII. period, "When Knighthood was in Flower." This play is by Paul Kester, the author of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" and is a bustling, cut-and-thrust piece of work, full of quick action, and rich with all the pomp and circumstance of the Tudor court. George Musgrove personally directed the rehearsals, and he certainly made of it an imposing and spectacular production.

Most of us had never seen George Musgrove actually "producing" and stage-managing a play himself, and we were critically curious as to his methods and technique. One good rule he adopted, he had, at every rehearsal, the scenes set exactly as they were to be at the public performance, a very unusual but helpful arrangement.

The first scene of "When Knighthood was in Flower" showed the River Landing in Windsor Park, with a distant view of the castle, and a very beautiful picture it was, from the brush of W. R. Coleman. The conscientious and experienced "Jimmy" Atholwood was playing the Duke of Buckingham, and he essayed to question Muzzy's capabilities.

"Excuse me, Guv'nor," said Jimmy blandly, "but I go off *here*, prompt side, and a minute or two afterwards I make an entrance from the other side of the stage. There's a clear view right up to the castle from here, and if I walk across the stage the audience will see me. Am I supposed to walk right around Windsor Castle which is two miles away, and get back here in the time?"

The imperturable Muzzy eyed him with a twinkle. Then, confidently, as he pointed to the footlights. "You cross through the orchestra, which happens just now to be a portion of Windsor Park. Indeed the Park extends right through the stalls, across Spring Street, and away to Fitzroy Gardens."

The explanation was unanswerable. Mummers are always too conscious of their mumming, and forget all about the fourth wall.

During one of the rehearsals of this play the tidings came of King Edward's death. The setting was appropriate enough, being a room in King Henry VIII.'s palace at Greenwich. Oddly enough the news came just as an important line had been spoken, "The King is dead!" The theatre was closed for that evening, and again on the date of the royal funeral.

Nellie Stewart as the hot-headed impetuous Princess Mary played a long and exacting part which incidentally entailed the getting into boy's clothes—the tights and doublet of the period—and she scored still



An incident during
"When Knighthood
was in Flower."

Nellie Stewart,
by M. L. Webb.

another genuine success in a character which was the antithesis of the preceding one, demure Maggie Wylie.

During the run of "When Knighthood was in Flower" Nellie Stewart's usually quick eyes deceived her for once.

She saw, as she thought, her friend Dr. Chenhall sitting in the front stalls, and as she particularly wanted to consult him, she gave a slight nod of invitation in the direction of her dressing room. The hint was promptly taken, for in the interval, presently, there came a discreet tap on the star's dressing-room door. Nellie Stewart herself admitted the visitor. But although he somewhat resembled him, he was *not* Dr. Chenhall, but a total stranger, and a clergyman at that! Profuse apologies and explanations were offered and accepted, but the parson seemed loath to go. He wanted to have a yarn about Shakespeare and the musical glasses, and the behind-the-scenes glamour evidently appealed to him. But presently he went away, well pleased with himself, and so Nellie Stewart inadvertently forged another link between the Church and the Stage.

At the conclusion of "When Knighthood was in Flower" we transferred to Her Majesty's Theatre, and finished the season with a revival of that never-failing magnet, "Sweet Nell."

From Melbourne we went to Broken Hill for a short season. This was, I think, Nellie Stewart's first visit to the Barrier, and it created a great deal of local interest.

Then followed a season at the Theatre Royal, Adelaide, after which we made a jump to Brisbane, which incurred a railway journey of 1890 miles. We opened there in "When Knighthood was in Flower," and a successful season included also "What Every Woman Knows," and, of course, "Sweet Nell."

From Brisbane we came to Sydney, opening at the Theatre Royal in "What Every Woman Knows."

During this season "Trilby" was revived, and Nellie Stewart appeared for the first time as the wistful and sweet Trilby O'Ferrall. I had seen the first Australian production of "Trilby" at the Princess's, Melbourne, in 1896, with Edith Crane and Reuben Fax in the principal parts, and I had been "producer"—they still called it stage-manager then—for the putting on of the play by Tyrone Power and Edith Crane at the same theatre in 1901, but I am wedded to the opinion that Nellie Stewart's "Trilby" was the best Australia had seen.

But like so many adaptations of books, the stage version of "Trilby" makes rather a sloppy, artificial sort of a play. Nellie Stewart must be credited with making that amazing creation live and breathe naturally; she gave an unforgettable performance. By the way she had a particularly trying time of it in that show. Through a gauze Trilby was shown actually singing in the Cirque des Bashibazoucks, while Svengali conducted from the *estrade* in the orchestra. Nellie Stewart had to stand there and dumbly mouth the ah-ah-ahs of a highly florid number, and then sing "Ben Bolt" also in pantomime, while the two real singers—there was a different one for each item—warbled out of view of the audience. Nellie Stewart, remember, who for years was Australia's adored *prima donna*, and favourite singer in comic opera, pantomime, and in grand opera itself. Playgoers of the '90's will recall that she sang Marguerite in "Faust" in Melbourne for 24 consecutive performances, a feat unparalleled in the history of the operatic stage. When her singing voice failed her, she at once "made good" in comedy, drama and tragedy, and she essayed Shakespeare with distinction. Where is the next *prima donna* that could do it? She took an Aus-



Guston Mervale as "Sven gulik."



Nellie Stewart as "Tribby."

From the past by Mabel Webb.

tralian company to America, opened in a discredited theatre in 'Frisco, and in spite of the gloomy forebodings of Solomon Eagles and Yankee Jeremiahs, she captured the town.

She gave nine performances a week in America—seven nights, and two matinees—an evidence of her astonishing mental and physical energy.

But she has enormous vitality, and possesses as well the secret of perennial youth. Her secret is an open one, a life of hard work and keeping fit. I have seen her, after an all-night train journey, trip out of the carriage as fresh as the morning itself, while most of the others in the company were knocked up. Her youthfulness is real—not a pose.

To get back to "Trilby." Gaston Mervale scored heavily as Svengali. Being a musician, he actually played the piano, the first Svengali I have seen do this, and he made the "Rosemonde" of Schubert ring true in consequence. His "It was lost, the *bel canto*, but I found it in a dream—I, and nobody else—I—Svengali—I—I—I!" was very effective. He *was* Svengali.

That two-months' season at the Sydney Royal saw a revival of "Sweet Nell," always a sure drawing card. But this particular revival is memorable because of an extraordinary demonstration of Nellie Stewart's personal popularity.

Hearing that the Sydney Hospital required £2,000 for the purchase of radium, urgently needed to afford some relief to those poor souls who were suffering from that ghastly disease, Cancer, Nellie Stewart elected to raise the required sum by giving a *matinée* performance of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury."

By the way, Nell Gywnne herself is credited with having founded the Chelsea Hospital, which she endowed with £5,000 per annum. To-day, strangely

enough, it is a cancer institute. It was a happy coincidence, and it appealed strongly to Nellie Stewart that she in Sydney should make a charitable appeal in the name of the frail but lovable Nell she impersonates with such fidelity.

This Radium Matinée was given on Monday, 5th September, 1910, and every member of the company worked whole-heartedly to make it a success.

Nellie Stewart herself was indefatigable. She got a band of girl friends together, and for days they toiled, dressing little dolls as Nell the Orange-Girl, and the sale of these in the theatre on the day realised a decent sum. She sent out countless epistolary appeals, and went through Sydney Streets in a motor car, selling tickets; she sold scent for an hour or two each day at a leading drapery establishment and performed other "stunts" which were unusual in those sedate, pre-war days. Of course the whole thing was enormously successful.

I remember arriving at the stage-door before noon, to find Nellie Stewart already dressed as the orange-girl of the first act. She had her basket of oranges on her arm and was on her way to the already well-filled gallery to peddle her fruit for the good of the cause. This prior to playing a strenuous part, and with the prospect of a heavy night performance to follow.

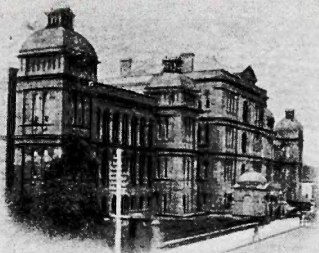
To act Nell Gwynne in Kester's play must be a severe physical strain for any woman. She is on the stage almost all the time, and has to make elaborate changes of costume for each act—all actresses know how tiring that is (the pun is unintentional).

For instance, Nellie Stewart wore a heavily-jewelled dress in act 2, which required quite an effort for a man to lift it off the hooks.

I asked Nellie Stewart if I could help, and was smil-

THE RADIIUM MATINEE

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY, BOX 1614 G.P.O.



Sydney Hospital

MACQUARIE STREET,

7th Sept. 1910

Dear Madam,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, enclosing cheque for ONE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED POUNDS, ONE SHILLING (£1400.1.0) proceeds of your matinee performance of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" in aid of The Sydney Hospital Radium Fund for which on behalf of the Institution I beg to tender you heartfelt thanks.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to inform you that at a meeting of the Board of Directors held yesterday, the recommendations of the House Committee were unanimously agreed to, and you were elected a Life Governor. In addition it was agreed to name one of our Cots "The Nellie Stewart Cot" so that there should be a perpetual memorial of your magnificent effort on behalf of the suffering poor of this State.

The members of my Board asked me to express to you their sincerest and warmest thanks and will feel greatly favoured if you will be so kind as to let all those ladies and gentlemen who so cheerfully and enthusiastically assisted you, particularly on the day of the performance, know how highly their kindness is appreciated.

On your return to Sydney, I hope that you will visit the Hospital and afford us an opportunity of showing you the principal features of the Institution and especially your Endowed Cot.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours sincerely,

Chas H. Muscham

Secretary.

Miss Nellie Stewart,
Theatre Royal.

Fac-simile of Letter
from Secretary of
Sydney Hospital.

THE SYDNEY HOSPITAL

MACQUARIE STREET.

No 4236

7. September 1910

Received from Miss Nellie Stewart

the sum of One Thousand Four hundred and one shilling, being the Annual Subscription for the year 1910

for the performance of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" £1400.1.0

Chas H. Muscham
Hon. Treasurer.

F. Cunningham & Co., Printers, Sydney - 3788.

ingly instructed to "dress up" and do my bit selling oranges, etc., in front. Accordingly I assumed the First Alderman's modest dress—full bottomed grey wig, bright blue beribboned breeches of a bounteous cut, scarlet stockings, court shoes with red heels and imposing buckles, a braided coat of cerulean blue, reaching to the knees, a voluminous red cloak trimmed with fur, ample laces, a heavy aldermanic chain and an enormous hat. Also I carried a basket of oranges and sundries on my arm. Looking like something out of a bad dream, I strutted out into Castlereagh Street at high noon, and had a hectic half-hour. I hawked my goods through each of the four hotels which then stood at the corner of King Street, and had an enormous following. I was finally rescued and escorted back to the Royal by a couple of friendly policemen.

"Sweet Nell" never went better, and Nellie Stewart was the idol of the hour. Of course, she was the target of all eyes, and received innumerable "floral offerings." I recall that Nancye and my wife took a car-load of flowers to the Sydney Hospital, a thoughtful gift from Nellie Stewart.

After the show the stage was set out with dozens of tables while afternoon tea was served to the audience, which crowded on to the sacred boards until six o'clock, the members of the company, still in costume, assisted as waiters and waitresses. A musical programme was supplied by distinguished performers, and there was much jollity and good feeling all round.

The *matinée* yielded £1,400/1/-, easily a record for those antebellum days, and this large sum was, of course, supplemented by the Government subsidy. Finally, some charitable enthusiast made the total up to £3,000, so that Nellie Stewart's objective was more than achieved. It was a memorable day.

This letter came two days later,—

Sydney Hospital,
7th Septr., 1910.

Miss Nellie Stewart,
Dear Madam,

I am in receipt of your letter of 6th instant enclosing cheque for One Thousand Four Hundred Pounds, One Shilling (£1,400/1/-)—proceeds of your matinée performance of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" in aid of The Sydney Hospital Radium Fund, for which, on behalf of the Institution, I beg to tender you heartfelt thanks.

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On your return to Sydney, I hope that you will visit the Hospital and afford us an opportunity of showing you the principal features of the Institution, and especially your Endowed Cot.

I am, dear madam,

Yours sincerely,

CHAS. H. HELSHAM.
Secretary.

Some months later Mr. Helsham sent a covering letter with a letter from Dr. Wickham, the celebrated French savant, whose name is famous owing to his researches in connection with Radium.

Some extracts,—

Dear Miss Nellie Stewart,

I am sending under separate cover Dr. Wickham's letter to you—I think that you will prefer to keep it. It is absolutely certain that no other woman in the whole world has a similar letter, and it is not at all probable that there ever will be.

I know that you will be glad when I tell you that practically every morning I issue £4,000 worth of Radium to our Doctors for use on various cases.

.....I am going now to give your love to the tiny occupant of your cot. The youngsters all know the name of "Nellie Stewart," and love it.

Yours sincerely,

10/5/11.

This is Dr. Wickham's letter:—

4 Rue St., Phillipe du Roule.

Madame,

Il m'a été très agréable d'apprendre par le Dr. Johnston, c'était grâce à votre bienfaisante influence qu'à Sydney les malades pauvres allaient pouvoir profiter des bienfaits du Radium. Je tiens spécialement à vous en féliciter au nom de l'humanité. Le cancer est une maladie si atroce que le moindre soulagement apporté à ceux qui en souffrent est une bonne action. Parmi les gens que je soigne avec le Radium, ce sont certes les pauvres, les déshérités qui m'intéressent le plus et il serait à souhaiter que dans toutes les villes des personnes charitables comprennent comme vous, l'avez fait les services que peut rendre le Radium. Je serais très heureux que le hasard des circonstances me permette de vous être un jour présenté et je vous prie de croire à l'expression de mes sentiments les plus respectueusement dévoués.

DR. LOUIS WICKHAM.

Le 14 février, 1911.*

A day or two after the Radium Matinee we sailed on the "Maheno" for Auckland, N.Z., opening there on Tuesday, September 13th, for a three-weeks' season. Then we went on by train to the capital, Wellington, playing two nights *en route* at Palmerston North. After three weeks in Wellington we played a fortnight at Christchurch, then nine nights at Dunedin, and finished up with two nights in Invercargill.

*For Translation see Appendix E.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

IN THE SMALLS.

(CONTRIBUTED BY NORMAN CAMPBELL.)

To Bungeldoo the agent came to boost the Buskem show,
A score of artists, everyone a star;
And he talked with Lucky Hogan, who controls the Barley Mow,
And he pasted up a daybill in the bar:

* * * * *

The agent gave a hollow groan, and writhed as though in pain,
Then grabbed his bag and bucket and withdrew;
The wire he sent to Buskem ere he sprinted for the train
Was: "Actors' graveyard, cut out Bungeldoo!"

N.C., in THE BULLETIN.

AND now commenced a remarkable tour of the "smalls" under the sole management and personal conduct of George Musgrove. All the scenery, properties and paraphernalia pertaining to the other plays were packed up and sent back to Melbourne, the personnel of the Company was re-organised, and we set out on our travels with only one play—the never-failing attraction, "Sweet Nell of Old Drury."

We had a capital *petit orchestra*, for the tour, the conductor being Nellie Stewart's daughter Nancye, newly arrived from her French school at Lausanne, and full of delight at being with her parents again. She was proud, too, to be *chef d'orchestre* for "Sweet Nell," and made a dainty figure at the piano. She continued as our musical conductress throughout the whole tour, never missing one night's performance. I expect that Mendelssohn's



Nancye Stewart.
1911.

Spring Song, the barcarolle from "Les Contes d'Hoffman" and other *l'entr'acte* gems still haunt her in her sleep.

Our long, long trail was an unusual one in many respects, and is quite unique in the annals of theatrical travel in Australasia. Never before had such a far-famed star as Nellie Stewart undertaken an adventure like this.

And so from November 29th, 1910, when we broke the ice at Gore, N.Z., until July 27th, 1911, when we finally closed down at Maryborough, Queensland, we were streaking through the Backblocks scenery practically every day. Certainly we played for 2 nights running in some places, and once—in Charters Towers it was—for three consecutive nights, and even for four nights in Rockhampton, but mostly we were out of one bed in the morning, and into another, many miles further on, at night.

We went first through the "dry" zone, including Gore, Balclutha, Oamaru, Ashburton, etc., and so steadily on through both islands. The no-licence towns made no appeal to most of our party.

The story goes that at one arid spot, George Musgrove and Harcourt Beatty resolved to try a desperate experiment to break the drought after the show.

Said Beatty, "The landlady here seems a kindly old soul, suppose I take violently ill, and you appeal to her for help? I'll bet she's got a likely black bottle hidden somewhere." So Beatty writhed on the sofa, while Musgrove summoned the landlady.

"Look, madam!" he exclaimed distractedly, "Poor Mr. Beatty—you saw him play King Charles to-night—sudden attack of gastritis, I think—he's in great agony—what shall we do?" The old lady cooed soothingly, "Don't you worry, sir, I'll get you something that will

put him right in no time," and with a knowing smile she hurried off to the kitchen. And then, just as the conspirators were congratulating themselves on their strategy, back came the sympathetic soul with—a mustard plaster!

The perfect arrangements made by George Musgrove weeks and months in advance were a feature of the tour. Muzzy was a born organiser, a Big Chief, and a remarkable man in every way. As we started off on the long trek we were each given a printed list showing the towns we were to visit, with particulars as to theatres and so on. This piece of forethought enabled us to send the dates of our itinerary to our friends, and they could thus keep in touch with us and our movements.

A copy of the details of the New Zealand route is before me as I write. It shows that we stormed 32 towns, in all, in Maoriland, and the directions conclude, with meticulous precision, "Sail for Sydney, Monday, January 23rd—Arrive Sydney, Friday, January 27th." Muzzy was nothing if not thorough.

There recently appeared in the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" (July 1st, 1922), an appreciation by "T.J.H." of George Musgrove's managerial capabilities, with some sidelights on his remarkable personality, and his views of men and things. It may well find a place here:—

No doubt the great gov'nor of the Australian stage in the past generation was Mr. Williamson, by his continuity of reign and fine achievement and influence. But for interest's sake, let us take first the more glowing personality of his quondam partner, George Musgrove.

People's faults and virtues don't come in sets, as Shaw explains in one of his plays, but in such complex combinations that you can never get a sure line of assumption that such and such a quality or defect will follow on another. Mr. Musgrove could be the brusquest and most offensive man, brutal with intended brutality; and the kindest and most considerate. He was an expert theatre director; and a plunger who bought what instinct, rightly or wrongly, told him to buy. He would make thousands on a "production," and drop as much



Private Study of Nellie Stewart in 1901.



*Nellie Stewart
as "Prince Charming" in
"Cinderella" pantomime.*

or more on his next. He saw "The Belle of New York" in the city where the belle belonged, bought up the whole thing, and took it to the London Shaftesbury Theatre, then leased by Williamson and himself. Williamson demurred. "All right," said Musgrove. "You stand out." Then he went ahead, and after a bad beginning cleared sixty or seventy thousand pounds out of the piece. Only a man with rare pluck and confidence would have undertaken that big venture of bringing the "Pagliacci" company and the Blue Ballet to Australia, and the "productions" he imported almost lock, stock, and barrel. And although he often backed losers heavily, only a man of fine judgment would have picked "Nell Gwynne" for Nellie Stewart. It is said that once he could have bought the Lyceum for about £21,000, but refused it for the sake of a thousand or two. But if he had really wanted it, thousands wouldn't have stopped him.

Once he sent the remains of an unsuccessful company through New Zealand with a variety performance. The tour was made through many degrees of frost. On its return the manager met Musgrove near the Australia Hotel, and, with trepidation, said, "Mr. Musgrove, I'm sorry to say I've lost £2,000 for you." "You did devilish well," replied Musgrove... "I thought you'd lose twice that much. Come and have a drink."

That was typical of him. When he lost, that was all about it. Musgrove was no squealer. In many things an ugly customer, whom this writer met very often, seldom without being more or less gratuitously offended. But like the King in "Ma Mie Rosette," he was a gallant man.

When first I enlisted under George Musgrove's banner I was rather in awe of him. Tales of his autocratic rule had prejudiced me, and he stood prejudged as an overbearing and domineering martinet. And perhaps there was a Dr. Fell attitude on his part. I know I always felt uneasy when he was within hail. I fancied he was utterly antipathetic to me, and I was careful to keep out of his way as much as possible, fearing his sometimes acid tongue. The slightest slip entailed from him a pungent, if stimulating reprimand.

Later on I learned to understand him better, and to appreciate his never-failing consideration for those who worked for him. Underneath his porcupine quills George Musgrove had the kindest of hearts. Afterwards,

when I became his stage-manager, and had his trust and confidence, I found him a man among men, and a staunch ally to those he believed in. "He was my friend, faithful and just to me," and there is no Brutus who can weaken my respect for his memory.

We were treated well. Throughout the tour everyone was paid full salary whether we played for only two nights a week, or, as when at sea, we didn't play at all. This was quite opposed to all the traditions.

In a variegated theatrical experience of over 20 years with the best—and worst—dramatic companies, I have never been treated so fairly and generously in this regard as by George Musgrove.

Muzzy carried a mechanical race-game with him to relieve the tedium of our journeys by sea, and I have a vivid memory of him working this apparatus, and laying the odds in pennies while a fellow-passenger—Peter Bowling, the champion of the coal-miners—acted as bookmaker's clerk.

Harcourt Beatty was another whose unflagging good humor brightened the trip, and he and George Musgrove had an inexhaustible fund of racy anecdote that cheered many a long, drab journey.

On that Smalls' tour when I drew my first salary—or "treasury"—for myself and wife, I found my envelope contained £1 more than I had asked for. George Musgrove merely growled—there is no other word—when I pointed this out, and demanded sharply, "What are you waiting for?"

"Don't you want a receipt for this?" I asked.

"No!" he snapped, then with quite a threatening frown, "We're all going to be a happy family!" And indeed we were.

We were all glad to have a couple of days at Rotorua, the show-place of the thermal district. It is off the

beaten track of most touring shows, but we did well there, and "did" all the sights which draw monied tourists from the ends of the earth.

George Musgrove did not join us, however. Tourist resorts didn't interest him very much, although he liked to go to a picture-show when we had a night off. His tastes were domestic.

I remember that when we did David Belasco's "Sweet Kitty Bellairs" in Melbourne in 1909, Muzzy's domesticity manifested itself in a quaint way. Nellie Stewart had just returned to Australia from London after an absence of about six years, and she brought with her most of the principal performers, including Claude King, Fred Moyes, and Langhorne Burton. Burton was on his honeymoon, and his young wife, Marjorie Chard, spoke the prologue; she was the daughter of Kate Chard, the first Boccacio in Australia. Nellie Stewart top-lined a cast of about 35 characters.

"Sweet Kitty Bellairs" was a costume play of the George III. period, with a strong military flavor, and dealt with the scandals and intrigues of the exquisites and powdered belles of Bath. Nellie Stewart was admirably suited, and gave a telling performance in the title role. I recall the second act—the bedroom scene—as being one of the most effective I have ever seen.

George Musgrove spared neither himself nor us over that production. He would have everything right. He even brought out a *perruquier* with the wigs from Gustave's shop in Long Acre. The costumes and uniforms by Alias of London were very elaborate and gorgeous, and the gowns of the ladies were dreams of loveliness—and eccentricity. I recollect that in the ballroom scene in Prideaux Hall one lady had to wear a striking head-dress which was a large and shimmering model of a full-rigged ship.

When the eventful first night arrived—Easter Saturday, April 10th, 1909—everyone concerned from the call-boy to the commissionaire was keyed-up and nervy. The booking was exceptionally heavy, and the "House Full" placard was posted before 7 o'clock. It was a great night.

We all supposed that Muzzy would be adorning the dress circle and foyer, and nervously picking holes in an almost perfect production. But no. My wife got a shock when she ran up to the wardrobe-room for something during the performance, for there was George Musgrove in his shirt-sleeves making Irish-stew over a gas-ring for Sweet Kitty's supper! He had put the show on on its merits. His troubles about seeing it!

"Sweet Kitty Bellairs" was a big draw. On the Easter Saturday morning we had a brief rehearsal of one scene—an unusual happening on the day of production, for with George Musgrove we always rehearsed perfect long before the opening date. As we came out of the stage-door at the Princess's at 11 a.m., I was surprised to see a platoon of ardent first-nighters already forming the vanguard of the enormous queue that collected later at the gallery door. When we got to the theatre at 6.30 p.m. there was hardly a soul in sight, and we wondered what had happened until we learned that George Musgrove had had the gallery and stalls doors thrown open at 6 o'clock. The fact was that with the exception of the reserved seats, the Princess's was, at that early hour, crowded to its capacity.

During the afternoon, at Nellie Stewart's thoughtful suggestion, afternoon-tea and scones were served to the patiently waiting queue, which mostly comprised women and girls. This kindly act set a good example which other managers have occasionally followed since. On that occasion the gallery girls fully appreciated Nellie



Nellie Stewart as "Pretty Peggy," Act II.

Stewart's thought for them, and they made an impromptu collection, with which they purchased a beautiful basket of flowers. This gift was lowered from the gallery on the first entrance of "Sweet Kitty," and handed up to Nellie Stewart with "the love of the gallery girls." I was on the stage with "Sweet Kitty" at the moment, and I know she was deeply touched at the incident.

The gallery girls are now a recognised institution in Sydney and Melbourne, and they constitute a friendly but very critical "upper house" on all first nights. The artful managers are alive to this, and try to win the goodwill of the gallery goddesses in various ways. I have seen, at one Sydney *première*, hundreds of small bouquets distributed to the waiting queue, the idea being that in a burst of spontaneous enthusiasm the floral offerings might be showered at the feet of some newly-risen star. But the disgruntled management found, on that occasion, that the goddesses are not so emotional after all, for the little stratagem missed fire. There was no floral ovation, and the girls took their presentation posies home with them.

However, I have wandered far from New Zealand and the thermal wonders of Rotorua. George Musgrove devoted his day to the worrying minutiae of theatrical book-keeping, but the company scattered all over the district to gaze at the marvels. At the famous native village and show-place of Whakarewarewa, near Rotorua, the Maoris were very enthusiastic over Nellie Stewart's visit. They induced her to perform the mysterious ceremony of soaping a geyser which had been recalcitrant for a long time; and persistently refused to go off. So Nellie Stewart solemnly threw handfuls of soap shaving into the boiling spring, and all the Maoris, guides, and miscellaneous sightseers stood at a safe distance in an expectant group. Ordinarily these explosive

geysers answer to this treatment, and a satisfactory eruption follows after a few minutes. But this one was more responsive. With a mighty, hissing roar it instantly shot up a steaming column of boiling water a hundred feet in the air. We were all horrified at what we supposed was a shocking catastrophe, but when the steam and boiling spray subsided, Nellie Stewart stepped smiling from what seemed certain death.

"Well, I've started the geyser all right," she said, "and that's that!" We spontaneously joined the Maoris in a cheer of relief.

The Maoris had all been to see our performance overnight, and in acting as our cicerones at Whakarewarewa, they recited their stock speeches and made odd interpolations, or stage asides, concerning "Sweet Nell." As thus:—

"This is the brain pot—didn't King Charles look fine? So called because So-and-So, the great cannibal warrior used it to cook the brains of his victims—was that you played Lord Jeffreys? On the left is the porridge pot—didn't Nellie Stewart give him what-for? You will see the steam rising and hear the bubble-bubble—"—and so *da capo*.

The Maoris are keen play-goers. At Hastings the crowded dress circle was almost entirely occupied by Maoris, all in evening dress, and there was a long queue of smart motor-cars waiting outside for them. These were mostly for the professional people, doctors, lawyers, and so on, but even the humblest Maori believes that "the play's the thing."

Said George Musgrove, "I like these Maoris. The white man comes up to the ticket-box, clutching a florin in his hand, and asks, 'What's the lowest price, mister?' But the Maori throws down a fiver and demands cheerfully 'a couple of the best seats you've got, boss!'"

When we were all sightseeing at one town, George Musgrove went to have his hair cut.

He was muffled in the usual white sheet, when a jaunty man strolled in and accosted the officiating barber.

"Going to see Nellie Stewart to-night?" he asked.

"Not much," was the barber's reply, "Six bob a time's too hot for me, and I'd have to take the missus."

"Oh, never mind that," said the breezy visitor, "the advance-agent engaged me as ticket-taker. I'm certain to be on the stalls door to-night. Give us half-a-dollar and you can both sail in on the nod."

Musgrove said nothing, but he was tremendously interested. He turned up at the theatre very early that night, and waited for the ticket-scalper. Presently he came in.

"Good evening!" said Muzzy in his most engaging manner. There was a pause.

Then, "Did you bring the barber with you?"

And then George Musgrove let himself go with fine effect.

We went down the West Coast of the South Island, to Westport, Greymouth and Hokitika, which was breaking new ground for most of us. I found George Musgrove on deck at midnight, or later, studying the various lights and beacons. He took a great interest in navigation, and assured me he could pick up correctly every light between Sydney and London, so often had he made that journey.

At Westport Nellie Stewart had a visit from a dear old lady who had come miles to see her. Chatting after the show this admirer said to Sweet Nell, "Ah, my dear, it takes me back years to see you again. I remember seeing you play with Sir William and Lady Don!" Rather an equivocal compliment, seeing that those distinguished mummers were contemporaries of G. V. Brooke

and thrilled the miners of Ballarat and Bendigo in the '50's.

But most playgoers have an unaccountable tendency at all times to ante-date their stage favorites. They will tell you quite seriously that they saw Maggie Moore and Nellie Stewart do a double song and dance 60 years ago!

Everywhere we went people had a very frank and embarrassing curiosity to know Nellie Stewart's exact age. At one out-beyond hotel the self-satisfied landlord came to George's Musgrove's table at dinner with the inevitable question.

"Some of the boys have got a bit of a wager on, Mr. Musgrove. How old, exactly, is Miss Stewart?"

Muzzy looked him in the eye, and all the dining-room hung on his answer. "Exactly ninety-four," he said politely.

We boarded the "Wimmera" on the appointed day, January 23rd, 1911, and left New Zealand for Sydney, where we rested for a week.

We had one peremptory call from George Musgrove, however. He summoned us all to a meeting in the city, and as we sat wondering what we were wanted for, Muzzy strolled in with a very corpulent money-bag and paid us all a quite unexpected week's salary for our holiday. There were no complaints.

On February 3rd we opened the new Empire Theatre at Hobart (now the National) to a capacity house, but we only played two nights there.

On getting to the station to take train to our next town, Launceston, we found that the railway officials would not allow our truck of scenery, etc. to be attached to the mail train. "It's against the regulations," said Authority. George Musgrove merely shrugged.

"Have a special train ready in half-an-hour," he



Nellie Stewart in "A Country Mouse."

calmly ordered. Authority was perturbed. "But that will cost you——" it began in chorus. "I didn't ask what it cost," Musgrove cut in, "get the train ready." He had a way with him.

And so we followed on, right across the Island, arriving in Launceston about half-an-hour behind the mail train.

It was at Launceston that Julia joined the show. She was at once our pride and our despair, and she had more than her share of the unfair sex's alleged contrariety.

At almost every small town we visited on our pilgrimage, our chief difficulty had been with the inadequate stage lighting. Often there would be excellent illumination for the auditorium, but the stage would be provided with two feeble gas-jets at most, or perhaps a row of foots with only one effective burner. As often as not the rich and colorific costumes of Charles's day were seen but darkly in a dim and decidedly irreligious light.

Seeing that our glories were more or less eclipsed, George Musgrove purchased for a good round sum a portable engine and dynamo, with a full equipment of electric lighting gear for the stage.

That engine was a dubious, sneezing, snorting contraption, too delicate for our strenuous travelling, and always failing us at the most crucial moments. We christened her Julia, and she came in for much objur-gation.

We would hear an ominous spit and sizzle, and at once a sudden twilight, or cimmerician darkness, would descend on the brilliant sunshine of Drury Lane, and Nellie Stewart would groan, *sotto voce*, "Julia's gone bung again!"

We carried her with us for some tentative weeks, but she continued to be shockingly unreliable, and so, re-

luctantly, she was sent back in disgrace, to rust at ease in the Melbourne store.

For the rest of the tour we depended on the doubtful illumination of the local acetylene plants, and the conscientious Nellie Stewart would nightly add the finishing touches to her make-up on the stage, and under active service conditions, so to speak. But the indifferent lighting of most of the country halls is a serious drawback to effective dramatic entertainments.

Julia's arrival necessitated the engaging of two electricians, one for the switch-board on the stage, and one to minister to the chug-chugging lady herself. Our working staff comprised also two mechanists, two property men, a wardrobe mistress and dresser to Nellie Stewart, and a "useful."

George Musgrove had as his assistant in the front of the house, William E. Bryer, a member of a very well-known theatrical family.

There were slight changes in the cast once or twice. The dependable Albert Myers, who had risen from call-boy in George Musgrove's service, was our stage-manager at first, but he left us in Victoria, and I was promoted in his stead. This was the cast:—

Charles II. (King of England) Harcourt Beatty
Lord Jeffreys (Chief Justice of England)

Charles Lawrence

Lord Rochester J. Stuart Clyde

Lord Lovelace William Ladd

Sir Roger Fairfax Leslie Woods

Percival (a Provincial Actor) Walter Bastin

Rollins (his friend) . . . George Thorne, Junr.

Lacy (an agent of Jeffreys) Norman Campbell

Lord-in-Waiting Frederick Pettit

Capt. Graham Clavering William Edgeworth

1st Alderman W. E. Onslow

railway station on our arrival, to drive Sweet Nell in triumph to her lodging.

By the way this was an ordeal that Nellie Stewart dreaded. The spirited bays and chestnuts of the Outback were too much for her nerves, and often she has slipped away quietly with Nancye and walked to her hotel a mile away, maybe, leaving the ungratified George Musgrove to vicariously accept the compliment.

We went down the West Coast to Zeehan, and along the picturesque King River to Queenstown, which proved to be our most unprofitable venture owing to a temporary, but very depressing industrial slump.

Having "done" Tasmania, we crossed Bass Strait and opened the Victorian campaign at Geelong. Thence through the Western District, and up to Ararat and Stawell.

At the latter town, as in Longford, the performance had to be relinquished owing to the inadequate dressing-room accommodation provided. Stawell, too, was full of visitors, prospective playgoers who had come in from all parts of the district. Again, there was much open resentment at our breaking faith. But Muzzy was adamant. Had we played there it would have entailed a climb of several flights of stairs from the dressing-rooms to the stage, and for Nellie Stewart, with her weighty and elaborate gowns, and equally weighty and elaborate part, this would have been a very trying effort. So in his lordly way Muzzy ordered a special train, and we went off to Ballarat, 75 miles away, where we were to play the next night.

After Ballarat we went to other notable diggings towns—Daylesford, Maryborough, Castlemaine, St. Arnaud and Bendigo.

In the Golden City a ludicrous incident occurred. A pretty little flaxen-haired kiddie was handed up on to

the stage with the inevitable "floral tribute." It happened at the climax of the third act where Nell Gwynne is bearding and wiggling Judge Jeffreys in his lair, and Nellie Stewart couldn't pause in the action of the scene. As Sweet Nell stormed around the stage the angel child trotted after her endeavouring to deliver the vegetables, until the hand of Fate—or the stage-manager—intervened and yanked the intruder off.

From Bendigo we went up to Echuca and on into New South Wales to Deniliquin.

Everywhere the interest and enthusiasm persisted. The halls and theatres were generally booked out at top prices before we arrived, and often no money was taken at the doors. Nellie Stewart's advent was eagerly anticipated for weeks, and was regarded as the event of the season.

One of George Musgrove's particular aversions was the baby-in-arms infliction. In tense stage moments the wailing of a fretful baby is alike nerve-racking to the audience and the performer. No baby, however camouflaged, could get past Muzzy.

I heard one vituperative lady expostulating with him on his hardness of heart. "Weren't you a baby yourself once?" she demanded bitterly. "Possibly," admitted the unmoved Muzzy, "but I'm certain, madam, that my mother never took me to the theatre."

Generally he compromised by undertaking to mind the baby himself. I have a memory of him as he solicitously watched over half-a-dozen mothers' darlings in the vestibule, as dummy in mouth, they peacefully slumbered in their prams; and of his comporting himself in this trying predicament with much discrimination and dignity.

After a trip through Gippsland as far as Bairnsdale, we toured the North-east of Victoria with undiminished

success. In all we played at about 30 Victorian towns, even visiting such small centres as Euroa, Yarrawonga, Seymour and Rochester.

From Chiltern we crossed the Murray to Albury, New South Wales.

Throughout the New South Wales portion of our itinerary the travelling was easier, as we now had our own special train everywhere. We usually left each town at about 9 in the morning, and we all had our regular seats and corners, and could leave our personal belongings, books, rugs, and so on, in the carriages from day to day.

We all felt the benefit of the improved travelling conditions, for the strain was beginning to tell. It was marvellous how Nellie Stewart kept up her spirits and her animation. She gave the public of her best, and never faltered through all that strenuous tour. She never missed one performance or a single cue.

Her admirers in the various towns did not realise the stress under which she was living, and she was asked to innumerable "At Homes" and other social functions. These kindly-meant invitations, necessarily, she gracefully but firmly declined.

Can one imagine travelling a hundred miles or so by train, playing "Sweet Nell" at night, and knowing the same thing is to do to-morrow, and then attending—say—a charity ball? But this is what she was repeatedly asked to do, so many well-meaning people lack a sense of proportion.

We went on through Wagga, Coolamon, and Narandera to Hay. We went no further west than Hay, although we were assured repeatedly that there were many likely places further out. We didn't seem to want to see them.

At Coolamon there seemed to be no town at all,

merely a couple of hotels and a sandy road, but from 50 miles around the squatters and their families filled the little hall to overflowing, and, *mirabile visu*, they were all in evening dress.

I think it was at Coolamon that we were so cramped for dressing room that I put Harcourt Beatty to dress in a cowshed, and King Charles II. used Strawberry's bail as a royal hat-rack. Beatty didn't mind in the least, for he was the least exacting and best-natured leading man I have encountered.

In some towns the best efforts of the bush chefs were rather lamentable, and in any case one wearied of corned beef as a constant diet.

I met George Musgrove in one little village, laden with parcels. He explained that he had bought a spirit-stove, frying-pan, bread, butter, condiments, etc., and a couple of pounds of rump-steak, and was now on his way to his bedroom at the leading hotel to cook a surreptitious meal for Nellie Stewart and Nancye.

We visited Junee, Gundagai and Tumut. Cootamundra, Yass, Harden, and Goulburn. Then we went up through Young, Cowra, and Blayney to the Western Line.

Our experience at Dubbo was a gruelling one. The hall there was booked to us for two nights, but there was one night sandwiched in between on which the hall was required for a local function. Accordingly, we played on Tuesday, May 2nd, packed up everything after the performance, and went on to Coonamble, a hundred miles away on the Castlereagh River, and played there on the Wednesday. We were back in Dubbo again, and duly played there on the Thursday.

We travelled so rapidly that it was impracticable to get any washing done, and the laundry problem was sometimes a difficult one. The laces and frills for the

stage were washed in benzine at regular intervals, so that they dried at once, but our personal linen was a different matter.

Sunday was washing-day, and all the company, male and female, usually put in the morning at the rear of some Mechanics' Institute or School-of-Arts, washing out more or less intimate articles of underwear. Nellie Stewart always did her own week's washing, and George Musgrove superintended, handing the blue-bag, or stoking the copper as required. Harcourt Beatty became quite expert, and carried his own flat-iron, but we all acquired a useful working knowledge of washing-boards and developed a nice judgment in the purchase of soap and soda.

We worked down the Western Line through Wellington to Orange, and out to Parkes and Forbes, on the Lachlan.

Then through Bathurst to Lithgow. We jumped from Lithgow to West Maitland without missing a night.

We came over the Blue Mountains and down to Strathfield where we had a distant view of Sydney, and where friends and relations had a hurried 5-minutes' chat, then we switched off via the goods' loop to the Northern Line, reaching West Maitland about 6 p.m.

There was a tremendous house, and the crush at the doors was so great that several women fainted, and there were some minor casualties. We moved on to Singleton next morning.

We went out to Moree and Inverell, and on through Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield, and so across the border into Queensland. We played at one Queensland town, Toowoomba, the Darling Downs "capital," and then went on to Brisbane, and, doubling back through Tweed Heads, we were again in New South Wales at Murwillumbah.

We played the North Coast towns down to Grafton. To our travel-jaded eyes, the famous cow-country was a delightful region, and the trip down the Tweed River from Murwillumbah is a happy memory.

Returning to Brisbane we went to Ipswich and then headed North for Townsville and Charters Towers.

Although it was then the middle of June, it was so hot in Townsville that George Musgrove announced the end of the tour. But the temperature fell that evening, and he decided to carry on according to programme.

We went to Cairns, and gathered ripe cocoanuts from a palm growing at the back of the hall.

It was at Cairns that Nellie Stewart—*prima donna* of grand opera, *opera bouffe*, and comic opera; for so long the musical star of Gilbert and Sullivan productions in Australia; and principal boy in dozens of pantomimes from here to Drury Lane—last sang on the stage.

It seems that Nancye, our musical conductor, had dared her mother to sing in public once more. Accordingly, to the amazement of the company, Sweet Nell broke into song in the last act, and, warbled a verse of Nell Gwynne's song, unaccompanied.

How many opera melodies, and lyrics of the "I Was Dreaming" order have been made popular throughout Australasia by Nellie Stewart, and are still linked with her name! Memories of Audran, Lecocq, Sullivan, Hervé, to say nothing of Gounod and other *maestri*, come at the mention of her name—

"As the stringed pearls, each lifted in its turn
By a beating heart at dance-tune."

We went up to the hinterland of Cairns, to Mareeba, Atherton, and Herberton. And we went out to the mining town of Irvinebank on a little toy railway, with a 2-foot gauge. The engine was as capricious as our old friend Julia, and finally left us stranded in the

bush while extra h.p. was sent out from Irvinebank to pull us in. We got to the town at 7 p.m., but the curtain went up at 9, a smart piece of work. At 9 next morning we were back on board the doll's train with bag and baggage, and off to Chillagoe.

It was in Queensland that the first and only number of "The Limit" was published. This was a manuscript "newspaper" for circulation only among the members of the company. It professed to be "Personal but never Partial," and served to beguile the time with a smile or two.

The first couple of pages were devoted to quasi-advertisements under the caption "Professional Cards."

A sample:—

GEORGE MUSGROVE.

"Always Merry and Bright."

Applications for free seats received daily.

Silence a polite negative.

Cable Address: "Julia."

Like most theatrical managers George Musgrove did not regard the deadhead as a *persona grata*.

"The Limit" had a showy cover design in two colors and was illustrated. Nancye contributed some verses criticising the legs of the company as seen from the orchestra, and illustrated her poetic lucubration with some sketches in color which are reproduced here.* The vision of Sweet Nell's hosiery is particularly effective.

It was at Chillagoe, the most remote Northern town we visited, that Nancye had to arm herself with a business-like waddy to defend herself and her mother on the way to the hall. Snakes were said to be as common as grasshoppers at Chillagoe.

* Appendix D.

OH, THOSE LEGS!

LEGS IN ORDER IN WHICH THEY APPEAR:

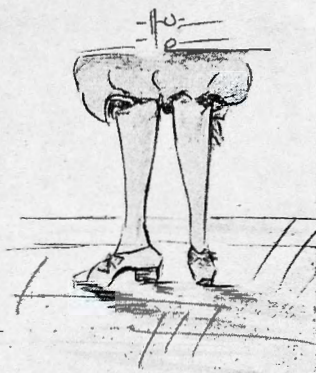
HARCOURT BEATTY
DUDLEY CLINTON
CHARLES LAWRENCE
LESLIE WOODS
NELLIE STEWART

Oh, Those legs!

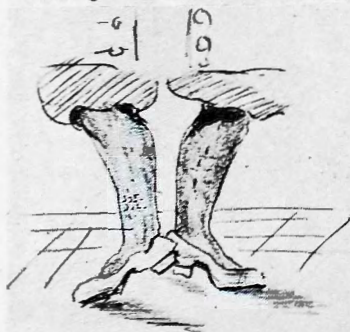
In the Nellie Stewart company,
There are many pretty faces.
The gentlemen are quite the thing
With snuff or pills and laces.

The men have fair complexions
(Tho' they feed on pickled eggs),
And tiny waists, & dainty feet,
But oh! — by gum — the legs!

There is one pair — see who'll guess it —
They are clad in silken hose
(At least that's what they used to be)
Now they're out at the toes!

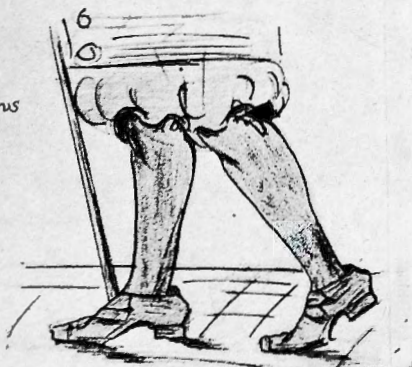


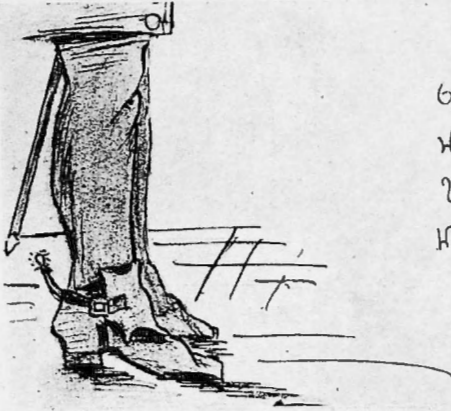
The outline's very straight
From the ankle to the knee
He's not one of the "embompoms"
As you shall easily see.



There's a grey pair, red with patches,
Like the colour of his nose,
His legs go out, & don't come in,
(Warmer hiring for his toes!)

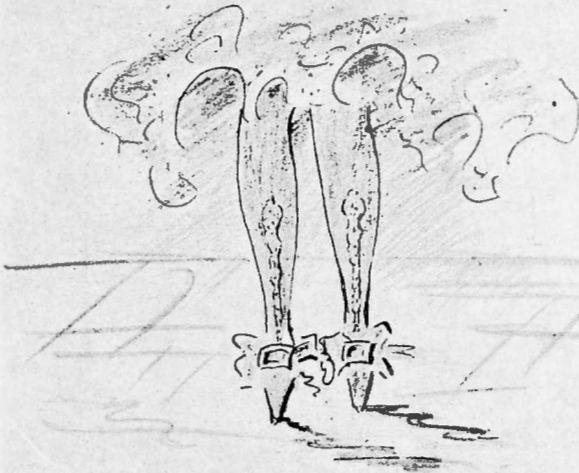
There's a black pair, great & monstrous
(Most original & new!)
To those who go to see the play
They quite obstruct the view.





One pair is always covered up
With boots, right to the knee.
What's underneath those boots, I'm sure
We all should like to see.

The ladies' legs are never seen—
Tho' one—when she is able—
Gives you a glance of silken hose
Beneath the writing table.



Her feet are small, her ankles fine,
Tho', when she's strictly speaking,
The owner, when she makes a bow,
Says they're "old & creaking"! —

Guess the author better stop before he gets kicked out! — by those legs.

Verses and Drawings by Nancye Stewart.

On our return journey to Cairns we stayed for a couple of days at Kuranda, the little tourist town at the famous Barron Falls. We were booked to play there, but the only available hall was out of the question, as far as our show was concerned. So we viewed the falls by moonlight instead.

We went back to Townsville on the "Wyreema" from Cairns, and then took train to the sugar town of Ayr, where there was much industrial unrest at the time.

A strike was raging acrimoniously, and our train was actually held up by strikers who searched it from clue to ear-ring looking for blacklegs.

As we were merely play-actors, and consequently rogues and vagabonds, we were allowed to proceed unmolested. The train crew seemed to regard the incident as a recognised formality, but as we were passengers on a Government-owned railway, journeying on our lawful occasions, we thought this bushranger business a little unorthodox.

We played for two stirring nights at the Delta Theatre in Ayr, a playhouse, built on sensible lines for the tropics, with a cool and inviting fernery flanking each side of the auditorium. George Musgrove was greatly taken with the internal economy of the place—the theatre, I mean—and took careful measurements and notes with a view to reproducing it elsewhere.

It was in Ayr that I went into a "private" bar with Harcourt Beatty, and across the barrier dividing us from the popular part of the hotel was a mob of more or less alcoholic strikers discussing beer and the then equivalent of Bolshevism. One inflamed rough-up spotted us, "Yon's Harcourt Beatty, the (qualified) actor-r," he said, with a marked Caledonian burr. "Stuck-up toff! Wouldn't drink wi' oor sort!"

The Scotch, but impetuous Beatty vaulted over the barrier and invited his critic to either fight or have a drink with him. The caviller decided on a pot—first.

"Awm a riveter-r frae the Clyde," he explained, "and I knew a man in Glesga o' your name—Harcourt Beatty Bland—he was a teacher of elocution."

"My father!" said Beatty.

There was no more talk of fight after that, and Beatty turned on the tap for the whole bar. The toast was, "Scotland for Ever!"

Our next town was the sugar capital, Mackay. We had to tranship from the "Grantala" to a motor-launch at the island of Flat Top in order to cross the bar and negotiate the shallow, tidal river to Mackay where we knew a packed and expectant house awaited us. The tide steadily fell with the darkness, and although our boat had a draught of a few inches only, we grounded several times, and finally stuck hard and fast on a mud-bank, with the lights of Mackay shining invitingly only a mile away.

A few adventurous souls managed to wade ashore, but most of us sat on the little craft, pestered by the mosquitoes and very hungry and unhappy. In spite of his serious loss and disappointment, George Musgrove kept us entertained with yarns of the famous people he had met. When he let himself go he was a born *raconteur*.

We floated off with the next tide, and reached Mackay late at night. The theatreful of people had all gone home to bed philosophically, being quite used to similar disappointments owing to the river's irregularities.

Our tour was nearing its end. We played for four nights at Rockhampton, and made a flying visit to Mount Morgan, also. We then went on to Gladstone, and

completed our ordered itinerary at Maryborough on July 27th, 1911.

The tour under George Musgrove's sure and experienced hand was eminently successful. More, we all felt a comforting sense of security under his management.

I do not know what the financial profit amounted to, but it must have been considerable. I remember at Gympie I went with Muzzy to the bank while he paid in a large sum. The teller commented on the amount.

"Really, Mr. Musgrove, I knew you had a splendid house last night, but I never dreamt you took so much as this!"

Muzzy merely smiled. He told me afterwards that his deposit represented the takings of the *three* preceding towns.

George Musgrove, a much-travelled and observant man, who knew London, New York, Paris, Berlin and most of the big cities of the world as well as he knew Sydney or Melbourne, was asked what had impressed him most during our Smalls tour.

"There are two things I shall not soon forget," he said, "one is the molten slag pouring down the sides of Mount Morgan at night—it reminded me of a glimpse I once had of Stromboli in eruption—and the other is the conviviality at an hotel in Narrabri, where the young squatters were shooting at the electric light bulbs with the popping corks of champagne bottles."

He added thoughtfully that the Gorge at Launceston was a unique marvel of beauty, that the public gardens at Ballarat were as fine as anything of the kind he had seen in any part of the world.

Being so much thrown together we all got on familiar terms and developed a spirit of *camaraderie* which was altogether delightful, and which was not spoilt by any friction at any time during the tour.

We were a cheerful party, on the whole. The male mummers used to break into song, on occasion, in the dressing-room after the performance.

These impromptu concerts were a never-failing success with the ladies in the next compartment, and they made a hit with Nellie Stewart, who has a blessed sense of humor. Harcourt Beatty's contribution, as he climbed out of his King Charles's finery, was invariably this lyrical cameo:—

Me name is Jack the Ripper,
A country lad am I;
I came up 'ere to London town,
Me forchin for to try;
An' th' life of Jack th' Ripper
Is 'appy, g'y an' free,
For as I cuts th' lydies' throats
I sings "Tra-li-a-ty!"

The members of the "Sweet Nell" company are to-day scattered far and wide. For some the final curtain has fallen. They have strutted their hour and now are seen no more. George Musgrove, strong man and straight-goer, is dead. He was a man, take him for all in all; I shall not look upon his like again. Some of the actors on that tour have since taken part in that larger expedition, and have proved their manhood in the Great War. Harcourt Beatty, everybody's friend and prince of good fellows, was desperately wounded, on the Somme. But, happily, he is to-day playing his part on the London stage, and by virtue of his undoubted talent is doing well.

Of Nellie Stewart it is difficult for me to speak feelingly without incurring the reproach of being fulsome. It is a commonplace to say that she is a great artist, distinguished in her profession in both hemispheres. But it is certain that her artistry has added to Australia's prestige. That she tries to follow her profession with

sincerity, but withal modestly and without conceit, most Australians know; and her goodness of heart is proverbial.

Who shall correctly analyse or estimate the charm which is the peculiar attribute of Nellie Stewart, and which has made her the most attractive actress, the most compelling and challenging stage figure of her time?

No other artist has made such an insistent and sustained appeal to the Australasian public. She has never had an artistic failure.

We have had other actresses who also possessed in a marked degree grace, *naïveté*, magnetism, force; and who excelled in some of the things that go to make actresses great. Yet it would be difficult to name anyone who so thoroughly charms people of all sorts and conditions, men and women, intellectual and frivolous alike.

She has charmed us as a winning and captivating singer, as an arch and roguish pantomime boy, and she has charmed us, too, with her gentleness and pathos in comedy and drama. She has a voice that can be attuned to the melting tones of tenderness, or can ring clamantly. Above all, she possesses in a marked degree that pervading spirit which defies definition, that subtle and elusive quality—personality.

And so we begin to understand. She is direct and simple, and mars her work by no affectations and mannerisms; she has at her command both pathos and humor, and with her the two are never far apart. Always we are conscious that there are tears behind her rippling laugh, just as we are sure that there are ever smiles behind her tears.

In America the critics called her, in their flamboyant way, "The Bernhardt of Australia." The label is inapt. To us she is simply "Sweet Nell," and that tells all.

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

DE PROFUNDIS.

Pity me.....because I can never forget
.....because I do nothing but dream out the
dream I commenced with you.....

Jeanette—"MADAME DU BARRY."

I HAVE assured you—on the very first page, I think—that I am, and always have been, a very sincere woman. From now on I am writing my innermost secrets. I do so without one jot of reserve in any particular. There have been so many foolish accounts and fabrications of my life, that I unreservedly unfold the real facts and undisguised truth to you now. This chapter must tell of my darkest hour.

Of what use was all the money that for three years had been pouring in? It benefited neither of us. Litigations—unfair dealings—and all went. Thousands and thousands to pay it off, for George was honor itself. So we were once more left poor—oh! so poor none will know—and nothing looming for the future.

About this time Mr. Hugh Ward offered me an engagement of six weeks with the Williamson firm at £100 per week, for which I thanked him. But George, in his care for me, stipulated that the parts I would be required to play should be specified. The uninitiated may wonder at this, but the wisdom of such a precaution is obvious. However, this did not coincide with Mr. Ward's views, and the matter ended.

George was my one and only consideration always, remember, as I was his.

I think I told you that after my father died in 1902 a great surprise came to me on finding that he had left to me all the moneys George had always contrived to send to him weekly after the bank smashes in '93, as well as the money I myself had sent when under engagement at Drury Lane. Then there was some land at Sorrento, Victoria, which was mine by deed of gift, and which I sold profitably. When my sister Maggie died in 1903, I was left shares also, and there was my part of the "Paul Jones" profit. My father had never touched any of this money; it had been entrusted to our old family solicitor, who had invested it most successfully, I now found.

Now was the time when all this could help George, so all my moneys were called in and totalled some good big sum. It was a very proud day when I was able to hand this to poor George for another venture, which was to take the form of an open-air restaurant on continental lines—high-class and of the best.

George's friendship with a certain financier became such that they both worked on the idea. Plans were drawn, the land secured by deposit. Alas! that deposit was £2,200 of my poor little savings, which I eventually lost. I never knew the facts exactly. Nothing was ever told or explained to me. I only knew that my name was freely used as a guarantee, and that George Musgrove was the victim of designing schemers, whose machinations eventually caused his death and I was left next to penniless.

Oh! the rank rottenness of it all. I had been sent with Nancye to Vienna to choose everything for the restaurant, much against my will, and what I went through there would fill a volume. Sufficient that when

I landed back (Christmas time again!) George met me, full of hope and in high glee. I had secured all he sent me for. In Sydney excavations had commenced on the land—another £500 of my money paying for this, and lost! Gradually the clouds gathered. George caught whooping-cough, and never really recovered his strength—this was in 1913.

He had surprised me by building the little house Den o' Gwynne for me during my absence and four shops in Bayswater Road with the remnant of what was left of my money, but they were all mortgaged to the hilt.

I could see that my poor old man was failing daily, his worries were too much for him; his poor brave heart was giving way under the continual strain, so we went to live in the little house he'd built—hoping against hope.

I never talked to him of this last gigantic failure, or of all the money that had gone into it, but I tried to think what I could do to help him.

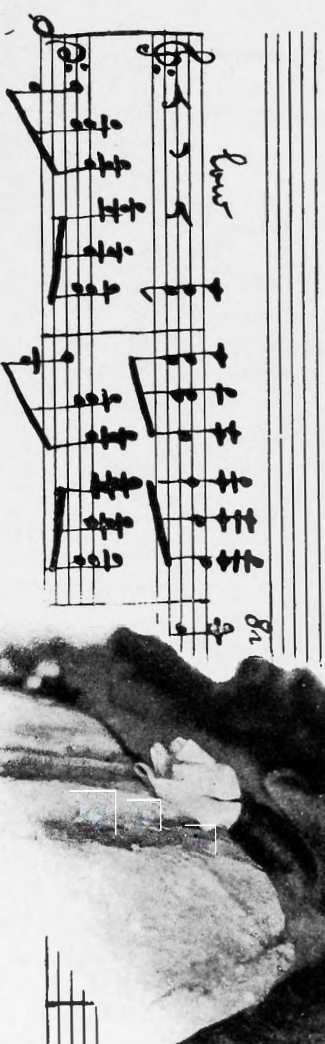
I had seen Belasco's "Du Barry" in New York years previously, when passing through with George, and I knew the part would suit me if I could only think of a means of procuring it. So I talked to Frank Musgrove, George's brother, and he said he was willing to put up the money if we could get the rights. George cabled, and after much trouble the piece was secured.

Harry Roberts, who had played in Belasco's original production in New York, with Mrs. Leslie Carter in the *title rôle*, was already in Australia; he would stage-manage it I knew, and I could make the costumes—which I did. Photographs were sent out of all the scenes, and with George once more on the war-path—though a very sick man and failing rapidly—things went ahead.

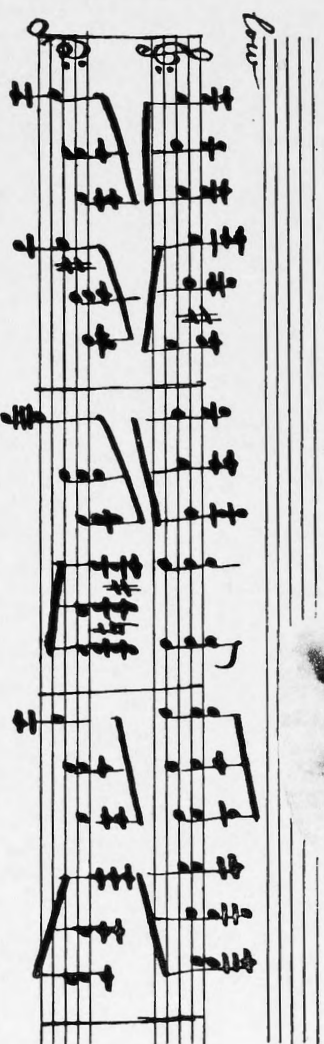
And then came the most awful blow of all to our



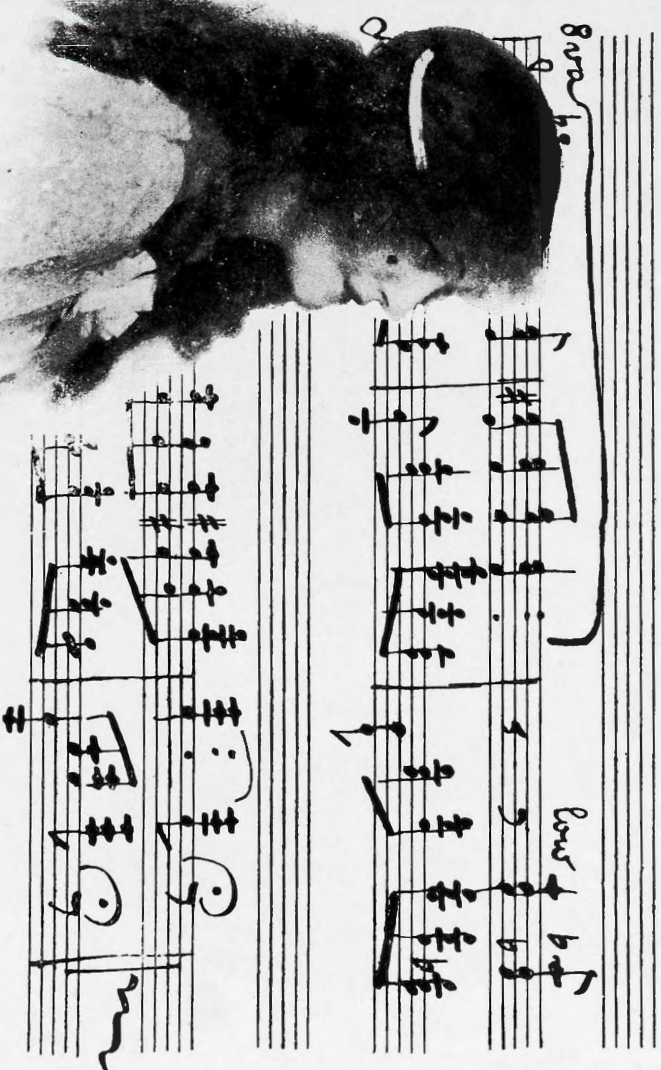
The first system of the musical score for "Du Barry" features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The tempo/mood is marked "mp". The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The system concludes with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket.



The second system continues the musical score. It includes a vocal line with a "low" dynamic marking and a piano accompaniment. The system ends with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket.



The third system of the score continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line is marked "low". The system concludes with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket.



The fourth system of the score continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line is marked "low" and "b". The system concludes with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket.

Nellie Stearnt as "Du Barry,"
Music expressly composed by Lottie Hyman.



Nancye Stewart in "Du Barry."

hopes. We were to open on August 28th, 1914. War was declared on August 4th, 1914.

Think what it meant to us! Every penny sunk in this venture. It was impossible to stop, our imported artists had arrived, and all was ready for the opening. But the declaration of war ruined all our sanguine hopes. The piece was gigantic in every detail, and a huge success *artistically*, but the depression told, and financially no profit was made.

You will recall that in the first anxious days of the war playgoers were disposed to stay away from the theatres, feeling that it was not a time for amusement. This attitude was to change completely as the titanic struggle progressed, for the public then sought relief and relaxation from the stress of a constant nightmare. But to us in those early weeks, it spelt ruin.

Still we struggled on. Melbourne came next with the same result—always the War—War—War. And now my poor George was in hospital with very little hope entertained of his recovery. Can you imagine what I felt?

After the season in Melbourne I brought him home to Sydney where my dear old sister Docie was keeping house for me. We re-opened our Sydney season at Christmas-time with "Dorothy of the Hall," "Du Barry" and "Sweet Nell," but my heart was breaking. I had to nurse poor old George, and stage-manage, and play at night, and with it all keep up a brave heart.

Then came a New Zealand tour of these pieces, and I had to leave George behind. The depression caused by the war pursued us everywhere. A success artistically always—yes—but the conditions too awfully distressing.

We came back from New Zealand in May, 1915, to end the tour, only just having paid our way. When passing through Melbourne, the J. C. Williamson firm ap-

proached us to do a short season in Adelaide of three weeks. I wanted so badly to get back to George, who was in Sydney at our little home "Den o' Gwynne," and I knew he was very very far from well, but I also wanted the money which I knew would be our share, and my salary added to it, if we did the Adelaide season.

So arrangements were entered into, and it was settled that we should open in Adelaide ten days later.

I rushed over to Sydney to spend all the time I could with George, and Frank remained in Melbourne completing the necessary arrangements in regard to scenery, costumes and our company. I found poor George very, very ill, but cheerful. We went together to see Mr. E. J. Tait, then a business manager for the Firm, and matters were completed, so I returned to Melbourne *en route* for Adelaide, to learn, alas! that Frank was lying low with pneumonia.

We opened in Adelaide on June 6th; Frank Musgrove died that same night, in Melbourne.

Frank was a good chap, a straight-goer. He was rather a quiet man, not given to wearing his heart upon his sleeve. His last thoughts were of his wee daughter, Marjorie, of whom he was passionately fond. She is a very dear little girl, and a special pet of mine.

The season in Adelaide yielded good profits, and on my way home, passing through Melbourne, I persuaded Dr. O'Hara (who was an old friend of George's) to come to Sydney to see what he could do for him. His fee was £75, which I paid gladly out of the salary I received in Adelaide (of course, poor old George never knew I did this). I found him very much worse.

After some time as no word had come from the J. C. Williamson firm in settlement, George wrote to them, and their reply came that "*the profits of the Adelaide season were held against the debt for rent.*"



Harry Musgrove, senior.



Frank Musgrove.



*Marjorie Musgrove,
Frank Musgrove's daughter.*

How often has George handed to the J. C. Williamson firm the keys of his stores, that they might use whatever scenery, wardrobe, or *materiel* they required! This, believe me, happened not once or twice, but many, many times. Surely some touch of gratitude might have been shown now in return for his assistance to the Firm on countless occasions.

He had helped them out of hopeless situations, when, after Mr. Williamson's death, they lacked a strong administrative hand.

One instance—I particularly remember that George had his big "Faust" organ built up for Melba's performance of Marguerite under the J. C. Williamson management.

Well, Dr. O'Hara's verdict was that George could not live three weeks. I was desperate. If only I could give him peace of mind. So much was owing for our little home; the furniture was not secured, though Messrs. David Jones & Co. were kind enough to allow this to be paid off by degrees. *What* could I do? I ascertained from George that he was willing to sell the whole of his *matériel* still lying at the Princess's stores in Melbourne, if it were possible to get £1,000 for it. I therefore wrote to Mr. Tallis and made the proposition to him. He replied that he would give £1,000 for it. Nothing was withheld excepting the 'script, scenery, and *matériel* of "Sweet Nell," which was mine, by gift while I was in America, and which George wished me to always keep. The money was paid, and the bargain was such that if the footwear alone had been charged for at one penny each £200 would not have paid for them, £35,000 worth of property for £1,000! If I had been a member of that firm, I should have allowed him to keep his *matériel* and would have *given* him the £1,000 under the sad circumstances, knowing he was a dying man.

What built up the reputation of the original "triumvirate?" Was it not the prestige attained, and the high standard set by George Musgrove in the days of his first association with the Firm?

George was the brains of the concern all the time. Mr. J. C. Williamson knew this well, and profited by it. He continued on the lines laid down by George Musgrove, and endeavoured to maintain the standard set by him, when they had separated.

I think perhaps, if Mr. Williamson had lived, he would have been kind to George, but he was dead before the worst happened.

Mr. Williamson was always very kind to me, whom he insisted on calling "Ellen," and generously spoke of me as "standing on a pedestal, alone;" therefore I don't think he would have left George so utterly alone as his successors did.

I cannot forget their utter callousness to the man whom they all have to thank for establishing that high standard which has benefited them so much since.

The £1,000 enabled George to pay all his little debts. Oh! what a happy child he seemed writing those cheques.

I thanked God, as I watched him, for giving his poor, bruised heart this little respite. He seemed to grow better. I was then doing all the nursing, day and night, in fact I never left his dear side, and kind old Dr. McCarthy helped me to keep him alive. It was during this nursing that I received so many terrifying shocks, that eventually my health was undermined, and caused the breakdown which followed, when he passed away.

Christmas 1915 passed very sadly for us. I don't think we had any special dinner that day, or New Year's Day. Nancye was earning a little, as she had secured an engagement with the Firm.



George Musgrove.

"He lived for those who loved him, and the
work God assigned him."



*George Musgrove's Grave
at South Head Cemetery, Sydney.*

January 21st was George's birthday. He did not seem quite so well, but as he was expecting a visit from young Zelman, who was over from Melbourne, he busied himself about the garden and tried to put everything in that order which was so wonderful with him. I was busy, as Nancye expected to go to Melbourne on the 22nd with the company. The lunch bell rang, but George did not come in from the garden, as was his custom. I went to look for him, and found him. Oh, yes! I found him, lying in his beloved porch—dead.

The shock was awful. I could *not*, would *not*, believe it. I had sent him some roses that morning for his birthday, and chaffingly said "Oh, George! from another girl, I suppose." He had arranged them so beautifully, as he always did, in a big, silver bowl that had been presented to him on the last night of "The Belle" in London.

He was gone. Good God, spare me from another such blow—or grief!

For years I felt like one who had been torn apart from some other world. It is seven years this January (1923) since he went, but in seventeen more years I shall never, never have recovered from his loss.

A kind friend used to take me motoring, but I got no peace unless I was there by his grave, wishing for it to open and take me too.

"Tenderly, day that I have loved,
I close your eyes,
And smooth your quiet brow,
And fold your thin dead hands,
The grey veils of the half-light deepen;
Colour dies.
I bear you, a light burden,
To the shrouded sands....."

But I should be ungrateful did I not speak of my one enduring comfort in that harsh hour of consuming

sorrow. My Nancye was with me. In her, my grief was crowned with consolation. I often wonder what might have become of me but for her devotion and care. Her tenderness and love for me has inspired her to here set down her impressions of that bitter time.



Nancye Stewart—A Private Study.

CHAPTER TWENTY.

AN INTERMEZZO.

(CONTRIBUTED BY NANCYE.)

The hands are such dear hands;
They are so full; they turn at our demands
So often; they reach out
With trifles scarcely thought about,
So many times; they do
So many things for me, for you——

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

WHEN I was quite a little girl I remember seeing my mother get up early on many a cold winter's morning, in order to light a fire with her own hands, so that my father and myself might get up in comfort—not because there was no one else to do it, but because she knew her dear hands could do it a little bit better, perhaps, than someone else.

And I think that has been her motto all her life, that "bit better than someone else," that has won for her her place so far, far above many others.

Her work is never done. Always "a little better, and better still next time." A little more thought for someone else, a little more giving, a little more loving—that is my mother.

I suppose it all began the moment she was born, this craving to do things for other people, but my first memory of it goes to the time when she sacrificed many

a necessity, in order to send me to a school that she thought "a little better" than the average. I could go on naming a hundred and one ways in which she has shown her extraordinary generosity and patience and endurance, but I want principally to tell of the way she nursed my father through his last illness, because that is one of the things she cannot tell of herself, and even after the telling it will be hard to understand for those who do not know her.

At this time my father had lost most of his money through the San Francisco earthquake, spoken of in another chapter. Mother was given a certain sum of money to select and purchase the things needed for the entire production of "Kitty Bellairs." I think the amount was limited to a degree because of the misfortune just mentioned. With what excellence and exquisiteness of taste that production was shown, can only be told by those who witnessed it. She chose every artist, every dress; every colour scheme was hers, and the production was quite up to the George Musgrove standard.

But my mother was not satisfied. No part of hers has she ever played to her entire satisfaction. No pudding (and she is a wonderful cook), is as light as it might have been! And not a day of those when she nursed my father was as full of servitude and love and gentle thought as she would have liked to have made it.

I have never been able to realise whether it was will-power, or unlimited attention, or just love alone that kept father alive for so many months after the doctors had given him up. But one day, too full of agony to write of, she was told that the end must come within three weeks. Somehow she seemed to gather all her strength and love and belief in a supreme knowledge that it was not to be—and it was not.

With all-enduring patience, with self-effacing devo-



A Private Photograph of Nellie Stewart in 1916.

tion, she took my father from the hospital and made of herself nurse, cook, laundress, companion, all in one. Not five minutes of those dark days did she leave him. Day by day she coaxed him into believing that he was a little bit better. She got him to sit up, to walk round the room, to come downstairs, and then one glorious day, to drive to town and buy a new hat! In that house there were stairs that she would run up and down perhaps fifty times a day, and that is what first brought on the illness that took hold of her a few months after my father's death. For in spite of all he passed away six months after he left the hospital.

During that time mother made of him almost his old self, loving his home, tending his garden, and in this way he left us. I think his last months were the happiest of his life—mother saw to that, keeping all worry and concern away from him and bearing it on her own shoulders—an ever increasing debt, and an ever diminishing credit. Even then mother blamed herself for the accident that brought about my father's death. She imagined she had failed to do that "little better" and so after the terrific strain of months of nursing and caring and working, something snapped at last, and she became ill.

At least people called it illness, but I know that it was her heart that was sick. Not of overstrain in the way the doctors said, I think it just broke.

We never miss a person so much as when he has left us. We never realise what they have done until our loved ones have gone. And so I think my father was before his time in the productions he gave Australia. No man is better spoken of now than he, no one's work is more appreciated than his by those who remember. He was strangely intolerant of people who wouldn't understand. He knew he was right, that his colossal ideas

and rare taste were really what was wanted, but he would not realise that Australia was yet young. And so that was why he had so many financial failures. He should really have been associated with a Government-supported concern in a country that found such a thing necessary for its artistic education—and I think we should have had another Max Reinhardt.

Unlike my mother he was satisfied—only after infinite trouble—with his work. He got a thing up to his standard of excellence, then in all satisfaction he could sit back and enjoy. He never said much, but those near to him could tell by his manner in a moment whenever he was pleased. The greatest compliment I ever remember him paying my mother, was on the first night of "Sweet Nell;" to her he didn't say a word, but as he sat next to me in the box, the tears were running down his cheeks.

Of my own little attempts at acting, he was filled with disgust. "You young ones ought to be paying a premium for being allowed to learn your business," was his remark when I showed him the first week's salary I had ever earned. I am afraid he offered no encouragement to the young generation of actors or actresses. He had no patience for the flighty ways of beginners. He told me that I should never act until I was a mother.

For anyone so practical as my father, I think he lived to a surprising extent in his dreams.

These dreams were mostly of England, or some place on the continent. His ideals were high. He was born to have an estate with myriads of servants round him. He was satisfied with nothing but the best, and I know of no one who was such a born organiser and leader as he.

For one of such strict methods and definite ideas he was surprisingly Bohemian--so long as it was Bohemia

de luxe! A sudden all-night party appealed to him tremendously, so long as it was something worth while when he got there. During his latter days, when our way of living was extremely simple, he would like to sit over a meal dreaming of choice liqueurs and fragrant cigars; of grapes piled high on silver dishes; and of the things that belonged to the life he fitted into so well. I don't know where he got those ideas of luxury and magnificence, for he had had to work hard all his life, and any glory and success that he achieved was brought about only by the utmost hard work.

He has gone, and the little mother is left behind to find the way—alone. Yet not alone, for in the countless playgoers who have known and loved her for so long she has troops of friends. In the great heart of the public I rejoice to know that my mother has a very special place.

Her noble work for charity through all her toilsome days has made her name an honored one in Australia. Her kindly, capable hand that has so often helped the lame dog over the stile—in the homely phrase—is strong and firm as ever to help her fellows in distress.

She is still steadfast in her determination to give the public the best, and only the best, of her compelling art, and I know that the little mother will still win out triumphantly, as she has ever done. She will go on doing "better still."

.....one out of suits with fortune,
That could give more, but that her hand lacks means.

Rosalind—"AS YOU LIKE IT."

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

BEGINNING AGAIN.

"All the strings of my harp are broken, except the string of Hope."

AND so life went on. There was no money; no friends who cared. Just one long, weary waiting to join my beloved. I struggled along somehow. My old sister, who had also lost part of her money, with me. My shops yielded next to nothing, as their position in Bayswater-road, Darlinghurst, in 1916-17, was considered out of the running. Tenants who occupied two of them, paid, I think, £3 per week, the other two shops were empty.

It was at this time that Hugh D. McIntosh came. When I hear some Sydney people talk slightingly of this big man I cannot bear it—for he is a man all through.

Mr. McIntosh is a Highlander by his ancestry, and is proud of it. He is a patriotic Australian, but deep down he is pleased to think of his forbears who rushed round on the heather in kilts and occasionally descended on the towns to stick their claymores into fat superior persons. In his own case the Highland blood shows often. Talking to him, you often find that his mind is running intuitively a sentence ahead of your speech. They tell me that when he is angry he skirls (though *skirl* is one of those words that is used in connection with any Highlander sooner or later). I have never seen him angry, so I can't say. With him hospitality is almost a religion, and that is a Highland trait. It is said the low-



The Hon. Hugh D. McIntosh.

land Scot became so frugal, so keen on holding on to whatever he has, because in the old days the Highland raids left him so little to hold on to. Again, I don't know. I do know that Mr. McIntosh himself is the most generous of men, and that he is at all times far more likely to suffer from brigandage than to resort to it.

I never met Mr. McIntosh till 1911, but from that time to this I have had no truer friend. If one woman's wishes could enrich a man, Hugh D. McIntosh should never go short of great possessions. I'd see to that.

He came to me first about a big benefit *matinée* for the hospitals, which he was preparing to give at the Sydney Stadium. He asked if I would allow him to use my name in connection with it, and if I would work with him to make the *matinee* a success. I, of course, immediately said yes to both queries.

Hugh D. impressed me at once. A man of a little less than medium height, broad in the shoulders, cheery in the eye, hiding under a rattling loquacity the fact that he is shy as a girl, a man all aglow with enthusiasm like a happy boy. One of the first things I discovered was that he had brains. In his discussion of people and things, I don't think I ever heard him say anything really stupid. He has an almost eery knack of flashing his way to the core of a subject. His personality is almost startlingly vivid.

He has, of course, the defects of his obvious qualities. He holds no opinion in moderation. His enthusiasms are all at full blaze. I speedily found that, as to all matters connected with the theatre, he has the most astonishing acuteness of perception. What a producer he would be, if his means were unlimited! He told me that he had never been to school for any time worth mentioning, and presently I began to wonder whether that might not have been a very good thing in his case,

whether the dry routine might not have dulled the freshness of his mind. He has a knack of underscoring his adjectives rather heavily in conversation, but when he gets into his swing he is a most attractive talker.

Nowadays there is a good deal of talk about the harm that the merely commercial theatres are doing to the art of the theatre. In Mr. McIntosh I have never come across anything merely commercial. He simply exults in any and every opportunity to improve at any point whatever production he may be concerned with. He has strange intuitions that seem invariably to turn out well when he is true to them. He is so generous by nature, so tender of heart, that he is constantly being taken advantage of. It was a very ill thing for the theatre in Australia when Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh went out of management, and it was a particularly bad thing for the players. I found that Hugh D. delighted to promote anybody in his employ who seemed to be in any way worthy of promotion. Young Australians never before had such opportunities as Mr. McIntosh gave them, and I don't know when they will have such opportunities again.

While other men lost themselves in a fuss of talk about what they meant to do, Mr. McIntosh did it. His kindness extended to every member of his companies. When he sent a production from Sydney to Melbourne or anywhere else by rail the ladies of the chorus and ballets were provided with sleeping-berths, just as the stars were. But I'm again getting a little ahead of my story.

The hospital *matinée* at the Stadium was a great success. Mr. McIntosh did all the work, and gave me all the glory. I enjoyed my association with him thoroughly. I enjoyed everything; that *matinée* was a very happy event in my life. When Mr. McIntosh came to me that time in 1911, we had finished our *smalls* tour of "Nell,"

and we had done the film version. I was free for the moment, and that made me enjoy working for the *matinée*. We had all sorts of attractions, including several charming novelties.

I afterwards received this letter:—

Sydney Hospital,
Macquarie Street,
8th February, 1912.

Dear Miss Nellie Stewart,

I have the honor to inform you that at a meeting of the Board of Directors, held on the 6th inst., it was unanimously decided, in view of the great services rendered by you to the Hospital on more than one occasion, notably in connection with the Radium Fund, and more recently in connection with the Carnival held at the Stadium, to call the Children's Ward here "The Nellie Stewart Ward."

My Board sincerely hopes that this method of showing its appreciation of your efforts on behalf of this Institution will prove acceptable to you, and trusts that you will long be spared to continue your good work in the cause of charity, for which you have justly become famous in Sydney.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES H. HELSHAM,
Secretary.

No higher compliment could be paid me: certainly none that could give me greater pleasure and gratification.

I used to watch Mr. McIntosh rushing round, with a good word for everybody and a word of encouragement wherever it was needed, a very happy, brotherly, straightforward, dependable man, and I said in my heart, "You dear!"

The more I saw of him, the more sorry and amazed I was that I had not met him sooner. He was electric. He had the oddest happy knack of getting out of all his people the best that was in them. I had to recognize a marvellous worker in this lovable man. As to production, at all points, his judgment and taste were alike remarkable. He was on to any apt suggestion like

lightning, and his perception of the weak points of any inept suggestion was immediate.

As a raconteur I found him very delightful. Some of his tales of the ring were unique. With eyes dancing he would tell me of this big fight and that, of what a "white" man Bill Langford was (actually he is black), and of his discovery that Jack Johnson (whom he cordially disliked) had a cheap streak running right through him. When Hugh D. told a story, he set a scene that lived, a glow in every curve, convincing in every outline. I felt more than ever that that big brain of his should have done wonders for the Australian theatre on the side of direction.

Life is strangely made up of chance meetings and "wide separations." It happened that I did not meet Hugh D. McIntosh intimately again till George died, in 1916.

Never on God's earth or in God's time was a woman more desolate and alone than I was then. I was crushed. It seemed that life had nothing left for me but my load of intolerable sorrow.

Not a soul came forward to ask me if anything could be done to help—except that loyal soul, Hugh D. McIntosh. He didn't say much, but I knew that his sympathy was unfeigned and true.

I am not impressed when managers advertise their enterprise and importance on the hoardings, because I know too much of the game. It is the heart in any man that counts, I don't care whether he be a manager or a scavenger. Mr. McIntosh came to me without affectation, not at all insistent or intrusive, but I felt that he understood.

We talk of the feminine gift of sympathy, and we talk with good intention. But in the hour of trouble, the sympathy of the right men is one's strong buttress.

When my life seemed broken beyond all possibility of comfort, when I felt that I wanted to creep quietly to some corner and die, Hugh D. McIntosh comforted and sustained me, and I shall never forget it. I never want to forget it. I should be unworthy of your honest esteem if I ever could forget it. It was not the words he spoke; it was rather the strengthening sense and consolation of the fact that he was there and that he was true. He brought me a brother.

Nor did he end in talk, as so many of the others do. He said simply that he was going to try to put me on my feet again, to "put me back where I belonged." On that he left me to my sorrow, and he went to work. He collected here and there all that belonged to me of "Sweet Nell," the scenery and everything. He had the whole lot done up and made-over like new. He did not ask me what money I needed to "get going." He said he would like me to produce the play in its one-act condensed form at the Tivoli, and he gave me a good round sum to start with.

One cannot escape from the ordinary demands of life, and I needed help just them. I was generously paid for all I did at the Tivoli; but I was just as generously helped in other ways—the ways in which money is no help at all. I was made to feel that I was not altogether a friendless little woman left alone in the world.

Everyone in that homely theatre seemed to take his cue from the chief. Mr. Edmund Covell, Mr. McIntosh's right-hand man, was kindness personified; a very keen and painstaking man is Mr. Covell, and a prodigious worker. I was helped and encouraged in every conceivable way. There never was a pleasanter theatre than the Tivoli as I knew it. Everybody was friendly with everybody, and they all made themselves friends of mine. And through it all the man I had only known so

short a time proved himself the most staunch and constant friend of all.

It was during this engagement that the breakdown came. Mr. McIntosh sent his own doctor to me, and then he called in Dr. Sydney Jamieson, who handed me over to Dr. Stawell in Melbourne. The verdict was always the same—"I would never work again." The heart had given out with the strain and shock to my nervous system, there was nothing to do—just go back to my little desolate home, and there await the inevitable, which Dr. Stawell told my sister would come gradually. I was to go on weakening perceptibly each day.

In the latter days of my life with George, I had become an inveterate cigarette-smoker, much against his liking, but the habit had grown on me. Many and many a time had he chided me for it, but it seemed to relieve me as nothing else would during all the time of his illness and our trouble.

When he was taken I felt I could get some peace if only I could know he was with me, in spirit. That he knew, and that he was near me. In my agony I cried aloud many, many times to dear God to send me some sign from him, and it came in this wise. Suddenly one morning when I took my cigarette to light it, it fell from my hands, and in lifting it to my mouth the taste was repugnant. I threw it away and have never since smoked or desired to. Here was the sign I had asked for. From that moment I have never turned back, and I am once more strong and better in health than I have ever been.

One of the doctors, who had said I would probably drop dead at any moment, was called in to me by my brother during the influenza epidemic of 1919; my girlie being in America, the friend I was staying with had refused responsibility because my temperature was ris-



*Nancje Stewart
as "Jessie Brown" in "The Master of Ballantrae," during her American tour.*

ing. The doctor in question shook his head when he knew it was I, and said that very likely I had a bad attack of influenza to fight. He proceeded to examine my heart and I shall never forget his astonished, incredulous look as he put down his stethoscope after doing so. All he said was: "A miracle has happened." What he meant was that there was not one trace of the supposed auricular fibrillation, valvular, or any other heart affection, although I had done nothing but follow the Master's teaching.

So here I am to-day, more agile, healthier, and in every way younger than I was when I first played "Sweet Nell" 1902.

One thing though, I do not think any artists can do justice to any big rôle in dramatic work until they experience the sorrow that comes but once in a lifetime, such as I had been through. And I know that if I were to play any of the emotional parts I was classed so good in before this came to me, I should now excel myself a hundredfold. One day I may be able to show my public so, for I still intend to continue my work.

The next time I came into contact with Mr. McIntosh was in reference to the production by him of "Chu Chin Chow," in 1920. He sent for me. His first idea had been that I should play Miss Lily Brayton's part, but he feared my health was not good enough; but he knew when too late, and after other arrangements had been made, that this was not so. He asked me now if I would go down to Melbourne and do what I could to assist Miss Vera Pearce. I said "Yes," I was perfectly sure I could help.

Nancye was away in America, seeking "fresh woods and pastures new," and playing lead successfully in H. Jewett's company in Boston—I wanted to work.

I had only seen Miss Pearce once or twice, but I

looked forward to working with her. Mr. McIntosh asked me to name my terms. I would not discuss terms with him. I was content to do any mortal thing he wanted me to do, because he had been so good to me.

Well, he fixed my fees, and he sent me down to Melbourne with as much care as if I had been a princess on my travels. In Melbourne he used to consult me about all sorts of things. But for the big initial success of the great spectacular play in Melbourne, Mr. McIntosh himself was chiefly responsible. People got a wrong idea about me. They thought I was somehow concerned with the production. It was not so. I helped Miss Pearce, and I talked to Mr. McIntosh; but his was the directing brain, all through. I am sorry that Sydney people did not see the Melbourne production of "Chu Chin Chow" under Mr. McIntosh. It was a very remarkable production indeed, and the Sydney production later (under J. C. Williamson, Ltd.), lagged far behind it.

Due credit has never been given to Miss Vera Pearce in her own country. She was forced into too great prominence when she was still too young. Had she gone step by step, under wise training, she would have gone far. She is quick and eager to learn, very tractable, an indefatigable worker, and a dear girl. I greatly enjoyed the weeks I spent with her and I have no hesitation at all in saying that her opening performance in Melbourne was thrilling—her entrance the greatest thrill of a very fine and satisfying production.

I know that some people will pretend that it is rather bad taste to speak so candidly of the merits of a living man as I do of Mr. McIntosh. But why? Hugh D. McIntosh radiates happiness and cheer. It is a great gift, and I think it is a gift that only goes with a genuine nature,

When I returned to Sydney after the emphatic success of the first night of "Chu Chin Chow," I received, in addition to the big fees Mr. McIntosh was pleased to give me, a cheque for £100. That was a characteristic McIntosh acknowledgment of whatever little things I had been able to do in Melbourne. A little later, he wished to see what I could do with Miss Rene Maxwell for "The Lilac Domino," and again I received a generous cheque in addition to fees. Mr. McIntosh is nothing if not consistent.

When, a little later, Hugh D. retired from management and gave over the Tivoli theatres, he asked me, "How am I to compensate you?" To that I made no reply. My feeling was that nothing could compensate any of us for his retirement. Afterwards, when he went to Melbourne, he wrote over and said that the Williamson firm were anxious to have me, and that he had an idea that I should do well to go to them to take up coaching work. So I took his advice and went to them on the same terms.

But suffice it, the ingratitude I received was so humiliating and discourteous that I doubt if I can ever forget it.

I am sure you will acquit me of even a scintilla of malice in saying this.

During a busy public life I have rubbed shoulders with all sorts and conditions of men. In the rough and tumble of the world, I suppose, I have had my angles worn down, somewhat. I want you to believe that I am not one to complain querulously over trifles. It is a world of compromise—give and take. But the facts are as I have set them down, and I firmly believe in the old saw, *Veritas superabit*.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

STEPPING STONES.

No! no! We must have smiles now, not tears.....

Nell—"SWEET NELL OF OLD DRURY."

I am coming to the top of the hill at last. It has been a long climb, I'm afraid. For me it has been uphill work, perhaps; for you—I wonder? Some things, in the track we have travelled, stand out curiously foreshortened.

Some things have become idealised by time, it may be, and now, as I look back, they seem more roseate in this golden afterglow than they really were. But rose is my favourite colour you must know, just as the carnation is my darling flower of all. With Perdita I think

the fairest flowers o' the season
Are our carnations.

But the colour I love best is the Du Barry rose (poor, loving, ill-starred Du Barry), which is really old cerise, a softer shade than the deep, rich cherry-colour which is called cerise nowadays.

Lots of trivial little happenings stand out clearly. For example, I remember, with singular vividness, one night in romantic Italy. George was organising an opera company, at the time, to present "Cavalleria" and "Pagliacci," which he brought to Australia with the celebrated "Blue (Turquoise) Ballet."

We were in Rome, and George was determined to hear some wonderful tenor who had been highly spoken of. This artist was singing at Lodi in Lombardy, up near Milan, and thither we journeyed to hear him.

Lodi is famous, I believe, for a signal victory of Napoleon Bonaparte's, but I discovered that it possessed another claim to distinction.

I don't think they had ever had an Australian woman at the little inn where we stayed. It was a comic-opera sort of place, with sanded floor and grapevines, and was crowded with fierce brigands drinking chianti out of celery glasses. But the most impressive overpowering marvel of the place was the *smell* of it. My memory of Lodi is just one pungent, permeating, saturating essence of—garlic.

I forget whether George caught the tenor—if he did he must have deodorised him first. In the night a blaring brass band commenced to play in the auberge itself, and sleep was impossible. It turned out that it was New Year's morning they were celebrating—but we had overlooked the date. Anyhow an Italian is quite willing and eager to celebrate any thing with music at any hour or on any date. That's what makes Italian opera possible.

Another glimpse of those continental quests comes back to me, this time from Germany. George was searching for suitable operatic talent, and we were staying at Mayence. George read in a Frankfurt paper the musical bill of fare for the opera house there. It ran—

Monday	Rigoletto
Tuesday	Tannhauser
Wednesday	Parsifal
Thursday	Geschlossen
Friday	Lohengrin
Saturday	The Flying Dutchman

"Um!" commented George, "Here's a new opera I've never heard of, 'Geschlossen.' We'd better go and see what it's like."

So off we went to Frankfurt. We didn't arrive there till after seven on the Thursday evening, so we decided not to go to an hotel, but to make straight for the opera house. When the cab pulled up, the big building was in darkness.

"They must start very late," said George.

Then to the cabman, as he pointed to the opera house, "Geschlossen to-night?"

"Yah, soh!" the cabman answered.

Here the conversation flagged, for George couldn't speak German, and the cabman had no English.

But presently the cabman became suspicious of us. Soon he became abusive, in his guttural way, and so George called a policeman to straighten things out.

The policeman knew a little English and explained that Geschlossen is German for "closed!"

We drove to our hotel in dignified silence.

In London, especially when "The Belle" was the talk of the town, we had a constant stream of visitors at our home, and many notabilities came to "Mia-Mia."

Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson was a very frequent visitor. A quiet, diffident man, with a compelling eye, he always struck me as being eminently sensible and sensitive—the two attributes don't always rub shoulders.

Of Dame Nellie Melba we saw much, she liked our home and spent many happy hours there. Knowing she thought a great deal of George as a manager, I asked her the other day if she would write a few words about him for my book. She did not hesitate, and her reply I now reproduce here, together with her favourite photograph which she was good enough to send me, another of her

||

DAME NELLIE MELBA

(HER FAVOURITE PHOTOGRAPH)



*Dame Nellie Melba
as "Marguerite" in Gounod's "Faust."
(Her favourite photograph.)*

Telephone 12 Lilydale.

Coombe Cottage,
Coldstream,
Victoria

My dear Nellie Stewart
I am delighted to
hear you are writing
your memoirs & assure
they will be most-
interesting especially
to the Australians who
have always loved you -
I am only too happy
to send you this little
line ^{to tell you} that I always
loved & admired George

You can imagine my
excitement & happiness
for I felt my career
had begun - During
that time which lasted
I think a month
Mr Musgrove was always
most kind & courteous
in fact my association
with him was always
of the happiest nature
not only then: but -
during my first
Australian tour in
1902 -

Musgrove - He had
a rare personality
with a great magnetism
I shall never forget
~~the~~ day he came
to see me, representing
Williamson, Garner
& Musgrove & offered
me an engagement & to
on tour with Mr & Mrs
at a salary of £20
a week. That was my
first engagement in

When you come to
Melbourne I would
love to see you here
one day it will
give such pleasure
to talk over old times
& to show you my
beloved Coombe
May I send you my
love
Nellie Melba

I love the enclosed
photo of me as
Marguerite - Is it
it as? Dec. 9th 1921

gracious acts. Dame Nellie,—I thank you. George was her first manager you know, and indeed it was under his direction that she made her first public appearance in Australia.

I have been especially free from disagreeable happenings during my long career, but one uncomfortable quarter of an hour stands out vividly in my memory.

My father always had a horror of the Law, and was much given to warning us of its pitfalls. Partly because of this, I think, I am particularly averse to courts and the “dusty purlieus of the law.” So when I was called on on one occasion to be a witness in a Supreme Court case in Victoria in which George was the defendant I was frightfully nervous. It was over an operatic dispute. It occurred only a few weeks after father’s death, and I must have appeared very constrained and ill at ease under a searching cross-examination. Indeed, Mr. Gavan Duffy took advantage of my confusion, and said sarcastically:

“So, Miss Stewart, *you can’t say!* I see. You’re as great an actress off the stage as you are on.”

The bit of Irish in me rose at this, and I think I gave the bench and bar Dad’s whole experience as an operatic artist. It did no good, for the judge, Sir John Madden, C.J., hurt me most dreadfully again by quietly telling the court that “Miss Stewart’s father knew a little of opera management, but had no wide experience.”

I was crushed, and hated John Madden. I couldn’t forgive him for his small estimation of my dear old father’s managerial knowledge and ability—he who had done such wonderful things in the management of operatic companies, not only with Saurin Lyster, but with others. And did he not play with all the great artists of his day?

In later years I had no two greater admirers of my work than these same two legal gentlemen—they both

proved it in many ways. We mummers are so hypersensitive! But you may be very sure I set Sir John right as to my father's knowledge of opera!

Like most stage-people, I have given my services at countless benefit entertainments arranged for this or that charitable object. It has always been a very real joy to me to be able to help in this way. After George's death the Williamson firm suggested that I should be the beneficiary of a *charity* entertainment. *This* I certainly declined. Other than the pseudo-benefits that were *de riguer* in my early days, I have never had a benefit tendered me.

Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh in the goodness of his heart, did propose that a big *Testimonial* benefit should be organised for me, but at that time the War was the one tragic fact in the life of the people of Australia, and there were too many appeals being made to the sympathies of the public on that account, to make it either desirable or advisable that our playgoers' generosity should be exploited for me.

I have taken part in some interesting benefit performances quite lately.

At the Grand Opera House, Sydney, on Monday, May 30, 1921, I appeared in a Shakespearean scene with Nancye. The "Sydney Morning Herald" thus commented on that performance—

Nellie Stewart's re-appearance caused quite a sensation, and the more so because the actress played as Romeo in the Balcony Scene to the Juliet of Nancye Stewart, who had assumed the same rôle at Boston, U.S.A., during her two years' absence. Miss Nellie Stewart astonished her admirers by the unchanged grace of her slight, but statuesque figure, and she suggested the rapturous eagerness of the lover, with charm. There was much enthusiasm to mark the possibly unparalleled instance of mother and daughter appearing together in the famous scene.

This entertainment was in aid of the United Hospitals' Fund, and it realised a large sum.

I appeared again in the same scene at the same theatre on Thursday, September 15, 1921, at the Rose Day Matinée, on which occasion I was the Juliet to Mr. Arthur Greenaway's Romeo, and he shared with me the honor of a tremendous demonstration of enthusiasm—the curtain being lowered and raised again and again.

I played Romeo in that scene also to Katherine Pelham's Juliet in Melbourne. This was for the Old Actors' Benefit Fund on April 6, 1922. I shall not soon forget the tremendous burst of affectionate applause that greeted my re-appearance in Melbourne—it almost unnerved me. As one newspaper afterwards said—

What must it have been to have lived for that moment? The watching, breathless house burst into a furore of applause that must have shaken the foundations. Seconds merged into minutes before Romeo was allowed to alight from the wall and proceed to address the moon or whatever he was to do. The audience troubled not about Romeo and his love. Its interest was in Nell Stewart. The light, quick tread, the rich garb of sapphire blue and silver brocade. The beautiful limbs as they moved and the tones of the sweet voice of the idol of the public for many years. The grace and charm of her remain and she seems to have attained the secret of perpetual youthfulness.

One of my most treasured possessions is a laurel wreath formed of gold eucalyptus leaves—on each leaf is inscribed the name of the Opera, Comedy, Drama or Tragedy in which I have played. There is only *one* missing.

This wreath forms a very dear and treasured memory of an admirer whose encouragement and appreciation of each and every one of my performances did so much to help me.

He never failed me on each first night, and his faith in me was so great that his telegram or letter the following morning were expressed in these words, "Well done! Another triumph—I knew it!"

At this performance of "Romeo" in Melbourne I

missed my customary greeting—and to my sorrow I learned from his relatives that their loss was mine also. I missed his little pat on the back more than I can say.

On another occasion in Sydney, "The Sun," paid this graceful tribute—

At the theatrical matinee yesterday, Nellie Stewart captured all hearts as Romeo.

Sweet Nell—sweet memories of long ago!—

Who into all our hearts has danced and sung—

Comes with eternal youth as Romeo,

Romance incarnate, young as love is young!

Who says that the Australian audiences are fickle, that they are soon off with old love and on with the new? They have always been loyal to me, always! I have proved their sympathy and affection a thousand times.

Perhaps the most memorable and significant performance it has ever been my good fortune to participate in was this one—I am quoting the newspaper advertisements—

ROYAL GALA NIGHT.

PAGEANT OF EMPIRE

and

"KISSING TIME."

With a grand finale, including the "Renown" Band.

In honor of and in the presence of
H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

Tendered by J. C. Williamson, Ltd.

This took place on the night of Tuesday, June 22, 1920.

The Williamson firm sent for me and asked me if I would take part in the Pageant of Empire, and of course I said yes. I was very proud indeed when I was told that to me had come the honor of representing the emblematical character of Australia. But there was some unexplained hitch about this, after all, for when I went to consult Madame Emily Nathan (Messrs. J. C. Williamson's "Mistress of the Robes") as to my costume, I was told that I was to personate New Zealand.

Now, I love Maoriland very much indeed, and have many dear friends there, as I have told you, but Australia is the very heart of me, and I was a little, just a little, disappointed. But silence being the sanctuary of prudence I said nothing. Only I *thought* a lot, and wondered at the casual, haphazard kind of way in which such a big organisation orders important matters of detail.

By the way, Madame Emily Nathan, to whom I refer above, commenced under George Musgrove's direction as costumiere in his wardrobe in the year 1881—to her I owe much gratitude!—for in the early days of my triumphs her kindly interest and care of all my peculiarities of costume helped me much.

Florence Young, my old friend, was the Spirit of Empire. And here's a curious thing. My brother Dick was manager of Her Majesty's Theatre at the time, and on him devolved the honor of receiving the Prince, while I had to play my part on the stage. What a lot of theatrical history had been made in Australia since we two had figured in the same respective capacities with the Rainbow Revels!

But that gala performance was a rainbow revel, too. The public enthusiasm was remarkable, and one could not help feeling thrilled with it all.

"The Sydney Morning Herald," kind as ever, referred to my own efforts as follows—

But who is this graceful figure, lightly moving in raiment of beaten silver, with a great silver fernleaf on a helmet of sparkling jewels, recalling the early days of the Royal Comic Opera Company, when she charmed in singing parts, and more recent triumphs in comedy when admired as Sweet Nell of Old Drury? The programme names her as "New Zealand," but "Nellie Stewart" is heard in answering thunders of applause. The silvery voice, in perfect elocution, reaches every ear, as she recites the verse, and then, dropping on one knee, ardently addresses the Royal visitor in the lines:—

Prince, you have seen the battle rage,
Now take the sweeter heritage,
And look in tender eyes of love.....

I hope the Prince enjoyed the show as much as I did. But there was a lump in my throat, I'll admit, because of my own warm-hearted reception. Australians soon forget their favorites of the stage! Never was a greater libel invented.

And so this rambling, thespian journey of ours nears its end; yet not its end altogether, thank goodness! We merely come to a halting-place where one may take a deep breath before beginning again. I shall not cry "Hold, enough!" yet awhile, for this is only the story of my life *up to now*. I have lots more work still to do in the profession that I love so well. I face the future hopefully, secure in the affection and loyalty of my friends across the footlights, who have always shown such faith in me.

As I write these last words it is Anzac Day, and my heart is filled with love and gratitude and sympathy for our splendid, heroic men; we should all take our inspirations from the afflictions borne so patiently by those who are back with us, and the sacrifices of those who've "gone over." For our watchword should be "Go For-



The latest photograph of Nellie Stewart, 1923.

*Gerald Marr Thompson,
Dramatic and Musical
Critic for "The Sydney
Morning Herald" since
1881.*



*Clement Scott,
Dramatic Critic of
the "London Times."*



*Alan Dale,
Dramatic Critic of
"The New York Times."*

ward"! After all it is Courage that is so big a make-up in us Australians—"We should thank our Creator three times daily for Courage instead of our daily bread" for unless a man has that virtue he has no security for preserving any other."

I am still steadfast in my determination to do my utmost best always. Resolve will meet no rocks, but it can scale them. And so, friends of mine, *au 'voir*. Let me take my leave of you in the last words of "Sweet Nell"—

"Memory will be my happiness—
For *you* are enshrined there."

FINIS.

APPENDIX A.

MARY ANN YATES.

My great-great-grandmother was in many ways a remarkable woman. She was the most versatile and easily one of the most distinguished actresses of her time. She seems to have shared with Hannah Pritchard and Sarah Siddons the singular distinction of being always orderly in her loves. So far as we can discover, there was only one man in Mrs. Yates's story, and that man her husband. She was a woman of great natural dignity and rare sweetness of disposition. The record tells only of some friction with George Anne Bellamy, an actress who fell out with everybody. Unfortunately, the surviving particular records of Mrs. Yates's life are very meagre, and we have to go to accounts penned by Bellamy herself for information as to what occurred. Mrs. Bellamy was leading woman at Covent Garden at the time when Mrs. Yates accepted an engagement there. The jealous George Anne did not like the introduction of Mrs. Yates, and greatly feared for her own prestige, but Colman gave her his assurance that there was plenty of room for both of them, and that each could shine without injury to the other. On which, says George Anne :

"I was really pleased at the engagement, instead of feeling any envious emotions. But I have some reason to believe that she was of another opinion, for upon my going up to her at the first rehearsal, in order to salute her, and congratulate myself, she very coldly received my greeting, and we did not afterwards speak."

That is rather unconvincing in view of the chroniclers, that Mrs. Yates "seemed formed of the mildest materials . . . and was quite insusceptible of resentment upon any provocation." However that be, there was certainly trouble between these two. Presently George Anne prepared to take her benefit, and she assumed that all her fellow-players would take their accustomed parts as a matter of custom and right. But—

"Having never been accustomed to *ask* as a favour what I imagined I had a right to *expect*, I did not apply to Mrs. Yates to perform her part; as she had lately played it, I had no apprehension of her not doing so now. However, the play being advertised, I received a note from the intended Helen's daughter, in a very high style indeed; to this I replied; and in a few days was not a little surprised to see the dejected Trojan Queen's correspondence with the beautiful Princess in the public papers."

The play chosen was "The Distressed Mother," and Mrs. Yates did not appear for Mrs. Bellamy's benefit, though she had previously taken the part of Hermione. Her refusal to appear was probably due to a touch of feminine pique because Mrs. Bellamy had not done her the courtesy of inviting her co-operation. Occasionally there were slight clouds in the intercourse of Mrs. Yates and Garrick, but there was an attitude of gentle dignity on both sides, and it is clear that Garrick himself recognised the right of the famous actress to insist on getting what she considered her due.

Mary Ann Yates was born about 1728, in Birmingham. There is some dispute as to the date, but 1728 is the most probable, though some authorities put it several years later. When Mary Ann was three years old, her mother died; and as her father was a captain's steward, constantly away from home, Mary Ann was brought up by friends or relatives. We know, in fact, very little about her childhood, though it is clear that she supported her father tenderly in the days of her

prosperity, be being then old and blind in London. We lose sight of young Mary Ann until she makes her first appearance on the stage, which is at Dublin in 1752, when she would be about twenty-four years old. We don't know by what influence she got this chance, but it is said that the manager, Thomas Sheridan, found her figure so "encumbered with corpulence" and her voice so weak that he paid her a sum of money to cancel her engagement. On the face of it, this statement cannot be taken very seriously. John Taylor, a famous journalist contemporary with Mrs. Yates, declares that he had never seen another woman so commanding and dignified until Mrs. Siddons appeared. James Boaden, who hymned Mrs. Siddons with unstinted enthusiasm, speaks very warmly of the majestic grandeur, the statuesque beauty, of the form and features of Mrs. Yates, says that her declamation was a musical enchantment, that her acting was "in the highest style of sublime tragedy." Romney's appealing portrait is of an unusually beautiful woman.

But more than all, we have the fact that Mrs. Graham, as she was then called, appeared at Drury Lane the year following her Dublin experience, and at the Lane remained till the close of the season 1754-5.

But Garrick thought very little of her acting, and would not engage her for the next season. Garrick's opinion was not general, for now she married Richard Yates, one of the Drury Lane company. He was more than twenty years her senior, and he had been married before. His first wife had left him well provided for, but there is every reason to believe that his match with Mary Ann was a match of genuine affection. It continued without a break till death came to sever it. Mr. and Mrs. Yates were always together. They had all their interests in common. The later prosperity of the wife did not spoil the marriage, as so often happens with players. There are women who, when they make a stage success, turn wearily from their honest husbands in their eagerness to bewitch the young bloods of the town. Mary Ann Yates was not like that.

At Drury Lane in December, 1756, there appeared "Mrs. Yates, late Mrs. Graham." It hadn't taken David Garrick long to change his opinion. Very soon Mrs. Yates was playing leading parts with conspicuous success. Mrs. Cibber's health was bad at the time, and on short notice Mrs. Yates took her part of Mandane in "The Orphan of China." Even now Garrick doubted the ability of the new actress to attempt with success a part designed for the distinguished and adorable star. By her charming work in that one part, Mrs. Yates became famous. That fame was sustained undimmed throughout all the remainder of her long career. There is evidence that in comedy she surpassed Mrs. Cibber. In those days versatility was essential to success in an actress. Mrs. Yates played with equal success parts of the most tragic intensity and parts that came within the definition of low comedy. William Godwin testified to her skill in comedy, writing to Campbell in 1834 :

"What I seem best to remember her in is *Violante* in *The Wonder* ; and though it is sixty years since I saw her and Garrick in that play, I remember a great deal of it as if it had occurred yesterday. It is an admirable acting play, and the two principal performers seemed to leave nothing to be desired. What I recollect best of Mrs. Yates is the scene in which Garrick, having offended her by a jealousy, not altogether without an apparent cause, the lady, conscious of her entire innocence, at length expresses a serious resentment. 'Felix' had till then indulged his angry feelings ; but finding, at last, that he had gone too far, applied himself with all a lover's arts to sooth her. She turns her back to him, and draws away her chair ; he follows her, and draws his chair nearer ; she draws away farther ; at length, by his winning entreaties and cajoling, she is gradually inclined to melt, and finally makes it up with him. Her condescension in every stage, from its commencement to its conclusion, was admirable. Her dignity was great and lofty, and the

effect highly enhanced by her beauty ; and when by degrees she laid aside her frown—when her lips began to relax towards a smile, while one cloud vanished after another, the spectator thought he had never seen anything so lovely and irresistible ; and the effect was greatly owing to her queen-like majesty. The condescension, in a graceful and wayward beauty, would have been comparatively nothing—with Mrs. Yates's figure and demeanour, it laid the whole audience, as well as her lover, as her feet."

As additional evidence of her standing, we may take the matter of her salaries. In December, 1772, Mrs. Yates then being forty-four years old, Digges set out to induce her to visit Edinburgh. The season was already well advanced, and for what remained of it he offered her £400, to which a member of the Faculty of Advocates added £150 ; but she did not go until they agreed to pay £700 for the service of herself and her husband. Yates was not a highly-salaried man, but for the first week or more in Edinburgh only he appeared. Digges had to explain that Mrs. Yates' trunks had gone astray. Another day or two went past, and then the trunks were recovered. Mrs. Yates appeared and made a great success. She appeared in several different characters, comedy and tragedy, during her stay.

A curious note. Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk, writing to a woman friend, says :—

" The playhouse has been much frequented since Mrs. Yates arrived, who receives infinite applause. For though she often appears on the stage more than half-seas over, she's not the less agreeable to all the male part of her audience, who come there a little disguised themselves ; and in this land of obsequious wives, you know, there is no disputing the taste of the men "

Mrs. Yates had enemies, but there is in no other surviving document the slightest hint or suggestion that she ever drank to excess. It is probable that her lightness and brightness,

her distinguished gaiety and nerve, made the good Scots doctor in his land of obsequious women imagine that she must have been at the bottle.

Sometimes she had differences with Garrick and left his company, but he always persuaded her to return, and always on an increased salary. Having regard to the value of money in her time, it is plain that she commonly enjoyed a salary (taking benefits into the count) higher than that now paid to any dramatic actress, apart from one or two of the greatest. In my own excursions into drama I never earned more than £80 a week, and my average was very much less than that.

When Garrick died in 1779 it was Mrs. Yates who was chosen to speak Sheridan's monody. Boaden has left it on record that her manner of reciting it "charmed him beyond anything he had ever heard from a human voice." You can imagine that beautiful voice speaking lines like these—

"The Actor, only, shrinks from Time's award ;
Feeble tradition is his memory's guard ;
By whose faint breath his merits must abide,
Unvouch'd by proof—to substance unallied !
E'en matchless Garrick's art, to heav'n resign'd,
No fix'd effect, no model leaves behind ;
The grace of action—the adapted mien,
Faithful as nature to the varied scene ;
Th' expressive glance—whose subtle comment draws
Entranced attention, and a mute applause ;
Gesture that marks, with force and feeling fraught,
A sense in silence, and a will in thought ;
Harmonious speech, whose pure and liquid tone
Gives verse a music, scarce confess'd its own ;
As light from gems assumes a brighter ray,
And cloth'd with orient hues, transcends the day !
Passions wild break—and frown that awes the sense,
And ev'ry charm of gentler eloquence—
All perishable ! like th' electric fire,

But strike the frame—and as they strike expire ;
Incense too pure a bodied flame to bear,
Its fragrance charms the sense, and blends with air”

It is difficult to imagine any Australian actress speaking lines like that with an effect of thrilling charm. We are sometimes inclined to think too meanly of our grandmothers. I am exceedingly proud of this one of mine.

Mrs. Yates made her last appearance in 1785, playing Jane Shore for her old rival George Anne Bellamy's benefit. Mrs. Yates was a comparatively wealthy woman. George Anne, who made a lot of money in her time, never had a spare shilling in her life—one of the permanent hard-ups.

Mrs. Yates died in 1787. Her husband, twenty-two years her senior, survived her nine years. For thirty years he had been blessed with the affection and friendship of a very loyal and distinguished woman, and he must have missed her. He doubtless found the world an arid place. She had spoiled him, and nobody is left to spoil solitary old men. However it be, one morning in April, 1796, he then being in his ninety-first year and in apparently robust health, Richard Yates worked himself into a great rage when he was told that the fishmonger could not furnish the eels he had ordered for dinner. So his housekeeper went out to find eels. When she brought them, she found Richard dead. He was buried beside his beloved wife and her father in Richmond Church, where their monument still stands, two players weary at evening and kneeling at their prayers together.

It will greatly relieve some of their surviving distant kin to hear that Richard and Mary Ann were indubitably married. They loved each other when they met, and they had the good fortune to be both free.

APPENDIX B.

SOME CORRESPONDENCE.

Tivoli Theatre, Melbourne,
13th December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART.

Dear Miss Stewart,

I feel I must write and say how very much I appreciate your wonderful assistance during the production of "Chu Chin Chow." Not only has Miss Pearce received the benefit of your tuition, but the other members of the company have been materially brought nearer the standard set by "Chu Chin Chow."

I want you to feel that I am not only one of your warmest admirers, but your closest friend, and that you can call upon me at any time and it will be a very great pleasure for me to obey.

Yours sincerely,

HUGH D. MCINTOSH.

* * * *

Tivoli Theatre, Melbourne,
13th December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART.

Dear Miss Stewart,

Would it be possible for you to take Miss Maxwell in hand when you return to Sydney and make this a special matter? You will be able to have her from Wednesday onwards. We open on Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

HUGH D. MCINTOSH.

Tivoli Theatre, Sydney,
21st December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Clifton Gardens,
Sydney.

Dear Miss Stewart,

In begging your acceptance of the enclosed cheque for £100 as an appreciation of your splendid services in connection with "Chu Chin Chow," I do so with a great deal of pleasure.

I think it is entirely due to your efforts that Miss Pearce made the wonderful success she did, and besides this you very materially improved other members of the cast.

I sincerely wish you every success, happiness and prosperity during 1921.

With my very kindest regards,

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

HUGH D. McINTOSH.

* * * *

Tivoli Theatre, Sydney,
21st December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

Dear Miss Stewart,

I was very pleased to receive your kind note of the 20th instant, and am indeed sorry that you missed the performance on Saturday evening last.

It went enormously, and Miss Maxwell did exceedingly well.

I trust your present indisposition will be of short duration, and shall be indebted to you if you will continue the good work as soon as you are able to do so again.

With my very warm thanks and kindest regards.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

HUGH D. McINTOSH.

Tivoli Theatre, Sydney,
22nd December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

Dear Miss Stewart,

I have consulted Mr. Linton with regard to your good self, and he has asked me to write to you direct on the matter.

We would like to have your services at our disposal to coach erring actors and actresses—in fact, to take full and complete control of the dialogue of each production we put on. We would give you a retainer of £500 per year and a set bonus to be agreed upon for each and every production.

This arrangement, I think, would be better perhaps than a set salary.

Would you please let me have your views on the matter.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

HUGH D. McINTOSH.

* * * *

Tivoli Theatre, Sydney,
24th December, 1920.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

Dear Miss Stewart,

I am in receipt of your letter.

I think the idea of a School for Acting is a splendid one, and I shall be delighted to go into the matter with my whole heart and soul. With your permission, we could call it "The Nellie Stewart School for Acting." Take good rooms, and work the thing properly. God knows it is badly enough needed in Sydney.

May I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

With my kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

HUGH D. McINTOSH.

Ernest Cohen & Linton, Solicitors,
Sydney, 17th March, 1921.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel.

Dear Miss Stewart,

We have endeavoured to raise you by telephone all the morning without success. We communicated with Mr. McIntosh after your last interview, and have just received a letter from him stating that Mr. Tallis and both E. J. and J. Tait have specially requested him to ascertain if you would be prepared to accept an engagement with them similar to the one you had with Mr. McIntosh.

Will you please call as soon as possible after receipt of this to discuss the matter.

Mr. McIntosh states that the managers are very anxious to be associated with you in the manner indicated.

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST COHEN & LINTON.

* * * *

Tivoli Theatre, Sydney,

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

24th March, 1921.

Dear Miss Stewart,

I have the honour to inform you that the following resolution was passed by the Directors to-day:

“Resolved that the Company place on record its deep appreciation of the valued services rendered by Miss Stewart during the time she has been associated with the Company.”

Personally, I would like to add my own thankfulness and pleasure in association with you. I sincerely trust you will be long spared to continue your excellent work, and take this opportunity of wishing you every success, happiness, and good health.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

HUGH D. MCINTOSH.

J. C. Williamson, Ltd.,
Sydney, 31st March, 1921.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Clifton Gardens.

Dear Miss Stewart,

Would you kindly call and see me to-morrow morning?

Kind regards.

Yours very truly,

CLYDE MEYNELL.

* * * *

J. C. Williamson, Ltd.,
Sydney, 13th July, 1921.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,
Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

Dear Miss Stewart,

Your two letters received. I have refrained from answering your first *re* bonus, because I was not quite aware what arrangement you had made with Mr. McIntosh. I now find that he paid you a bonus where you were largely responsible for training his Leading Lady for "Chu Chin Chow," and his Leading Lady for "Lilac Domino," but I don't think you have had anything of this description to do since we took over these productions.

With regard to Miss Reidy. She simply came to you under the ordinary circumstances for training under the arrangement which I made with you, viz., £10 per week. If you were to be really responsible for finding and training some big artist for us, no doubt the Firm would consider the question of a bonus, but the circumstances are entirely different.

With regard to your second letter. I would like you to watch the various performances and seize upon any inexperienced local artist or novice that you see and take her for private tuition. I don't know that there is any necessity for you to watch all the rehearsals.

Kind regards.

CLYDE MEYNELL.

CLYDE MEYNELL, Esq.,

Messrs. J. C. Williamson, Ltd.,
Castlereagh St., Sydney.

July 14th, 1921.

Dear Mr. Meynell,

I received your letter this morning and need hardly say that I was more than surprised at the contents.

My understanding of the arrangement with you was that it was to be on the same terms as the one I had with Mr. McIntosh. These terms were that I was to be paid a retainer of £500 per year, and a bonus to be agreed upon in respect of each production. Since joining you, my work has been similar to that carried out for Mr. McIntosh, and as you know Miss Maxwell had to be taught everything for "Firefly" by me, and likewise Miss Reidy, and at times I have had as many as five understudies on the stage. I think I am justified in saying that my efforts are shown in the improvement in the various artists, and it is very disappointing to me to think that a firm of the standing of J. C. Williamson, Ltd., regards the value of my efforts at a sum of £10 per week, which is not more than would be paid to one of the humblest parts in the show. I certainly joined you with the expectation of a bonus and as this was part of our agreement I must ask you to see that it is paid to me.

Yours faithfully,

NELL E. STEWART.

J. C. Williamson, Ltd.,

Sydney, 15th July, 1921.

MISS NELLIE STEWART,

Clifton Gardens Hotel, Mosman.

Dear Miss Stewart,

Your letter of July 14th to hand. I regret that you should be surprised at the contents.

I certainly never arranged to give you a bonus for each production. Why, the number of productions we keep doing, we should be perpetually giving you bonuses.

I looked upon the payment of £10 per week as being quite an adequate remuneration for the ordinary work you would be called upon to do, and the only idea of a bonus that ever entered my head was when you should be intimately associated with the training of a leading artist and actively concerned in the production, as, I understand, you were in the case of "Chu Chin Chow," and the "Lilac Domino." I cannot see that you have had any work of such an onerous description as this during your connection with J. C. Williamson, Ltd.

With kind regards,

Yours truly,

CLYDE MEYNELL.

[Here ends the matter. I have never re-opened it with Messrs. J. C. Williamson (Ltd.).

N.E.S.]

APPENDIX C.

DELINEATION OF MY CHARACTER.

During our season of "Sweet Nell" in San Francisco, Madame Kellog, a famous graphologist, having seen one of my letters, defined my characteristics thus :—

The traits shown in the handwriting according to the rules laid down by graphologists are as follows :—

The most prominent thing seen which catches the eye at once and dominates all others, is a most striking originality, so much so that under certain conditions it would be almost carried to eccentricity, but in this case is held in check and so balanced by an artistic sense of values that no jarring element is possible.

Refinement. Idealism. Modesty. And simple in ideas, but never satisfied, constantly trying to learn more. Activity *most* pronounced. Love of human nature, generous to a fault, and while not wasteful, still, something, or some circumstance in the past has taught the value of money, and the care for it, which is not there by nature.

Inclined to be too outspoken in ideas. Would not have the patience to go at a thing diplomatically, to gain a point, but will hold strongly to views. Chatty. Nervous ambition. *No vanity*, but a sincere and strong desire for the approval of others, which makes her very painstaking.

In the life of health, is burning the candle at both ends, and living too much on her nervous energy, which is bad ; the brain too active, must try and throw worry off and leave that to others.

Optimistic and hopeful ; it is rather unusual to find a

handwriting showing so much temperament, so free from depression, if there, it is caused by starved nerves—not character.

Not much business ability, should rely on others to settle any great question.

Would be likely to be imposed on by others, because nature is so candid and honest, does not look for deceit in others. Quick of comprehension and does best work along broad lines, and, while painstaking to a degree, should not wear herself out on details, leave those to others. Absolutely indifferent to stiff conventionalities, peaceful, gentle, sympathetic and impulsive, but is inclined to let sympathies get the best of judgment. Does not care for eating or drinking.

Love of change, because ideas are too broad to remain without new fields to conquer. Keen sense of proportion and relative fitness.

A good and lasting friend and a kind enemy.

B. W. KELLOG.

APPENDIX D.

Theodosia Stewart
Born April 12th 1815

February 2nd
1891
My endeavours
Have ever come too short of my desires
Henry VIII

Autograph of Nellie Stewart's Mother.

Richard Stewart.

Born May 24 (Queen's Birthday) 1827

Feb 2/1891
A fellow of Infinite jest
- Hamlet -

Autograph of Nellie Stewart's Father.

APPENDIX E.

TRANSLATION OF DR. WICKHAM'S LETTER.

4 Rue St. Philippe du Roule.

TO MISS NELLIE STEWART.

Madame,

It was very agreeable to me to learn through Dr. Johnson, that it was, thanks to your well-doing influence, that in Sydney the sick poor would be able to profit by the Radium cure. I wish specially to felicitate you, in the name of humanity.

Cancer is a disease so atrocious that to give the minutest relief to those suffering from it is a good action. Among the people that I attend and treat with Radium it is certainly the poor which interest me the most, and it is to be hoped that in all cities some charitable person like yourself will understand the services that Radium is able to render.

I should be very happy if the hazard of circumstance permits me one day to meet you, and I beg you to believe the expression of my most devotedly respectful sentiments.

LOUIS WICKHAM.

14th Feb., 1911.

APPENDIX F.



Nellie Stewart has her shoes shined by Hon. Hugh D. McIntosh and Oscar Asche, at the Carnival at Sydney Showground, in aid of the Rawson Institute for Seamen.

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