

First National Bank

Bellefonte, Pa.

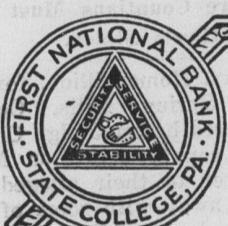
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First National Bank

Bellefonte, Pa.



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A. Fauble

Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., February 27, 1925.

EDWIN BOOTH.

The Prince of Tragedy in America.

By Levi A. Miller.

Edwin Booth, the great actor, has been before the public for many years, and no lover of the drama will dispute the fact that he was the best representative man of the American stage; and when we consider his personal as well as his professional worth, we must give him a foremost place with the leading men of the country and of the century. He made his first appearance as an actor, at the Boston Museum, September 18th, 1849, in the part of "Tressel" in Cibber's version of Richard III, his father, Junius Brutus, one of the greatest tragedians of his time, at the same theatre.

The eccentric and wonderful man was on the stage from 1813 to 1852, when he died, aged fifty-six years. Before he became an actor he had been a sailor, printer, painter, sculptor and writer for the press. Driven from London by the envy and jealousy of Edmund Kean, he came to America in 1821, and bought a farm near Baltimore, where his son Edwin (the seventh of ten children) was born in November, 1823, "on a night memorable for a great and splendid shower of meteors"—the precursors of a star of the first magnitude.

Edwin accompanied his father in his wanderings from town to town, and shared with him the sorrows, hardships and disappointments of his travels. His sad and strange experience during these days of trial gave a sombre color to his after life and changed the tone of a cheerful temperament to the gloom and melancholy which later on assisted him so materially in portraying the intellectual and emotional character of Hamlet.

In the beginning of his career as an actor, Edwin Booth assumed the character of Sir Edward Mortimer, Sir Charles Overreagh, and other tempestuous parts, in all of which he excelled. In the summer of 1852 he went with his father to California, from thence to Sandwich Islands and Australia. He had four years of severe experience and hard discipline of labor, trial, sorrow and disappointment. But he was made of stuff too stern to yield to discouragement and disaster. The pure gold of the man shone the brighter for the furnishing of affliction and sore trial. The training of grief and suffering was a source of education and polish, and the young tragedian returned to the East in 1856 "no longer a novice," but an artistic actor of experience and great vigor of soul.

He made the tour of the South and was hailed as a prodigy of skill and genius in the principal towns and cities of the Union. In the summer of 1860 he crossed the Atlantic and acted in London, Liverpool and Manchester, returning to New York in 1862. The following year he assumed the management of the Winter Garden theatre, and continued its control until the building was destroyed by fire in 1867. In 1869 he opened Booth's theatre, which he managed until the spring of 1874. Since that time he has been acknowledged as a star upon the stage in many of the principal cities in the United States. In San Francisco the receipts exceeded \$96,000 for eight weeks' acting.

Here I may be permitted to say that performers on the boards, who draw their inspiration mainly from the bottle, are not now, as they were formerly, the favorites of the public. They must have a loftier and purer spirit than they can find in their cup to win the reputation which buds and blossoms and bears the fruit of fame. The public may, for a time, bear with the antics of a man of genius who goes astray, but the confirmed sot will not suit the fastidious and exacting audiences of the present age, nor excuse him on the ground that he is alcoholically defacing the images of the god, Edwin Booth, who had inherited from his father the insanity of intemperance; but conquered it utterly many years ago and nobly and grandly trod it beneath his feet. And, as he matured in his career, through acting every kind of part, from a dandy Negro up to Hamlet, he at last made choice of the characters that offered ample scope for his powers and aspirations, and so settled upon a definite, restricted repertoire: Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear, Othello, Iago, Richard the II and III, Shylock, Cardinal Wolsey, and a number of others.

Edwin Booth has been tried by some of the most terrible afflictions that ever tried the fortitude of a human soul, but he heroically outlived them. Edwin Booth met with a great sorrow when he lost his second wife, an amiable and accomplished lady of great attractiveness of person and loveliness of character. Strong men are not easily crushed by afflictions and disadvantages. They rise to the ordinary events that would be disastrous to ordinary actors on the stage of human experience. It is said by those who are competent to judge, that this prince of tragedy excels, not in elegant comedy, but in fierce sarcasm and "stimulated madness." He has intense poetic sensibility, and being a "man of moods," like all men of real genius, he is equal to his efforts. Even when he seems to lack warmth and color, there is always artistic treatment and poetic expression in his voice and manner.

He studies, analyzes, and masters every point in a play before its presentation on the stage. He is not satisfied until the spirit of Shakespeare gives life to his ideal. The mere memorizing of the words of the drama is but a small part in his preparation. The text in type is a mere body without the animating life. He did not rest until it contained a living soul, pulsing in the heart and throbbing in the brain.

No detail of his study was neglected. Historic accuracy was demanded, and the passion of the play is brought out as vividly as lightning from a thunder cloud. His face and head re-

present a refined and cultivated man. One whose fine and delicate organization combines the tenderness of a woman, with the majesty of "the true prince." The dark hair is brushed from a full forehead; the heavy eyebrows give a background of shadow for the large brown eyes to flash under in the tempest of emotion. No man unendowed with imagination and poetic sensibility can properly translate the thought and feeling of a man of genius.

He must be formed of the finest clay, moistened with tears and tempered with smiles, to be a fit delineator of the characters created by the true poet. He must be transparent in his earnest endeavor, so that the figure photographed on his heart shall be seen in his face and heard in his voice. He must forget himself and become the embodiment and spirit of the subject he represents. In fact the actor must give soul and substance to shadows. The character is one of the great creations of the poet, so fine and flexible that the outbursts of passion are as natural as the sound of storms upon the air, and is the most difficult to impersonate on the stage. It is an expression of passion, thought and feeling put into speech that palpitates and bleeds if handled rudely.

STATE FURNISHES LITTLE OF ITS OWN PAPER WOOD.

Each year almost a half million cords of wood are ground up by the pulp and paper companies of Pennsylvania for the production of paper, according to F. T. Murphy, forestry extension specialist of Pennsylvania State College. Of this tremendous pile of wood only about 30 per cent. is grown and produced in the State. This small production of paper and pulp from Pennsylvania grown wood is due largely to the use of spruce and other woods which are not found naturally in any quantity in this State.

The native species of Pennsylvania which are used to the largest extent are: Poplar, beech, birch and maple, black cherry, bass wood, hemlock, gums and some few other woods. The wood must be cut in four to five feet lengths, peeled and allowed to season thoroughly. It should be kept clean, and no sticks should be less than four inches in diameter. Wood should be straight and sound, knots should be trimmed close to sticks, and it should be split only when too large to handle.

Pulp plants buying and using Pennsylvania woods are found in Elk, Clinton, Blair, Potter, York and Philadelphia counties. Wood of the proper species may be cut and marketed from any point in the State providing it does not lay too far back from a shipping point, county agent R. C. Blaney points out.

This market for wood should be taken advantage of by farm woodlot owners, with rare exceptions, only as a means of getting rid of products from thinning and improvement cuttings from existing stands. Where spruce and poplar trees are planted for timber production, thinning and clean cuttings for pulp wood would be most profitable.

If our woodlots were properly handled and our waste land planted with trees of the proper species, Pennsylvania should one of these days be self-supporting as to its pulpwood requirements and the money which is now being sent out of the State for raw materials would be kept here to swell the income of woodland owners and citizens of Pennsylvania.

ASPARAGUS GROWS POPULAR WITH KEYSTONE CONSUMERS.

Supply and demand are not equal in the case of asparagus. During the past few years markets have not seen enough of this delicious vegetable to satisfy those who hunger for it.

"It is no longer regarded as a luxury, which only the well-to-do can afford," says W. B. Nissley, vegetable gardening extension specialist of The Pennsylvania State College, "but it is rapidly being thought as a necessity. This vegetable merits a place in every farm garden, at least, and also in town gardens where space permits."

Now is the time to order asparagus roots for the spring planting, county agent R. C. Blaney states. These may be secured from a reliable seedman or from some grower. Buy well-grown, one year old roots. The most widely planted variety is Washington. For a family of five, 75 to 100 roots will be sufficient. For a family of two to three persons 50 to 75 roots are enough. For larger families add more roots proportionately. Where space is available it is well to plant the asparagus twenty inches apart in rows four to five feet apart. In small gardens where hand cultivation is practiced, plant in squares twenty inches to two feet apart each way.

Asparagus crowns must be set deep. In sandy soils they recommend twelve to fourteen inches and in heavy soils eight to ten inches. When the roots are planted cover lightly with one and one-half to two inches of soil. Later, after considerable growth has been made, the trench or hole may be filled gradually with soil.

Nissley urges all who plan to start an asparagus bed this spring to send to State College for a copy of Extension Leaflet No. 19, which tells how to plant this crop.

GEORGE'S VALLEY.

Barney Eisenhuth, of Spring Mills, R. D., contributes a few items from his section.

Another wish he expresses is that spring will come early so the farmers can get started with their work sooner than they could last year.

He says they have much sickness in George's Valley and James Reeder, one of his neighbors, who has been ill for some time, is improving.

Under date of March 23rd Barney writes to tell us that he is 74 years old, still works on the farm, and is a "hard" Democrat, so "hard" that he is going to stay that way until he dies.

—If you can't find it in the "Watchman" it isn't true.

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