

## TO A DANCING GIRL.

**A** FROU-FROU of shimmering silk,  
A swirl of some delicate lace,  
A flash of two arms, white as milk,  
A hint of an exquisite face—  
Oh, she dances my heart quite away,—  
It's caught in the glittering whirl!  
Mrs. Grundy may say what she may—  
I'm in love with a Gaiety girl!

### CHORUS.

I'm in love—yes, in love!  
My heart's in a glittering whirl!  
She's entrancing—with her dancing,—  
I'm in love with a Gaiety girl!

There's a snatch of a gay little tune,  
A glimpse of two dear little feet—  
Oh, she is a white rose of June—  
So prettily modest and sweet!  
Oh, her smile's like the sun on the sea,—  
It gleams from the shimmering swirl  
And its radiance falls full on me!  
I'm in love with a Gaiety girl!

When I follow her steps with my eyes,  
And try my fond love to express,  
She takes little heed of my sighs,  
And laughs at my silent distress.  
She's gone—with a gay little laugh!—  
To her lips there's the cruellest curl!—  
And still—though the whole world may chaff—  
I'm in love with a Gaiety girl!

LILLIAN ESTELLE WEILER.

## CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

**O**N the opposite page will be found a reproduction of a letter written by Charlotte Cushman, never before published and possessing unusual interest. It was written to Mr. Grigg, who lived in Philadelphia at that time and who presented it to a lady, a warm admirer of Miss Cushman, and was treasured by her as one of her most precious possessions. A short time prior to her death in 1876 she gave the letter to its present owner, who has preserved it with religious care. There is much to learn from this letter of the character of Charlotte Cushman in the early days of her career; in it she portrays disappointment, hope, ambition to succeed in her profession, the desire to support her family, and an amiable hospitality. She wastes no words in her appeal, but comes straight to the point, and asks for a modest sum in a business-like manner, offering interest for the loan.

Although at the time this letter was written she had met with considerable success in this country, she longed for better opportunities for study, and, encouraged to go to England, she found herself for want of means compelled to borrow money to live while seeking an engagement in a foreign land. At that period it was no easy task to get an engagement, as our actors were termed "American Indians," and had to encounter violent prejudice. Her mode of study was to act in any part with the best actors, and to study their methods. Her genius was so great and her individuality so overwhelming that she later made her own methods, although it is related of her that she always regretted the want of early systematic training, and prized the opportunity of witnessing the performances of great actors. Let us hope that Mr. Grigg acceded to her request, as he probably did, for shortly after

in Paris, where he was playing with Helen Faucit; he told her he could not assure her leading parts, but she could make a beginning. She replied: "May I have Lady Macbeth? I will accede to your wishes in all other things." This Macready could not promise, as Miss Faucit was already alarmed by the praises of Miss Cushman. She proceeded to London, and Mr. Vandenhoff gives the following account of how she procured her first engagement there: "The manner in which she obtained her first engagement in England is so characteristic of the spirit and pluck of the woman that I cannot resist telling it as it was related to me by Maddox, the manager of the Princess' Theatre, in 1845. On her first introduction to him Miss Cushman's personal gifts did not strike him as exactly those which go to make up a stage heroine, and he declined engaging her. Charlotte had certainly no great pretensions to beauty, but she had perseverance and energy, and knew that there was the right mettle in her; so she went to Paris with a view to finding an engagement there with an English company. She failed, too, in that, and returned to England more resolute than ever, bent on finding employment there because it was necessary to her. It was a matter of life or death almost. She armed herself, therefore, with letters (so Maddox told me) from persons who were likely to have weight with him, and again presented herself at the Princess'; but the little Hebrew was as obdurate as Shylock and still declined her proffered services. Repulsed, but not conquered, she rose to depart; but as she reached the door she turned and exclaimed: 'I know I have enemies in this country; but (and here she cast herself on her knees, raising her clenched hand aloft), so help me God! I'll defeat them.' She uttered this with the energy of Lady Macbeth, and the prophetic spirit of Meg Merrilies. 'Hello!' said Maddox to himself, 'S'help me! She's got de shtuff in her!' and he gave her an appearance and afterward an engagement in his theatre."

Of her first appearance as Bianco in Fazio the journals spoke with enthusiasm. Her engagement at the Princess' was continued through eighty-four nights. To her mother she wrote that her brilliant successes far exceeded her most sanguine expectations, and that in her most ambitious moments she never dreamed of the success that crowned her every efforts. Her good fortune enabled her to send for her family, of whom she so feelingly writes to Mr. Grigg, and in the early Summer she established them in a house at Bayswater. At that place Miss Cushman studied Romeo and her sister Susan Juliet. The play achieved what at that time was an almost unheard of popularity, and had a run of eighty nights in London. She afterward met with equal success in the provinces, appearing as Romeo upward of two hundred nights.

In August, 1849, after an absence of five years, she sailed for America, and was heartily welcomed on her return. She made her reappearance on October 8, 1849, at the Broadway Theatre, New York, as Mrs. Haller in The Stranger. In the Summer of 1852 she returned to England, and from that time she acted with short intervals in that country or the United States. It would be impossible in this short sketch to give an idea of the quantity of work she accomplished. Her stage life was one long triumph, covering a period of many years. Her private life was equally triumphant, as never a breath of scandal sullied its purity. Although a constant sufferer for many years before her death, on February 18, 1876, from a most painful cancer, she never failed to work, and remained a student to the end. The number of parts she assumed seem almost incredible, ranging as they did from light comedy to heaviest tragedy, from the most feminine to masculine characters, equally well done; but the most prominent ones of her latter days were Queen Katharine, Meg Merrilies, and Lady Macbeth. Miss Cushman made her final appearance as Lady Macbeth on May 15, 1875, at the Globe Theatre in Boston, in which city she was born July 23, 1816. With her died the greatest actress this country has ever produced, indeed one of the greatest actresses the world has ever seen. Her art ranked with that of Rachel and Ristori, and no matter how small the part had heretofore appeared

## CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

ON the opposite page will be found a reproduction of a letter written by Charlotte Cushman, never before published and possessing unusual interest. It was written to Mr. Grigg, who lived in Philadelphia at that time and who presented it to a lady, a warm admirer of Miss Cushman, and was treasured by her as one of her most precious possessions. A short time prior to her death in 1876 she gave the letter to its present owner, who has preserved it with religious care. There is much to learn from this letter of the character of Charlotte Cushman in the early days of her career; in it she portrays disappointment, hope, ambition to succeed in her profession, the desire to support her family, and an amiable hospitality. She wastes no words in her appeal, but comes straight to the point, and asks for a modest sum in a business-like manner, offering interest for the loan.

Although at the time this letter was written she had met with considerable success in this country, she longed for better opportunities for study, and, encouraged to go to England, she found herself for want of means compelled to borrow money to live while seeking an engagement in a foreign land. At that period it was no easy task to get an engagement, as our actors were termed "American Indians," and had to encounter violent prejudice. Her mode of study was to act in any part with the best actors, and to study their methods. Her genius was so great and her individuality so overwhelming that she later made her own methods, although it is related of her that she always regretted the want of early systematic training, and prized the opportunity of witnessing the performances of great actors. Let us hope that Mr. Grigg acceded to her request, as he probably did, for shortly after she accomplished her desire and left this country for England, where, after she succeeded in gaining an appearance, her success was phenomenal, and continued to the end of a long life. A brief *resumé* of her career may be interesting in connection with this letter, as she showed, even at the early period at which it was written, a business sagacity which put her "in the way of making much money," and gratified her ambition.

While playing with Macready in New York in the season of 1842-43 he remarks in his diary under date of October 23: "The Miss Cushman, who acted Lady Macbeth, interested me much. She has to learn her art." But Macready recognized her abilities as beyond question; otherwise he would not have invited her to play with him in New York, later in Boston, and still later to support him in England. Upon his advice she determined to go to England, and it was some time between Macready's visit to this country in 1843 and October 25, 1844, that the letter now published was written, as on the latter date she made her farewell appearance at the Park Theatre, New York, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, when Mr. Vandenhoff acted Benedick to her Beatrice. In his note book he thus speaks of it: "The house was by no means full; and she played Beatrice that night carelessly or over anxiously, I don't know which—the effect of either is much the same. I recollect particularly that she run one part of one act into another in a scene with me, in a very perplexed and perplexing manner. When we came off, she exclaimed: 'For heaven's sake what have I been doing?' 'Knocking the fourth and fifth acts together extemporaneously,' I replied. The truth is, she was disappointed with the house—the result being then of some moment to her. That audience little dreamt with what an accession of reputation and fortune she would return among them."

Miss Cushman, urged by Macready, whose parting words to her were: "Come to England, where your talents will be appreciated at their true value," sailed for England and reached there November 18, 1844. Upon arrival at Liverpool she found letters from Macready asking her to join him

her most sanguine expectations, and that in her most ambitious moments she never dreamed of the success that crowned her every efforts. Her good fortune enabled her to send for her family, of whom she so feelingly writes to Mr. Grigg, and in the early Summer she established them in a house at Bayswater. At that place Miss Cushman studied *Romeo* and her sister Susan Juliet. The play achieved what at that time was an almost unheard of popularity, and had a run of eighty nights in London. She afterward met with equal success in the provinces, appearing as *Romeo* upward of two hundred nights.

In August, 1849, after an absence of five years, she sailed for America, and was heartily welcomed on her return. She made her reappearance on October 8, 1849, at the Broadway Theatre, New York, as Mrs. Haller in *The Stranger*. In the Summer of 1852 she returned to England, and from that time she acted with short intervals in that country or the United States. It would be impossible in this short sketch to give an idea of the quantity of work she accomplished. Her stage life was one long triumph, covering a period of many years. Her private life was equally triumphant, as never a breath of scandal sullied its purity. Although a constant sufferer for many years before her death, on February 18, 1876, from a most painful cancer, she never failed to work, and remained a student to the end. The number of parts she assumed seem almost incredible, ranging as they did from light comedy to heaviest tragedy, from the most feminine to masculine characters, equally well done; but the most prominent ones of her latter days were Queen Katharine, Meg Merrilies, and Lady Macbeth. Miss Cushman made her final appearance as Lady Macbeth on May 15, 1875, at the Globe Theatre in Boston, in which city she was born July 23, 1816. With her died the greatest actress this country has ever produced, indeed one of the greatest actresses the world has ever seen. Her art ranked with that of Rachel and Ristori, and no matter how small the part had heretofore appeared when assumed by Charlotte Cushman it carried away the audience when touched by her genius. It is related of her that on one occasion she could not for some reason play Lady Macbeth, and took the part of First Witch. She held the stage, and made of that minor role the principal one of the performance. It is gratifying to know that her genius was recognized before her death, and a public ovation, such as the world has seldom witnessed, was tendered her at Booth's Theatre, New York, on November 7, 1874, when William Cullen Bryant crowned her with a laurel wreath, and Richard Henry Stoddard wrote a poem in her honor, which was read by Charles Roberts before an audience composed of the most prominent men and women of that day, whose names represented the highest in art, culture, and society.

In an account of that evening the New York *Tribune* said: "From Booth's Theatre to the Fifth Avenue Hotel the street was so packed toward midnight as to be almost impassable. A glare of light from the theatre-porch, the torches of the Arcadian procession, and the street lamps illuminated the scene; and presently from the direction of Madison Square a burst of Roman candles and rockets added to the brilliance and excitement of this memorable midnight hour. Miss Cushman entered a carriage opposite the stage-door, and, amidst the cheers of the populace and a tumult like that of the old-fashioned Fourth of July, was driven to the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where she presently appeared on the balcony and greeted the populace, while the Ninth Regiment Band performed a serenade, and the spaces and vistas of Madison Square were illumined with fireworks."

Her reverence for her art can in no way be so well told as in her own words: "I think I love and revere all arts equally, only putting my own first above the others, because in it I recognize the union and culmination of all. To me it seems as if when God conceived the world that was poetry; He formed it, and that was sculpture; He colored it, and that was painting; and then, crowning work of all, He peopled it with living beings, and that was the grand, divine, eternal drama."

K. M. W.



## A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

My dear Sir,

Pray excuse the liberty I am taking with you, but I am sure <sup>in</sup> the goodness of your heart ~~that~~ you will do so, when you know my wants. I have for a long time sought an interview with you. I even now have come from New York for the purpose, but as usual have been disappointed. I now take this method of asking a favour—

I have been for a long time hoping & wishing to go to England for improvement. I am anxious to study there under some of the great masters. It will be putting me in the way of making much money when I return to this country, for the support of my family who have for many years been dependent upon my weekly stipend.

Pray excuse the liberty I am taking with you.  
but I am sure <sup>in</sup> the products of your heart ~~will~~ you will do  
so. when you know my wants. I have for a long time sought  
an interview with you. & now now have come from New York  
for the purpose, but as usual have been disappointed. &  
now take this method of asking a favour—

I have been for a long time hoping & wishing to  
go to England for improvement. I am anxious to study  
there under some of the great masters. It is not to be putting  
me in the way of making much money when I return  
to this country, for the support of my family who have  
for many years been dependent upon my meagre stipend  
you, my dear Mr. Eng. can assist me & would you but  
lend me for a year or so—upon interest from £50. to £100.  
You would be doing me a charity, & put me in the way  
of future affluence—

Pray give this consideration & let me hear from  
you. I wish you would visit N. Y. we will do every thing  
<sup>in</sup> our power to make you happy & comfortable & make  
your time pass agreeably— don't forget to let me have an  
answer to this & believe me

Most Sincerely Yours  
C. J. Cushman