

slaughter of his dear ally Mercutio, and challenge the fiery Tybalt in some of the finest language that even Shakespeare has ever put into the lips of any of his Characters; when he has to convey the frenzy of passion in his scene with the Friar after the sentence of banishment; when he has to "defy the stars" upon so unexpectedly and painfully hearing of Juliet's supposed decease, and when he has to display the deep emotion with which he views the form of his lost love, as she lies apparently dead upon her bier in the tomb of all the Capulets, and verbally to express such emotion in language of unsurpassed power and pathos—he falls far below the requisite standard of intensity. The audience, consequently, are interested instead of being deeply moved and affected.

And so, more or less, is it with Mrs. Patrick Campbell's Juliet. Starting with the initial impossibility of presenting the part as a girl of fourteen—instead of eighteen—as most modern exponents have played it, judiciously altering in this particular the age given in the text—Mrs. Patrick Campbell soon discovers that she is forced to adopt the tone and the style of a young lady of somewhat maturer years, and her impersonation is thus rendered incongruous from the outset. Shakespeare himself had not histrionically to contend with this difficulty, because—though, so far as we are aware, no commentator has hitherto remarked it—he, of course, had a boy, or at least a youth, to impersonate the Character, and therefore the difference of age was not of importance, since the boy could as easily make up for fourteen as eighteen, and secondly, he had guarded himself against it with his usual dramatic dexterity, since he had provided for the change from the girl into the woman both by the marriage and by the tremendous and appalling events which followed it. To do justice, however, to Mrs. Patrick Campbell, we must state that her performance on the second night far excelled in power and sincerity that afforded on the opening one.

It is indeed scarcely fair of the Daily Press to pounce down upon the performance of a first night as if it were the be-all and end-all of what a Company can do, and this more particularly applies to a great Shakesperian presentment, when, as the *Times* critic justly remarked, so many adverse circumstances may militate against an adequate representation. We write therefore now from subsequent impressions rather than from primary ones. Mrs. Patrick Campbell takes the realistic conception of the character, and she is entitled to do so if she pleases, but we are bound to tell her that this can only be done by serious sacrifice of the subtlety of Shakespeare—a vital mistake, which the Profession seem more inclined to make now than they did in former days! Thus, Mrs. Patrick Campbell's treatment of the celebrated "Balcony-scene" is pensive almost to monotony, and lacked the sprightly touches which our author has infused into it, and which several admirable actresses, and, *par excellence*, the charming Helen Faucit, whose later Juliet we ourselves saw and criticised—have so justly conveyed. Juliet's great scene with the Nurse, when the latter informs her of the sentence of banishment pronounced upon her husband—a scene long left out at "the Lyceum" by Miss Mary Anderson, though it is the pivot upon which the plot turns—has indeed been rendered by Mrs. Patrick Campbell with much more force than at first, but she still fails almost altogether to adequately affect her audience in the famous "Potion scene,"—a scene in which Shakespeare has given his

exponent the grandest possible opportunity of exhibiting tragic intensity, and in which both Helen Faucit and the meteoric Stella Colas completely brought down the house. In the great passage also with the Friar, when Juliet receives the terrible instructions regarding the use of the sleeping draught, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, though fairly powerful, is not equal to Miss Mary Anderson in the display of exalted courage and resolution. Nevertheless, we must credit her with much lofty devotion in her delivery of the exquisite phrase, "to live an unstained wife to my sweet love," though we must conscientiously say at the same time, that it was well-nigh the sole passage in which Mrs. Patrick Campbell really struck the right note and reached the hearts of her hearers.

Unfortunately for the general effect of Mr. Forbes Robertson's Presentment, his support is, in many respects, far from what it should be. Mr. Coghlan, as most of the Press-critics have observed, is quite out of his place as Mercutio, and unpleasantly recalls his *fiasco* as Shylock, when he played that character during a *mauvais quart-d'heure* of a brief six weeks in Mr. Bancroft's production of the "Merchant of Venice" in 1875. We prefer to remember him in his masterly rendering of Antony some few years ago at the Princess's, when he took that *role* to Mrs. Langtry's Cleopatra. Mr. Coghlan's present Mercutio at the Lyceum is, we much regret to record, a dismal failure. His Queen Mab speech—conceived in Shakespeare's happiest vein—is made "a thing of shreds and patches," and painfully contrasts with the splendid rendering of the same in 1863 by the late Mr. George Vining, when that actor's magnificent delivery of it evoked thunders of applause—always the best assurance of a performer's ability—from the Princess's audience. In Mercutio's death-scene the words are comparatively inaudible, and the action is too prolonged, and, by a strange innovation, the death is made to occur on the stage, though the text makes Benvolio bring in the tidings of it to Romeo, after, by Mercutio's desire, Benvolio had "helped him into some house," and though Mercutio's characteristically humorous utterances preclude the probability of his death taking place in Romeo's presence. By a curious error of action too—particularly in the case of so practised an actor—Mr. Forbes Robertson pointed to the lifeless body of his friend, when he directed to Tybalt the magnificent ejaculation, "Mercutio's soul is but a little way above our heads, staying for thine to keep him company; either thou or I or both must go with him." One error, as is so often the case, thus leads on to another, for had Mr. Coghlan as Mercutio been drawn off, Mr. Forbes Robertson could not have pointed to his dead body on the ground when speaking of his soul which had gone aloft!

In Mr. Nutcombe Gould a fairly competent Friar has been secured, who can be well heard all over the house; and in Mr. George Ward and Mr. Will Dennis, old Capulet and Tybalt find worthy and striking exponents. Miss Dolores Drummond's Nurse is very mediocre, and but a feeble imitation of Mrs. Stirling, who gave such splendid support to Miss Ellen Terry's Juliet. Mr. Ian Robertson, in the "Apothecary," though he could not hope to rival the marvellous rendering of the "Part" by the late Mr. T. Meade, was nevertheless excellent both in manner and make-up, and the scene with Romeo, as played by the two brothers, was exceedingly well balanced. Still, disappointing as is the present Production when con-

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