

PICTURES OF THE BOOTHS.

A RARE COLLECTION OWNED BY
MR. JAMES YOUNG, JR.

He Will Shortly Present the Lot to
the Player's Club in New York—
A Portrait of the Elder Booth
That Has Never Before Been Pub-
lished—It Was Taken During His
Younger Days, and Seems Strange
to Those Who Knew Him Later—
The Entire Family.

There is no subject which is of more un-
failing interest to Americans than the
events, or, in fact, anything associated
with Junius Brutus Booth and his de-
scendants. It seems to be a magic name
which appeals directly to the intellect,
transporting one into realms of ideality,
and inciting the soul to emulation. Fate
threw a mantle of darkness over this fam-
ily, as it has over many others, but the
brightness of genius caused a radiance to
gleam forth from its sombre folds. All
the members of the household have
passed away but one, those of the sec-
ond generation alone remaining; and
many persons are not familiar with the
faces of those who lived in the heart and
home of the great tragedian.

One of the finest collections of portraits
of the Booths is owned by Mr. James
Young, Jr., the well known young tra-
gedian, of this city. During a recent in-
terview with Mr. Young at his residence,
these rare possessions were placed upon
exhibition. Looking upon the faces of
men and women who are now within the
mysterious portals of another life, one
could not resist being carried into the past,
and living for awhile with those, so sin-
gularly retiring and exclusive by nature,
but who, through the decree of the Ruler
of the Universe, were destined to be raised
to a height which placed them in a prom-
inent position before the world.

Mr. Young has, from earliest boyhood,
delighted in obtaining the pictures of dis-
tinguished people and studying them,
from which he thinks he has received
much of his inspiration. The posthumous
fame of a player is but traditional. His
art dies with its birth, and the ringing
plaudits sound the death knell to his con-
summated genius. The actor passes away,
his art goes with him, and what remains
are but impressions—impressions lasting
enough to the possessors, but lost to pos-
terity.

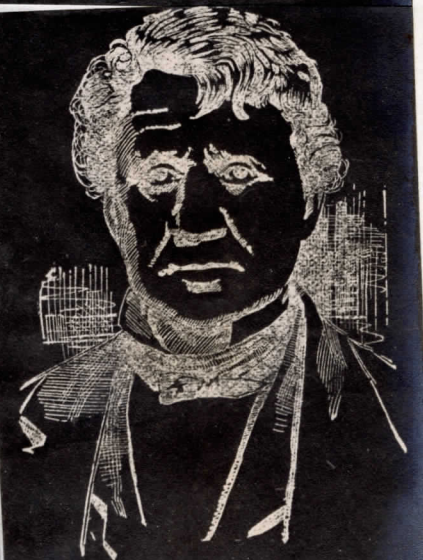
The collection, then, of the photographs
of these great movers of human souls
would seem most natural to the lovers of
dramatic art. Though these "counter-
feits" present but one fixed, immovable
expression, it is pleasant to know how
they looked at one time, and to conjecture
as to what mobility those features were
capable; how, when united with the power
of voice and action, by the merest shade
they would thrill and stir emotions never
felt before. All this, however, dies with
the generation, and grows, with time,
fainter and fainter. Contemporary writers
have endeavored to convey to our minds
in choice language the genius of the elder
Booth. Survivors of the past tell us in
glowing terms of his mighty power. We
marvel, but are not moved. It remains
for the artist to convey to us in his por-



JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH, SR., AS RICHARD III.
(From Original Oil Painting.)



EARLIEST PICTURE OF JUNIUS
BRUTUS BOOTH.



THE ELDER BOOTH LATE IN LIFE.

traits the features upon which we may
gaze, and through this medium reach out
to the genius and magnetism of the man.
The actor is nature, and his work as tran-
sitory; the artist it is who perpetuates the
beauties that appear in nature with last-



A CORNER IN MR. YOUNG'S STUDY.

ing colors, and in lines of imperishable marble.

The collection of the Booth pictures which Mr. Young has been fortunate enough to gather, is one of the best in existence. Many have never been seen by the public, and several of the rarest have never been published. The Players' Club, of New York, has some paintings of Edwin Booth worth vast sums, because of the reputation of the artists, but Mr. Young's collection presents more completeness. The rarest picture and the

rarest in existence of the elder Booth is a daguerreotype taken at an earlier age than any picture now extant. The public has the impression from the published portraits of Booth pere that he was a man with a severe countenance, square jaws, and forbidding expression. These were taken in later life, after the sad accident that ruined forever the classic outlines of his noble features. It happened in Charleston that he was struck by a fellow player; the blow resulted in the breaking of his nose and nearly prematurely ending a brilliant career. Gould, the biographer of the tragedian, in speaking of his appearance, says: "His face was originally cast in the antique Roman mould, and presents a singular resem-



MRS. J. B. BOOTH, SR.
(Mother of the Booth Family.)

blance to the portraits of Michael Angelo." The persons who saw Booth in his first flush of manhood dwelt much upon his physical beauty. The picture we give today for the first time to the public is the only one in existence taken before the unfortunate accident, and bears out the eu-



JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH, JR.

logistic descriptions of his eminently handsome face. Mr. A. M. Palmer had a copy of it made for his personal use, and when the daguerreotype was exhibited at the Players' it was viewed with considerable interest. In comparing this portrait of the young man, who was then "stretching the utmost reaching of his soul" to obtain the goal of his ambition, with those taken when he was the greatest of living actors, it would be difficult to recognize in them the same man.

The next portrait worthy of mention is one of the three oil paintings in existence



EDWIN BOOTH AND DAUGHTER.

of the elder Booth taken from life. It is a life-size, three-quarter picture, and represents him as Richard III., which character was most popular with the public,



EDWIN BOOTH AS HAMLET.

but was not, as some suppose, the favorite with the tragedian. This painting was the personal property of Mrs. Booth, who presented it to a friend, in whose possession it remained for nearly fifty years, when it became the property of its present owner. It has been widely copied, an engraving of it appearing in the Century, and another representing the frontispiece in "Booth's Life," by his daughter Asia. The pose, expression and costume would suggest Closter's opening soliloquy. The other painting from life is one in the same character, and hangs in an alcove in the reception room of the Players. The other is a personal bust, painted by a Baltimore artist of some repute, the late Mr. Way. The picture was taken during his latter years, and was exhibited in an art store in this city some years ago, but has since been disposed of.

What must certainly be interesting to everyone is the picture of the mother of



JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

the Booth family, of that oft-taken-of-an-famous family, the mother of him to whom the American theater owes much of its present glory, and the mother of that misguided genius, John Wilkes Booth. This picture of Mrs. Booth gives us an idea of the placid nature, revealing the cause of the influence she exerted over her husband and children. She held them together by the power of her love—ever patient and ready to contend against adverse circumstances. It was she who



JOHN SLEEPER CLARKE.

guided the helm, and tempered the effect of the peculiar nature of the father.

Of pictures of the Booth children, there were ten in all, but those reproduced are the six who lived to manhood and womanhood. The eldest, Junius Brutus, Jr., resembles in a marked degree the later portraits of his father. Most of his life was spent as an actor in California, but he attained no eminence in the profession.

Of the two daughters, Rosalie was the oldest, and the second child. She, too, was much like her father. Rosalie never married, and died only a few years ago, after living her life in quiet and retirement, surrounded by a few chosen friends, and being seldom mentioned in connection with the public life, in which most of the family moved.

That three is a fortunate number seems to find strength in the fact that the third child was Edwin. The cut presents an unpublished picture of him taken about

1855 with his little daughter, Edwina, at the age of three, standing by his knee. She is the present Mrs. Grossman. In speaking of Edwin one can only echo the sentiments expressed by the late Lawrence Barrett: "Eulogy and praise stand mute in the presence of such merit."

Asia Booth, like her brother Edwin, inherited much of the family beauty, but strange to say none of the desire for histrionic fame was inherited by the daughters, though they were much interested in everything theatrical, and it is said that Asia would not marry John Sleeper Clarke until he had promised to adopt the dramatic profession. Judging from what we know of the early enthusiasm of John Sleeper for the stage, the promise entailed no sacrifice on his part. These two sisters present beautiful characters. From the biography of her father, written by Asia, one may discover a literary gift, which, if continued, would have distinguished her in the realm of letters.



MARY EDWINA BOOTH.
(Daughter of J. B. Booth, Jr.)

A singular coincidence with John Wilkes, the next child, is to be found in the fact that he was an exact counterpart of the picture of the Elder Booth taken in his youth, and that it was he who inherited the erratic temperament of his father. It has been acknowledged that John was not vicious, only misguided. Patriotic fervor was a ruling passion of the family. Even the grandfather revered and hallowed the names of Brutus, John Wilkes and Washington, to such an extent of enthusiasm, that the children of two generations received the names of his hero's. An old lady, now ninety years of age, who lived on the adjoining farm to the Booths in Harford county, Md., was



ASIA BOOTH CLARKE.

devoted to the children. In speaking of John, she said, with a tear in her eye, "I loved the boy dearly. I knew him from babyhood and he was always so kind, tender-hearted and good. He would have joined the army but for the promise he made his mother. Many times he has toddled over to our house to get a slice of bread with a thick layer of sugar."

Life at "The Farm" was held so sacred,



ROSALIE, Eldest Daughter of J. B. BOOTH, SR.

that no one was allowed even for food, to harm the birds or squirrels, and it therefore seems strange that these principles, which were instilled into his youthful mind, did not take deeper root. But, then, it is the oft-told story—patriotic fervor reaching to madness. An extract from a recently published letter of Edwin's seems to settle the matter. "John was a rattle-pated fellow, filled with quixotic notions. We regarded him as a good-hearted, harmless, though wild-brained boy, and used to laugh at his patriotic froth whenever secession was discussed. That he was insane on that one subject, no one who knew him well can doubt. He possessed rare dramatic talent."

The youngest and the sole survivor of the family is Joseph A. Booth, a physician, living at Long Branch. The doctor has spent his life in retirement, away from the turbulency of public life, and his name has never been mentioned in connection with theatrical affairs.

Mr. Young's collection is not alone limited to the Booths, but in his possession are rare portraits of the other great players, notably Garrick and Kean, all of which, together with his theatrical li-



DR. JOSEPH A. BOOTH.

brary, he will present to the Players' Club, of New York, of which he is a member. The cut showing a corner in Mr. Young's study, or "den" as he calls it, exhibits Shakesperian taste and romantic play, and in which many valuable theatrical engravings are exhibited. The oil portrait of the Elder Booth is seen above the mantel, while below, at the foot of the couch, is shown the helmet and sword of Richard III., used by Mr. Young in depicting that character.