

LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.

A New Phase of the Case in Which John Surratt's Sweetheart Is Involved.

At the last meeting of the Columbian Historical Society Harriet Riddle Davis, who has written several pleasing novels of Washington life, related an unpublished incident regarding the assassination of President Lincoln, says a Washington correspondent in the New York Tribune. At the time of that great tragedy Mrs. Davis was attending a Roman Catholic academy in town, and her teacher, to whom she referred as Miss Annie X., was the sweetheart of John Surratt, and is said to have been employed by the conspirators to secure a room for them in an R street hotel, where they met before the murder.

"The conduct of Miss X., while teaching," said Mrs. Davis, "was a puzzle to the children. One morning just prior to the assassination of President Lincoln she appeared in the schoolroom in a state of great excitement. Her clothes were covered with dust, as if she had just returned from a long ride across country. 'Kneel,' she cried hysterically to the roomful of affrighted children, and as they fell on their knees the woman broke out into an agonized appeal for help and pardon for some unknown persons who were planning a terrible crime. The effect of it was heightened upon the children's imaginations by her haggard appearance and her evidence of great distress. At the conclusion of the prayer she summarily dismissed the children for the day."

Mrs. Davis was naturally much excited over the incident, but her family made light of it, and as it was not again referred to it passed out of her mind. At the trial of John Surratt for complicity in the murder Judge Riddle, the father of Mrs. Davis, was one of the prosecutors for the government. The jury, it will be remembered, failed to agree. One day shortly after the trial Judge Riddle happened to mention in the presence of his daughter that conviction would have doubtless been assured if it had been possible to get Surratt's sweetheart, Miss X., to testify.

"Why, that's my teacher," said the child. "What did she know about?"

The half-forgotten story was again told, and corroborated by another girl in the school, but all trace of Miss X. was lost, and as it was deemed impossible to get a jury in Washington that would convict Surratt without her evidence, the case was finally not pressed.

BOOTH'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN AMERICA.

Some interesting recollections of an interesting character of the late Junius Brutus Booth, the tragedian, are published in the Petersburg (Va.) Express. It says:

In the season of 1823-'24, our informant was residing at "Osborne's," a village on James River, some fifteen miles from Richmond, and then a place of some importance as a shipping port. One day shortly after the arrival of a foreign vessel, he was surprised to see, lying under the piazza of the hotel, an immense pile of luggage, each article marked "J. B. Booth." Wondering who Mr. Booth was, and what he he could want with so much luggage, he entered the house and very speedily formed the acquaintance of the stranger, whom he met at the dinner table. He was an intellectual looking young Englishman, free and affable in his manners, and, as our friend very soon discovered, of very convivial disposition. He sojourned two or three weeks at "Osborne's" without giving any one about the place the slightest clue to his calling or future plans, when one day our informant was shown a bill of the "Iron Chest," underlined for an early night—the character of Sir Edward Mortimer by Mr. Booth, "his first appearance in America." He took an early opportunity of showing the bill to his new acquaintance, and of asking him if he was the Mr. Booth alluded to. He very complacently answered that he was, and invited our friend to accompany him to Richmond to witness his debut on the American stage. The invitation was accepted, and accordingly, on the night appointed, they repaired to the Theatre, where a large audience greeted the powerful acting of the young tragedian with the warmest manifestations of approval. He appeared on the next occasion in Richard the Third, and completely confirmed the splendid promise of his first appearance by his unique and vigorous embodiment of that arduous character. Although playing in Richmond he made Osborne his headquarters for many weeks afterward, and during that time our friend became familiar with the erratic habits and eccentricities which distinguished the character of this great master of the Tragic Muse.

BOOTH.

Just now it came into my head,
I know not how it came,
That somewhere I have heard or read
That Junius Brutus Booth was dead
An actor of some fame.

In Richard he was really great,
Though Kean's was lauded higher;
All parts, when not in tipsy state,
He played with judgement accurate,
With spirit, force and fire.

His tragic powers high praise bespeak—
His comic claims as high;
Profound in the absurd or weak,
He made you laugh at Jerry Sneak,
And almost mad you cry.

For to his sense, with feeling rife,
The "fun" was not the best—
That tragedy of common life,
The loving fool, the tyrant wife,
He deemed a serious jest.

He was a scholar deeply versed
In old and modern lore;
A poet, too, and not the worst;
His lines, when by himself rehearsed,
Were seldom thought a bore.

At Holland's lodgings once we met—
Our speech on trilles ran—
The notions that we soon forgot,
But leaves me an impression yet
Of "wit and gentleman."

A bard the bluntest of our times,
While sauntering down the street,
Together strung these careless rhymes,
And thought how oft ambition climbs
As poor reward to meet!

What lasts of Booth?—a paragraph
Some flippant paper gives;—
A lie, or only true by half,
To set on barren fools to laugh—
And thus his "glory" lives!

Green boy, who seat on the stage
Some bully foam and roar,
Thinkst it glorious to engage
Applause, by shamming grief or rage,
Go—be a fool no more!

Few idols of the box or pit
Might well with Booth compare:
A genius, scholar, poet, wit,
For every rage of talent fit—
And Booth is—what?—and where?

In vain his mind was heaven-inspired,
By study, too refined—
All nature gave or art acquired,
Was only for the hour admired,
And then it passed from mind.

Life's real scenes should be thy stage—
Act well and nobly there—
Subdue thy passions, curb their rage—
Thou mayst not man's applause engage,
But that of angels share!

LINCOLN FORGIVES BOOTH.

Spiritualist Pastor Learns Martyred President Welcomed Assassin to Spirit World.

[Special Dispatch to the Boston Herald.]

NEW YORK, March 26, 1905. May S. Pepper, pastor of the First Spiritual Church of Brooklyn, from her pulpit tonight, said:

"We have been told of Abraham Lincoln that when he entered the spirit world he was met by the great statesmen of the past and that they have a congress there, where they all talk and discuss the affairs of this mundane sphere. By that same spirit we are told that when Booth, weighed down by the awful act that he had committed, with his soul tortured by his sin, entered the spirit world, the first man that he met was Lincoln, and that great man held out his hand, and in that way became in effect the savior of Booth in the spirit world."

Steele Mackaye Indignant.

Much interest is felt in London in the story published in the New York Herald about an alleged attempt to blackmail Ed in Booth by "a disreputable newspaper man" and "a person connected with the stage."

An article in the New York Dramatic News gives the names of Steele Mackaye, obviously as "the person connected with the stage," and that of Frank A. Burr as "the disreputable newspaper man."

Your correspondent showed these articles today to Mr. Mackaye, who is at present in London. Mr. Mackaye's rage knew no bounds.

"Nobody who knows me," he said, "will ever believe anything of that nature about me, but the attempt to connect my name with such an outrage is an infamy. The fact is that I have been for years the means of keeping that story from being published, and have used my utmost efforts to effect this purpose, and it is a dastardly thing that any one should dare to try to connect me with a conspiracy to injure a noble fellow professional like Mr. Booth, who, even if these letters were genuine, which I do not believe, is a tirely innocent in the matter."

There will be some explanations made when Mr. Mackaye returns to New York, and it is probable that some body will suffer.

Booth's Greatest Compliment.

Edwin Booth says that the most genuine compliment he ever received was on the occasion of his playing Iago for the first time at Grass Valley, then a new mining camp. The audience, who had not seen a play for years, were so much incensed at his apparent villainy that they pulled out their "shooters" in the middle of the third act and began blazing away at the stage. Othello had the tip of his nose shot off at the first volley, and Mr. Booth only escaped by rolling over and over up the stage and disappearing through a trap-door. A speech from the manager somewhat calmed the house, but even then Mr. Booth thought it best to pass the night in the theatre, as a number of the most elevated spectators were making strenuous efforts to induce the vigilance committee to lynch "the infernal sneaking cuss."