

THE LATE ADAM ISAACS MENKEN.

A cable dispatch announces the death at Paris of Miss Adah Isaacs Menken, &c. The chief events in the career of this singular woman are facts of contemporary history. Her maiden name was Isaacs, and she was born in New Orleans, about thirty-six years ago. Considerable attention was paid to the education of Adah, and from this source she probably received that taste which filled her with a sort of literary ambition. Her first husband was L. Menken, to whom she was espoused ere her extraordinary adventures had made her name celebrated. In 1860 Adah Menken was introduced to the New York public by Mr. James Nixon, then proprietor of the circus in Sixteenth street.

Previous to this her liaison with John C. Heenan in California, to whom she claimed to have been married, after her divorce from Menken, made her far from a stranger to the public. Heenan's subsequent disavowal of the marriage will still be remembered.

About the year 1881 she became the better half of Mr. R. H. Newell, well known as the contributor of the Orpheus C. Kerr letters to the *Sunday Mercury*. This alliance, like all her others, lasted but a brief time, and they parted with mutual satisfaction.

In 1884, Mr. E. T. Smith, the lessee of the Theatre Royal, Astley's, London, engaged Miss Menken for a season, to appear in the drama of "Mazeppa," a piece with which her name will be forever connected. This was produced at Easter and for one entire season, and, indeed, part of the season following, was the rage of the English metropolis. Despite the storm of criticism her appearance in the character of Mazeppa evoked, the season was an enormous success in a pecuniary point of view. Miss Menken played principally in "Mazeppa," the "French Spy," and pieces of a similar character. She was possessed of a fine figure, and her audacity in displaying it, together with her numerous marriages, gained for her the notoriety which attached to her. Among the last of those who were captivated by her charms were Alexander Dumas and Charles Swinburn, the English poet. Miss Menken made some pretensions to a literary reputation, but her contributions were confined mainly to this country to one or two weekly papers. She had visited nearly all European countries except Turkey, and had frequently expressed a determination to play an engagement under the Sultan's auspices, but had not succeeded. She did not lack what the French called "Audace," and evinced this trait when she dedicated a volume of poems to "her friend Charles Dickens." She played in Paris to crowded houses, and has been one of the notoriety of that city. Paris, more than any other city, suited the peculiar genius of Adah. She must have felt at home among its scandals and eccentricities.

FORMATION OF DEW.

The air contains at all times more or less of moisture, though in a state so rarified as to be imperceptible. To prove this it is only necessary in a summer's day to fill a glass with cold water, when, dry as the atmosphere may seem, its moisture will be condensed, and made visible, in the form of small pellucid drops upon the outside of the glass. This condensation of moisture is caused by the water's reduction of the temperature of the glass below that of the surrounding atmosphere. On this principle distillation is conducted; and in the same manner dew is formed. No sooner does the sun sink toward the horizon than the blades of grass which clothe the earth's surface give out the heat they have been receiving during the day, and consequently they become so much colder than the atmosphere, that they condense in the form of dew part of the rarified moisture immediately surrounding them. Dew, being thus formed, is, of course, more abundant before and after rains, when the atmosphere is moistest. Calm and clear nights are essential, also, for the copious deposition of dew, for then the blades emit their heat freely, and it is dispersed through the atmosphere without any equivalent return. On the contrary, however, if the night be cloudy, then the clouds, by abstracting the heat from the atmosphere, contribute, in some degree, to keep its temperature on a level with that of the grassy blades, and thus so nearly equalize the two that but little dew is deposited. If, in addition to the clouds, a high wind is blowing no dew will be formed; for then the temperature of the grass is prevented from sinking by the agitation of the air continually bringing a warmer current to succeed the colder current, by which it is surrounded; or it may be, that the night winds being generally cool, so rapidly reduce the earth's temperature as to bring it below that of the grass. As substances differ in their power of losing their heat, so they differ in their attraction for dew. On grass, swan's down, and other filamentous substances, which readily part with their heat, dew copiously condenses. The mechanical conditions of objects likewise affect the formation of dew, as shavings attract it more than wood. Dew is more plentifully deposited on meadow lands than on ploughed and cultivated soils as refreshed with abundance of dew, while barren rocks and sandy deserts, not needing, do not receive this genial moisture. Indeed, every plant possesses, according to its kind, the power of condensing as much dew as is necessary for its peculiar and individual exigencies. Thus, not even a dew drop seems to have been formed by the blind action of chance, but is gathered together by the hand of Infinite Wisdom for a definite and benevolent end.

When James T. Brady, the celebrated lawyer of New York, first opened a lawyer's office, he took a basement room which had been previously occupied by a cobbler. He was somewhat annoyed by the previous occupant's callers, and irritated by the fact that he had few of his own. One day an Irishman entered.

"The cobbler's gone, I see," he said.

"I should think he has," tartly responded Brady.

"An' what do you sell?" he inquired, looking at the solitary table and a few law books.

"Blockheads!" was the response.

"Be gone," said the Irishman, "ye must be doing a mighty fine business; ye ha'n't got but one left!"

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