



HOWARD KYLE
IN THE "GREATER LOVE" MADISON SQUARE THEATRE



RICHARD MANSFIELD
IN "DON CARLOS" AT THE NEW AMSTERDAM



BLANCHE RING
IN "HIS MAJESTY"
AT THE MAJESTIC



GRACE VAN STUDDIFORD
PROCTORS 23rd ST THEATRE



TERESA BLUFFORD
HELENE



EDWARD HARRIGAN
IN "OLD LAVENDER" AT THE
NEW YORK THEATRE



CLEVEA OAKLEY
HYPOCRISIE



ETIENNE GIRARDOT
IN "CHARLES'S ARMY" AT THE
MANHATTAN THEATRE

An American Actor in an Ambitious Project

Richard Mansfield's Production of Schiller's "Don Carlos"—History and Story of the Play.

IN a dramatic season which has been characterized by a slow but gradual return to interests of a more substantial and ambitious character than have enlisted public sympathy and support for several years past, there has been no more interesting announcement than that involving Richard Mansfield's intention to present on the American stage the "Don Carlos" of Schiller.

So interesting was the announcement in itself that there does not appear to have been any necessity for a misstatement of facts. This is not, as has generally been stated, the first production of the play in English, though in effect it might justly be considered as amounting to that, since the only available record shows that it had but one performance when, on May 6, 1799, it was put on in New York with Cooper acting the part of the Prince.

The subject of Don Carlos was previously introduced to the English stage, however, as early as 1676 in Otway's tragedy, "Don Carlos, Prince of Spain."

Mr. Mansfield's version of the play, which had its first production at the Valentine Opera House, Toledo, Ohio, on Oct. 21, 1905, is, of necessity, a much abridged arrangement. In its original form "Don Carlos" occupies some 200 quarto pages and would require in the acting from seven to eight hours of time. But objections to the actor's method of dealing with the work are fairly met in the statement that Schiller himself, when the play was first produced in Hamburg, in 1781, agreed to the excision of such matter as seemed to impede the action. As a matter of fact, even in Germany the play is seldom acted in full, though at occasional festivals it is played in two parts, occupying in presentation an afternoon and evening.

This play was begun by Schiller when he was a dreamy youth of 24. Having thrown off the degrading patronage of the Duke of Württemberg, he was in hiding under the assumed name of Dr. Ritter at Bauerbach from December, 1782, until July, 1783. During the winter months he began his preliminary studies of Spanish Court life for his tragedy of "Don Carlos."

He worked intermittently on the play for four years, and it is an interesting fact that as time progressed the original design was largely altered, as a manifest result of the poet's own change in character. In the first three acts of the play the Marquis of Posa is a minor personage. But when, after an interval of several months, Schiller resumed work on the second part of the tragedy, the Marquis loomed large on his mental horizon. Of the change in his plan Schiller himself wrote:

"In composing the piece many interruptions occurred; so that a considerable time elapsed between beginning and concluding it, and in the meanwhile much within myself had changed. The various alterations which, during this period, my way of thinking and feeling underwent, naturally told upon the work I was engaged with. What parts of it had at first attracted me began to produce this effect in a weaker degree, and in the end scarcely at all. New ideas, springing up in the interim, displaced the former ones; Carlos himself had lost my favor, perhaps for no other reason than because I had become his senior, and, from the opposite cause, Posa had occupied his place. Thus I commenced the fourth and fifth acts with quite an altered

heart. But the first three years were already in the hands of the public; the plan of the whole could not now be reformed; nothing therefore remained but to suppress the play entirely or to fit the second half of it to the first the best way I could."

As Mansfield produces it, Don Carlos is of course made the dominant figure throughout, more than one observer having already called attention to the fact that the part of Posa is cut to the bone. In the Mansfield version the play is unfolded in five acts and eight scenes. The first act shows the Queen's garden at Aranjuez; the first scene of the second act, the Presence Chamber in the Royal Palace of the Escorial at Madrid, and the second scene, the Princess Eboli's apartments; Act III. shows a hall in the royal palace outside the King's bed chamber; the second scene a gallery in the palace; the fourth act discloses a royal chamber on the courtyard of the palace; Act V. begins in a corridor within the Escorial, and the second scene is in the garden outside the Queen's apartment.

The play opens at Aranjuez, the summer residence of King Philip. Don Carlos, sad of mien, is conversing with his father's confessor, who fails to worm from him a statement of the cause of his sorrow. As the priest leaves, the Marquis of Posa, a boyhood friend of Carlos, who has been long absent abroad, enters and is welcomed in a scene of passionate joy. They pledge anew a brotherly friendship, and it is then disclosed that love for the Queen is consuming the young Prince. He had been betrothed to her before her marriage to the King, but since then had been unable to see her alone. Posa promises to bring about the meeting.

Posa gains the consent of the Queen to see Carlos. The Prince comes and offers impassioned protestations of love. Elizabeth shows him the folly of his passion, but assures him of her friendship. On the departure of Carlos and Posa the King suddenly appears and, furious at finding the Queen alone, pronounces banishment on the mistress of ceremonies, who left her unguarded, and upbraids Elizabeth herself. The Queen defends herself with dignity. Later the King is besought by Carlos to give him the command of the troops who are to go to Flanders, the young man being ambitious to be the savior of the Netherlands. The King fears a conspiracy and dismisses the Prince in disgrace, giving the coveted position to Alva.

Carlos receives a note, which he supposes to be from the Queen, inviting him to her presence, and on his way meets Alva, who has come to triumph over him, though ostensibly to say farewell. The scene is one of such bitterness of speech that swords are drawn, and Carlos and Alva are fighting, when the Queen rushes from her apartments and, calling the Prince's name, causes him to drop his sword, seize Alva's hand and beg for forgiveness, and then, sinking for a moment on his knee before the Queen, to rush wildly away. The note which made the trouble was really written by the Princess Eboli, on whom the King has been casting eyes, but who is herself in love with Carlos. The Prince comes upon her, expecting to find the Queen. She tells him the state of affairs, without disclosing the object of her affections, which he does not suspect. Carlos promises to protect

her and, in return for her confidence, attempts to tell her his own secret, but as soon as she learns that she is not the loved one she dismisses him in anger, and suddenly realizing that it was the Queen whom Carlos had expected to meet, she suspects the fidelity of Elizabeth, and, determined to seek vengeance, starts to find the King. During their interview she had given Carlos a letter from a man who was pursuing her. The Prince finds this to be from the King himself. He proposes to show it to the Queen, but is dissuaded by Posa, who reminds him of the suffering of the Netherlands and begs him to think of them. The King is informed of the Queen's faithlessness, but doubts the truth of the accusation, though his confidence is somewhat shaken. He feels the need of a friend whom he can trust, and, looking over the list of his grantees, hits upon Posa, whom he gives full authority to spy upon the Queen and the Prince.

Posa, without disclosing his new rôle to the Queen, urges her to persuade Carlos to flee from Spain and place himself at the head of the Spanish troops in the Low Countries. The Queen enters into the plan, but Carlos becomes suspicious of Posa. Posa convinces him of his loyalty, and induces him to give him the pocketbook in which he carries his private letters. The Queen learns of the stealing of

letters from her private desk, and goes to the King to demand justice. She finds that he has been a party to the theft. He accuses her of inconstancy, and she replies with a defiant threat of vengeance from across the Pyrenees. Among the letters which Posa delivers to the King from Carlos is the one from the Princess Eboli, which fact convinces the King that he has been deceived by the Princess and Alva. Posa says Carlos is about to flee from Madrid, and secures from the King a warrant for his arrest.

Carlos, not understanding the strategy, and fearing that the King and Queen have quarreled, begs Eboli to secure him an audience with the Queen. Posa, fearing that Carlos has confessed his love for Elizabeth and is, therefore, in real danger, has him led off to prison and decides to sacrifice himself in order to save Carlos and the Queen. He writes a letter, which he intends shall be intercepted by the King, declaring his own love for the Queen, who, however, he declares to be faithful to the King. This letter falls into the King's hands, and Posa is shot while he is bidding Carlos farewell. Philip frees Carlos, but still suspects him, and hearing that he is about to escape to Brussels, he surprises him in the apartment of Elizabeth, and he is led away to torture and death at the hands of the grand inquisitor.