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A MILLION AND A MAMMA.

With These Lotta is Satisfied and Don't Want a Man.

THE PET OF ALL THE MINERS

Debut of the Petite Soubrette in California—The American School of Comedy—Not Tired of the Stage.

WASHINGTON, May 1.—[Special to THE BEE.]—The charming actress Lotta, whom John Brougham immortalized as "the dramatic cocktail of America," has this year spent the quietest winter of her life. The sprain in her ankle which she received in jumping from a runaway carriage in Boston has kept her indoors and out of society and she has devoted the winter to art. She is delighted, she says, in the discovery that she has a new talent, that of painting, and Washington artists told me that her work is very creditable indeed. She has picked up all she knows herself, and without a lesson, she has painted a half dozen pictures all of which are of more than ordinary merit. I looked at these last night. Some of them are country scenes, and the air, the sky, the fields and the log cabins carry one back to Lotta's early days in California, and the scenes look as real as though they were painted out of doors. In portraits also, she is doing very well, and I took a sketch of a little negro model who stood for her as Topsy. Lotta's painted Topsy is as black as ebony and she has as bright, dancing, mischievous eyes as those possessed by the character made famous in Uncle Tom's Cabin. The figure has real life and it glows upon the canvas with all the vivacity of Lotta upon the stage. Lotta had expected to have rested this winter and to have gone much into Washington society. She is one of the few actresses who can afford to take vacations and she is by all odds the richest actress in America. She is worth at least \$1,000,000

and her mother is one of the shrewdest financiers of America. It was through her that the Park theater in Boston was bought and the International hotel in connection with it. For this Lotta paid \$300,000 in cash and she paid \$25,000 additional for the furniture which it contained. She has investments scattered all over the United States and she told me that she and her mother had lately planted some money in Kansas City which she hoped would grow a good harvest. She has investments in California, is said to have \$100,000 in New York property, and she has \$400,000 in United States bonds laid aside in case of a panic. Her mother manages all money matters for her and she defers to her in everything. She is here with her this winter and she has taken such good care of her that Lotta will be able to return to the stage next fall. When I called upon Lotta last night at her home on Fourteenth street above Newspaper Row I found that she had discarded her crutches. Her eyes were as bright as they have ever been upon the stage, her skin was as fresh and clear as that of a baby's and her plump, round form accorded with the statement that she made to me that she was in perfect health and that she weighed 125

pounds. Strange enough the conversation first turned to money-making and acting, and I asked Lotta the secret of her financial success. She replied: "I owe nearly everything to my mother and I really know very little about our money matters, but I think one reason for our prosperity has been in the fact that we have not been extravagant. We do not care to pay anything for pure show, and when we are making a tour we do not take all of the best rooms on the ground floor of every hotel we stop at, ride out in a coach-and-four nor give great dinners. I do not wish to make a splurge and I prefer quiet rooms higher up where we do not attract so much attention and have more rest. Besides, the profits of my acting have been well invested, and my mother is a shrewd business woman. The trouble with many actresses is that they always spend as much as they make and never learn the philosophy of interest accumulation. People on the stage receive very good salaries. The public has been very kind to me and I have been very successful in pleasing them through a long series of years."

"You began to act almost as a baby?" I said. "Yes," replied Lotta, "my first acting was so long ago that I can hardly remember it. My father was, you know, a book-seller in New York, and he had a store on Nassau street when gold was discovered in California. After a few years he got the fever and went west, and three years later my mother and I went out to him. We lived in a little log cabin at the mining settlement of Laporte, but times were not very good and my father, though he got some gold, never struck it rich, as they say. When I was about seven years old a dancing school was opened in the camp, and I there

Took My First Lessons in Dancing. I learned the steps easily and they tell me developed at once some musical talent. At the close of the term a performance was gotten up a little theater of the town, and after much urging my mother allowed me to take part. I both sang and danced and I was a great success. The miners you know were especially fond of children, and they went wild over me. When I came out on the stage at the close of the performance I was received with a shower of silver half-dollars and dollars which the audience threw at me. Our funds were rather low at that time and this occasion was quite acceptable. That night decided my career as an actress and shortly after this I started out with my mother and traveled over California as a star. I was known as La Petite Lotta and my name was the biggest one on the billboards. This was in the days of mining excitement and mining profits and this custom of throwing presents to the successful actress was in vogue. I received all kinds of things from twenty-five dollar gold pieces and ruby rings to sets of jewels and diamond backed watches. I remember two elegant diamond-studded watches that were given to me in San Francisco and I was everywhere received very kindly."

"But was not the society and the life a rough one?" I asked. "As to the life," replied Lotta with a smile, "there were a few hardships. We had no modern conveniences in the shape of railroads, gas and theater arrangements. There were no roads and we had often to travel from mining camp to mining camp by bridle paths among the mountains. I had a suit of boy's clothes made for me and I used these on these trips. As to the society, ladies were as well treated by the miners as they are treated in any of

the drawing-rooms of the world. I might say even better, and among the miners were as well-bred men and as well-read men as you will find in any of our cities. The gold excitement drew all classes to the west and a graduate of Harvard or Yale, with the bluest of Mayflower blood in his veins, might be the driver of your mule team or the supe at the theater. Mother traveled with me and she was very careful of both my manners and morals. I was more polite than I am now. I remember it was a custom at Laporte for the children to go about on Christmas to the stores and ask for Christmas presents. I was never allowed to do this and the merchants evidently appreciated the fact, for they sent me presents of their own accord, and one Christmas I remember I received seven new dresses."

"Do you ever get any such presents now?" I asked. "Not in the way of having them thrown upon the stage," replied Lotta. "That has gone out of fashion, and the best we get are flowers. You may remember an incident which occurred while I was playing 'Musette' at Philadelphia a few years ago. A lady sitting in a box was so delighted with the acting that she

Threw Me a Most Beautiful Ring. It contained two large diamonds and ten smaller ones and these were set about two rubies and two sapphires. I noticed the lady in the box while I was sitting on the stump and I was of course delighted to receive such a beautiful souvenir. Billy remained some time sitting on the stump and I asked him why he did so. He said he was waiting to see her throw him a ring. After the play was over the lady came behind the scenes and I had a very pleasant talk with her. This, however, was not the end of the story. About two years after this I received a letter from the family of the lady asking for the return of the ring. At the same time the lady wrote me that she had given the ring out of pure admiration for me and she did not want it returned. I could not keep it when I knew that her family did not like it, and I sent it back to her."

The conversation here turned to Philadelphia and New York and Lotta told me the story of her first success in the east. Said she: "I was playing in New York when I was fourteen years old, and my great hit there was 'The Marchioness,' which was written for me by John Brougham and from the acting of which he dubbed me 'The Dramatic Cocktail of America.'"

"The play was a great success and I have been playing it for years. You ask me for my favorite characters. I have so many that I can hardly say which I like the best. I am perhaps best known as The Marchioness, Topsy, Sam Willoughby, Musette, Bob and Zip, and as to the Little Detective I have played it season after season and year after year until I am really ashamed to show my face in it upon the stage again. That play has always been a great hit and it has brought me in no end of money. We paid just 25 cents for it, the cost of the book from which it was adapted to me, and we have made thousands upon thousands out of it."

"How about your future? It has been reported that you will soon retire from the stage." "There is no truth in any such report," replied Lotta emphatically. "I expect to have three new plays next year, and Mr. Boyd of Baltimore will be my manager. These plays are now being written for me and I expect to spend next winter by the sea at Nantasket studying them. Two of the plays are adaptations from the French and the German and the other is an American play written for me by Mr. Kildner, the man who wrote 'A Poor Relation' for Sol Smith Russell. This play is entitled 'Mischief.' The German has the name of Doctor Loh and it is the translation of a German comedy fitted for me. The French play is entitled 'Bleurette.' I cannot say which I like the best. I think all are good and out of the three we will probably find one that will be a hit." The public, however, always fixes the success of a play and you can never predict anything in regard to a new comedy with certainty. "As to retiring from the stage, when I get ready to go I will not make a great fuss about it. I don't believe in making a farewell tour again, and again. I want to keep before the public as long as the public wants me and when I do take a notion to retire it may be that I will change my mind after I have had a few months' vacation and want to go back again. The report of my retirement probably came from the fact that I had set aside this winter as a vacation. I find my life upon the stage, as much as I love it.

An Unnatural One

and the atmosphere is different from that of real life. During these periods of rest which I take I am able to get acquainted with my audience and I believe that I act all the better for them."

American acting was the next topic, and Lotta expressed her opinion of the American actor. Said she: "I think we have a distinct school of American actors, and this especially in comedy. You will find no where else in the world comedians who have the same vein of humor as ours, and American humor is, by the way, a thing of itself. The English do not understand it and there is as much difference between their ideas of fun and wit as there is between Puck and Punch. I think the American stage is improving and especially in the detail and in the setting of the plays. American audiences are, I think, more polite than English audiences. The English allow more freedom of expression of applause or of the reverse than we do and anything new is almost sure to be hissed. Henry Irving's Macbeth was received with a storm of hisses from the pit when it was first presented, and you remember that my experience with the English was not the most pleasant though I afterwards got along with them very well."

"What do you think of the stage as a place for young women?" "I think," replied Lotta, "that there is no better field in the world for the young woman provided she possess talents and has a guardian to watch over her as a balance wheel. In this case the serpents that now and then hang around the stage cannot sting her and she will find in her work a field for the development of all her faculties, and one in which she may find both profit and happiness."

I here showed Lotta a paragraph pretending to give a resume of her lovers and asked her whether she was still among the ranks of the single blessed and whether she intended to remain so. She raised her hand as she replied and brought it down with emphasis, saying: "Yes, thank heaven! It is all that I can do

The Management of a Husband

or accept a husband to let him manage me. I am satisfied with my present condition and I expect to continue in it."

Speaking of Lotta's early career reminds me of a talk I had last night with one of Patti's first managers. This man is now a little white-whiskered clerk in the treasury department. His name is Withdows and he is the most noted chime-ringer of America. Patti was thirteen years old when she started the country in a concert troupe with Ole Ball under him. She then got \$100 a week instead of \$5,000 a night. I understand that Patti will spend the summer at her estate in Wales, and it may be that she will devote her long time to writing her reminiscences. Not long ago Harper Brothers offered her a thousand dollars a letter for a series to be used by them in Harper's Weekly. Patti agreed to write the article, but she was not satisfied with the way her manuscript was treated in New York and she threw up the contract. The price had, I think, not much to do with the matter, as an article which would take a week or so to construct is a bagatelle at a thousand dollars to a woman who can make \$5,000 every night she chooses to open her mouth.

The death of Marquis de Caux in Paris not long ago brings to me a bon mot which Patti made while she was in Chicago last winter. She was taking a night off and was listening to the roaring farce entitled "We, Us & Co." As she saw the title on the programme, she said: "It used to be Patti and Caux, but now it has become We, Us & Co."

FROM THE SLOPE. A Well-Known Omaha Man Writes a Very Interesting Letter.

SAN JOSE, Cal., April 25.—[Special to THE BEE.]—Early yesterday morning I "experimented" for the second time a California earthquake, being awakened about 4 o'clock by a sudden rattle and general commotion of a very startling character. The house shook and swayed violently for several seconds, and the sensation produced was one long to be remembered. A few days since I talked with Mr. Whitton of this city, who in company with James King and Mr. Gubbering, established the San Francisco Bulletin in 1855. He related some interesting incidents of early days on the coast. The capital upon which the Bulletin began operations was an even \$1,000, but it jumped into a paying business at once and soon the three partners were drawing \$500 a week each, clear of all expenses. In May, 1856, Mr. King was shot down on the street by one Casey, a gambler, doubt resulting a few days later. The murderer was arrested and the organization of the famous vigilance committee whose doings are so graphically described in General Sherman's Memoirs was at once effected. This committee marched to the city jail in strong force, the armed member carried being supplemented by a brass cannon, and demanded the surrender of Casey and another prisoner who had killed United States Marshal Richardson just previous. The demand was complied with. As the funeral procession bearing the body of Mr. King to the cemetery reached the gate of his late residence a man posted on a high building across the street dropped a white handkerchief, the signal previously arranged, and at that instant the two murderers were hung in the room where they had been held under custody by the vigilantes.

Mr. Whitton showed me a bound volume of a weekly paper, the Oriental, printed by him in 1857 for a man named Spray, one-half of which is in Chinese characters and the other in English. He said that a those days

the Chinese had no stores of their own and that their trade was much sought after by American dealers in supplies. On the Fourth of July and other festive occasions the celestials were rather lionized, being given places of prominence and distinction in processions and at public assemblages. They were toasted and feasted. Times have changed in this respect, however. Last week there was a city election here and it was seriously proclaimed by one of the local papers that if a certain candidate for the position of chief of police should be elected he would at once take active measures to suppress gambling and other vices among the Chinese. A few days since a Chinaman cook in a restaurant was killed by a white waiter belonging to the establishment and when the latter was arrested he expressed a good deal of disgust at the fuss that was being made about the matter, as the one he had killed was "only a Chinaman."

The months of rainy weather experienced in California last winter were elyved by cheerful press comments upon the good the rain was doing the orchards. It is now being discovered that it is possible to have too much of a good thing, for from various sections of the state come reports of fruit trees dying from the excess of wet weather, in places entire orchards being ruined.

A friend of mine, a young man aged seven, was presented a few weeks since, with a rubber gun. Shortly afterwards he reported that he had hit thirteenth ten birds, though not all in one day.

"How many did you hit the first day?" I asked. "One," was the ready reply. "And how many the next?" "Two," many the next?" "Three."

"How many the next?" And then he turned questioner: "How many are left?" he asked. J. T. B.

SINGULARITIES.

One day last week Atlanta policemen had the unusual and exciting experience of a wild-cat hunt in the streets. The cat had been captured and is supposed, from the "Zoo" at Grant park. The twelfth shot killed it.

A Kent Island, Md., farmer placed twin one-half feet in his stockings. It has built its nest in a shaggy roach of pasture near the thundering ocean breakers. The bird's body is of a snowy white, even to the tip of its tail, except its breast, which is or a rosy red. An albino robin is very rare, but a red and white robin was never heard of before.

The statement in an eastern magazine that "butterflies have gone to the remarkable height of 800 feet in the Alps" has elicited from Mr. Maxwell of California a letter to the Scientific American, in which he pronounces the trip not at all remarkable. He writes that last summer he encountered numerous butterflies on a peak of the Sierra Nevada, 18,000 feet high.

Between the Ural and the Okhotsk seas there is a spot half as large as the state of Michigan which is frozen ground to the depth of ninety-four feet. This is, it has never thawed out since the world was created, and probably never will, and even if it should nobody would have any use for it. One of the largest bears ever killed in Wyoming was shot a few days ago by a ranchman near Laramie peak. Bruin had been playing havoc among the cattle. He had killed a cow upon which he had fastened once or twice, but when he returned again to take another meal he found serious business ahead of him. Dressed the monster weighed 1,080

pounds. From the nose to the end of its tail it measured nine feet.

A petition is being circulated among the students of the Georgia state university, the object of which is to change the custom of making Saturday a holiday and carry on the regular recitations through that day and make Monday a holiday instead. As it is now students are compelled to study on Sunday in order to prepare for their Monday recitations.

J. M. Fuller, a chicken fancier of Asheville, has struck a bonanza in a hen that lays six eggs a day. Mr. Fuller first noticed this enterprising spirit in his fowl about three weeks ago, and at first he would scarcely believe it. To make sure of it he put the hen in a separate coop, and these end the customary six eggs were waiting for him.

A calf that was born on William Lippincott's farm, at Tipton Falls, Pa., is one of the greatest freaks ever known. Its head, shoulders and front feet are like those of an ordinary calf, while the remainder of its body and its hind legs are hairless. Instead of hoofs on each foot there are two prongs, or toes, each about four inches long, and these end with sharp-pointed claws. Its tail is covered with long hair, and is spread out like an open fan at the end.

IMPIETIES.

Consider the lilies—how very expensive they are. Even the rat has some idea of the value of hole-in-the-wall.

Pastor (with a sigh)—Well, we've all got to go sooner or later. Layman—Yes, yes, and later the better.

Pharisee—I thank God I am not as other men. Publican—And so do they. Preacher—My friend, you ought to stop rinking. In the end it biteth like an adder. Booby—But why I don't sit atop. Can't be any end till I do.

Editor—You see, Mr. Pulpit, we have a Bible in the office. Clergyman (examining the Bible)—You keep it nice and clean, don't you? There are no finger marks on it. "Do with your night," the preacher said, "Whatever you find to do." The miser nodded his rich old head—"That's my opinion too. And I don't think it would be right. To give you more than all my mine."

Clergyman (sternly)—Do you ever expect to join the angelic chorus? Hobbs (howling drunk)—Certainly. I'm practising 'to peep at the Cashino next week.' Sunday School Teacher—Yes, the wicked will go to the evil place, where they will burn for ever and ever. New Pupil—Well, I call that all-fired tough.

Evil communications corrupt good manners, as any one may learn who listens to the remarks of the man who has received a disagreeable letter. By the waters of Babel we set ourselves down, We set ourselves down for to cry; And as for our 'arps they were wringing 'o. So we 'ung 'em on trees for to dry. As 'them as 'ad 'eup t' us, they asked us to sing. The 'arps of our country, so dear; How the duce can we sing the Lord's songs, say we. In a bloomin' run place like this 'ere! "Do you believe in the later theology concerning socialism?" asked a young man of Mrs. McJuddley. "Of course I do. Socialism is really all that has held our church together for the last six months." The Rev. H. H. French says: "You cannot dam the progress of religion." Is it possible that Dr. French has never read the writings of one Robert called Ingersoll? Like heaven's halo in the pastor's face The sun shines through the windows, stained and old; The people gathered in the holy place See him enshrined in a frame of gold. But soon his eyes roll back, with lips apart Emotion brings him to his benumbed knees. And ere his people from their seats can start The pastor wildly perpetrates—a sneeze.