

Good Old Days

E.D. PRICE TELLS STORIES OF LANSING'S EARLY DAYS.

Has Not Visited the City for many Years and Notes Many Changes—Tells Some Good Stories on Dr, Rush Shank and "Steve" Bingham.

E.D. Price¹, the well know theatrical manager, is in the city—his old home—after an absence of many years. His father Dr. E. Price, now of Jackson, was an old and respected citizen, who came here in the early 50's to engage in the practice of his profession. Manage Ed. Price was a page in the lower house of the Michigan legislature thirty years ago. When a youth of 18, he read law in the office of the Hon. S.L. Kilbourne, and subsequently graduated from the law department of Michigan university in the class of '70. His tastes naturally inclining toward journalism he soon joined the staff of the Detroit Free Press, and represented that paper at the constitutional convention of 1870. For the next ten years he was dramatic and sporting editor of the Detroit Post and Tribune, and in 1878 took the famous sho-wae-cae-mette crew of Monroe to England to row at the Healey regatta.

In 1880 he became business manager for that great actor, the late John McCullough. Subsequently he launched Richard Mansfield as a star and managed him with remarkable success in this country and in London for six years. Two years ago he undertook the management of Mrs. Leslie Carter, and his tact and energy have contributed not a little to her wonderfully rapid advancement to a place among the foremost women of the stage. Mr. Price is here personally arranging for the appearance on the 21st of Mrs. Carter in the musical comedy, "Miss Helyett," with the London sensation, Lottie Collins, the original "Pa-rra-ra, boom-de-aye," as a special attraction. This is the first company he has ever brought to Lansing.

¹ Edward D Price. Marries Miss Cathrine Cotintiss at Mount Vernon, N. Y., June 30, 1907.



Lottie Collins

"I cannot tell you," said Mr. Prince to the Republican, what strong emotions are aroused by this visit. I feel as Rip Van Winkle did when he returned to the village of Falling Waters. Everything has changed. Lansing, in my boyhood, was a little country village. Today it is a fine thriving city—but its sidewalks are as bad as ever. The fields where I hunted Indians with my little bow and arrow are covered with residences. There is a beautiful opera house instead of the queer little hall from which Dr. Rusk Shank (always my youthful companion in crime) was ignominiously ejected the night I threw bird shot on the stage to expose the trick mirrors of Martino, the magician. It is never too late to repent, and at this late day I make the tardy acknowledgement that Rusk was innocent. Baird's opera house replaces the little Episcopal church, and by a strange coincidence the stage upon which my company is to appear covers the exact spot where I used to officiate as Sunday school librarian, and give the choicest books to the prettiest girls.

"'Old Torrent' hose cart, which I helped drag in many 4th of July parades—alas! Where is it? The beautiful maidens, all in white, who rode in the band wagon, representing the different states in the union—alas! Where are they?

"There are two great incidents in my young life that can never be forgotten. One was when old Dan Rice passed me into the circus after I had carried water for his blind horse, Excelsior, and that sagacious animal had nearly kicked daylight through me. The other was when I saved up 25 cents and took a ride in the first hack that was ever seen

in Lansing. I was viewed with mingled hatred and admiration by all the other boys for a week. Oh, yes there was one other red letter event. When a hardened desperado of 10 I inveigled two mice boys into going along Washington avenue one dark night and daubing tar on the gate latches of many eminent and respected citizens' houses. As we carefully avoided tarring our own gate latches, the constabulary were not long in fixing our guilt. The two nice little boys turned state's evidence, and one of the outraged citizens who had a church quarrel with my respected father 'took the law on me.' 'Steve Bingham, then a struggling young lawyer, defended me. It was his first case, but his eloquence was useless, I was promptly and righteously convicted—most of the jurymen had found tar on their own gate latches—and fined \$3 and costs, to say nothing of a very unpleasant as harrowing quarter of an hour passed in the paternal woodshed. Ah those were great days in dear old Lansing—the happiest I ever knew."

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