

won't cry any more," replied Frances, breaking away from her brother and running to Miss Rowan, as the company smiled at Margaret's confusion.

But Margaret gathered up Frances in her arms and buried her face in the head of curls. This time it was not to hide her tears. Her heart was singing a song of joy and thanksgiving on this Christmas Day as Frances whispered in her ear:

"It was not the letter, it was the Child Jesus that did it all."

MONA.

The Stage of To-day and Yesterday

NOT long ago an aged friend, a representative of that class who lived largely in the mystic past, expressed his regret that our stage had deteriorated so much that it was no longer an inspiration or a source of pleasure to him. "Oh," he continued, "think of the days when Edwin Forrest, Charlotte, and McCullough, the great American actors, made the stage an education for the theatre-goers. Whom have we now, and what is there to be seen?" I listened attentively and retreated, under the impression that such criticisms with slight variation are continually heard; nor is it altogether surprising. The human mind is prone to magnify the glories of the past. As the poet says, "Distance lends enchantment to the view," and all literature bears testimony that there were giants in those days. Even old Homer scored the pygmies of his time. In-speaking of one of the heroes around the walls of Troy he says:

"Not ten strong men th' enormous weight could raise,
Such men as live in these degenerate days."

And so it is to-day. The giants lived in the past, the small weaklings in the present.

We know that the enthusiasm for classical plays has somewhat died out. The vaudeville has in a great many cases taken its place. Still this does not prove the statement that there are no star actors in our days. I mean classical interpreters.