

MRS. LANGTRY.

Mrs. Langtry is generally admitted to be beautiful. Her face is refined and quiet, her carriage distinguished by the ease of movement which always seems to go with graceful outlines. Her sobriquet "the Jersey Lily" shows that even to the popular mind her appearance suggests the exquisite poetry of the immaculate flower. Mr. Abbey, under whose management she is to play here in an interview on his return from England refrained, with the same tact which the London critics have shown, from discoursing at length on her beauty. He, however, spoke of her hair and complexion as lovely. As neither hair nor complexion goes for much on the stage, since either can be so easily made up, and as her beauty is not of the dashing kind which sparkles so brilliantly in the glare of the foot-lights, it follows that her enemies have done her injustice in attributing her success entirely to her personal appearance. That the latter has much to do with it I do not doubt. Cleverness and beauty combined will often achieve a speedier success than genius without the allurements of personal charms. No one has yet discovered in Mrs. Langtry the genius which would justify her engagement to star in this country on her merits as an actress only. Yet it is acknowledged by many who recognize her failings as an actress that her beauty gives a certain charm to her personation of certain parts, which would be lacking in the performances of others histrionically more gifted than she, but without those physical endowments which have given Mrs. Langtry a high rank among "professional beauties"—a class of which American society is fortunately as yet guiltless. For, happily for the modesty of American womanhood, feminine beauty is so general here that our most beautiful women are saved the mortification of becoming unduly conspicuous.

Mrs. Langtry comes here after a brief provincial tour and a briefer season in London. She scored a decided success as Hester Grazebrook in Tom Taylor's *Unequal Match*, made a pleasant impression as Miss Harcastle, and a dismal failure as Rosalind in *As You Like It*. The most judicious criticisms on these performances have appeared in the London *Telegraph*. They are marked by discrimination and by an evident desire to treat the debutante with perfect jus-



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Lillie Langtry.

tice. "Her attractive qualities and her self-possession," says the writer, "have been the main-stay of her success. We found in her Miss Harcastle great promise, but lack of experience. We found in her Blanche Hays the same natural gifts, of course, far more self-possession, a refinement of manner and charm of voice still more noticeable, and a progress that in so short a time was very remarkable. Mrs. Langtry's Hester Grazebrook in Tom Taylor's *Unequal Match* is altogether far more interesting than any of the series, and it is so far the best thing the novice has done, bolder in attack, and better in result—a success due in a very great measure to personal charm and natural gift, but showing a conspicuous advance in the student."

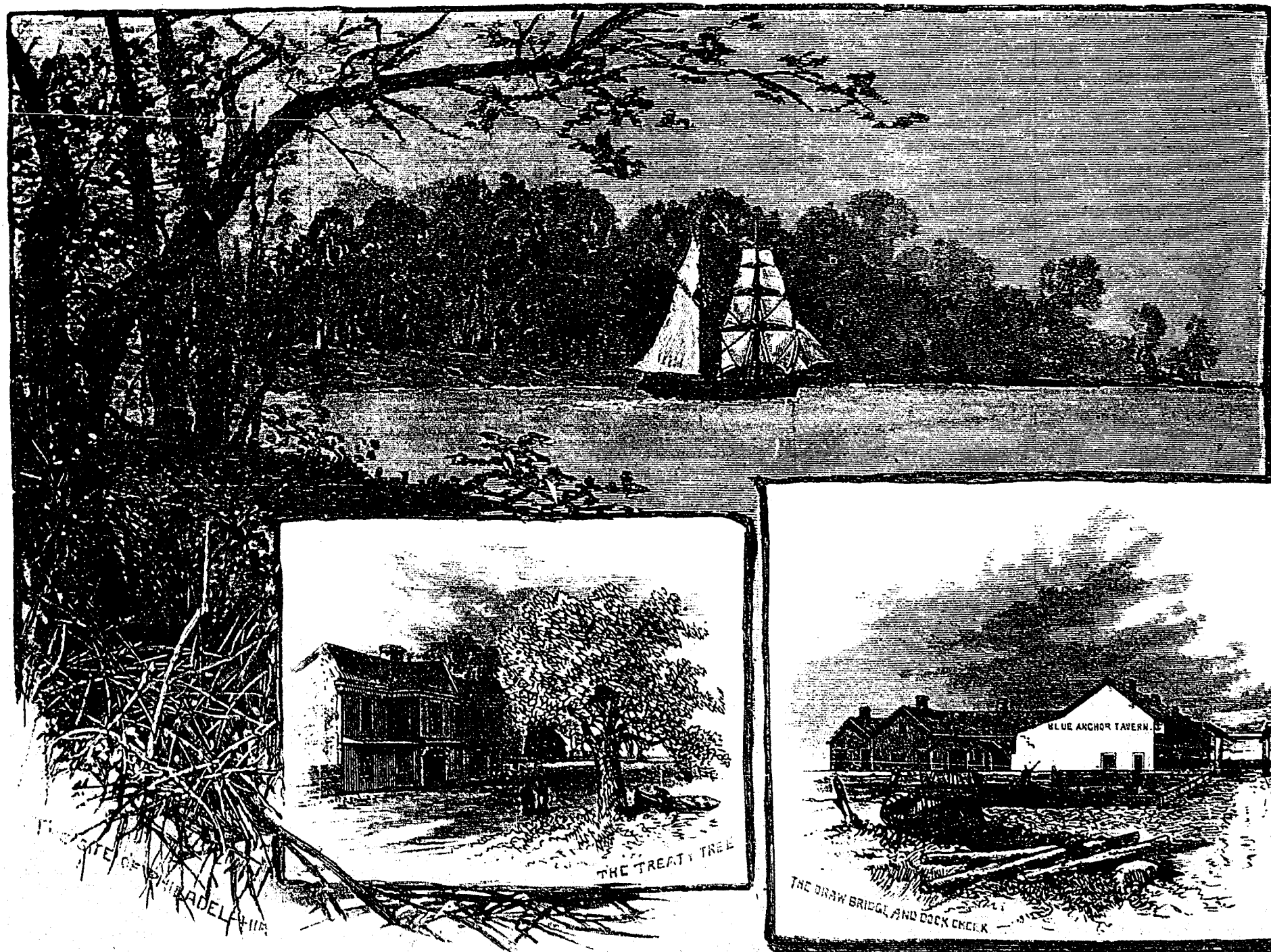
As it is understood that Mrs. Langtry is to make her debut here in the *Unequal Match*, some further particulars of the play and of her Hester Grazebrook will be interesting. In the first act Hester is an artless village maiden, who is wooed and won by an English nobleman; in the second, she is a loving wife, roused to jealousy by the intrigues of a rival; in the last, she simulates indifference and cynicism to win back her truant husband.

It was considered in London that in the first act Mrs. Langtry should have been less of the lady and more of the hoiden. Disagreeing with this general opinion, the writer in the *Telegraph* remarks: "She idealized the village maiden as a painter like Sir Frederick Leighton would idealize the heroine of the 'Lord of Burleigh' story. If Hester is not in some kind of way ideal, the story loses half its charm and interest." And later he speaks of Mrs. Langtry's performance in this first act as ideal in conception, and both musical and graceful in execution.

In the second act the tender scenes with her father were found genuine and unaffected; the cry of anguish, the passion of despair, following her supposition of her husband's faithlessness, artificial and insincere. Her performance of the third act seems to have been replete with banter and satire.

Mrs. Langtry is the only daughter of Mr. Le Breton, once Dean of St. Heliers, Jersey. Her first appearance was in some tableaux at Mrs. Freake's, in Teddington. Her first speaking part was at a performance at Twickenham, when she appeared with Miss Henrietta Hodson in the *Fair Encounter*.

GUSTAV KOBBE.



THE BI-CENTENARY OF THE FOUNDING OF PHILADELPHIA.—HISTORIC LOCALITIES AROUND THE QUAKER CITY.