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TWENTY-SIX YEARS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

AN ACTOR AND MANAGER.

INTERSPERSED WITH SKETCHES, ANECDOTES AND OPINIONS
OF THE PROFESSIONAL MERITS OF THE MOST CELE-
BRATED ACTORS AND ACTRESSES OF OUR DAY.

BY

FRANCIS COURTNEY WEMYSS. 1857-
1858.

“ Vanitas vanitatus, et omnia vanitas !”

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW-YORK:

BURGESS, STRINGER AND COMPANY.

222 BROADWAY.

1847.

354

W.C. / 1866 / V.2

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TWENTY-SIX YEARS

OF THE LIFE OF

AN ACTOR AND MANAGER.

CHAPTER XXV.

J. P. Wilkinson—Journey to the West—Beautiful Scenery—Fine Situation of Pittsburgh—Dramatic Festival—Opening of the Pittsburgh Theatre—Tyronce Power—Booth—General Houston.

JONES, Duffy and Forrest, at the close of the season, were presented by the actors, and others, with a silver cup, valued at one hundred dollars, for the honorable manner in which they had discharged all their obligations, since they undertook the management of the Arch Street Theatre. The cup was presented by Morton McMichael, Esq., in one of his happiest speeches, and received by Mr. Jones, the senior partner, with a suitable reply—nearly one hundred gentlemen being assembled on the stage, where an elegant cold collation was prepared; and the song and anecdote enlivened the company, who dispersed about two o'clock, A. M., highly pleased with the events of the evening.

On the 26th of March, my old friend,

J. P. WILKINSON,

made his first appearance in Philadelphia, at the Walnut Street Theatre, as Ephraim, in the "School for Prejudice," and Geoffrey Muffincap, in "Amateurs and Actors." Occupying, as he did, in London, with Arnold of the English opera house, a high station

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among his contemporaries, for many seasons, and being known as the original representative of Dr. Logic, of universal renown, it would have been reasonable to suppose a full house would have assembled on the occasion. On the contrary, the meagre appearance of the audience was sufficient to damp the energy of any actor. That Wilkinson should have been so coldly received, and wholly neglected, was a slur on the dramatic taste of the city. The character of the Parish Charity Boy, so well understood in the British metropolis, and so totally unknown in the United States, the representation of which made Wilkinson the magnet of attraction for a whole season, in a London theatre, produced not the slightest approbation. The feeling of the audience was one of disappointment, which must have been mutual. If they thought the actor dull and prosing, he must have thought them cold and ungenerous. The dogged stupidity of the Charity Boy, kicked and cuffed by every body in a London lodging-house, was not appreciated by an audience ever ready to laugh at the air and smartness of a Lissardo.

Wilkinson bore his disappointment like a philosopher, giving proof of his judgment and good sense, by fulfilling all his engagements, giving utterance to no complaints, and returning to his native country—to forget the folly which induced him to travel, as Murtoch Delany says, “to see foreign parts”—to enjoy his reputation at home, in the bosom of a happy family circle, of which he is not only the head, but the pride—an honorable and an honest man.

On the 27th of March, Mr. E. Forrest produced at the Arch Street Theatre a tragedy in five acts, from the pen of A. Stone, the author of “*Metamora*,” entitled the “*Ancient Briton*.” It was not successful, although Forrest, as the hero, and Murdoch, as Ottodane, exerted themselves to the utmost. Mr. Thayer, by refusing the part of Florus, gave a specimen of the oft-asserted sentence, that “actors cannot endure good fortune,” by attempting to throw an obstacle in the way of the managers who had regularly paid his salary, when such an event formed an era in the management of a theatre. He fancied himself capable of playing Ottodane, which the managers wisely entrusted to Murdoch.

On the 5th of July, 1833, I started for Pittsburgh, accompanied by my wife, my two youngest children, and their nurse, wisely resolving not to abandon housekeeping in the city of Philadelphia, or to remove my family, until I saw whether the prospects of success, so brightly painted, would be realized.

A journey to the West, in 1833 was not what it is now—rail-

roads were not so numerous. The whole 300 miles was performed in stages, without a single stoppage throughout the route, which was advertised to be performed in four days and a half.

We started rather in melancholy mood—shaking hands with one, nodding adieu to another, and kissing the tears from the cheeks of the children about to be separated for the first time from their parents—these thoughts occupied our minds for the first few miles. We had but two passengers, besides our own party, who left us at Lancaster, so that we were undisputed masters of the vehicle until we arrived at Carlisle, rendering the first night's journey very comfortable. At Chambersburgh, where the two routes from Philadelphia and Baltimore joined, we received an addition to our numbers, by no means pleasant, six grown persons and three children, increasing the party. Thus, with every seat occupied, containing nine passengers, and the addenda of five children, the remainder of the journey was to be performed. Thus crowded, we commenced the ascent of the mountains. Fortunately the weather was fair, and never shall I forget the grandeur and beauty of the scene which met my eye, as I reached the summit of the Cove Mountain. The amphitheatre of forest, with all its rich and varied foliage, the farms in the valley beneath, the village at the foot of the mountain, made us all forget every annoyance in exclamations of wonder and surprise—our fellow-travellers, like ourselves, crossing the mountains for the first time. The rapid descent, continuing for three miles, without interruption, alarmed the ladies, but delighted the children, and as darkness began to shadow the earth, at the close of the second day, the rain fell in torrents, continuing with slight intermission to the close of our journey, banishing the prospect of further comfort, and affording no opportunity of enjoying the mountain scenery as we progressed.

When we arrived at Bedford, we were detained two hours, a most seasonable relief to the ladies. We should have supped here, but being heavily laden, and four hours behind our time, every body had retired to rest, but those whose duty it was to attend to the stage, on its arrival. A glass of milk-punch, and a cracker was all that could be obtained in the way of refreshment; thankful for that, I was too old a traveller to render a disagreeable situation more irksome by the exhibition of bad temper, where I knew there was no remedy but endurance. Mrs. Wemyss, too, although much fatigued, laughed at every thing with that happy disposition which enabled her to convert present annoyance into food for amusement to the whole party, and suffocated as we all were, she

declared that never in her life did she behold so beautiful a scene as the setting sun, in passing through Mount Pleasant.

On the morning of the fifth day, we entered the city of Pittsburgh, about seven o'clock, the rain descending rapidly, and giving to the Birmingham of America a desolate and dreary appearance, speaking any thing but welcome.

We drove to the Exchange Hotel, where the hospitality which we received at the hands of Mr. McGuire, soon restored us to good humor. My friend, Mr. George Cook, was at the hotel before we had finished breakfast, and by 10 o'clock on the morning of the 10th of July, I found myself within the walls of the theatre destined to be the field of my future operations.

Here carpenters, painters and gilders were busily employed upon what appeared to be a shell, which would scarcely be ready by the first of September. The activity and business habits of the contractors, Messrs. Roseburgh, Scott, Reynolds and McCullough accomplished the task in the given time, to the surprise as well as gratification of the citizens of Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh, at this period, was at the height of prosperity, resembling a bee-hive, where no drone is suffered to exist. The roaring of the furnaces, the clank of the hammer, were unceasingly heard, day and night, while the activity on the banks of the river, and of the canal, the constant train of drays laden with merchandise for the West, moving slowly along the streets, furnished a novel and pleasing sight—while the ringing of steamboat bells, and the roaring of the high pressure steam engines in the boats, as they arrived and departed, gave the best assurance of the prosperity of the city, and the business enterprise of its inhabitants.

No city in the United States is more romantically situated, or can boast of finer scenery in its immediate neighborhood. Situated on the banks of the two rivers, the Monongahela and Alleghany, whose junction at this point form the Ohio River, the City of the Three Rivers, clouded as it is in endless smoke from its numerous factories, possesses advantages not often met in a manufacturing town. A walk of a quarter of an hour in any direction places you above the smoke, so much complained of by strangers, and presents to the view landscapes in which the eye of an artist revels with delight, and shady retreats upon its hills, where, free from observation, they can wander, and ponder upon the endless source of wealth which the coal mines beneath their feet pour daily into this city of industry. And here it was I expected to take up my future residence.

Whoever is acquainted with the duties of a manager of a theatre will know that during the last few weeks of building, there is no time for the director to be idle. Six weeks had flown over my head, when, by the arrival of a few members of my company, I was made aware that the time appointed for the opening the theatre rapidly approached. On Wednesday, the 21st of August, I received an invitation from the directors of the theatre company, to meet them at the Shakspeare House, to commemorate the completion of their labors. I cannot give a better description of the evening, than I find in *The Statesman* of the 28th of August, headed :—

NEW THEATRE—DRAMATIC FESTIVAL.—On Wednesday evening, the directors of the Pittsburgh Theatre gave an excellent supper to Mr. Wemyss, and the contractors, to celebrate the completion of one of the handsomest buildings which the city of Pittsburgh ever boasted. At nine o'clock, about sixty gentlemen sat down to supper, at the Shakspeare House, provided in Mr. Wilson's best style. Harmony and good humor pervaded throughout; no one left the table but with a feeling of regret that the hours had passed so rapidly, on an occasion devoted 'to the feast of reason, and the flow of soul.' The company retired at a late (early) hour, mutually pleased with each other's company. The following regular toasts were given from the chair, on the occasion :—

The Drama—Its agency in exerting a salutary influence is to be estimated not by the standard of possibilities, but by that which is incorporated with its design.

William Shakspeare—The child of nature—he represents her as she is, without often marring the chasteness of her coloring, or the simplicity of her imagery.

The Contractors of the new Theatre—The skill and promptitude which completed it, are in good keeping with the taste which furnished the model.

The Western Drama—May it reflect the warmth of genuine feeling, united with radiations of classic taste, upon the empodium of arts and the workshops of industry.

Mr. Wemyss, the present Manager of the Pittsburgh Theatre—With pleasure we greet his presence, and trust that his urbanity and anxiety to please, will meet the reward due to his individual and professional merit.

After the applause with which this toast was received had subsided, Mr. Wemyss rose, and in a neat speech, of which we can only give the substance, returned thanks as follows :—

GENTLEMEN,—In rising to acknowledge the favor you have just conferred upon me, perhaps the best method of returning my thanks, would be to assure those gentlemen, many of whom I see around me, (to whose undaunted perseverance in the good cause we owe the erection of a theatre, which I may boldly affirm, in point of elegance of structure, decoration, convenience, and comfort, both to auditor and actor, is not surpassed by any in the United States;) that so long as it remains under my direction, no exhibition shall ever take place within its walls, calculated to cause a feeling of regret to any individual who may have contributed a single dollar towards its erection.

Gentlemen, as far as one man's efforts can be directed to render your amusement a source of gratification, mine will be devoted to that end. Overtures will be made to every actor of superior talent, who may be at present, or shall hereafter arrive, in the United States; and I doubt not that many, if not all, will be induced to visit your busy and prosperous city.

For the kind manner in which you have been pleased to receive the toast of our worthy President, relating to my humble self, I can hardly thank you as I ought. I will not longer trespass on your time, but will, with your permission, propose the health of the *President and Directors of the Pittsburgh Theatre*. With all the honors, drank with three times three, and one cheer more.

The following volunteer toasts were given on the occasion.

Education—The only moral steam that will work without friction; the engine of the world.

The Ladies of Pittsburgh—Where they take the lead, who will fear to follow.

Mr. J. R. Smith, the Scenic Artist of the Pittsburgh Theatre—In this instance he has demonstrated by the touches of his skill, that the warmth and aspirations of the youthful imagination can be transferred to canvas. In the language of Shylock to Portia, "How much older art thou than thy looks?"

The New Theatre—The elegance of the structure and the rapidity of its completion, proves that Pittsburgh, in point of taste, skill, and enterprise, is not surpassed by any city in the Union.

The March of Refinement and Liberty—We hail those lovely harbingers of a "New Era," even amid clouds of smoke and the fulminations of intolerance.

The Press—As connected with the drama, the devil is said to be in both, but is harmless so long as he is bound by boards.

The occasion of our Meeting—May we all continue to be

stockholders in fellowship and good feeling, and ever ready to pay our instalments on each share of the good things around us.

The Encouragement of the Drama—The strongest evidence of a refined civilization in every age coincident with the progress of literature and the arts.

The authority of Criticism—When prompted by spleen, though it may slightly wound, the missile generally rebounds upon the hyper-critic; but when guided by science, taste, and impartiality, it exerts a salutary force in meliorating literary society.

Pittsburgh—Her moral force, without classic taste united with practical exhibitions of it, would be deficient in an important fellow-lever.

The theatre being finished, was opened on Monday, the 2nd of September, with an address, written by N. R. Smith, Esqr., of Pittsburgh, and spoken by myself.

ADDRESS.

When Genius, hovering in his native sky,
 O'er climes untutored cast a watchful eye,
 As yet, while thought was cradled by the Nine
 And fanned by zephyrs from Olympus' shrine,
 He sank at length from his empyreal height,
 And shed o'er Greece the rays of classic light.
 'The Muses triumphed and the Graces smiled,
 As brightened forth the dawns of their child;
 The plastic power of Genius intertwined
 Strength, fervor, beauty, in the infant mind;
 And reason, memory, judgment, formed the skill
 To curb the passions, and control the will.
 Still as the urchin Thought grew up, he knew
 No art to bring men's foibles into view,
 Nor yet their virtues, that this moral plan
 Might meliorate, exalt immortal man.
 To give perfection to the skill *their* muse,
 Thalia and Malpomene infuse.
 Greece rose in splendor as the lambent flame
 Which Genius kindled, blazoned forth her fame;
 Arts, science, arms, possessed the aspiring soul,
 And the bright Drama crowned the boundless whole.
 The Nine survived the ravages of time,
 And waved their trophies in another clime.
 Rome caught the Grecian spirit, and her pride
 Conceived new honors, spread her laurels wide,
 And triumphed long the mistress of the sphere,
 Till ruthless ruin checked her high career.
 The torch of Genius, though its flame had waned,
 Was not extinguished, for the spark remained;

And fanned by breezes from the Muses' bower,
 Relumed at length with renovated power.
 To Gothic night succeeded all the fame,
 And more, that gave to Greece and Rome a classic name ;
 The crest of Europe rose as Science spread,
 And o'er the world its light and lustre shed ;
 Shakspeare appeared the Drama's claim to try,
 Gave it new worth, and fixed its destiny.
 At length, when Freedom planted here the Tree,
 And called our soil the home of Liberty,
 Beneath its shade she fixed the Drama's seat,
 Where all the kindred ties of Nature meet.
 Hail to Columbia, free and unoppressed,
 And hail the rising glory of the West !
 Queen of the West, we trace thy rapid rise
 From forest gloom beneath inclement skies.
 Prophetic vision did not ken this age—
 He—an enthusiast—madman—to presage,
 That thirty years would throng a bleak, wide waste
 With wealth and pride, with fashion, beauty, taste.
 Taste and refinement here have joined to rear—
 Adorn a Dome, that pleads *your* guardian care,
 Taste shall unfold what taste alone imparts,
 Enlightened intellects and generous hearts ;
 And here the Drama shall display confessed,
 The Nine still vigorous, the Muses blest.

The play was the "Busy Body," and the afterpiece, "Of Age To-morrow." The company consisted of Mr. Addams, Mr. John Sefton, Mr. Charles Green, Mr. Henry Eberle, Mr. George Smith, Mr. William Smith, Mr. D. Rice, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Bannister, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Wallace, Mr. McDougal, Mr. W. Sefton, Mr. Gifford, Mr. Parsloe, Mr. Hathwell, Mr. Warren, and Mr. Wemyss ; Mrs. J. Sefton, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Turner, Miss Julia Turner, Miss Turner, Mrs. H. Eberle, Mrs. McDougal, Mrs. Hubbard, and Miss Hathwell. There were also engaged, who never made their appearance in fulfilment of their contract, Miss McBride, Mr. and Mrs. Stickney, Mr. Milliken, Mr. Milor, and Mr. Cuddy.

I had made my arrangements upon a scale much too large for the population. Half the number of actors would have been sufficient. It is therefore, not surprising, that the first season was by no means productive ; and my Pittsburgh friends, (who are numerous,) will excuse me for the declaration, that their judgment in theatrical matters was most singular. The company would bear comparison with the best in either of the Atlantic cities ; yet they selected the worst actors, (with the exception of Mr. A. Addams,) as their especial favorites, and even hissed poor

Spencer, (who afterwards perished with Fanning, like a hero, in Texas,) from the stage, because he dressed like a gentleman, and would persist in wearing white kid gloves in the street. Another amiable trait in their character, was a practice they had of hissing the manager on the last night of the season, merely in wanton sport, always salving his feelings with a good house. Booth they pronounced a bad actor; E. Forrest they did not support during his first visit; and yet several years afterwards they crowded the theatre nightly, to witness the performance of both these gentlemen; although the former disgraced himself as usual, by appearing in "Hamlet" in a state of intoxication. Yet this theatre, when I became acquainted with the taste of the citizens, and experience taught me how to manage it, proved the best and most profitable, ever under my control.

The receipts of the first night amounted to \$392 62, which fell to \$101, on the second. Forrest's first night was \$394 25; yet he was the first actor of repute, who played under one hundred dollars, ("King Lear," the character,) while* Mr. Booth's first night was \$348,00; yet he played Reuben Glenroy to \$112, and Pescara to \$106. Mr. Power's first night was \$353, his second, \$119,25. In fact, the worthy citizens of Pittsburgh seemed to think their duty performed towards the manager, if they received a star of the brightest nature with one good house, and made him a great benefit, on the system—one for you, the other for him.

The following letter of Booth's, deserves a place from its singularity. It bears the Baltimore post mark of the 3rd of December.

(COPY.)

TUESDAY NIGHT,

Stage Office, once more.

I am, as the French say, *en route*, and hope to reach Pittsburgh in time to begin on Monday night—bar sickness, my lord judge,

* The great error I committed at Pittsburgh, was relying upon the opinion of the gentlemen composing the board of directors of the theatre; all anxious for its success; but continually impressing upon my mind the necessity of strong police arrangements, to keep the frequenters of the gallery in order, whom they represented as a band of outlaws, only to be kept down by the strong hand of power. In carrying out their views, I rendered myself anything but popular with that class which experience proved must ultimately be depended upon for success. In a season of eighteen weeks, I received at the gallery door, two thousand two hundred and sixty dollars; an item of such importance as to embrace the whole rent of the theatre for one year, and make me anxious to conciliate the good will of such customers.

and other delays. Messrs. Managers of the West, you are partly the cause of —. Had you not announced Mr. Booth as being engaged in Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, Hamblin never would have *cochted* me here as he did. It is best, in my humble opinion, not to announce until the beast arrives.

Your's as in duty bound,

(Signed) J. B.

Good!—commence with I am—conclude with J. B.—he conjugates—the villain!

To F. WEMYSS, Esq.

Theatre, Pittsburg, Pa.

During the time the theatre was building, the stockholders were anxious that nothing should be left undone to render it as perfect as possible. And entering into this feeling, I resolved the arrangements of the interior should be made worthy of imitation by larger establishments. Every dressing room was carpeted and furnished. The green room furnished in the style of a modern drawing room, with piano, ottomans, chairs, looking-glasses, &c. The whole costing upwards of a thousand dollars.

During the first season, from the 2nd of September, until the 8th of January, upwards of four months, the receipts amounted to seventeen thousand six hundred and twenty-seven dollars and thirty-seven cents; to which is to be added, one thousand dollars received for rent of the saloons, and seven hundred dollars for season tickets; making in all, \$19,327. Out of which, the stars received \$3291, and the actors from their benefits, \$846.

Mr. E. Forrest, Mr. and Mrs. Hilson, Mr. Hill, Mr. G. Barret, and Wife, Mr. Ludlow, Mr. J. R. Scott, Mr. Booth, and Mrs. Drake, to whom I must add, Mr. George W. Dixon, the American buffo singer, to whom my friend Mr. Chandler, of the United States Gazette, albeit no advocate of lynch law, caused much trouble—having advised the citizens to treat him in the words of his own song, and “Clar de Kitchen;” which they did in spite of remonstrance, and such perseverance, under the displeasure of the audience, as I never witnessed; but all his rhetoric could not persuade me to allow him to act again. He made his final exit from the Pittsburgh Theatre, amid a shower of apples, peanuts, and chestnuts, sufficient to treat all the little boys around the place for a week.

Notwithstanding one or two unpleasant occurrences, I was enabled at the close of the season, to state, that during one hundred and eleven nights, not a single change had taken place in the

pieces announced to be performed, which for variety, could challenge competition.

On the 10th of January, 1834, I took the company down the river for six weeks, to Wheeling, where we acted to an average of seventy-five dollars a night, in a large room, miscalled a theatre. Russel Smith painted some very pretty scenery, and I escaped with a loss of three hundred dollars, which enabled me to keep the company together, until my return to Pittsburgh on the 23rd of February, for the purpose of presenting to the citizens the inimitable

TYRONE POWER.

Who that ever saw his laughing face, but must regret his lamentable end, as one of the "ill starred" passengers of the lost steamship President—the ocean for a grave. When I first saw Power act, he was considered a light comedian of mediocre talent, possessing so much quicksilver, that it was impossible to keep him quiet in any one spot of the stage for two consecutive seconds. This failing he never entirely divested himself of; it was conspicuous in the "Irish Ambassador," in Ratler, in "How to Pay the Rent;" or in Pat Rooney,—annoying to every actor who had to support a character in the piece; but not displeasing to the audience.

Chance installed him as the Irish comedian when poor Conner died so suddenly. His success at first, was by no means extraordinary; it was tolerated as a good natured effort of an actor, to aid the management in a dilemma. He rose in public favor slowly, and it was not until his return from the first visit to the United States in 1833, that he became an actor of consideration in London, where, prior to his death, fame and fortune were struggling who should crown him fastest. He was a noble, generous-hearted fellow, always willing to do a charitable action without making a parade of it, to form theatrical capital upon.

His career in America was brilliant beyond comparison, seldom playing to a bad house; frequently crowding the theatre to excess. An universal favorite with actors, managers, and the public; good humored Paddy Power, his cognomen behind the scenes as well as before the curtain. His last appearance but one, in Pittsburgh, was marked by one of those disgraceful scenes which render theatres, and all connected with them, a bye-word for the finger of scorn. In the play of the "Irish Ambassador," Mr. Green and

Mr. Hubbard were both so intoxicated, as to render it necessary to remove the first named from the theatre ; and the latter actually fell upon the stage during his performance. Mr. John Sefton read the part of one delinquent, while I had to officiate in a similar manner for the other.

Power bore the mortification with remarkable good nature ; having been in a great measure to blame, for dismissing the rehearsal at 12 o'clock with one of those complimentary speeches yclept "blarney," which he knew so well how to use on all proper occasions. Whether he felt what he so neatly expressed, or wished himself to take the ride for amusement he recommended to the actors, is a matter of no importance. In following his advice, Mr. W. Sefton, Mr. A. Addams, C. Green, and Hubbard returned to the city, as Bob Logic would say, in prime order—the consequence of which has been narrated.

The theatre was filled with ladies, which I need scarcely add, did not occur again during the season. It was a death-blow to our reputation, and resented as every similar exhibition should be, by every respectable citizen absenting himself from the theatre ; although, as the manager, I was the innocent sufferer. I bowed with respect to the decision which I felt to be just, and recommend the course adopted by the Pittsburgh audience, as worthy of imitation ; it is the only one to prevent a repetition of insult. It should have been carried one step further, by a marked determination never to permit the offenders again to appear upon the stage of the Pittsburgh Theatre.

I had used every endeavor to induce Power to visit Pittsburgh, had teased him into compliance, and was sorry to part with him on such terms, just as the audience were beginning to appreciate his merit. He agreed to play one night more, to prove to the public that he acquitted me of all blame, and rather accused himself as the author of the evil which thus brought his engagement to a premature close. He alludes to it jocosely in his *Recollections of America*. Poor fellow, his fame is cherished in the old as well as the new world, and many a heartfelt sigh has been breathed to the memory of—Poor Power.

He commenced his engagement on the 31st of March, with Sir Patrick O'Plenipo, in the "Irish Ambassador," and finished with Paddy O'Rafferty, in "Born to Good Luck." He was delighted with the theatre, and makes honorable mention of it in his account of Pittsburgh.

I subjoin his letter, upon the subject of his engagement :—

(COPY.)

MY DEAR MR. WEMYSS :—

I perceive that you purpose re-opening the Pittsburgh Theatre, in February, Now, I shall be here in April, and if, about the end of that month, or in May, you think a visit from me to my countrymen there will answer our mutual end, I shall be most happy to meet you on the banks of the Ohio. I congratulate you on the terms you appear to part with your constituents—and in the way of news from England, have only to tell you Bunn & Co. are gone to the devil. Never was failure in quackery more absolute than this attempt to “gag” the profession, by joining the two theatres in one. Allow me to beg an early reply. I act here until the 7th of February, and on the 17th open in Boston. With best wishes, believe me,

Truly Yours,
(Signed,) TYRONE POWER.

MANSION HOUSE, Philadelphia, }
January, 23, 1834. }

During this season Mrs. Duff, Mr. E. Forrest, Mr. Booth, Mr. Cooper, Miss Priscilla Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Cowell, Miss Clara Fisher, and Jim Crow Rice appeared, but nothing worthy of a passing notice occurred after the unfortunate termination of Power's engagement, if I except the following letter from my crazy friend, Booth :—

(COPY.)

DEAR WEMYSS :—

Please pony up, and pay my attendant and companion, John, enough to settle with the captain for his passage, as I have only by me some silver and 1400 dollars in two large lumps, one for a thousand, t'other \$400.

Yours with sincerity.
(Signed) BOOTH.

I hope your wife received her turkeys.

To explain this P. S., I shall also insert a letter received two days previous, with two of the finest Kentucky turkeys the most inveterate epicure would have delighted to have seen cooked and placed upon the dinner-table.

(COPY.)

TO MRS. WEMYSS, LIBERTY STREET, PITTSBURGH.

MY DEAR MADAM :—

I hope you are in full enjoyment of health, and that your lamp, fed with vegetable oil, burns well and clear. I take the

freedom of making you a *present* of two handsome turkeys—*pets of mine*—which I transfer to you on condition that you will not have them killed, but let the children now and then give 'em *bread to eat* and *water* to drink, or *pulse*, as *Daniel* calls it, and let them live until the great Jehovah of the Christians causes them to die of a good old age. My best regards to your excellent husband, and my love to your handsome children. Please also remember me to Mr. Warren and your valuable Philadelphia servant.

I am, dear madam, yours with affection.

(Signed) J. B. BOOTH.

WHEELING, Feb. 22, 1834.

In two days afterwards, the tragedian himself appeared with the evil spirit upon him, coming suddenly into the theatre accompanied by Governor Houston, of Tennessee, a really great man, for let his faults be what they may, that man who was raised by the suffrages of his fellow-citizens to rule over them, mingled with the Indians, and became among the children of nature, a ruling chief of their nation, and finally emigrating to Texas, was elected President of the new formed Republic, to direct the destiny of a nation, must have been formed for command by nature. He and Booth left Pittsburgh, the latter painted and dressed as an Indian chief, in which habiliments he proceeded by mail the same evening to the East, and for nearly a year, I neither saw nor heard any more of him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Removal to Pittsburgh—Visit from the Author's Brother—Lake Erie—The Falls of Niagara—Bad Roads—The Ohio River—Cincinnati—Commencement of the Fall Season at Pittsburgh—Strange Changes—Lease of the Walnut Street Theatre—Burton, as an Actor and Author—First appearance of Power at the Walnut Street Theatre—Mr. and Mrs. Wood—Miss Philips—James Sheridan Knowles.

FINDING the theatre with careful management could afford a comfortable livelihood, I lost no time in sending for my family from Philadelphia. I hired a house in Liberty street, and made up my mind to a long residence in the city of Pittsburgh. How little do we know of our future destiny, which in despite of our

daily labor, urges us on to the fulfilment allotted by fate to every member of the human family.

We soon had the pleasure of beholding our children seated once more at the table, from which they had been daily missed, and again under the eye of their ever anxious and affectionate mother.

During the summer, I had the addition of a fine little Pittsburgh boy to my family, and a visit from my brother, Captain Wemyss, of the British army, whom I had not seen for twenty years. We parted as boys, and met, he a veteran officer, and I——but no matter. If my position in society was altered, my pocket had been replenished by my long course of buffoonery.

In his company, I travelled through the State of Ohio, finally taking a steamboat on Lake Erie in which we descended to Buffalo, and so crossing into Canada at Black Rock, proceeded to the wonder of the world, the Falls of Niagara, which every Englishman, travelling for pleasure, takes the earliest opportunity of visiting. If I attempt no description of them, it is because they cannot be described. I was fool enough to venture under the mighty cataract, which feat of daring is daily practised, and only those who have stood upon the rocks and seen the mighty flood, which in an instant might overwhelm them, can form any idea of the various feelings which, in so short a space of time, crowd into the human mind. How insignificant does man appear when thus braving his Creator—placing his life in jeopardy—for what? to say *I have been under the Falls of Niagara*. What romantic folly.

From Fort George, we crossed Lake Ontario to Toronto, where Captain Wemyss met some of his old military companions, in whose society we spent a delightful evening; the following morning we retraced our steps, returning towards Pittsburgh through the country of the Seneca Indians, paying for our ride, but dragging the coach two miles for one it dragged us. Never did I see such roads; every five minutes was heard the driver's summons to dismount, for we were *stalled* again, so with the assistance of a rail, we contrived to extricate the lumbering vehicle, in which we had engaged a passage to the town of Erie. We returned by this route preferring it to the Lake conveyance, during a high gale of wind, and as we progressed along the margin of that sheet of water we beheld so placid a few days previously, we beheld it lashed into fury by the wind, exhibiting one vast crest of turbulent foam on this inland sea.

After a delightful trip, we arrived in Pittsburgh, from whence

we proceeded for a few weeks to Wheeling. On my return, Captain Wemyss took his departure for the West Indies, and left, for a time a void in our family circle, which he had enlivened during the summer.

My wife and the little Pittsburgh stranger accompanied me on a visit of business to Louisville, Kentucky. In our passage down the Ohio, we enjoyed the beautiful scenery of that splendid river. At Cincinnati, where we remained one night, I of course paid a visit to the theatre, then under the direction of Russel and Rowe, of New-Orleans. The proud Queen of the giant West is a Philadelphia in miniature; the same regularity of building, the same cleanliness of appearance, and the same industrious population. The citizens who founded such a place may well feel proud of their handiwork. Louisville, although a more active place of business, is far behind Cincinnati except in what may be termed the picturesque and beautiful. We remained there one week, and ascending the Ohio, returned to Pittsburgh to make preparations for the fall season at the theatre, which commenced on the 8th of September. The company, Mr. John Sefton, Wm. Sefton, Oxley, C. Porter, J. G. Porter, Schinotti, Kent, Lewellen, De Cordova, J. Reed, C. Green, Harris, and Wells, Mrs. C. Green, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Roper, Mrs. Lewellen, Mrs. La Combe, Mrs. J. Sefton; new faces, and many of them actors of talent. At the commencement of the season an effort was made by a committee of those who took an interest in the welfare of the theatre, to secure the performance of one legitimate five act comedy in each week, the play to be chosen by the committee, who affirmed that this species of dramatic representation was most congenial to the taste of the citizens of Pittsburgh. The night selected was the Wednesday of each week. The first play the "School for Scandal," a judicious selection, which filled the lower boxes, but the pit, gallery, and upper boxes were *c-m-p-t-y*. The second comedy, "She stoops to Conquer," was followed by the like result, whereas the repetition of the "School for Scandal" as the third attempt, failed to procure even the attendance of the committee themselves, who gave up any further attempt in despair, leaving me for the future to manage the theatre in my own way, with the promise of their future support in any effort which should not be considered as degrading to a temple dedicated to the muses.

The failure of this attempt to make one decent house each week, induced me to turn my thoughts to other cities for permanent support, convinced thereby, that Pittsburgh could not be relied

upon for a longer season than six weeks or two months at any one time.

Since my departure from Philadelphia, strange changes had taken place. Duffy and Forrest had abandoned the Arch Street Theatre, which Maywood & Co. had taken, leaving the Walnut Street without a tenant, which being advertised to let, I was deliberating whether to return to the East, or to bend my course still further to the West, towards Cincinnati and Louisville, where the theatres leased by Russell and Rowe, were offered to me for the winter season, when my friend George Cook, unexpectedly made his appearance at my house, and during dinner, on the Sabbath day, issued his orders for my immediate departure for Philadelphia, thus:—"Frank," said he, "I have been thinking over your affairs, and I am afraid the Western theatres won't answer your purpose, you must go over the mountains this evening, and at once secure the Walnut Street Theatre; this city, it is evident, will not by itself support a company of actors, and as I brought you here, I feel in duty bound to see you placed in as good a position as I found you, when you adopted my advice to try your fortune in this city of iron and smoke."

In eight hours I found myself comfortably seated in the Pittsburgh mail coach, "en route" for Philadelphia, to propose for the lease of the Walnut Street Theatre in that city. So suddenly are resolutions taken, which alter the course of events in man's life.

When I arrived in the city of brotherly love, the first person I surprised by my unexpected appearance, was my worthy friend Louis A. Godey, who had become a "Benedict" since we parted. I at once communicated to him the object of my visit. He did not seem to think very highly of the speculation, and even dissuaded me from making an offer; but a letter from Pittsburgh, with orders all but peremptory, decided the matter.

In forty-eight hours after my arrival, all the preliminaries were agreed to. Rent four thousand one hundred and fifty dollars per year, exclusive of the rooms occupied as bars, which, on account of a recent law, prohibiting the granting of tavern licence to theatres, I refused to have anything to do with, and the stockholders received three thousand dollars per year, for breaking a law which the manager thought proper to obey. More of this hereafter.

I agreed to pay one thousand dollars in advance upon signing the lease, and the stockholders agreed to re-decorate and paint the theatre according to a plan furnished by myself. I left them to

prepare the lease for signature, while I proceeded to New-York to complete my arrangements: I remained there two days, where Thomas Flynn, on behalf of Mr. Hamblin, promised many things which his proprietor afterwards failed to ratify.

I returned to Pittsburgh on the twelfth day after my departure, with my lease in my pocket, to prepare for opening what was now first christened the American Theatre in Philadelphia.

While I was in Philadelphia, I visited the Arch Street Theatre, where Power was performing as usual, to good houses, and I learnt that Mr. Maywood was hourly expected with recruits from England, for the stock company. These were Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Brunton, Miss Pelham, Miss Elphinston, and Mr. W. E. Burton. The last, the only one destined to add to the resident talent of the American stage; although, on his first appearance in Philadelphia, he did not meet with a very favorable reception. No sooner had he played Guy Goodluck in "John Jones," than the Philadelphians discovered they had acquired an actor worthy to succeed Jefferson; and he rapidly rose in estimation, assuming at no distant period, the proud title of a successful star; rather an unusual honor to a stock actor on the American stage. With him originated the Gentleman's Magazine, which he sold to Graham, the present proprietor, to turn manager; an unfortunate exchange in a pecuniary point of view. However, his pride might have been flattered in converting Cooke's Circus in Chestnut Street, into the most splendid theatre the United States could boast, where for a short period he was pre-eminently successful; but finally sank under an effort to sustain a fourth theatre, where those already established were rapidly changing hands for want of support. Mr. Burton as an author, possesses talent of no mean order, and whether as manager, actor, or author, is alike indefatigable. His industry deserves that success which the writer sincerely wishes may ultimately crown all his efforts. As an actor, he is entitled to the first rank in his profession; however public opinion may vary upon some points, all will admit his title to be just, when pronounced the best low comedian of the American stage.

My first business after my arrival at Pittsburgh, was to despatch my artist, W. Russel Smith, (a name since well known in the annals of fame,) to Philadelphia, to decorate the interior of the theatre. And well did he execute that work. The design was formed thus; each tier of boxes was decorated with paintings representing some celebrated battle in the history of the United States; around the dress circle were placed medallions of the heads of the Presidents; around the second tier, the heads of

celebrated generals, and around the third tier, the heads of the naval heroes; between each medallion and its corresponding painting, was a large burnished gold star, the whole forming on a pink ground, the most pleasing interior I ever saw. I have seen them more gaudy, but never one so chaste and beautiful.

The time for opening was fixed for the 22d of December, 1834, the Monday previous to Christmas Day, giving me ample time to bring my season to a successful termination in Pittsburgh, and to make the necessary arrangements for returning to the city of Philadelphia after an absence of eighteen months, during which Duffy and Forrest commenced the campaign of 1833 and 1834, at the Arch Street Theatre. On the 28th of August, 1833, with the "Iron Chest" and the "Young Widow;" J. R. Scott playing Sir Edward Mortimer. The stars announced, being E. Forrest, Master Burke, and Mrs. Conduit, who afterwards became notorious as the cause of Mr. and Mrs. Wood's fracas in New-York.

The Walnut Street opened under Maywood & Co., on the 31st of August, with the "Mountaineers" and "Aladdin;" Mr. Murdoch playing Octavian. The stars announced, being Mrs. Austin, Mr. Jones, and the far famed Mr. Rice, as Jim Crow. Not much in the way of novelty at either house.

Mr. Davis with his New Orleans company, opened the French opera, on the 2nd of September, with "La Gazza Ladra," and "Rabelais."

On the 10th of September, Duffy and Forrest produced "Ma-zepa" at the Arch Street Theatre—Maywood and Company underlining it also, at the Walnut Street, but not playing it until the 12th of November, when they attempted it at the Chestnut Street Theatre with Gale; but Dan Reed was the most original and successful representative of this very popular drama, in Philadelphia.

On the 14th of September, Mr. Tyrone Power made his first bow at the Walnut Street Theatre, as Sir Patrick O'Plenipo, in the "Irish Ambassador," and Dr. O'Toole in the "Irish Tutor." His success was of such a doubtful nature, that the managers closed the theatre and removed to the Chestnut Street, where on the 23d of September, he played M'Shane, in the "Nervous Man," and Padeen O'Rafferty in "Born to Good Luck;" commencing the brilliant career of success which followed him in the city of Philadelphia, to the hour of his final departure; engagement after engagement, increasing in attraction.

On the 7th of October, Mr. and Mrs. Wood appeared at the Chestnut Street Theatre, as Hawthorn and Rosetta, in "Love in a Vil-

lage ;” and this may be the most appropriate place for the following remarks.

MR. AND MRS. WOOD.

These distinguished vocalists made their first appearance in the United States, at the Park Theatre, New-York, on the 19th of September, 1833, as the Prince and Cinderella ; and at the Chestnut Street Theatre, as above related ; here their first engagement was not a profitable one. It was not until the following season, when they produced “ La Somnambula,” that the theatre was nightly crowded with delighted auditors. The lady, as Miss Paton, had long enjoyed the reputation of being the best English singer of the day. How well she deserved that title, let those decide who have heard her in “ Norma.” As to her merit, there is no divided opinion ; but as to the merit of Mr. Wood, there are as many opinions as critics ; no two agreeing upon the exact rank he ought to hold as a vocalist.

To the Woods belongs the credit of establishing what Mrs. Austin and Mr. Berkeley commenced—a taste for English Opera, on so firm a basis, as to render it essential to the success of a theatrical season. They made the citizens of these United States in love with music, paving the way for the success of Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Miss Sherriff, Mr. Wilson, Giubelei, Miss Poole, &c. The only thing now wanting to place the American theatres in the same rank as the best in Europe is “ The Ballet,” for which Fanny Ellslet has left a hankering wish, as Malibran did for Italian Opera.

No person has been treated so harshly by the American public as Mr. Wood ; twice driven in disgrace from the stage, and on both occasions without cause, or even reasonable complaint, on the part of his persecutors.

Mr. E. Forrest refused to act for the benefit of the poor, in his native city of Philadelphia, during a winter of more than common severity ; but nobody dreamt of hissing him from the stage, or forcing him to retire from his profession, because he denied the right of any committee to dispose of his services as they thought proper, or to exact from him two hundred dollars, (the compensation he received for acting nightly,) for the same purpose to which they generously proposed to contribute the price of a box-ticket. As a matter of *business* he refused his professional services, which nobody presumes to say he had *not* a right to do ; but he offered publicly, through the newspapers, to *double* any sum that either of the gentlemen who were so clamorous on the subject of his

refusal *would give for the relief of the poor, from one hundred to five hundred dollars*; but they declined this just mode of testing the sincerity of their charity, designating the proposal as an insult from a purse-proud actor. Much undeserved obloquy has been cast upon Mr. Forrest's name for the want of feeling he exhibited in refusing his professional aid for this benefit; but I can see no evidence of want of feeling in the proposition which accompanied the refusal. It was a determination to maintain the right of control over his business capital, (*i. e.*, his talent,) at the same time that he was willing to contribute generously to the wants of the poor.

The demand made upon Mr. Wood was of a similar nature, but the exercise of the same control was refused. It was intended as charity to an individual, a member of the profession, who had not the slightest claim upon his consideration that she should expect, and her friends demand, the gratuitous services of Mr. and Mrs. Wood on her benefit night. Was Mrs. Conduit the friend or associate of Mrs. Wood? *Assuredly not.* They possessed nothing in common but the unenviable title of *actress*. The attack made upon Mr. Wood was followed up with the ferocity of savages, and disgraceful to a civilised community. He was, perhaps, unwise, for he might easily have turned the tide of popular *indignation* into *admiration*, by at once acceding, in bland terms, to the wishes of those assembled for the avowed purpose of insulting him, and offering the services of himself and Mrs. Wood for the *lady's* benefit; but he preferred his independence to his interest, refusing to yield to threats what he had already declined to entreaty. His subsequent conduct, in spitting in the face of the reporter of the *Courier and Enquirer*—the newspaper which produced the mischief—admits of no excuse; but it was a manly feeling which prompted the act. He was too young and powerful to attack an old man, for the purpose of castigation, without a charge of cowardice; to have challenged him would only have been to have subjected himself to a column of abuse in the newspapers, on the audacity of an actor, whose profession, it would have been said, excludes him from the title of gentleman, daring to seek the redress of one. He did it, therefore, to provoke from the reporter a demand of that satisfaction for an insult no gentleman could brook, which he was anxious and willing to afford him. But these wholesale assassins of reputation always shrink from the responsibility of personal encounter; in a court of law, and not the court of honor, he sought his redress, receiving several thousand dollars for preventing Mr. Wood from peacefully

pursuing his profession. Hard sentence this, for an assault unattended by violence. Had the reporter spat upon the actor, the judge, I am inclined to think, would have pronounced no such heavy penalty. The courts of New York fined Bennett of the *Herald* five hundred dollars for libelling a judge, and Wood, the actor, thousands, for spitting in the face of "one of the gentlemen of the press," who had not only libelled him, but, through the influence of the newspaper for which he wrote, fomented a conspiracy which drove him from the stage.

The sober second thoughts of the people convincing them that Wood had been most hardly dealt with, and wishing once more to hear the syren notes of Mrs. Wood, he was invited to cross the Atlantic, with an assurance that the past was buried for ever in oblivion. In an evil hour he consented again to visit the United States, to be again insulted, without having given any cause of offence; but Philadelphia, not New York, was the scene of his last degradation.

The Opera of "Norma" had been produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre, as opera alone can be rendered effective, with a full band of instrumental music, and a full chorus of well-drilled singers; but the result proved that the managers did not reap a full harvest. The receipts were unequal to the expenditure; they could not pay their singers and musicians; and because Mr. Wood would not consent to do it for them, by sacrificing his share of the proceeds to the necessity of the theatre, he was, a second time, compelled to resign his professional engagements; the only offence laid to his charge being a refusal to proceed with the opera without being paid for his services, according to contract. When the managers and himself agreed to bring what they represented to be a losing engagement to the theatre, to a termination, no allusion was made by either party to the fact of the following night being the one appropriated for the benefit of Mrs. Bailey. Mrs. Wood at once volunteered her services for a concert, to be given by Mrs. Bailey, at which Mr. Wood was not permitted to sing; he prudently declining to appear when rumor pointed out "a row," without an object. Thus the Woods were, a second time, driven from the shores of America, victims of unjust persecution. Kean, who had offended, was severely, but perhaps justly, punished; Anderson merited his fate, and courted it; but Wood was the victim of newspaper violence and misrepresentation, and, to crown all, he had invested the greater part of his professional earnings in the stock of the United States Bank—lost—all lost; so that his recollections of the United States must be very agreeable; and

if the notes of himself and his wife were now considered as of little or no value, those he received in return proved more worthless.

The death of Mr. William Forrest caused the Arch Street Theatre to close for the season as early as the 4th of February. On the 11th of June, Mr. Duffy produced Dr. Bird's new play of the "Broker of Bogota," written for Mr. E. Forrest. Why it has been so seldom acted, might well be asked; for as an effective acting play it is superior to either the "Gladiator" or "Oraloossa," from the pen of the same author.

On the 23d of August, 1834, Maywood and Co. commenced their season, in the Arch Street Theatre, with the play of "Man and Wife," and "Simpson and Co." Maywood having visited England during the vacation, sent over, as recruits, Mr. Burtōn, Mr. Hamilton, Miss Pelham, and Miss Elphinstone, who made their first appearance in the United States thus: on the 25th of August, Mr. Hamilton as Sir B. Backbite, and Miss Pelham as Lady Teazle, in the "School for Scandal;" on the 26th, Miss Elphinstone as Juliet; and on the 3d of September, Burton, as Dr. Ollapod, in the "Poor Gentleman," and Wormwood in the "Lottery Ticket." Power and James Wallack played each for a few nights; and on the 13th of October, the Chestnut Street Theatre opened with "Romeo and Juliet,"

MISS PHILIPS

acting the part of Juliet. This young lady's fame in the theatrical world was of very recent date, and, although supported by Wallack, always a favorite with the Philadelphia public, her engagement was not an attractive one. The managers had raised the prices—to one dollar, boxes, and fifty cents to the pit, which, might have caused the failure, more than any want of talent in Miss Philips, who is universally respected for her private worth; and having retired from the stage, is scarcely a fair (yet she is a very *fair*) subject for criticism.

The stars announced, were Mathews, J. Wallack, James Sheridan Knowles, Mr. Ternan, Signor Lauza and pupils, Miss Philips, Miss Fanny Jarman, and Herr Cline.

On the 27th of October, 1834,

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES

played Virginius, in his own play of that name. We had always supposed Virginius to be a Roman; but to use a little Irish slang on this occasion, he was "a Greek"—what a delightful Irish

brogue he had. This was not tragedy upon stilts, but upon "hand-crutches." Mr. Knowles has been justly termed the Shakspeare of the present era of the drama, and to carry the similitude a little closer, he determined to prove, like the immortal bard who preceded him, that a divine author may be a very bad actor. The London critics, when they permitted, or tolerated the performance on the stage, of this truly good author, permitted him to exhibit himself in a position which his vanity made him fancy he was fitted for. I will not do him the injustice to follow him through the career of antics he was permitted to play; but turn with pleasure to the record of the reception given to his literary talent, leaving his acting where it is, and from whence no labor can remove it—the theme of laughter to those whom he has made his brethren of the sock and buskin—the actors.

On the 8th of November, a public dinner was given to the dramatist, at the Masonic Hall, by many of our first citizens, at which Mathews was present; and where justice was awarded to one whose plays had for years delighted his hosts. Upon this occasion, and in such a scene as this, Knowles was at home—his good humored blarney making every one present pleased with himself, and consequently pleasing everybody. Whoever had the good fortune to be present at this dinner, will remember it with feelings of pleasure—where the feast of reason and the flow of soul, imparted warmth and hilarity to the dullest present.

On the 10th of November, Mathews, after an absence of eleven years, again appeared before many of his old friends. In 1827, he told me in London, that if his life should be spared long enough, he was determined to contradict in person, the calumny circulated, by playing his "Trip to America," word for word, before an American audience, and leaving them to judge on their own soil whether he had designedly misrepresented them. His expected acquittal was but a disagreement of his jury; and the result aided the speedy dissolution which followed his return to England. It is a subject of regret to me, that I arrived from Pittsburgh twenty-four hours too late to shake hands with him. He started for New-York the very day I returned to Philadelphia.

On the 15th of November, Mr. Ternan, a name unknown, was announced to play Richard the Third. On enquiry, I found he was the husband of

MISS FANNY JARMAN,

Whom, as a girl, I remember in Bath, in 1820, and whose fame

had gradually increased, until, in 1834, she made her appearance as a star, and a bright one, too, at the Chestnut Street Theatre, on the 18th of November, as Juliet. She was received most enthusiastically by the audience, and during her engagement the theatre was crowded nightly. Her success, was her failure—the cause—the same that ruined Mrs. Sloman. In the same manner she had unfortunately selected Philadelphia to make her first appearance in the United States. The same success in New-York, would have heralded her throughout every city in the Union; but talent must not be fostered in Gotham, which has violated the golden rule laid down—that they alone must assign the rank which every foreign artist must hold—“ ’tis true ’tis pity, pity ’tis ’tis true.” As Mrs. Ternan was another sacrifice, it may be deemed bad authority, but my opinion of her talent is, that, as an actress, in every requisite of her art, she is superior to Miss Ellen Tree. As she made her first appearance in Philadelphia, so also did she take her leave of America here, at the Walnut Street Theatre, in the character of Ion.

On the 15th of December, Celeste commenced an engagement as the French Spy. Up to this time, Maywood & Co. had the whole city of Philadelphia to themselves; but the day fixed for opening the American Theatre, so christened, on the 7th of October, was fast approaching.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Return from Pittsburgh—Eclipse of the Sun—Opening of the American Theatre, Walnut Street—Gratifying Reception—Mr. Oxley—Mr. A. Addams—Judge Conrad’s Play of “Jack Cade”—Difficulty of its Production—Correspondence—Failure from the Misconduct of Mr. Addams—Play Re-written for Mr. E. Forrest—Firemen’s Fund Benefit—“Zanthe”—“Tom and Jerry”—Awkward Accident—Misconduct of Actors—“Last Days of Pompeii”—E. T. Conner’s Performance of Glaucus—Sheridan Knowles—Miss Emma Wheatley—Coney and Blanchard, with their Dogs—Close of the first Season—Introduction of Mr. Hadaway to the Walnut Street Audience.

ON the 29th of November, 1834, the Pittsburgh Theatre closed its third season, having been open seventy-three nights, during which Gouffé, (the Monkey man,) Miss Mary Duff, Mr. Charles Mason, Mrs. Sharpe, Mr. Cooper, and Miss Priscilla Cooper, (Mrs. Robert Tivler,) Mr. A. Addams, and Mr. Hill appeared.

On the 1st of December, I started with my family in the Good Intent mail line, for Philadelphia, and in our progress, witnessed an eclipse of the sun at the top of the Alleghany Mountains, the most beautiful and sublime sight ever seen from such a position—the shadow of darkness on the trees, looking indeed like the shadow of death, described in the Pilgrim's Progress.

On Monday, the 22nd of December, 1834, according to previous announcement, I opened the American Theatre, Walnut Street, with the following company:—John Sefton, William Sefton, E. Conner, John Mills Brown, Charles Porter, J. G. Porter, Charles Thorne, A. Jackson, W. Kent, Schinotti, De Cordova, Lewellen, Rodney, Caldwell, Mestayer, Sprague, Fenner, Forrest, Wemyss, and Barrymore; Prompter, Mr. Huntley; Miss Mary Duff, Mrs. Duff, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Thorne, Mrs. Conduit, Mrs. Cooke, (Mrs. Roper,) Mrs. LaCombe, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Jackson, Miss Charnock, Miss Ruth, Miss Pearce, Miss Gillespie. Barrymore was the stage manager; Clemens, the leader of the orchestra; the play, "Wild Oats," and the farce, the "Dumb Belle." When I appeared as Rover, my reception was most gratifying to my professional pride. Not content with the usual demonstration on the appearance of an old favorite, as the curtain fell upon the last act of the play, I was loudly called for, and received by such applause as rarely falls to the lot of an actor. The farce of the "Dumb Belle" introduced John Sefton, after an absence of some years; it was admirably acted, and at the close of the performance, I was again called before the curtain, and while bowing my acknowledgments, an auditor proposed three cheers for the success of Mr. Wemyss and the American Theatre; which were given with a hearty good will.

The first drama I produced, was "The Golden Farmer," in which Mr. John Sefton laid the foundation of his theatrical fame. To him this part, which he at first refused to play, and to the last moment grumbled about, has put more money into his pocket, than all the catalogue of parts he ever acted, put together. At the Franklin Theatre in New-York, under the management of Dinneford, he played this part one hundred times, during the first season, a thing without precedent in the annals of the American stage, either before or since. Mr. Sefton had a clause in his articles of agreement with me, by which he had the right to choose his part in the dramatis personæ, where there was more than one low comedy part in a piece, and he insisted on playing Harry Hammer; but Barrymore insisted that he was the only man in the theatre fit for his "thief" in the "Golden Farmer." It was finally

left to my decision, and although John Mills Brown played Hammer, much to the mortification of Sefton; yet I do not think my friend John has any cause to complain of the result, offended although he was by the choice, and first played Jemmy Twitcher as an act of favor towards me in the management of the theatre. "*Vell, vot of it,*" we know what we are; but the best among us know not what we may be.

I laid out a plan from which I never departed, to produce a new piece every Saturday night, and the steady perseverance in this plan, first gave the Walnut Street Theatre one night in the week, on which the manager could depend upon a good house by very moderate exertion. And Saturday still preserves its prerogative in that theatre.

On the 29th of December, I introduced to the Philadelphia public, their townsman, Mr. John Oxley, as a star, (one of minor importance; but who still continues to sparkle, while brighter constellations have been totally eclipsed.) As an actor, he was unknown; but he made an impression which has since enabled him to wander about, with the admitted right of having his name placed in large letters on the play-bills, whenever he performs.

The "*Amazon Sisters,*" followed the "*Golden Farmer,*" in which Miss Mary Duff and Mrs. Kent sustained the heroines in a masterly style. On the first of January, 1835, the "*Deep, Deep Sea*" was produced; but notwithstanding Barrymore's acknowledged tact, it failed to please, and was withdrawn after the second night. On the 5th of January,

MR. A. A. ADDAMS,

after so long an absence from Philadelphia as to have been almost forgotten, made his bow to a crowded house, in the character of Hamlet. Had he permitted me to choose, it would have been either Damon or Virginius. He pleased his audience, but in either of the latter characters he would have carried them away with him triumphantly. Why Hamlet should be selected by so many clever young men to try their powers, is a subject upon which pages might be written. Of all the characters of Shakespeare, the melancholy Prince of Denmark is the most difficult to attain excellence in. John Kemble, Charles Young, Edmund Kean, and Junius Booth, are the only actors who have, in my mind, approached the just conception of this part. I do not like Macready, with all his study—he is too cold and constrained; and although A. Addams' representation is on a par with E. For-

rest's, yet they both want that finish so requisite to complete the picture, neither of them having any pretensions above mediocrity in this character. Addams played twelve nights, on each successive performance rising in favor, until he was fixed so firmly in the good opinion of the audience, that nothing has been able to destroy his popularity, and no man has labored harder to effect it—disappointing his audience frequently, yet always forgiven, and always received with kindness on his return to reason, to offend in a similar manner on some occasion when his services were most needed.

Gifted by nature with a commanding person, not only a handsome, but an expressive countenance, a voice capable of being modulated to the tones of the softest flute, yet powerful enough to out-rant the loudest lungs of any actor who ever tore a passion to rags, Mr. Addams should have distanced all competitors. He is the only one who ever had a chance of shaking Forrest in his position, and made him tremble for his title of *the* (“par excellence”) American tragedian. The genius of Addams is superior to that of any American actor, but the study and application requisite to make that genius available, was wanting. While Forrest, by tact in the management of his affairs, was accumulating wealth, Addams was destroying both his pocket and his health by a course of dissipation which placed public opinion at defiance. His engagement with me, which should have been profitable to us both, was of no service *to him*, and a positive loss *to me*. No one labored harder than myself to reclaim him. That he has chosen to throw away such advantages is a source of regret to all his friends.

As a proof of the utter recklessness with which he trifled with his reputation, I subjoin his letter to me, announcing his success at the Park Theatre :

(COPY.)

Park Theatre, New-York, 1835.

MY DEAR W.

I walked into them like goose and mashed potatoes last night, up to the handle ; at the end of the fourth act they gave me nine rounds. I play Othello to-morrow night, Miss Philips playing Desdemona. Where's the doctor ?

Yours truly,

(Signed) AUGUSTUS ADDAMS.

F. C. WEMYSS, Esq.

This was on the 3d of April, when he appeared as Virginius, succeeding to his heart's content, where success was certain to be followed by money as well as fame. He left an impression upon his audience, which he failed to improve, missing the golden opportunity offered by Simpson, and flying off to Albany, without fixing any time for his return to the Park Theatre; until, in pique, he went to the Bowery, on his return to New-York—thus closing his hopes at the Park forever.

In the full tide of his first success at the American Theatre in Philadelphia, he was introduced to R. T. Conrad, Esq., (afterwards Judge Conrad,) whose play of "Conrad of Naples," having met with success at the Arch Street Theatre, suggested the idea, that a tragedy from his pen, written expressly for the theatre, would prove a source of profit, and also of fame to the young tragedian. It was agreed Mr. Conrad should write a play, the principal character adapted to the talent of Addams, which, if approved by *him*, was to be purchased by me, at such a price as should be fixed upon by two gentlemen of literary taste; one to be nominated by R. T. Conrad, the other by F. C. Wemyss.

This is the origin of the play of "Jack Cade"—"The Noble Yeoman"—"Aylesmere."

"The Noble Yeoman," was the author's first title; "Jack Cade" was substituted, at my suggestion, as a more "taking" one, that being the name of the hero of the piece.

Addams expressed himself delighted with the part; the play was accepted by him, and placed by the author in the hands of L. A. Godey and Morton McMichael, Esqrs., under the following agreement:

(COPY.)

Francis C. Wemyss and R. T. Conrad having submitted to Louis A. Godey and Morton McMichael, a manuscript tragedy, entitled "The Noble Yeoman," in order that they might fix a value upon the same, the said Louis A. Godey and Morton McMichael determine as follows:

Francis C. Wemyss shall pay to the said Robert T. Conrad the sum of three hundred dollars, in cash, and the proceeds of the third night of the representation of the said tragedy shall be for the benefit of the said Robert T. Conrad, that is to say, the third night shall be announced for the benefit of the author, and the receipts of the house, after deducting two hundred dollars for expenses, shall be mutually divided, share and share alike, between the said Francis C. Wemyss and Robert T. Conrad.

(Signed) L. A. GODEY.
MORTON MCMICHAEL.

Philadelphia, Oct. 2d, 1835.

We agree to the above decision, and undertake to abide by its terms.

(Signed) FRANCIS C. WEMYSS.
R. T. CONRAD.

On the 25th of Oct., 1835, Mr. A. A. Addams left me in the city of Pittsburgh, to commence an engagement in Philadelphia, during which the play of "Jack Cade" was to be produced, both the public and myself expecting a performance from the hero worthy of his reputation. On the 16th of November instead of Conrad's play, I perceived by the newspapers that Mr. Addams had commenced his engagement with Damon, and received a letter by the mail from Mr. Philip Warren, urging my immediate return, for he had used all his rhetoric in vain, to induce Mr. Addams to play the part of Cade; that the scenery and dresses, every requisite behind the scenes, was ready, but the principal actor was not perfect in his part.

On Tuesday, the 2nd of December, I arrived in Philadelphia, making it my first business to send for Mr. Addams: he assured me he was perfect in the words, and wanted only rehearsals. I told him I was tired of this trifling, and asked him whether he could play the part—yes or no—on Monday, the 7th, rehearsing it every morning until the day of performance; he said, certainly, and the following morning found us engaged on the stage.

On Thursday I received the following letter from Mr. Conrad:

(COPY.)

I venture to say that no man in town is more rejoiced at your return than I am. I have had more trouble with the piece since it left my hands than in writing it. Immediately after you signified a desire to have it noticed, the *press* opened full-mouthed, but the piece thus announced *didn't come*, and I was forced to signify to my friends the necessity of silence, until we knew when it was coming out; or whether at all; for from the delay in the principal part I began to be apprehensive it would not be played. I was sedulous in visiting and urging Mr. Addams up to the day of my illness. To have had the piece blowing away all this time would have been awful. It is bad enough to undergo the puff, puff, puff, for a week, but night and day for a month, it would have made the piece and its author, the theatre and its manager, objects of universal merriment; so those of my friends who had their hands on the bellows stopped, until they were certain the iron was in the fire. Since they are assured of that, they will doubtless get to work to the tune of "Blow your trumpets, blow." If the piece fails, it wont be for the want of puffing. I am glad to learn that *you say* that Addams is up in the part—if he is, he will play it splendidly.

Will you do me the favor to superintend such alterations as may be necessary. I don't care about the piece being cut, but should like some moderation observed in leaving out or transposing scenes. If such is contemplated, will you see to it. Any change *you* approve will meet my full assent.

Will you be so kind as to send by my brother my MS. of the piece: I want to have several extracts made for the papers on Saturday.

Your's truly,

(Signed) R. T. CONRAD.

Thursday night.

On Saturday morning Mr. Addams did not attend rehearsal, but sent an apology, stating that he wished to remain at home and devote his time to the study of Jack Cade, and requesting the prompter to read his part, but not on his account to dismiss the rehearsal. This not being an unusual request, raised no suspicion in my mind. The play was announced for Monday night, and it was not until Monday morning, when I received a note from Miss Mary Duff, that she was too much indisposed to act Marianne, that I began to tremble for the fate of my play. The part, although an interesting one, was not a long one, and Miss Ann Waring, with that kindness which always characterised her conduct in the theatre on such occasions, instantly volunteered her services; a messenger was despatched for Mr. Addams, whose return induced me to visit that gentleman. I found him seated in an arm chair, just recovering from an attack of mania-a-potu!!! He assured me, however, that he would be at the theatre, ready to perform his part in the evening. At half-past six o'clock, when the house was crowded, I received a note from his physician, to inform me *Addams was totally unfit to appear*. What to say to the audience, under such circumstances, puzzled me; at that moment Mr. David Ingersoll, an actor of much talent, entered the green-room; I offered him one hundred dollars to read the part, and play it for three nights: the first proposition he would not listen to; but for one hundred dollars, offered to act it three nights, the first performance to take place on Wednesday. Thus armed, without time for thought, I presented myself before an audience who had paid upwards of eight hundred dollars for admission, to announce to them *the disappointment*. More than half the auditors demanded their money back again, and, after returning four hundred dollars, we substituted "Ambrose Gwinette" for "Jack Cade," and promised the latter play for Wednesday; substituting Mr.

Ingersoll for Mr. Addams, and Miss Ann Waring for Miss Mary Duff, in the two principal characters, so that all the fame of an original part, which had cost me three hundred dollars, was sacrificed for a night's debauch. Oh shame! shame! Mr. A. A. Addams. No sooner was the arrangement announced in the play-bills, than Mr. Warren handed me the following letter from the author:—

(COPY.)

Philadelphia, Tenth day, 1835.

DEAR SIR,

I perceive that Mr. Ingersoll is underlined for "Jack Cade," on Thursday. I am sorry that it has been thought advisable to produce the piece at present, with Mr. Ingersoll, as I think that, if reserved for Mr. Addams, who is now nearly well, and perfect in the part, we will be enabled to get up some excitement in its favor, and give it a *run* which will remunerate Wemyss for the expenses already incurred. Having been announced as written for Addams, he will certainly draw in it better than any one else. If Mr. Ingersoll plays it, Addams probably *will not*, and we lose all chance of making much of the piece. I mean no disrespect to Mr. Ingersoll. However well he may play the character, the circumstances of the case, I think, make it advisable to reserve it for Addams, with whom I think we can yet make the piece profitable, and without whom I am confident it will not draw *now*. I have no personal feeling in the matter, but am entirely anxious to see Mr. Wemyss repaid for the money laid out on the play.

Yours truly,

(Signed) R. T. CONRAD.

P. WARREN, (Present.)

I also received from my friend, McMichael, the following note:

(COPY.)

DEAR WEMYSS,

I have just heard that you intend to do "Jack Cade" to-morrow night, with Ingersoll and Miss Waring. Do you think you have a right to make this change without some consultation with the author? The sale was made upon the understanding that Addams should play the part of Cade; and as Conrad's interest in the benefit is equal to your own, the property does not absolutely rest in you, until that has taken place.

If the piece should fail, in consequence of the change of performers, and the shortness of the notice, you will incur severe

censure. I wish you would think of the matter before it is too late.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) M. McMICHAEL.

December 8, 1835.

Was ever a poor devil of a manager so tormented? The author and his friends remonstrating against Mr. Ingersoll acting the part—no dependence whatever to be placed on Mr. Addams—and the audience clamorous for the play. I decided upon acting it, and on Wednesday, the 9th of December, 1835, "Jack Cade" was first acted with the following cast:

Lord Say, Conner; Clifford, Porter; Walter Worthy, Clarke; Henry Mowbray, Watson; Sir Edward Lacy, Porter; Courtney, Muzzy; Faintheart, Hadaway; Pembroke, Collingbourn; Vassal, Mestayer; Harald, Smith; Henger, Bottenham; Jack Cade, Ingersoll (instead of Addams); Helen Mortimer, Miss Ann Waring (instead of Miss Mary Duff); Margaret, Miss Charnock.

The receipts on the occasion were \$339,25; the second night, \$243; and the third night, for the benefit of the author, \$288,75. Thus did Mr. Addams lose the opportunity of reaping the harvest which afterwards fell to Mr. E. Forrest, in his play of "Aylesmere," altered and re-written by the author from my play of "Jack Cade."

Mr. Addams, too indolent to commit the words of his part to memory, avoided from time to time, on the most frivolous pretexts, acting the part of Jack Cade, until the term of his first engagement with me had expired. I am thus particular, because to Mr. A. Addams's history this play belongs, and I must carry on the subject to a conclusion here, as the most proper place for its insertion. In entering into a contract with him for another year, the day was fixed upon which he was to act in this tragedy. Here it is:—

"I agree, under the present engagement, to deduct one thousand dollars only, instead of two thousand, due by A. A. Addams, he giving his note for the other thousand on demand, which shall remain twelve months in my possession, provided A. A. Addams fulfils his contract, otherwise to be in full force against him. The month due for sickness, occasioned by his own imprudence, A. A. Addams to make good when demanded. I will pay the two hundred dollars to Mr. Browsers, immediately after the performance of Jack Cade by A. A. Addams, which is to take place on Monday, February the first, 1836. I will also agree to pay to

A. A. Addams his salary weekly, on condition he shall in no case call upon me for further pecuniary aid. I will have the whole account brought regularly up immediately on my return from Washington.” (Signed.)

F. C. WEMYSS.

Considering that the author had not been fairly treated, I insisted that Addams should play the part, which he did on the first of February, 1836. *He failed even in the attempt, for his performance was not equal to Ingersoll's, and the public were more than ever disappointed.* His first night was \$317,50; the second, \$112,50; the third, \$118,25; the proceeds of the three nights not equal to the amount taken to witness the first announcement. He played the part twice in Pittsburgh, and there ended his connexion with the play, disastrous in its results, through his misconduct, to all concerned.

In 1839, when making arrangements with Mr. E. Forrest to perform three separate engagements at the Walnut Street Theatre, I asked him if Judge Conrad would re-write the play of “Jack Cade,” to suit his views of what the hero should be, whether he would act the part? He said he would do so. On my arrival at Philadelphia, I told the Judge that I thought it was due to his reputation, that the play, which had never been fairly tested, should have a chance of success, and told him what had occurred between myself and Forrest. He said he felt bound to do anything that would promote *my* interest in the affair, as he looked upon the play as my property. I told him that any arrangement he might make with Mr. Forrest should be exclusively his own, reserving only to myself the right of the play in Philadelphia, and with this understanding I placed the MS. in his hands. That the play of “Aylesmere” was the result of this negotiation, and that much of the language of “Jack Cade” is retained, is not denied, although Mr. Forrest said he could not conceive what right I possibly could have to a play written by Judge Conrad for *him*; yet I will give a copy of his first letter upon the subject of this very play.

(COPY.)

DEAR WEMYSS,

I have it marked 11th and 16th of September. I can begin with you on the 11th, but would it not be better to open on Monday the 16th? You might then do it with a flourish of trumpets. You are perfectly right to raise the prices. Want of time will prevent my visiting Philadelphia prior to my engagement

with you. I should like much to see the play of "Jack Cade," and will be much obliged if you will send me the MS.

It would be well perhaps to produce Richelieu during the first engagement at the Walnut, and reserve the re-written "Jack Cade" for the succeeding engagement.

There is a prospect of my having an entirely new and effective play for you during the season.

With best regards to Mrs. Wemyss, yours truly,
(Signed) EDWIN FORREST.

13th August, 1839.

At a later period of the season, he thus writes upon the same subject :

DEAR WEMYSS—

I have not yet received the MS. from Judge Conrad. He promised it by the 4th inst. So soon as it comes to hand, I will furnish you with the scene, plot, &c., &c.

I am anxious to postpone my next engagement with you, from the 13th April until Wednesday, the 22d of that month.

At present I cannot say any thing definitively about Baltimore, so you must make your arrangements, and let me take my chance, in the event of my being able to perform there.

Mrs. Forrest joins me in kindest remembrance to Mrs. Wemyss and yourself.

An answer by return of mail will much oblige

Yours truly,

(Signed) EDWIN FORREST.

F. C. WEMYSS, Esq.

New-York, March 6th, 1840.

The play was not produced during the season; and notwithstanding, when in New-York, C. Thorne, the manager of the Chatham Theatre, offered me, through Mr. Rice, my own terms for my skeleton copy of "Jack Cade," the only one in my possession, to enable them to produce it on the same night at their theatre, with Addams as Jack Cade, that Forrest produced "Aylesmere at the Park, I refused, writing from the prompt-table of the National Theatre to Mr. Forrest the following :

(COPY.)

DEAR FORREST—

I have this day refused a tempting offer to do an action which might have affected the literary credit of my friend, Judge

Conrad. I have been offered \$200 for a copy of my *old play* of "Jack Cade." You are aware I paid the judge, some years ago, \$300, and a portion of the receipts of the third night of performance, announced as the Author's Benefit; you are also aware I first broached the subject of rewriting this part of Cade for you, and was to have had the advantage of the performance by you in your last engagement with me at the Walnut Street Theatre. I need hardly say that \$200 to me, at this time, would have been a small fortune. However I regret not what has been done; and should your play succeed, shall leave it hereafter to be decided by Conrad and yourself whether I deserve any consideration at your hands.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) F. C. W.

E. FORREST, Esq.,
Park Theatre, N. Y.

The great tragedian suffered this note to remain *unanswered*; and I never received to this hour the slightest remuneration for the appropriation of *my* property to *his* use. What an uproar it would have made if I had taken "Metamora," and, altering the dialogue, suffered Mr. Addams to play the hero. Why, no epithet would have been considered too bad to mark the indignation of the actor; but the manager has no such claim to sympathy; his property is fair game for every body to make a target of; and stealing copies of MSS. has, from time immemorial, been one of the perquisites of the prompter, on every occasion of the production of a new and successful play.

On Tuesday, the 27th of January, took place the first benefit in aid of the Fund for the Support of Disabled Firemen. The house was filled; Addams acting Damon, and Oxley, Pythias. The following Address was written by Robert T. Conrad, on the occasion, and delivered by F. C. Wemyss:

ADDRESS.

The city slumbers: o'er its silent walls
Night's dusky mantle, soft and silent, falls;
Sleep o'er the world slow waves its wand of lead,
And ready torpors wrap each sinking head;
Still'd is the stir of labor and of life,
Hush'd is the hum, and tranquilliz'd the strife;
Man is at rest, with all his hopes and fears,
The young forget their sports, the old their cares,
The grave or careless, those who joy or weep,
All rest contented on the arm of sleep.

Sweet is the pillow'd rest of beauty now,
 And slumber smiles upon her tranquil brow ;
 Bright are her dreams—yes, bright as heaven's own blue,
 Pure as its joys, and gentle as its dew ;
 They lead her forth along the moonlit tide,
 Her heart's own partner wandering by her side ;
 'Tis summer's eve : the soft gales scarcely rouse
 The low-voic'd ripple, and the rustling boughs,
 And, faint and far, some melting minstrel's tone
 Breathes to her heart a music like its own.
 When, hark !—oh, horror ! what a crash is there !—
 What shriek is that which fills the midnight air ?
 'Tis fire !—'tis fire ! She wakes, to dream no more ;
 The hot blast rushes through the blazing door,
 The room is dimm'd with smoke, and, hark, that cry !
 " Help ! help !—will no one aid ?—I die ! I die !"
 She seeks the casement, shudd'ring at its height—
 She turns again—the fierce flames mock her flight !
 Along the crackling stairs they wildly play,
 And roar, exulting, as they seize their prey ;
 " Help ! help !—will no one come ?" she can no more,
 But, pale and breathless, sinks upon the floor.

Will no one save thee ? Yes, there yet is one
 Remains to save, when hope itself is gone ;
 When all have fled, when all but he would fly,
 The fireman comes to rescue, or to die !
 He mounts the stair—it wavers 'neath his tread,
 He seeks the room, flames flashing round his head,
 He bursts the door, he lifts her prostrate frame,
 And turns again to brave the raging flame.
 The fire-blast smites him with its stifling breath,
 The falling timbers menace him with death,
 And sinking floors his hurried steps betray,
 And ruin crashes round his desperate way ;
 Hot smoke obscures, ten thousand cinders rise,
 Yet still he staggers forward with his prize ;
 He leaps from burning stair to stair,—On ! on !
 Courage !—one effort more, and all is won ;
 The stair is passed, the blazing hall is braved,
 Still on—yet on—once more !—thank heaven, she's saved !

The hardy seaman pants the storm to brave,
 For beck'ning fortune woos him from the wave ;
 The soldier battles 'neath the smoky cloud,
 For glory's bow is painted on the shroud ;
 The firemen also dare each shape of death,
 But not for fortune's gold, or glory's wreath ;
 No selfish throbs within their breasts are known,
 No hope of praise or profit cheers them on,
 They ask no meed, no fame, and only seek
 To shield the suffering, and protect the weak ;

For this, the howling midnight storm they woo,
 For this, the raging flames rush fearless through,
 Mount the frail rafter, head the smoky hall,
 Or toil, unshrinking, 'neath the tottering wall ;
 Nobler than those who, with fraternal blood,
 Dye the dread field, or tinge the shudd'ring flood ;
 O'er their firm ranks no crimson banners wave,
 They dare, they suffer—not to slay, but save :
 At such a sight, Hope smiles more heavenly bright,
 Pale, pensive Pity trembles with delight,
 And soft-eyed Mercy, stooping from above,
 Drops a bright tear—a tear of joy and love.

And should the fireman, generous, true, and brave,
 Fall, as he toils the weak to shield and save ?
 Shall no kind friend, no minist'ring hand be found
 To pour the balm of comfort in his wound ?
 Or, should he perish, shall his orphans say,
 " He died for ~~them~~—but what for us do they ?"
 Say, is it thus we should his toils requite ?—
 Forbid it justice, gratitude, and right ;
 Forbid it, ye who dread what he endures,
 Forbid it, ye whose slumbers he secures,
 Forbid it, ye whose hoards he toils to save,
 Forbid it, all ye generous, just, and brave ;
 And, above all, be you his friends, ye fair,
 For you were ever his especial care ;
 Give to his cause your smiles, your gentle aid—
 The fireman's wounds are heal'd, the orphans' tears are stayed.

At the close of the performance I was called before the curtain, to return thanks on behalf of the committee, which I did.

On the following evening, I produced "Zanthe," founded upon Kenney's tragedy of "Hernani," which had failed at the Chestnut Street Theatre, with Mr. Charles Kean for the Hero. The secret of this splendid drama, which is now vivid in the recollection of the audience, was simply this:—I was preparing "Gustavus," with a Ball Masqué, to surprise the citizens, when by some means Maywood & Co. were apprised of my movements, and endeavored to forestal them. Much to my annoyance they announced "Gustavus," and produced it on the night of my benefit. Barrymore, whose fertile genius in a theatre was never at a loss, came in, and perceived by my face that something more than common was the matter. I handed him the play-bill containing the announcement of what we intended to be *our great card*, and for which Russel Smith, Landers, and the wardrobe keepers, had been working incessantly from the night the theatre opened. He burst out into a hearty laugh, and slapping me upon the shoulder, said, "Never

mind, governor, we will give them a Roland for an Oliver; let them have 'Gustavus,' we will give them a coronation as well as a ball masqué, and not lose an hour either. To triumphe!"—and away he went. In something less than an hour, he returned in high glee. "All right, my master, and Wednesday shall see us in a new style before this audience, or I will forfeit my head." Wednesday did see us triumphantly successful. For eighteen nights "Zanthe" crowded the theatre; but all is not gold that glitters. Notwithstanding we received in four nights, two thousand two hundred and sixty-five dollars, yet the average was unequal to the expenditure. The extra expense nightly, was—brass band, \$20, four drummers, \$3, one hundred and twenty-five supernumeraries, \$26,25, wax candles, 140—35lbs every three nights, say \$7,00, two pound red fire, at \$3,50—\$7,00; in all, \$63,00, in addition to the dresses and properties, which were in Barrymore's usual style of extravagance. And if "Zanthe" was found at the end of the season in debt to the treasury, it had given us a reputation for spectacle which has served the Walnut Street for capital, ever since the memorable 28th of January, 1836. Its success was perfect, and taught the managers of the aristocratical theatre, "prudence." They never attempted the same thing again; but quietly suffered me to enjoy my reputation as a *minor* theatre.

The favor with which "Zanthe" was received, induced me to revive "Tom and Jerry" with new scenes, and every property on the same scale as when first produced at the Chestnut Street, in 1823, under Warren and Wood. The 9th of February saw the curtain ready to rise upon a house of \$482. Every thing promised a rich harvest; all was marred by the misconduct of Mr. William Sefton, who was the Jerry of the evening. His brother John first called my attention to him during the opening chorus. It was evident he was in such a state of intoxication, that if he got through the part, it would be a miracle. My piece was evidently sacrificed, and I made up my mind to endure the mortification as best I might, resolved that in his person, such an occurrence should never take place again. At the conclusion of the second act, while I was giving some directions to the master carpenter, being dressed at the time for Falstaff, in the "Masquerade," one of the carpenters in running across the stage, slipped and fell between my legs. In endeavoring to rise, he brought me to the floor with him, falling on me and twisting my leg under him. This accident lamed me for life. For twelve months I was unable to walk without the aid of a stick, and never perfectly recovered

the use of my knee. Therefore, I have cause to remember "Tom and Jerry."

On the 23d of March, "The Last Days of Pompeii" was produced with twenty-two new scenes, painted by Russel Smith. The design of the last scene was truly magnificent; but whether by accident or design, failed on the first night. I was present at this representation, for Barrymore had promised to outdo himself: and he certainly kept his word. The three first acts had proceeded much to the satisfaction of the audience, when Barrymore came forward and prepared them for a failure, by stating that his last act had never been rehearsed. Blunder succeeded blunder, until, to crown the whole, the quick match which should have fired Vesuvius, was cut, and passing backwards and forwards on the traveller like a squib, was the only eruption which was to bury Pompeii. Down came the curtain amid the jeers and laughter of the audience. Barrymore, half crazy, seized one of the side lights, and, at the risk of having his eyes blown out, held the lamp until the powder ignited. A most brilliant display of fireworks succeeded. Elated, and determined that the audience should see what effect his last scene had been intended to produce, he insisted upon raising the curtain; but the carpenter, whose duty it was to attend to this matter, had left his post. Up went Barrymore himself, the fireworks blazing away all this time; and very well worth seeing they were—but powder won't burn forever. Just as he succeeded in raising the curtain, the last spark exploded in a puff of powder, and all was darkness. Such a roar of laughter, and such a shower of hisses followed, that Barrymore ran out of the theatre to avoid the shame and mortification of meeting any of the actors. Of course the fate of the "Last Days of Pompeii" was sealed. It cost twenty-three hundred dollars, and was played six nights only. This induced me to hurry on the benefits as fast as possible; and the season closed on the 11th of April, with Conner's benefit—a young man, who, from this very failing piece, in which he acted Glaucus, became one of the most popular stock actors ever known in Philadelphia: thus proving that it is indeed an ill wind that blows nobody good. The receipts of the season amounted to twenty-seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-five dollars, which, for ninety-six nights, gives an average of \$291 per night.

The theatre opened again on the 2nd of May, with Yankee Hill, who played to a succession of bad houses; followed by Mr. and Miss Cooper. Sheridan Knowles played Icilius, for Cooper's benefit—rather an ancient looking lover for Virginia; however,

it proved the kindness of the author's heart. Miss Emma Wheatley and Master Bowers, Mr. Charles Eaton; and finally, Coney and Blanchard, with their dogs Hector and Bruin, and Jim Crow Rice. This season was injudicious. Having succeeded in establishing the Walnut Street as a winter theatre, I should have been content; but the summer season having been looked upon heretofore as exclusively belonging to this theatre, I was induced to make the trial, which cost me eleven or twelve hundred dollars during the fifty-six nights it was open, and is only remarkable for having introduced Hadaway to this theatre, who became a reigning favorite during the whole of my career as manager.

By a singular coincidence, the Pittsburgh Theatre opened on the 2d of May, and closed on the 6th of July, the very same night the curtain fell upon the Walnut Street Theatre for the summer season. Mr. Knowles and Miss Wheatley commenced the season, in "William Tell," to \$306. The following night "The Wife," was advertised, and the receipts \$207; notwithstanding Miss Wheatley was attacked by scarlet fever, and Mrs. C. Green read the part of Marianne; but the brilliant prospect of the season was cut short by this disappointment. Miss Wheatley, and not Sheridan Knowles, was the attraction; and who would come to see him in such parts as Fazio, the Stranger, and Duke Aranza? Ha, ha, ha!—"Oh, Paddy, now can't you be aisy?" A. Addams was the only star who played to even decent houses.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Madame Celeste—"The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green"—Sheridan Knowles—Emma Wheatley—Mrs. Austin's Farewell Benefit—A sad disappointment—Miss Booth—Abbott as "Hamlet"—Balls—John Reeve—Actors, and their Imitators—Complimentary Benefit to Mr. W. B. Wood—Brough—Mr. and Mrs. Wood—Great Success of "La Somnambula"—Re-opening of the Chestnut—Monsieur Tonson come again.

I MUST now proceed to trace the progress of the Chestnut Street Theatre, from the time of my opening. On the same night, Dec. 22d, Celeste, whose career in Europe had added to her previously acquired fame, played in the "Wizard Skiff," and the "Wept of the Wish-ton-wish." Elliot offered to come to the American at

the conclusion of his present engagement. I unfortunately declined the proposition, because I considered the terms exorbitant, thus losing a good auxiliary, and, what would have been of far greater consequence, depriving Maywood and Co., as the sequel proved, of their most attractive, and always to be relied upon, star of the season. On the 29th, Miss Philips was announced to play Mrs. Beverly, but did not arrive, in consequence of some accident on the railroad; she, however, appeared the following evening. On the 7th of January, "Gustavus" was produced. On the 12th, Emma Wheatley, and on the 14th, James Sheridan Knowles, with the wonderful Diavolo Antonio, and his equally wonderful sons. On the 20th, Knowles produced his own play of "The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green," playing Lord Winford himself, Emma Wheatley supporting the character of Bess. The play made no great impression, and was acted only a few nights. After this, Knowles gave a series of lectures on dramatic literature. Here "Richard was himself again;" in such a sphere he moved without a rival, and those who heard these lectures were warm in their expressions of admiration; but I doubt if the author realised much money, however he increased by them his literary fame. Mrs. Austin's farewell benefit, and last appearance, was announced for the 16th of February, the lady playing Ariel in the "Tempest," and Zulima in "Abon Hassan." The house was a very indifferent one, the weather very bad; and the managers announced another night for that purpose, Feb. 19th, when she made her last curtsy to the Philadelphia public, as the Princess in "Massaniello," and "Cinderella," after a residence of eight years in the United States, during which time she labored hard, and successfully too, to establish a taste for English opera; and her reception induced others, of higher talent, to cross the Atlantic in search of fortune. The Chestnut Street Theatre closed for the season on the 21st of February, with Mrs. Ternan's benefit; the pieces, "Fazio," and "The Young Widow." The purpose of closing, the avowed *necessity* of reducing the price of admission to the standard of last year.

I must now travel across the Alleghanies, and bring my fall season in Pittsburgh to a close, which commenced on the 17th of October, 1835, with A. A. Addams as Damon. He was always a sure card with the citizens of Pittsburgh; and started the season with a house to the tune of \$259; his benefit \$313; after which I despatched him across the mountains to play "Jack Cade" at the Walnut Street Theatre. Murdoch made his first attempt as a "star," aided by Miss Vos, Hill, and afterwards by Conner and

Miss Mary Duff: he was not considered of sufficient importance. He had two benefits, neither of them worthy of a stock actor in common favor with his audience. Aided on both occasions by other stars, the first house amounted to \$185,50, and the second to \$158,75.

Music being the order of the day, I made an arrangement with John Thompson Norton, Hunt, Trust and Cioffi, on their way to New Orleans, to stop four nights at Pittsburgh. A subscription paper was well filled to insure me from loss in this attempt, and on the second of November, my box-sheet presented the unusual spectacle of five hundred places secured: even what are termed the "flies" were taken. Night approached, but with it came not the stars of the evening; the canal boat bringing me the very consolatory information, that my party, in despite of warning, had insisted on taking Leech's line of boats instead of the Express line, and that in all probability the gentlemen would arrive about four o'clock on the following morning. The deception practised by this line often proved a source of annoyance from which there was no redress; but I had cautioned Mr. Norton in Philadelphia, and he therefore sinned with his eyes open. I had to call upon Murdoch to aid me by playing Dick Dashall in "My Aunt," and returned between two and three hundred dollars at the doors. Nor was this the worst of the loss: at least half of those who had subscribed for the four nights, at once withdrew their names, and several were so much offended as to abstain from visiting the theatre again during the season: it was not therefore in the best of humors that I met the "absentees" at the breakfast table. They performed on the 2nd of November to \$280, on the 4th to \$191, on the 5th to \$132. The three houses scarcely yielded as much as the first one would have done, and one night out of the four lost altogether. For this disappointment I received only an allowance of fifty dollars from our original engagement.

On the 7th of November Mr. and Mrs. Ternan appeared in "Fazio" and "Personation." On the 20th of November, Miss Booth (now Mrs. Charles Burke) took her first benefit. This young lady improved rapidly in her profession, and at this early period of her career gave promise of her future popularity. She was a great favorite with a portion of the audience, although her style of acting was by some considered as coarse and vulgar—wanting the refinement necessary to personate a lady upon the stage, and approaching in assumption of character nearer to the manners of a chambermaid. Logan beat us all this season in the receipts of his benefit; and on the 28th of November the theatre closed, as

usual, with my benefit, Miss Ann Waring playing "Theresé." In six weeks Addams, Murdoch, Miss Vos, Hill, Norton, Hunt, Trust, Cioffi, Mr. and Mrs. Ternan, Mr. Conner and Miss Mary Duff appeared, so that the worthy citizens of Pittsburgh could not with justice complain of want of attraction.

On the 19th of October—"Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon!" Mr. Abbot made his first appearance at the Chestnut street Theatre as Hamlet. "*Oh Crickee!*"

Do the actors in England suppose that Americans are totally ignorant of the position they occupy in their profession in their own country? Abbot, in his best day, never aspired to even second rate parts in tragedy in London, where he was admitted to be the best walking gentleman belonging to the British stage, and capable of better things, having pretensions as a genteel comedian of repute. We could have tolerated him as a light comedian, superior in every respect to Mr. Balls, who followed him to this country, and allowed his claims to the foremost rank in that walk of the drama; but as a tragedian, capable of playing Hamlet, it was impossible he could succeed, and any mortification he may have met in this career is to be attributed to his own foolish vanity. Whoever had the pleasure to meet him in private society must remember him with feelings of regret, that he is not longer spared to occupy a place at the festive board, he so much graced, where few men possessed so happy a talent of making himself generally agreeable. Whatever may be the opinion of his merit as an actor, placed beyond the sphere of his ability, as a companion all must yield to him their full approbation.

"He was a fellow of infinite mirth."—SHAKESPEARE.

Miss Emma Wheatley was the next star, followed by the ever successful Celeste, producing with great effect the "Devil's Daughter," and commencing the announcement of her one hundred and one (more or less) farewell benefits, with "Victorie" and the "Spirit Bride."

Balls made his first appearance in Philadelphia, on the 16th of November, as Vapid, in the "Dramatist," and the Three Singles, in the "Three and the Deuce." He was a sprightly, dashing, good-looking fellow, possessed of more impudence than talent, seldom knowing the words of his part, and keeping the audience in good humor by never allowing them an opportunity of discovering his weak point. His first engagement was, I am told, a profitable one to the theatre; but, the novelty worn off, such a

result could never be expected again. How I hate bastard starrng ! Why don't the public finish the matter by turning a few of them adrift ? Where talent is really overwhelming in its effect, the starrng system may be endured ; but if ever a well regulated drama is to take root and flourish, the profession must be stripped of all exotics.

On the 17th of December, 1836, one of the drollest of all droll comedians appeared in the person of

MR. JOHN REEVE,

another, and a bright victim to conviviality. From an actor whose gibes and merriment did keep his audience in a roar, descending to the besotted buffoon, uttering his own coarse and vulgar jokes to make the million laugh, and the judicious grieve ; rarely treating his audience to the words of the author, but by his rare comic powers, retaining possession of their kindly feelings to the last moment of his career. Nature had endowed him with such rich power of mimicking, that he dared to enter the field against the *Mathews*, on his own ground, and with success, in a piece called "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, by Advertisement," in which he acted on his first appearance in Philadelphia.

As an actor, he was a spoilt child. From the night of his first appearance at the English Opera House, he gained a place in the good graces of his audience ; and as a "droll," was little inferior to Liston, the great buffoon of the English stage. Reeve never knew the excitement or privation of the strolling actor's career. His first attempt was made in the metropolis ; and notwithstanding his erratic course, to the last moment of his professional existence he possessed the undiminished favor of the audience at the Adelphi Theatre. When he played Bob Acres, in Sheridan's play of "The Rivals," in Philadelphia, he found himself charged with the high crime and misdemeanor of being an imitator of *Burton*, whose popularity had been acquired by a close imitation of the best points in Reeve's acting. This is not an uncommon occurrence in theatricals ; first impressions, if favorable, bearing great weight in the minds of auditors. Miss O'Neil is said to have formed her style of acting from Miss Walstein, who was rejected in London, as an imitator of Miss O'Neil—Elliston, in the same manner, of Tom Cunningham of Bath—Mrs. Jordan, of Mrs. Brown of the York Theatre, who in comedy, shared the same fate as Miss Walstein before the London public. While the imitators reaped golden opinions, the real Simon Pures were rejected as

base counterfeits ; but Reeve's failure in America was owing more to his intemperate habits, than any other cause ; increased perhaps, by the mortification of finding himself considered second to an artist whose greatest merit was, that he *could* imitate such an actor as John Reeve successfully.

The first complimentary benefit offered to an actor in Philadelphia, was tendered to Mr. W. B. Wood, by a committee of his fellow citizens. Mr. Wood had been connected with the stage for thirty-seven years ; during the greater portion of the time as manager. At this period it was a compliment, and Monday, the 11th of January, was fixed upon as the night. As manager of the Walnut Street Theatre, when called upon by Mr. Francis Godey, as one of the committee of superintendence, to lend my aid, I at once placed, not only my own services, but those of any member of the company they might require, entirely at their disposal.

On the 18th of January, Mr. and Mrs. Wood appeared in the opera of "The Maid of Judah," aided by

MR. BROUGH,

who made his first appearance on the Philadelphia stage, in this opera.

" There was a jolly miller once lived on the River Dee,
He drank and sang from morn to night, no one more blythe than he
And this the burden of his song, forever used to be—
I care for nobody, no not I, since nobody cares for me."

Here is at once a character of my good-natured friend Brough ; a better companion over a boon or a bottle, than an actor upon the stage. As a singer, a valuable adjunct to Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and like a satellite, deriving lustre from their superior fame. He has travelled throughout the United States, respected wherever he went, and his absence regretted as the loss of a capital good fellow, ever ready to perform a generous action, seeking his reward in the consciousness of having performed a pleasing duty to one of his fellow beings. Long may his jovial laugh ring over the board of festivity, and success crown him wherever he goes. His name in theatricals must ever be associated with "La Somnambula," and will descend to posterity, so long as the charming music of that opera retains a place in every lady's musical port-folio.

"La Somnambula" was acted for the first time in Philadelphia, on the 11th of February, 1836, and for fifteen consecutive nights

held possession of the town—the Chestnut Street Theatre closing on the 26th of February, for the season, the engagements of Mr. and Mrs. Wood elsewhere, preventing a longer stay ; having acted in Philadelphia, from the 18th of January until the 26th of February.

I am inclined to think this was the most profitable engagement ever entered into by Maywood and Co. during their career as managers.

The Arch Street Theatre opened on the 27th of February, 1836, with the "Exile," and the "Weathercock." Abbot and Miss Wheatley, the first "stars," followed by James Wallack, Herr Cline, John Reeve, Celeste, Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and Mr. Brough, (on the 25th of April, opening in "Fra Diavolo," and "Sonnambula," on the 2d of May,) Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Ternan, J. R. Scott, and closed on the 11th of June.

On the 13th, the Chestnut re-opened with W. B. Wood's benefit, Mr. and Mrs. Ternan playing in the "Jealous Wife," and the farce, "The Happiest Day of my Life." Celeste followed, (Monsieur Tonson come again,) producing "Yelva, the Orphan of Russia," for her farewell benefit, on the 25th, and appearing again on the 26th—with another farewell benefit on the 2d of July. The theatre closed with Rowbotham's benefit, on the 9th of July, "The Gnome King," and "The Quadrupeds." Very legitimate—ahem!

The theatre opened for one night more, on the 11th of July, for the benefit of Mr. Hamilton ; not the only occasion on which he succeeded Mr. Rowbotham.

CHAPTER XXX.

Discoveries in the Moon—Sol. Smith *vs.* the Man-monkey—"The Spirit of '76."—Coney and Blanchard—The "Infernal Machine"—Opening of the Theatre in Washington—A drunken Ghost in "Hamlet"—Addams' performance of "Jack Cade"—"The Jewess"—Mr. Murdoch—A Curious and Interesting scene—News of the Capture of Santa Anna—Close of the Walnut Street—The Wilmington Theatre—Indifference of the people of Wilmington to Theatricals.

The American Theatre in Walnut Street opened for the season on the 22d of August, 1836, with "Richard the Third," Booth,

playing Richard to \$556 ; quite a cheering prospect. On the 29th, Addams played Othello to Booth's Iago, to \$591. Mr. Forbes, Miss Vos, and Rice, (Jim Crow,) succeeded Addams and Booth.

On Saturday, the 5th of September, the first new piece was produced, under the title of "Discoveries in the Moon," (Rice was the author,) founded on the well-remembered *hoax*. It was very successful, and withdrawn only because Rice's engagements would not permit a longer stay. "Bone Squash Diabolo," for which Clemens had written the music, and Landers prepared the machinery, was transferred to the Bowery Theatre, New York. Thus we lost the credit of its original production.

Forbes and Miss Vos did not add to the receipts of my treasury ; but on the 15th of September, Sol Smith, the cherished favorite of the south-western theatres, made his bow in Philadelphia, as Mawworm, in the "Hypocrite." Gouffe played on the same occasion ; and here we see the difference of value between intellectual and physical acting, (I am indebted to my friend Oxley for the observation.) The gentleman and actor received from the citizens of Philadelphia, on his benefit night, \$140, while the man-monkey, on the previous night, received \$444. *O tempora ! O mores !*

On the 23d of September I produced a rational drama, entitled, "The Spirit of '76," in which the costumes, scenery, &c., of the times were carefully preserved. It was played seven nights, to an average of \$257, and was then withdrawn, to make room for Coney and Blanchard, and their dogs, who held possession of the theatre for fourteen nights. On the 16th of October, Mr. Ward took his benefit, previous to his departure to join Maywood and Co., at Baltimore and Washington. Mrs. E. Knight and Mr. Hill both played a short engagement. On the 24th October, Mr. Benjamin Brewster, a young lawyer of much promise, dramatised the "Infidel," from Dr. Bird's novel of that name. I regret that I was in Pittsburgh on this occasion, for I think his play deserved a better fate than it met at the hands of my stage manager.

The next piece was a horrible perpetration, under the title of "Fieschi ; or the Infernal Machine." All I can say about it is, that it was played to infernal bad houses, and consigned to the infernal regions, with the *blessings* of the actors. Hackett played one night, on the 18th of November ; and on the 21st, Addams attempted Richard the Third. Booth and Rice, (Jim Crow,) played : the former, Sir Giles Overreach, and the latter in "Oh, Hush !" on the 28th, to \$857.

"Bone Squash Diabolo," a very clever African opera, was first acted in Philadelphia, on the 1st of December. On the 25th, Russel Smith, whose rapid strides to excellence had now placed him at the top of his profession, painted some most excellent scenery for a Christmas novelty, under the title of "Uda and Magnus." The receipts of Christmas netted \$855 50; not quite as good as the year before, but certainly not a house for the manager to complain about.

On the 25th of December, 1835, I opened the Old Theatre, in Washington city, with "Therese," and "Kill or Cure;" following it by Booth, who played an engagement, profitable to me as well as himself. Everything seemed to promise a good season; but, notwithstanding the aid of A. Addams, Mrs. E. Knight, Mary Duff, Signor Vivalla, and many others, the first fortnight was the only one attended with profit, and I closed it on the 8th of February following; one incident only occurring worth record—a drunken ghost, in "Hamlet!"—A spirit steeped in spirits! Poor Paddy Field, could you have found no other part to disgrace yourself in? Although no subject for laughter, yet it was too comical to see this ghost staggering across the stage, and then, in despair, missing the entrance by which he should have left it. A fellow-feeling for a fellow-failing, I presume, alone induced Booth to proceed, who laughed as heartily as any of the audience.

On New Year's day, 1836, at the Walnut Street, "Ida Stephanoff," a drama, by Conway, was played. It lived three nights only. On the 12th of January, Booth commenced a farewell engagement, prior to his return to England; and a brilliant one it was—Hamlet, Sir Giles Overreach, Sir Edward Mortimer, Pescara, Octavian, Othello, and Richard the Third. This last was played twice to \$800 houses, and repeated by request. Such is the hold this wonderful man possesses over the minds of his audience, and such was the estimation of his talents during this engagement. Let me not forget to mention the production of a pleasing farce under the title of "Hunting a Turtle," acted as it was, nightly, with shouts of laughter, and a standing favorite during the season.

On the 1st of February, Mr. A. A. Addams, after many disappointments, appeared as "Jack Cade." It was a bitter pill, which he was forced to swallow, and unlaced his reputation when most at stake. An original part is generally considered the touchstone of an actor's merit; and here was one of his own choosing, in which he neither performed his duty to himself, the author, or the manager; and the audience rewarded him by the worst benefit he

ever had in Philadelphia. This, however, unfortunately touched my pocket, not his own.

On the 15th of February, James Wallack commenced a short and very unprofitable engagement. I thought I had achieved a great triumph in obtaining his services. Had I known what I discovered afterwards—that in concluding this engagement I was enabling Maywood & Co. to continue, for twelve nights longer, their successful career with the Woods, which Mr. Wallack's time would have interrupted, I should not have been so well pleased with the idea. People are sometimes too cunning for themselves.

The Annual Benefit promised to the Fireman's Fund took place on the 18th of February, and even with the aid of Mr. Wallack, I am sorry to add, was a failure, \$39,25, being all the money I had to pay over to their treasurer on the occasion. Wallack's last night, on which occasion he played Rienzi, was only \$68. He never on any engagement proved a fortunate star to me.

On Monday, February 29th, "The Jewess" was produced. This was an alteration by myself from a drama called "Esther the Jewess." The only merit it contained was its pageantry, which was the most superb of any thing yet offered to the public of Philadelphia. The allegory, headed by Time, representing every nation on the face of the globe, was of such an imposing nature, that I boldly assert, the last scene has never been equalled in America, or surpassed anywhere. The beauty and variety of costume, formed a tableaux on which the eye rested with feelings of delight. The far-famed "Naiad Queen" had no single scene that could compare with the last scene of the "Jewess," although as a whole it far surpassed it, having something like interest attached to its plot, and a succession of brilliant scenes, while the "Jewess" boasted of but one, but that one was a *chef d'œuvre*. It was played fourteen nights, and withdrawn to make room for "Norman Leslie."

This piece was dramatised by F. C. Wemyss, in consequence of Hamblin demanding half the receipts of each night's performance for the use of Miss Medina's drama from the same novel.

Murdoch, with whom I had entered into an engagement to pay him \$275 per month, for three months, and take the proceeds of his benefits, made his first appearance at the Walnut Street Theatre, under my management, as Rover in "Wild Oats," on the 12th of March. He told *some one*, in particular confidence, and *that somebody* repeated it to *every body*, that *he* had *no* interest in the receipts on his benefit nights, so that all the advantage I

expected to reap from the engagement was lost, and at the expiration of the time I declined renewing it, or making him any further offer, but such a one as I made to Hadaway, Conner, and others regularly engaged in the theatre. Thus terminated, on the 2nd of July, the attempt to make a "star" of Mr. James E. Murdoch in his native city—not much to the satisfaction of either party. The pear was not ripe.

Matson's novel of "Paul Ulric," dramatised by himself, was produced on the 30th of April. Its success may be judged by the fact, that the author's night produced ninety-four dollars. Query. How much did the manager make by that?

Hill, who seems to have been dancing the hays during this season, alternately at the Walnut, Chestnut and Arch, played on the 5th of May, an unprofitable engagement, "Cäspar Hauser" being the chief attraction offered. Murdoch and Rice (Jim Crow) followed; and Murdoch's benefit, (reason previously alleged, for it will scarcely be believed,) with the new play of "Caradora," and Rice's assistance, was only \$185.

On the 25th of May a scene occurred of such a character, not often witnessed within the walls of a theatre. The performance announced was "Othello," and "Perfection;" the proceeds to be appropriated in aid of the people of Texas, the public sympathy being deeply excited by the fall of the Alamo, and the inhuman butchery of Fanning and his associates. News of the capture of Santa Anna arrived in the city, and Mr. Coffee, of the Exchange Reading Room, knowing that Colonel Childers of Texas was at the Walnut Street Theatre, with the Texan Committee, came directly to the theatre with a slip received from New York. Col. Thomas Florence, a member of the Committee, read it from the boxes, eliciting the most enthusiastic cheers: Colonel Childers addressed the audience in a complimentary strain, and alluded to the threat made by Santa Anna, "to place his blood-red banner of Mexico on the dome of the Capitol at Washington; and reversing the picture, adverted to the period, when it was not improbable that the Star Spangled Banner, aiding the Lone Star of Texas, would float from the gilded domes of Mexico, as a sign that the tyrant had fallen—that the people were free.

The theatre closed on the 4th of July, with the "Boston Boys in '76," and "Black Eyed Susan."

The Pittsburgh Theatre opened on the 2nd of April, for the spring season, and closed on the 14th of May. The stars who appeared, with the exception of Herr Cline, presented not a very brilliant array.

On the 29th of May I opened the Theatre in Wilmington, Delaware, a very little, snug affair, but out of place in such a city. Notwithstanding Conner, Miss Mary Duff, Murdoch, Oxley, and even Miss Fanny Jarman appeared, in six weeks the whole receipts amounted only to \$886, an average of \$24 a night. Booth could only play to \$33. It was impossible to excite sufficient interest about the drama. With the exception of a few, the citizens neither cared about the actors or the theatre.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Opening of the Season of 1836—"The Bronze Horse"—Out of evil sometimes cometh good—Booth—Finn—His melancholy fate—Forrest—Return of Joe Cowell—Mr., Mrs., and Miss Barnes—Success of "Lafitte"—Farewell Engagement of Mr. Ternan—A quarrel between Justice and Mercy—Mr. Denville—Dr. Croly's play of "Cataline"—Great success of "Thalaba"—New play by David Paul Brown.

ON closing the season, on the 4th of July, 1836, I applied to the stockholders to replace the stage, which had become positively unsafe. They refused; but Mr. Henry G. Freeman *kindly* gave me permission, if I thought proper, to do it at my own expense. As I intended to open my season with the "Bronze Horse," I was compelled to forego the exhibition of scenic pieces, for which the Walnut Street had acquired a reputation, superior even to the Bowery, in New York; or have the stage relaid. Of two evils I chose the least; and, at a cost of one thousand dollars, Mr. Sanders, and his assistants, completed the alterations.

A new difficulty now arose. Miss Waring, upon permission, had been acting for six weeks in New York, with Mr. Hamblin, in the music composed by Mr. Henry Allen, expressly for her voice. I now wanted her assistance; she refused to return, and fulfil her engagements. Mr. and Mrs. Muzzy, also, having had overtures from Mr. Barry, at that time manager of the Tremont Theatre, Boston, also violated their contract. Mr. and Mrs. Houpt, who were engaged, also refused to come to Philadelphia, having made their arrangements with me the means of obtaining their own terms with Pelby. Mr. Collingbourne, and Mr. and Mrs. Watson, I had voluntarily released. Mrs. Willis was engaged at the Park Theatre, New-York; and to her kindness in foregoing, under these circumstances, a more eligible situation, was I in-

debted for the means of opening at the appointed time, but not with the appointed piece. The "Bronze Horse" was not produced until the 31st of August; and is the first piece upon record that ever ran fifty nights, in one season, in the city of Philadelphia.

I opened on Saturday, the 27th of August, with the "Fate of Calas," and the "May Queen." The money saved by the misconduct of these actors proved a source of profit on the season, which, for the first time, netted nearly five thousand dollars; the success of the "Bronze Horse" rendering it unnecessary for me to supply the place of any of the delinquents, until after Christmas. "Verily, out of evil sometimes cometh good." Russel Smith increased his reputation tenfold by the scenery; and repaired to Boston, to the New Theatre, (The Lion,) to paint the scenery, and also superintend the machinery. Mr. John Wiser supplied his place during his absence; and in the Walnut Street Theatre acquired the first practical lessons in the art of scene-painting, in which he, also, has become an adept.

Booth was the first star; commencing with the "Stranger," on 6th of September. I did not wish to break off the connection of Booth's name and the Walnut Street Theatre, or I should have declined this engagement; it was paying a premium to keep him from performing at any other theatre in the city. Mr. and Miss Cooper followed—the "Bronze Horse" still continuing his career. On the 3d of October, Mr. Finn appeared in the "Clandestine Marriage;" an actor, whose dreadful fate in the Lexington steamboat, makes his a name which never will be forgotten. To me he addressed the last letter he ever wrote upon the subject of theatricals, and, in all probability, the last he ever penned; and I cannot do better than subjoin it, although it was two years from the present time. He was ice-bound on the western side of the Alleghany mountains, and from Pittsburgh had addressed me a letter of complaint; the subject of which I was anxious to remove. He remained to act, (as he passed through Philadelphia, returning from that unfortunate engagement,) for Celeste's benefit, at the Chestnut Street Theatre; and, so delayed, became a passenger on board the Lexington; whether perishing by fire or water has never been ascertained.

(COPY.)

United States Hotel, Saturday Evening.

DEAR WEMYSS,

I did not receive your letter till after I had finished acting, or should have replied before.

I think my explanation of circumstances will exonerate Mr.

Jackson from having unnecessarily communicated the contents of your "confidential letter." From the tenor of your first letter, he naturally concluded it was left optional with him to renew; which he had no hesitation in doing, previous to the receipt of your counteracting letter; and on my claiming the fulfilment of that promise, he was obliged, in self-defence, to state your sentiments. Nor did he consent to make another engagement till the Wednesday following, and then only after consulting with Mr. Simpson.

You admit that the failure of the mails was the cause of his not receiving the one assenting to the renewal. This did not reach him till last Sunday; but what was he to do, in the absence of all information, but decide for the best? I pass by the circumstance of taking a long, expensive, and hazardous journey; the one from Pittsburgh being the most dreadful I ever encountered—two nights out, in an open board box, half froze to death, and nearly buried in snow—because they were the first, though severe penances, for committing a most glaring act of folly: I took exception to what seemed a capricious movement without sufficient motive, because the time subsequent to the expiration of the first week was unfilled by any one else, and had, (apparently, at least,) a wish to exclude me from participating in the next, for the mere purpose of exclusion. I have no reason to complain of Pittsburgh; bad as it was, it was better than I anticipated; the people suffering, and those who could afford to pay for amusement, preferred sleighing. In better times, and at another season, I have no doubt the arrangement—even sharing after \$150—would have been a paying one; but I am convinced it is the wrong season for Pittsburgh. The navigation is stopped, there are no boatmen or travellers, the laboring classes are out of employ, and I defy the power of any professional locomotive to draw them.

Mr. Jackson told me the whole of your communication about myself, "also the words, until you hear from me again;" but this did not alter the position in which I was placed, because we had no reason to suppose that it would be in *two* days, as you did not state when. It is evident there was a conspiracy of the elements to thwart our prospects; in which I was a material sufferer, in mind, body, and estate; and we can only fall back upon the melancholy consolation afforded by the proverb, "bad now, better another time;" but that other time must be the better by being milder.

Yours ever, (December excepted,)

HENRY J. FINN.

Old associations had rendered me anxious to continue in the good opinion of Finn. Strange as it may appear, he had been the *tragedy hero* of Butler's Company ; had been at the Haymarket Theatre, in London, where he was the original Thomas in the "Sleep Walker," and by his excellent acting of an insignificant part, aided materially in the success of the piece. He then returned to his native country, (for Finn was an American actor, although he never laid claim to any indulgence upon that score, but stood before his audience on his own merit,) and became one of the managers of the old Federal Street Theatre in Boston, and finally a "Star," and one of the brightest in the galaxy. No one need shrink to have their merits weighed by the standard that gave pre-eminence to Finn : his Lord Ogilby, his Philip Garbois, his Paul Schack, his Beau Chatterley, have never been equalled on the American stage ; and although it has latterly been the fashion to laugh at his Hamlet and his Romeo, I have seen them worse acted by gentlemen who claim the dignified appellation of tragedians. During this engagement he acted Lord Ogilby, Paul Pry, Philip Garbois, Paul Schack, Dr. Pangloss, Billy Black, Beau Chatterley, Mawworm, Jack Humphries, and Richard the Third !!

On the 12th of October, Mr. and Mrs. Ternan played a short and profitable engagement, proving that it may be advantageous sometimes to descend from the stilts, and change your ground in the same city. No one understands this better than Mr. E. Forrest, who tries the market all round, and sometimes, although rarely, refuses a *better* for a *worse* offer, by this means keeping up the excitement that adds to his popularity.

On the 22d, Joe Cowell, after an absence of eight years, played Paul Pry, and Crack in the "Turnpike Gate ;" Barnes, (Jack Barnes and Joe Cowell,) playing Colonel Hardy. The receipts upon this occasion were \$498 ; but his Philadelphia friends deserted him on the night of his benefit, which was a bad house, (\$224,) when every other night of his engagement was good, proving much to his mortification that it was "La Fitte," and not Cowell, that was the attraction.

Mr., Mrs., and Charlotte Barnes, played three or four nights, and now the "Bronze Horse" was suffered to rest, to make way for "La Fitte," the piece which caused the destruction of the Bowery Theatre, New York, in 1836, and the announcement of which here created more than usual excitement. It was first acted on Friday, October 23th, the audience leaving the theatre with a determination to hiss it on the following night. But a few judicious alterations, the chief one the arrangement of the Pirate's Island,

altered the sentence. What failed so signally on the previous night, was received with cheers on its second representation, and keeps possession of the stage to the present hour, as a favorite drama. It was played for twenty-one nights : Conner, Mrs. Willis, and Mrs. Preston, not forgetting Woodhull, gained much credit, while Percival, by whom it was patched together, as Cudjoe, made quite a favorable impression on his audience. The music was well selected, and what is of more importance, well sung ; and no piece could be more satisfactory to the management, after having so narrowly escaped total damnation.

On the eventful 7th of November, the night the Pennsylvania Theatre in Coates Street opened, "La Fitte" was played at the Walnut Street to \$628, a proof that the audience who support it, do not come in such numbers as supposed from the northern Liberties ; a little tact and better judgment in the building, would have rendered a Theatre of their own profitable. I was very sanguine in my hopes, and felt the disappointment : it crippled my resources. But the general crash,—suspension of bank payments, desolation and ruin in the community,—not the building of this place, from the loss of which I had perfectly recovered,—caused my future difficulties.

On the 23d of November, Conner produced an alteration of Byron's play of "Sardanapalus," by C. Durang, which, joined to his now increasing popularity, yielded him \$929 for his benefit. On the 3d of December, I revived "Zanthe," but it did not answer any good purpose. On the 6th of December, Mrs. Ternan commenced her farewell engagement, playing Ion, and Jenny Deans in the "Heart of Mid Lothian," to take her final leave of the citizens of Philadelphia. In the "Winter's Tale" there is a good story told of my worthy Stage Manager and myself, in the procession scene to the Coronation of Anna Boleyn. Mr. Durang and myself, as the representatives of Justice and Mercy, were engaged in quarrelling, and in so loud a tone that the audience perceived we were in earnest, and the actors called the attention of Mr. and Mrs. Ternan to the fact of Mercy and Justice being so engaged, which had such an effect on the risible muscles of the gentleman, that he was for some time unable to proceed with his part, the audience joining in the laugh, although ignorant of the cause.

On the 13th of December, Mr. Denville, a gentleman whom I had known with Macready under the name of Stuart, appeared in a well-written drama, entitled "Minerali." In what position to place him as an actor, would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer : at one moment he would strike out some point so excellent, that the

audience testified their approbation in a burst of genuine applause, the sound of which had scarcely subsided, when he would do something so totally ridiculous, as to raise doubts as to his sanity ; and so laughed at, and so applauded, he continued to act for six nights, when Richard the Third and Shylock convinced the audience he was *non compos mentis*, in which opinion, however reluctantly, I am compelled to acquiesce. Bunn got up "Manfred" for him and Miss Clifton at Drury Lane, which had a most successful run, and there ended his reputation as "*a star*."

On the 5th of February, 1837, I produced Croly's play of "Cataline," altered and adapted to the stage, at the request of A. Adams : all my labor thrown away, for as in the case of Jack Cade, I found it impossible to persuade him to commit the words of Cataline to memory, until, in despair, I gave over the attempt, and Conner was the hero. It has often been acted since, I am told, very successfully,—the language is beautiful, being Dr. Croly's. I may be allowed to say thus much : the merit belonging to me, if any there be, was rendering a play which had been pronounced unfit for representation, by a slight alteration of the incident and plot, highly effective ; the greatest liberty I took with the author, was placing many of the speeches in the last act, written for Hamilear, in the mouth of Cataline.

After an interregnum of two weeks, during which hammer, paint, and nails were busily employed, "Thalaba" was placed before the audience on Monday, the 20th of February, producing, in six nights, \$3285, the greatest average of any piece I ever played at the Walnut Street Theatre. It did not cost one-third of the money expended upon "Zanthe," bringing a return, as compared to that much-talked-of drama, into the treasury, during the run, of more than double the amount of money. On the 20th of March, David Paul Brown's play of "St. Paul the Prophet," was acted for Conner's benefit to \$728. How the accomplished author, who was present, bore the butchery,—for it was worse than murder,—of this his second-born, lives in his own recollection. Whatever he thought, he uttered no complaints ; but I will entrust him with a secret, which, if he continues to write for the stage, may atone for the mortification he must have endured, and prevent the possibility of a similar occurrence : Never permit a play to be brought forward for *an actor's benefit night*,—it never *does* receive the necessary attention, either of scenery or dresses, added to which the performers seldom know the words of their parts, and more than two rehearsals can *never* be obtained. The manager feeling no interest in the result, beyond receiving his nightly charges for the

incidental expenses of the theatre, will not lay aside his *own* business to promote the advantage exclusively of one member of his Company.

During this season, and from the performance of "Thalaba," sprung the Conner and Proctor factions, in their result so detrimental to my interest. The theatre closed on the 3d of April with "Kate Kearney," and the "Siege of Missilonghi." The seeds of disunion were sown between Proctor and Conner, in the performance of Bannister's play of "Gaulantus." The unreasonable request of Conner causing our separation, he tried his fortune at the Chestnut Street Theatre, and with James Wallack at the National Theatre in New York, when he returned to his home at the corner of Ninth and Walnut Streets, not long to remain before he tried his fortune as a Star—in the West!!! He is always well received by his Philadelphia friends, although he has done much to forfeit their good opinion: he was as a stock actor the greatest loss the theatre ever sustained.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A Liberal Offer!—Suspension of Specie Payments—Mrs. H. Lewis—"The Vision of the Sun"—Conner, as Richard the Third—Mr. Walbourne—His Failure—The Ravel Family—An Amusing Declaration—E. Forrest—Mr. and Mrs. Keeley—Mr. Downton—Miss Ellen Tree—Mrs. Gibbs—Cooke's New Circus in Philadelphia—Mr. Vandenooff—Public Dinner to E. Forrest—Non-attendance of the Profession—First Appearance of Miss Augusta Maywood, as a Dancer—Miss Mary Anne Lee.

On the 31st day of July, 1837, my first lease of three years expired. The gas was to be introduced at the Chestnut Theatre in the fall, and I also wished the stockholders to introduce it into the Walnut St. Theatre at the same time. Whether it was finesse on the part of Mr. H. G. Freeman, who, although only the treasurer, was in fact the sole director of the place; or whether it emanated from the board of directors, consisting of Messrs. Montelius, Wickersham, Peddle, Lajus, Donaldson and Freeman, the proposition made to me was, to renew my lease at an advance rent of one thousand dollars, for one year only, and they would introduce the gas. Liberal! thrice liberal offer. A noble return for all my exertions—for all the improvements I had made to their pro-

erty—but not an unusual one with landlords, and associated companies are the worst of landlords. You can fix the evil upon the shoulders of no one individual; but every act of grace is the work of each particular agent. It would not at that time have answered my purpose to throw up the theatre; but if I had done so, as the result proved, it would have saved me from ruin. Mr. Cooke, whose equestrian company had been so successful in New York, came over to see me, in company with Mr. Amherst, on the subject of occupying the Walnut Street Theatre as a circus. My lease forbidding me to under-let the theatre, without the written permission of the board of agents, rendered it necessary to consult those gentlemen. Mr. Cooke's offer was a most liberal one—three thousand dollars, for three months, with full security, to be deposited in any bank in Philadelphia, nominated by the stockholders, to leave the property in the same condition he should receive it.—The conditions of my lease, requiring an advance payment of one \$1000, and \$200 per week after that, until all paid, the first payment commencing at the expiration of one week after the opening for the winter season, left the stockholders in advance payment six months, from the 31st of January. Unfortunately, all the rent was paid before this offer was made; and, not satisfied with a rent which they have never received before or since, and the profit which would accrue to them from the rent of the bars, which would have been \$1000, they refused their assent, unless I agreed to pay them \$1000 for it. As they had already \$2000 of mine in their hands, I declined, stating at the same time, that if they refused their consent, arrangements would be made by Mr. Cooke, before he left the city, to build a circus in Chestnut Street. Mr. Freeman laughed at the idea; but I had pledged myself to Messrs. McIntyre and Rogers, who held control of the lot, in the event of our negotiation being broken off, that I would bring Mr. Cooke to them. I apprized Mr. Henry G. Freeman of the fact; he was still obstinate, reminding me of the lawyer introducing his client: "I send you a fat goose, pluck him, he will bear it." But I was tired of being plucked in so bare-faced a manner. The stockholders of the Walnut Street Theatre, or their agents, were the sole cause of the erection of Cooke's circus, since altered by Burton, and now possessed by Welsh and Co. Mr. Cooke was anxious to occupy the Walnut Street Theatre: the fame of his New York exploits had made the citizens of Philadelphia anxious to see him. The avarice of Mr. H. G. Freeman and his associates forced him to erect another building. I introduced him to the gentlemen named above, and all the preliminary arrangements were made

before Mr. Cooke left the city. When past recall, the agents told me they would give their assent, if I could prevail on Mr. Cooke to stop operations. This \$1000 I had denied, they were determined to have, and so proposed and so obtained an increase of rent for the year 1837, with the fact of a new circus staring me in the face by way of a pleasant opposition. This was my punishment, fool that I was, with a building in the city, of my own, which might have answered my purpose, until I could obtain a better one. I should have said no; as it was, for \$12 or \$1400 outlay in gas fixtures the stockholders received an interest of \$1000 per year!!! Is it wonderful the manager should have been ruined? He ought to have been a wiser man, and said, no: the gas I must have, but I will pay no more rent; or, at most, the interest on the cost of introducing it—and *I would have got it*. But, throughout my whole dealings with the board of agents, the more I yielded, the more they demanded, until, provoked by insolence, I hastily severed a connexion, in which they seemed to think I had too large a stake, to be driven away from the possession, so long as it was in my power to retain it.

While Cooke was erecting his building, I made up my mind to a long summer season and a late opening in the fall. Here again I decided wrong. My season could not have been worse; and, by not being open at the usual time, the pit audience had found another place of amusement; and thus the main support of the Walnut Street Theatre was for the present destroyed.

In proceeding to Pittsburgh, I adopted the resolution of having no Stars; but taking my whole Walnut Street Company to produce, in rapid succession, those pieces which had been most successful in Philadelphia: and Russel Smith and his brother were started off, one month in advance, to prepare the scenery.

On the 10th of April, I opened to \$300. Mr. Conner not arriving, the Wrecker's Daughter was changed to the Stranger; and so well was the play acted, that, for once, the Pittsburghers burst out into an hosannah for their manager. This was, numerically, the strongest company ever seen in the Iron City, accompanied by the adjunct, for the first time, of a corps de ballet. The company with which I opened the theatre possessed more talent; but the orchestra never was so complete, and now the efforts of actors were appreciated, not as four years ago, laughed at. The first week's business produced sixteen hundred and twenty-three dollars and seventy-five cents, or an average of two hundred and seventy dollars per night.

Well done, Pittsburgh—this, too, without the aid of a Star. The

first drama was "Zanthe," not liked; a little grumbling; but the first night's receipts \$423 37. The next was "Lafitte"—house, \$461 87; a great hit. Then came the "Bronze Horse;" but, as if from *perversity*, it was pronounced "a humbug," and the manager's character, in consequence, at fifty per cent. discount. It was excellently done. But the secret, it must be told: Madam Celeste, on her way to the West, had arrived, wanted to play, and her services were declined!!! She, or, rather her husband, Elliot, went grumbling on his way, leaving me to meet all sorts of "*blessings*" for my refusal. But I had determined no Star should act during this season; for I well knew, if I took one, I must, perforce, take all the rest, or give offence. Besides, I had, at a very early period of my management, made known to all these "*wanderers*," that, as my time in Pittsburgh was always limited to a certain number of weeks, announced at the beginning of the season, they must make their engagements with me before I left Philadelphia, or make up their "*books*" without Pittsburgh. To this rule I rigidly adhered; and to that, more than any other cause, were the citizens of Pittsburgh indebted for the visits of the brightest Stars, while their fame was at its height. Serjeant Talfourd's play of "Ion," brought one good house; and "Norman Leslie," four;—quite complimentary to my pride as an author.

"The Jewess," on the 13th of May, brought \$358 62, with an excellent box sheet for Monday; but here, a "malignant star" crossed my path. On Sunday, the 14th, I first heard of—THE SUSPENSION OF SPECIE PAYMENTS; and, on the 15th of May, actually turned from the doors over \$200, for want of change. Such a row—such swearing—some at the banks, others at the theatre, —all declaring I had specie enough and would not pay it out. I might have had specie for \$300 I had deposited with Mr. Cooke that morning, which I could have had, and as much more, for asking; but I was so amused by the quaint speeches—half funny, half threatening, that I heard at his counter during the day—as every new refusal for change was answered with—banks stopped payment, that I forgot my own business, until the doors of the theatre opened, and I found myself in a very awkward predicament. One hundred dollars of specie, which I promised to return in the morning, was all I could raise; and I only made bad worse by paying that out. If the thought had only struck me in the afternoon, I might have sold tickets by the handful, by promising silver in change to parties of four or more, that is, a front bench. Under this arrangement—during the panic—I might have filled the house every night, at the slight cost of "thirty dollars discount." Two

hundred and fifty dollars of specie, nightly, would have secured me five hundred dollars per night. How readily a mistake may be pointed out, after the fact becomes apparent to every one. It was a decided miss; for the citizens had the theatrical mania so strong upon them at this time, that, specie or no specie, they were determined to come, buying two tickets, one for present, one for future use, when they could not obtain change for their notes.

Mr. James Wallack was permitted to pass through without being allowed to play, declaring it was the first time in his life a manager had ever refused his proffered services, in a city in which he had never acted. My worthy friend, Finn, also used his rhetoric, to convince me I ought to relax in his favor; and, when I would not, "then," said he, "I'll relax in yours—dine with me, and I will make you drunk, if I can, out of spite." I don't know whether he kept his word: but I saw him comfortably seated in the stage, at four o'clock in the morning, on his way East.

"The Jewess" was below par. "Thalaba" mustered only \$250; and the "Last Days of Pompeii," \$218; "The Star Spangled Banner," \$257; and "Abon Hassan," for my benefit, on the 3d of June, 1837, only \$175. NOTE: *They did not hiss me this season—this accounts for the badness of the house!!!*

Thus was the most brilliant season ever anticipated cut short, by a circumstance which could neither be foreseen or prevented, in which I had not the slightest agency; but, like many more, was finally engulfed in ruin, without even sympathy, while the course of the banks was legalized, or galvanized. They were suffered to proceed with their business, without interruption—no charter was declared forfeited.

This season, with the disasters of the last eighteen nights, produced ten thousand seven hundred and forty-six dollars, making an average \$223 75 per night; but at one time the average was over \$300, and a prospect of continuance: but I had only seen the beginning of the end in Philadelphia. I had the prospect of a season which would require sacrifices, which having so lately escaped from the difficulties of building the Pennsylvania Theatre, I was not prepared to meet.

To prepare for the continuance of my season, so as to avoid, if possible, the success which every body anticipated to attend the opening of the New Circus, Russell Smith and Landers had been preparing the "Vision of the Sun," with which we were to have opened: but delay—excitement out of doors—always apathy within—the piece was not ready till the 30th of June. So I opened the Walnut Street Theatre, on the 17th, persuading Conner to attempt

Richard the Third!! Shade of Shakspeare, forgive me! He did it—and “*did it brown.*” The pit boys were vociferous in their applause; and he has played it on one or two occasions since, when, I thank my lucky stars, I was not present. For “Thalaba,” or “Lafitte,” I want no better or more efficient man; but the idea of Conner, as a tragedian—don’t let me pursue it. On the 19th, Mrs. Henry Lewis, an actress of the Cobourg school, but a good one, and one whose value I appreciate, opened in Bianca, in “Fazio.” On the following evening, she played Matilda, in the “French Spy;” she also played Richard the Third, Virginius, and Othello; and to say how the audience liked her, is only to say, she had \$472 on her benefit night, notwithstanding the thermometer was ranging at 82°, a pretty good proof of success.

“The Vision of the Sun” had been looked for and expected, as the opening piece: the scenery, machinery, &c., could not be excelled. But the disappointment—always throwing cold water upon any piece—showed me the receipts of *one hundred and fifty-four dollars*, as the first return of a piece, the last scene of which cost nearly three times the money. The second night—*Saturday night, too*, was twenty dollars worse. On the 4th of July, it was to \$456, and the following night \$97. It was played altogether ten nights, two of which, the 4th of July and the 18th—the night the ship Pennsylvania was launched—produced \$1009 75. Any other piece would have possibly produced more on these two holiday gala nights; and the other eight nights, collectively, yielded \$961 25. A heavy blow to the treasury. “*Damn the banks*”—ALL caused by the banks. This was the general cry, and why not join it: for, seriously, they deserved a little harder treatment than harsh words.

Monday, the 10th of June, introduced to the Philadelphia audience one of the most astonishing men that ever trod the stage, whose fame was made by and expired with Tom and Jerry.

Mr. Walbourne was the original Dusty Bob; and Pierce Egan, in his “Life of an Actor,” classes his performance of this part, as giving him a title in the niche of fame beside John Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, and all the great actors contained in his “Catalogue of Parts Acted”—which can never be forgotten by those who witnessed them. Here is the note, page 14:—“Mr. Walbourne’s personation of Dusty Bob has been unanimously decided by the public, as one of, if not the greatest triumph of the histrionic art ever exhibited upon the stage.” Kean, the first tragedian of the day, with the utmost liberality, gave it as his opinion that, during the whole course of his theatrical career, he had never seen any per-

formance equal to it. Munden, a comic actor of great celebrity, exclaimed—"Good heavens! is it possible—do my eyes deceive me? Most certainly, it is a real *dustman* they have got upon the stage. I am very sorry the profession has descended so low as to be compelled to resort to the streets to procure a person of that description, to maintain the character." He left the house in disgust—nor was it until introduced to Mr. Walbourne, behind the scenes, that he would believe it was an actor. *Further praise than this is superfluous.*

The character of a Dustman, being unknown in America—like the Charity Schoolboy of Wilkinson—was lost. As a clown, in the pantomime of the "Farmer's Son," only, is Walbourne known in the United States—and not considered even equal to mediocrity in that.

Booth played a few nights, and then with J. R. Scott. Henry G. Pearson, formerly of Philadelphia, now of the New Orleans Theatre, also played with Scott; but his acting appeared to the audience an attempt at burlesque. If such was his motive, he was most successful; but his reason for such a course seems mysterious—very.

On the 1st of August, the "Pickwick Club" was produced, in which Conner played the Fat Boy to admiration. Mrs. Fanny Kemble Butler's play of the "Star of Seville" was acted on the 7th; and at the same time, a very clever one-act farce, upon the subject of her Journal, was placed in my hands, and purposely retained until the close of the season, because I was unwilling to wound the feelings of Mr. Butler. It was returned to the author, who promised he would not offer it to any one else. It could have done no good, but would have revived prejudices almost forgotten. On the 16th of August, a very effective drama, on the subject of Ainsworth's novel of Crichton, was produced, with considerable success. The author, Mr. Coleman, made me, afterwards, pay a pretty price for this, by running away from his bail, which I had foolishly become in Pittsburgh, to keep him out of prison. I had to pay \$230 for this act of kindness. The theatre closed on the 3d of September; the very time it ought to have been opening for the season.

On the 13th, I opened in Pittsburgh, with the Walnut Street company, with "Damon and Pythias," and the "Agreeable Surprise." On the 16th of September, Mr. Conner resigned his situation, because I would not take Mr. Proctor out of the part of Gaulantus, which he had played in Philadelphia—quoted precedents never heard of, and, if allowed, only proving him to be

wrong in the construction placed upon them by the usages of all well regulated theatres. I endeavored to combat this folly in vain ; he was obstinately bent upon carrying a point which, in the relative position of the two actors, would have been unjust to Mr. Proctor in every sense. I had taken no part in the foolish quarrel, which had driven people from the theatre in disgust ; hissing and applauding both of them every night ; and I resolved I would not now interfere. To Mr. Conner I had resigned my position in the theatre as an actor, permitting him to play all the light comedy, as well as the leading melo-drama. He had become a great favorite ; and at the very time his services were most needed, he thought proper to withdraw, which he did, at the close of the season. Mrs. Lewis, the Ravel family, (with Gabriel,) the Ninth Wonder of the World, Master Meer, Mr. Marble, and Master Burke, were the stars of the season, which closed on the 4th of November, 1837 ; when they paid me their usual compliment of hissing, which they neglected last season, and gave me \$378 for my benefit. There was nothing heard but—how bad the company is—nothing to compare to last season ; until, one Sunday afternoon, when the subject was being discussed, I asked for a sheet of paper, recapitulated all the names, and, to the utter confusion of the grumblers, proved that they had only lost Mr. and Mrs. Green, and had acquired Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Mr. and Mrs. Meer, and Mr. and Mrs. Kent. To their being caught in this trap, I owed the exertion they made for my benefit night ; for Pittsburgh was laboring under frightful pecuniary difficulty, from the ruinous rate of exchange, and almost total absence of specie funds in their business transactions. Notwithstanding this general depression, in seven weeks and a half, I took \$10,604—an average of \$230 per night. It is true I had to pay the Ravel Family their own terms ; and the other stars received a considerable portion of the money ; but I here wish to draw a comparison, being forty-six nights in Pittsburgh, and the same number of nights in Philadelphia ; the Walnut Street Theatre having been closed during the time the company were in Pittsburgh ; \$7,940—an average of \$172 60 ; a difference in favor of the small city over the large one of \$57 40, per night, notwithstanding Booth, Rice (Jim Crow,) Marble, Conner, Murdoch, and Scott, and a new scenic piece ; and, strange as it may appear, Booth's benefit yielded \$475 75, and my own, the following night, \$483 25—equal to \$969, in two nights, or one-eighth part of the whole amount of the forty-six nights' receipts !! This was generally the case ; the money made in Pittsburgh was lost in the Walnut Street Theatre ; whose doors

must have closed, but for the timely aid received, in cash, from my western friends; yet it is but justice to state, that the expenditure for producing pieces, in the regular course of business, was charged to the account of the Walnut Street Theatre; the Pittsburgh Theatre receiving the advantage derived from scenery and properties, also dresses; and, most of all, the travelling reputation of such pieces as "Zanthe," "Thalaba," "Norman Leslie," &c., &c. For many seasons, Pittsburgh was a source of profit and pleasure; but when the tide did turn, I must show a different statement for forty-six nights. Locked in by ice on the Ohio, Alleghany, and Monongahela rivers, shut out by snow upon the mountains, \$2,308 was all that was received during forty-six nights of a winter season, at the doors of the Pittsburgh Theatre! Unfortunately, the Walnut Street could not return the compliment of a cash remittance, to make good the deficiency; the season in Philadelphia being almost equally disastrous, during the severity of of this more than usually severe winter of 1839-1840.

The very cold weather, and the neglect of the firemen of the Walnut Street Theatre to attend to the comfort of the supernumeraries, produced the following DECLARATION:

SIR—When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for a certain body of men to complain of those wrongs which they have endured, and the evils which they have sustained, a decent respect for the opinions of the *dramatis personæ* compels us to make known to you, our manager, those grievances of which we complain. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created free and equal; that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are *light, heat, and the power of keeping themselves warm*; and in order to maintain those rights, *stoves* were instituted among mankind, deriving their powers of heat from the fuel which is placed in them. But when those who ought to place the fuel in them have neglected to do so, we then feel all the *coldness, heaviness, dampness, and disagreeableness*, which flesh is heir to. But there is a time when forbearance ceases to be a virtue: *such a time has arrived*. The history of the present fire-maker is a history of repeated injuries towards the honorable supernumeraries.

To prove this, let facts be presented to a candid world. He has neglected to make fires when we were almost perishing with cold; he has refused to give us the materials, when we were willing to make the fire ourselves; he has, in many instances, exercised an undue authority over us, which we can no longer endure in silence.

We, therefore, the supernumeraries of the American Theatre, do solemnly publish and declare, appealing to you for the rectitude of our intentions, that we must, and of right ought, to have a good fire kept on these cold nights, and when such is not kept, have the power of making it ourselves; and with a firm reliance that you will redress these wrongs, we pledge to you our firm principles, our aid in the time of need, our sacred honor, and our best wishes for your success.

Yours, &c.

(Here follow twenty-four signatures.)

The Chestnut Street Theatre opened, for the fall season of 1836, on the 20th of August; Mr. Robert Hamilton, Mr. Brunton, Mr. Lindsay, Mrs. Broad, and Miss Morgan, announced as additions to the regular stock company; with Power, Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, Ellen Tree, Madame Celeste, Miss Philips, James Wallack, Downton, and Gabriel Ravel, with a French troupe. Well done, Messrs. Managers. The performance on the first night was "Married Life," and the "Gnome King." On the following evening, Mr. Robert Hamilton made his bow in Martin Haywood, and Mr. Lindsay as Silver Jack, in the "Rent Day." Brunton and Miss Morgan, on the 23d, in "Rob Roy." On the 5th of September, Mr. E. Forrest, who had returned to his native country, after making the fashionable tour of Europe, was announced to appear, prior to his departure for England, where he was engaged by Mr. W. Jones, to appear at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. This announcement, so contrary to expectation, created such an excitement, that a row was anticipated; Mr. Forrest having frequently declared publicly, he would never act in any theatre in which Mr. Maywood possessed the slightest control; and having, from the stage of the Walnut Street Theatre, during its first run of success, under Blake and Ainslee, declared his preference of any theatre over the Chestnut. A report was circulated that he had broken faith with me; and a committee waited upon me to ascertain the facts. Having no engagement with Mr. E. Forrest, I could not enter into the views expressed by these hot-headed and injudicious friends of the Walnut Street Theatre. Mr. Forrest had stated in my house, in presence of Mrs. Wemyss, that he should not play in Philadelphia at all previous to his departure, and that, on his return from England, I might calculate upon his services. He altered both his intentions; but, to cover the retreat, a paragraph appeared in the *Inquirer*, stating that Mr. E. Forrest was engaged in Europe, to act at the Chestnut Street Theatre. Now, I know Mr. E. Forrest too well to accuse him of uttering a falsehood upon so trifling an event; but will any person believe, that if Maywood and Co. had formed an engagement with Mr. E. Forrest, in England, such an important engagement would not have been announced at the commencement of the season, with a flourish of trumpets? The fact is, Mr. Forrest playing at all in Philadelphia, at this time, was the result of accident; his choosing the Chestnut Street Theatre, in all probability, was to conciliate the favor of Mr. Stephen Price, in London, whose influence, and knowledge of London theatricals, might prove of essential service to his movements in foreign theatricals. Why he acted there, on

his return, in direct violation of his pledged word, has never been explained; but, as I shall shortly show under his own hand, as he sowed so he reaped. His reception by his countrymen was enthusiastic; the theatre crowded every night. He opened in *Othello*, and played *Spartacus*, in the "*Gladiator*," three times; closing on the 9th of September, with the best wishes of all his friends for his success in London, not one of whom joined more cordially in them than myself.

On the 12th of September the managers announced a benefit for the relief of the suffering women and children in Texas, on which occasion Mrs. Shaw, an actress—since this period acknowledged as one of the best belonging to the American stage—played *Letitia Hardy*. She afterwards appeared as *Hamlet*,—bad taste for ladies to assume the parts of male heroes. There was nothing to approve, and much to condemn, in this performance.

On the 26th, General Harrison visited the Chestnut Street Theatre, to witness Power's first appearance for the season, in the "*Irish Ambassador*." On the 14th of October, Power's engagement closed; the actor more popular and as attractive as ever: and on the following evening

MR. AND MRS. KEELEY

appeared, the former as *Peter Spyk* in a "*Loan of a Lover*," and the latter as *Lucille* in a drama of that name, and *Gertrude* in the farce. Little Bob Keeley, and his still less wife, (*Miss Goward*,) were a pair of turtle doves worth caging. He is not the only actor who owes his first approach to fame to "*Tom and Jerry*." His admirable performance of *Jemmy Green* was one of the gems of the piece; quickly bringing the representative before the audience: as an actor possessed of more genius than heretofore conceded by the public. He was transplanted to the English Opera House, where he became an universal favorite. Mrs. Keeley was there received nightly with smiling faces, and applauding hands, as the soubrette, worthy of a place by the side of *Miss Fanny Kelly*, imparting such a vigor of coloring to every part she undertook, as to win the hearts of all, both male and female. The popularity of the Keeleys in London induced the offers, which for a time placed them before an American audience; where, if in a pecuniary point of view they were not benefited as largely as they should have been, they have left a reputation, which, should they again visit the United States, will make them the most profitable stars a manager can engage. Unfortunately, it was not until they were on

the point of leaving us, the audience began to appreciate their value, and utter useless regrets that they had not availed themselves of the opportunity offered, to witness the performance of these talented artists, who must have returned to England with no very high idea of the judgment of our citizens in theatrical affairs. They continued to act during their first engagement in Philadelphia, until the 29th of October, when they were followed by Mr. James Wallack and Miss Clifton; and on the 7th of November,

MR. DOWTON

claimed the attention of the Philadelphians in the character of Sir Robert Bramble in the "Poor Gentleman," following it by Falstaff; thus singularly enough selecting the last part poor Warren ever acted, for his first appearance, and the one in which he never will be forgotten, as his second. These recollections operated against his success—nobody went to see him; his engagement was the worst of the season. Can it be believed, that Dowton—rich, rare, old Dowton—the most natural actor of his day—the pride of the London Stage,—whose Dr. Cantwell, Sir Anthony Absolute, Sheva, and Old Dorley, were alike inimitable,—*should have failed?*

Why did you risk the well-earned reputation of a life of toil in thine old age, to visit the New World, to court mortification, while the Old World was in despair to find thy substitute; feeling thy departure the knell of those comedies, where none could approach thy excellence? Your career in the United States was a succession of professional mortification: your quiet acting, misnamed tameness; your best efforts received with coldness; escaping censure only by the charm in thy name—*that* protecting you from the insult an actor feels most keenly; scarcely realising money sufficient to defray your travelling expenses, while journeying to fulfil engagements. Alas! that this should always be the return of an actor, whose energies have been exhausted in the service of the public. *Applause* in his opening career—*adulation* in his success—*insult* in his decline—in his end *desolation, misery, and*

DEATH.

The Bowery Theatre, in New York, having been burnt to the ground after the second performance of "Lafitte," on the 23d of September, a dramatic festival took place at the National Theatre, (Thomas Flinn, the manager,) as a farewell benefit to Mr. Thomas Hamilton: and no one ever better deserved such a compliment, for his integrity in all his business transactions; the 15th

of November the night selected—the volunteers on the occasion, Power, Downton, Hacket, George Barrett, Miss Clifton, Miss Watson, Madame Celeste, Hamblin, and Miss Charlotte Cushman, who sung “The Open Sea;” the pieces—“Henry the Fourth,” “Wept of the Wept-on-Wish,” and “Three Weeks after Marriage.”

On the 28th of November, Celeste produced “La Bayadere,” under the title of the “Maid of Cashmere,” which has retained its hold in the affections of the people from that date. On the 6th of December, Talfourd’s play of “Ion” was first acted in America, at the *Walnut Street Theatre!* Mrs. Ternan being the original representative in the United States. For the copy of the play I was indebted to Pierce Butler, Esq.

On the 17th of December, Celeste took another farewell benefit, (quere,—what number was this? I have lost count,) and on the 20th the Ravel Family, with the *immortal Gabriel*, commenced a career in Philadelphia, closing the year 1836 in a perfect blaze of theatrical success. The 1st of January, 1837, fell upon a Sunday, and the new year introduced, as Julia in the “Hunchback,”

MISS ELLEN TREE:

an actress who does not impress her audience violently in her favor at first, but gradually increases in their estimation, until finally having obtained a place in their hearts, there she remains in defiance of their better judgment. She must pardon me if I do not entertain so great an opinion of her talent as many of my contemporaries: my admiration of her sister, Miss M. Tree, (Mrs. Bradshaw,) whose performance of Clari and Zaide, in the “Law of Java,” placed her so high in my estimation as a tragic actress, that I forgot her fame as a singer in my eulogium upon her acting—may render me an unfair judge of her merit; her best points painfully bring to my recollection “the light of other days.” I have never seen Miss Ellen Tree perform any part in the numerous range of characters she sustains, that left such an impression upon my mind, as to make me desirous of witnessing it a second time. She came to the United States heralded as the best actress of the English stage, (yet strangely enough her great fame in England was acquired after, and not previous, to her first visit to America,) which, being tacitly admitted, no critic was ungallant enough to analyse her claim; besides her charming affability in private life turned the heads of half the editors, who bit the other half, and thus she triumphantly acquired golden opinions everywhere

May she long continue to convert them into eagles. She acted during her first engagement, Julia, Rosalind, Lady Townley, Letitia Hardy, Mrs. Haller, Marianna, Beatrice, Juliet, Lady Teazle, Portia, Mrs. Oakley, Donna Violante, Juliana, Viola, Donna Olivia, Kate O'Brien, and Mary in the drama of "The Daughter." If variety be charming, surely here is enough to charm any one; few stars favor their visitors with such a list.

Mrs. Gibbs, formerly Miss Graddon, played for Walton's benefit, in "Cinderella," on the 25th of January, and Miss Grove, on the 30th, played Juliet. On the 14th of February, 1837, poor Rowbotham, one of the firm of Maywood and Co., died. He was one of my oldest theatrical friends: I induced him to cross the Atlantic, in 1827. Few actors have left behind them a name more universally respected. His loss will be severely felt in the Chestnut Street Theatre, as an able and strict drill-serjeant.

The next novelty was Hackett, as Sir John Falstaff. Shade of Warren, where art thou? Poor mangled Shakspeare! Rest—rest, perturbed spirit.

Power played another long engagement, during which he introduced "O'Flanagan and the Fairies," closing on the 11th of March; on the 13th, a new opera, by J. Watson, entitled the "Pirate Boy," which seems to have had a very successful run. E. S. Conner, by my permission, played for the first time at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Pythias, and William in "Black-eyed Susan," for the benefit of Messrs. Watson and Eberle. Note,—“Love thy neighbor, but don't pull down your own hedge.” Had I attended to that proverb in time, E. S. Conner never would have left the Walnut Street Theatre,—a-hem! Mr. Balls played on the 10th of April, and Miss Tree returned on the 17th. On the 26th, she appeared as Ion, continuing to act nightly until the 20th, when the Chestnut Street Theatre closed for the season, with "Ion" and the "Barrack Room." The Arch Street opened on the 1st of May, 1837, with "Paul Pry" and the "May Queen." Power, James Wallack, Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, Miss Ellen Tree, the Ravel Family, Miss Turpin, and Celeste, all played short engagements; the last named lady closing the theatre on the 8th of July, with another final leave of her American friends, written by a deaf and dumb poet, and presented to Celeste by General Morris, of the *New York Mirror*, as the play-bills politely informed us.

The Chestnut Street Theatre opened for the fall season, full of mystery. Not a star announced as engaged, but brilliantly lighted with gas on the 18th of August, 1837; the play, "Every one has his Fault" in which Mr. Harrington, one of the most sensible ac-

tors to be found among us, made his first appearance as Lord Norland, assuming a position which he held while he remained in the United States. On the 29th, the budget promised made its appearance : E. Forrest, Hackett, Rice, (Jim Crow,) Ellen Tree, Charles Horn, Bedouin Arabs, Miss Horton, Mr. Brough; and Mr. and Mrs. Wood.

To oppose this galaxy, was offered the horses, ponies, clowns, and equestrians of

COOKE'S NEW CIRCUS,

which opened on the 28th of August, 1837—the most perfect affair of the kind yet offered for support in Philadelphia; but as the Yankees never saw anything upon which their inventive genius could not improve, so the style so new to them was, before Cooke's departure, thrown entirely in the shade. He had opened the eyes of Welsh, Raymond, Bancker, and other equestrian managers, and discovered to them a mine of wealth, which they have been working successfully ever since. No foreign circus can ever again compete with them—so it should be; and their enterprise and energy deserve the success they have met. For a short period the circus was the rage, the fashion, the everything. It continued open until the 21st of December, when, followed by the good wishes of the community, Cooke, and the different members attached to his establishment, proceeded to Baltimore to reap fresh honors.

Miss Horton was the first star of the season at the Chestnut Street Theatre : she appeared as Cinderella on the 30th of August. Hill, the best of all Yankee comedians, was the next; then James Browne, a genteel comedian of the first rank : he played Bob Acres and Baron Frederick Willinghurst, on the 18th of September, inducing Mr. W. B. Wood to remark, that he belonged to the breed of actors that he feared was extinct—great praise, Mr. Browne, from such a source. I never heard a fault found with Mr. Browne's acting by any person in the city; but I do not recollect ever to have seen him play, except upon the occasion of some actor's benefit, to a tolerably filled house : indeed it was one beggarly account of empty boxes succeeding another, each night of his engagement—a striking proof that Philadelphia has receded from the high and honorable post she once occupied, which induced actors to look up to her decision of their talent as the pass-word to success. Alas! the same educated class of society rarely darken the doors of the theatre; and I fear the *breed* of the audience, as well as the actors, is fast becoming extinct. On the 25th of September, Miss

Ellen Tree played a round of her favorite characters, and on the 9th of October one of the most extraordinary men belonging to the stage, appeared among us—

MR. VANDENHOFF.

This gentleman for many years enjoyed a high reputation as an actor, in Liverpool and Manchester. In an evil hour, anxious to increase his fame, he accepted an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre, where he made his appearance as King Lear. The press treated him with much severity, but with more civility than the audience. The manager, disappointed in his expectations, tried every annoyance to induce him to abandon his contract. I remember seeing him in a very indifferent melo-drama, founded upon Scott's novel of "Kenilworth," in which he acted the part of Leicester, the audience hissing him regularly as he left the stage. If this also was a managerial device, it failed; he had evidently made up his mind to receive, at least, the wages of his fall. His look of indignation plainly said, "Insult me if you please, I am defenceless; but I can't afford to relinquish my bond: the sovereigns I must have;" and he got them. A compromise took place; for a stated sum of money he agreed to leave the theatre. He returned to the country, hoping to receive from his former patrons sympathy and support. Here he was doomed to meet another disappointment. The fate of all unsuccessful aspirants for theatrical honors awaited him. During his absence Mr. Salter had so well supplied his place, that the audience would not permit the managers to discharge him, or to place him again in a second-rate position, to make an opening for their former favorite. The Montagues and the Capulets of old never carried their feuds to greater length: blood flowed, drawn by the fist instead of the sword, of the opponents. In 1822, every dead piece of wall in Manchester bore an inscription: *Salter forever—Vandenhoff forever—No rejected Actors—* giving the town an appearance of an election, during the discussion of some popular question. In Manchester, Salter was the favorite, but in Liverpool the odds were as decidedly in favor of Vandenhoff. The managers were compelled to retain both the actors—at Liverpool Vandenhoff taking the lead, and in Manchester Salter was to be the hero. After a short lapse of time, Vandenhoff returned to London, making now the Haymarket the scene of trial, with no better success: but with the iron nerve of a man of genius, conscious of having been unfairly treated, he made the third attempt, and succeeded,—being considered one of the best trage-

dians of the English stage—indeed we may class him next to Mr. Macready. Not having been announced at the commencement of the season, he appeared without the usual preparation of *puff, puff, puff*. As an actor of cold declamation, he stands unrivalled—his Cato, and his Adrastus in “Ion,” may be quoted as specimens of excellence. He made his first bow to a Philadelphia audience in Coriolanus, producing neither wonder nor displeasure. Mrs. Flynn supported him throughout his engagement. Jim Crow (T. Rice) was the next star. The traitor! the deserter! the black varmint!—what induced him to go to the Chestnut Street Theatre? Poor Gumbo Cuff! thy fame has gone—perished, thy broad humor: converted into a Bond Street dandy—Jim Crow turned aristocrat!! At the Walnut Street Theatre, a star of the first magnitude—on the boards of Chestnut Street, a thing to frighten the audience from the boxes. Mr. Rice found this secret out too late: after one good engagement—the reward of his English fame,—he was consigned with diminished attraction, and almost annihilated popularity, to the minor theatres, which he should never have left. All the new farces he brought with him, were formed for the meridian of London: too genteel for American negroes, and, consequently, troublesome only to the actors, and unproductive to the treasury. Rice’s excellent performance of Othello in the “Black Opera,” has redeemed his reputation. Why don’t he associate himself with Palmo’s “Ethiopian Opera Comedy?” His splendid voice and business tact will create for him, under such an arrangement, another fortune.

Charles Horn, Brough, and Miss Horton, in opera, proved no attraction; the cast too weak for effect. On the 15th of November Mr. E. Forrest made his re-appearance as Othello, Mr. E. S. Conner playing Iago; on the 27th, the “Broker of Bogota;” and for one month he continued to fill the theatre, closing a very brilliant engagement, (the first and only one of the kind at the Chestnut Street Theatre.) On the 11th of December, Henry Wallack, after an absence of eight years, was very warmly received; his Old English Gentleman was a perfect representation of an English squire of the last century, and added to his reputation almost as much as his not-forgotten representation of Frederick the Great in the “Two Pages,” twelve years previously. Miss Turpin and Miss Clifton closed the year 1837.

On the 15th of December, a public dinner was tendered to Mr. E. Forrest, by his fellow-citizens of Philadelphia, for the able manner in which he had acquitted himself upon the London stage, claiming as an American, in the metropolis of the British empire,

the right to be enrolled as an actor with their own Garrick, Kean, and Kemble. Nicholas Biddle, at this time a great man, (alas! for human greatness; had he died before the suspension of specie payments by the banks, what a reputation had been his in the history of after ages,—now the finger of scorn is pointed at his memory, as a financial Charlatan, who, by his wild theory and speculation, ruined thousands of his countrymen!!!)—was announced to take the chair; but being prevented by sickness, his place was supplied by Chief Justice Gibson, supported by Judge Rogers, Mayor Swift, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Morton M'Michael, Louis A. Godey, E. Holden, &c., &c., &c. Mr. E. Forrest, and his friend, Mr. Leggett, of New York, being duly introduced by the Committee, the good things provided for the occasion by mine host of the Merchants' Hotel, (Mr. Sanderson,) were dispatched with the usual celerity on such occasions, and the speeches, which were excellent, commenced. Mayor Swift's allusion to the first attempt of Forrest to act in public, under the influence of the laughing gas, at the Tivoli Garden, in Market Street, caused a roar of laughter, in which no one joined more heartily than the tragedian himself. Forrest's speech had in the delivery too much of the *Metamora* style about it, but the matter was decidedly good; and although protesting he was no actor here, (at the festive board,) yet he never acted so well in his life, as during this reply to the compliments profusely showered upon him.

When a public dinner is given in honor of a naval or a military hero, their professional brethren are sure to muster in their strength,—nothing but *duty* can induce them to absent themselves: the same "esprit de corps" governs statesmen, lawyers, and politicians; but a dinner to an actor, as the reward of literary service rendered to his country, was such an unusual event, that the novelty should have induced the attendance of every actor who respected his profession—their numbers should have spoken their feelings in this just cause of triumph to their art. In the days of Jefferson, Francis, Warren, and Burke, what a display would have graced this table; but while the bar, the press, and even the pulpit, were represented fully, the stage alone was numerically absent—W. B. Wood, Maywood, myself, E. S. Conner, Charles Porter, and Howard the vocalist, were the only members of the profession present. A deputation should have been there from the theatres of Boston, New York, Baltimore, and Washington, anxious to avail themselves of such an opportunity of proving that the stage was, and is, a profession that any man of learning might feel proud to embrace.

As a compliment to Mr. E. Forrest, this dinner was a flattering mark of the estimation in which his talent was held in his native city ; but I should have preferred recording that he was to be found as the esteemed guest of those gentlemen who met here to do him honor at their private dwellings, giving to the actor a claim to the position of a gentleman, in the society of gentlemen, upon terms of admitted equality—respected and respecting. Is this for ever to be forbidden ground ? It has been asserted, that the conduct of the foreign actor has been such as to close the doors of society against their admission : but gentlemen, in mercy, visit not these sins on the heads of your own countrymen. The time is fast approaching when all your actors will be Americans : give them, then, an inducement to elevate their profession—show them that the doors of society are thrown open to them, courting their admission. You will find them then rational companions, eager to wipe out the stain of vagabondism unjustly stamped upon their brow for ages.

On the 30th of December, 1837, Augusta Maywood, La Petite Augusta, made her appearance as a dancer. Zelica in “the Maid of Cashmere,” by a native American dancer is an era in the history of the stage worthy of the same page which sounds the praise of Edwin Forrest. Possessed of every requisite to acquire future fame ; very ambitious ; passionately fond of her art, Augusta Maywood won a triumph which her father should have improved to better advantage. How Manager Maywood, with his usual shrewdness, could have committed such a mistake as to suffer Augusta to proceed to Paris, until he had first gathered the dollars, which in America actually invited him to accept them, has surprised all his friends. A most brilliant career opened before the young lady, which a tour throughout the United States would have improved into fortune and independence ; while one year so spent, would not have marred her prospects in France : for in Paris, the young American, La Petite Sauvagé, would have been at any time regarded as a prodigy ; petted, applauded and spoilt. As a novelty, sending dancers from North America to Paris, was carrying the war into Africa with a vengeance.

There was another candidate for fame on this same 30th Dec., Miss Mary Anne Lee, who, in the trial dance, won for herself a reputation in public favor. The manager, justly proud of the success of his little daughter-in-law, was guilty of injustice to the poor dependant girl, who aided her success. After Augusta’s benefit had taken place, on the 5th of January, the citizens, anxious to afford Miss Lee some mark of their favor, applied to the ma-

nager to appoint a night for her benefit. This Mr. Maywood at first indignantly refused, as an insult towards his dear child; and afterwards as foolishly granted. The excitement thus raised enabled Miss Lee to boast of a triumph over her more gifted competitor. Wreaths were showered on the stage every night during this trial of skill, by the friends of both parties. They deserved these attentions from the audience: their success was but a just tribute to merit; and, if La Petite Augusta felt any jealous pang to mar her triumph, the injudicious conduct of her own parents toward "our Mary Anne," as Miss Lee was now familiarly termed, was the sole cause. As a foil to her own excellence, Miss Lee would have been the most valuable auxiliary she could have found; in claiming to be her equal, for a time she lost ground; yet her career has been a profitable one, if not so brilliant as Augusta's. What a pity two such young creatures should have been separated with rancor in their hearts, when, united, they would have proved a source of mutual profit. The public felt proud of them, as children whose talent should be encouraged. As the companion and schoolfellow of my own children, I felt an interest in the success of Augusta Maywood, which induced me to peril my interest, by loaning to the managers Mr. Russel Smith, to paint the scenery of "La Sylphide," which was the next part attempted by the juvenile dancer. At the end of the season, she departed for France. At the academy at Paris, she practised with unremitting diligence—made a successful debut in the French capital—married; thus blasting all the hopes of fortune to her parents. An undutiful child never made a good wife. She has deserted her husband, and the heartless letter in which she recommended her child to the care of its father, at the moment she was abandoning him for the arms of a paramour, proves that her heart is even lighter than her heels. The very brilliance of her opening in life has been her ruin; the stage again pointed at as impure and immoral; and Augusta Maywood, who should have been, and who would have been the pride of it, as an American artiste—who had gained the highest honors abroad—has become its shame: and thus I draw the veil upon her and her crimes for ever, hoping she may never attempt to appear upon the stage of her native country again; and if she do, that her countrywomen, whose character for purity she has disgraced, will drive her from it indignantly, as a warning to others not to follow her example.

On the 16th of January, 1838, I played at the Chestnut Street Theatre, for the benefit of poor Howard, Charles Paragon in "Perfection." During the performance, Mr. Benjamin Duncan came

into my dressing-room, and communicated to me, at the request of the Howard Committee, their anxiety to do something for me in return for the many favors they were pleased to say I had at all times granted them; asking me if I would accept a complimentary (vile word) benefit, offered in their name and that of others. It is hardly necessary to say I did not refuse: but of this, in its proper place. What a singular body is the body called the public. Mrs. Rowbotham, drying her tears in example of Lady Anne in "Richard," married Mr. Robert Hamilton, before those shoes were old with which she followed poor Rowbotham to the grave. Every body knows that she was a great favorite at the Chestnut Street Theatre: and, although her course of conduct might not have been approved by the friends of her late husband, yet to hiss a lady for such a cause, on her first appearance as Mrs. Hamilton, was disgraceful to every coward concerned in it; disgraceful to the audience who tolerated the insult, and disgraceful to the Chestnut Street Theatre. Mr. Hamilton should have fixed this matter on the shoulders of one individual engaged in it, and with a horsewhip, made those shoulders pay for the conduct of his companions as well as his own.

On the 17th, Forrest played Richard the Third, and on the third night of his engagement, played Damon and William Tell—a sure sign the houses were not as good as on his previous visit, and also that he was interested in the receipts nightly, as he never works thus hard when receiving two hundred dollars per night for his services. On the 5th of February, Madame Le Compte made her first appearance in "The Maid of Cashmere." Although an excellent dancer, her figure was too large to render her efforts agreeable to the eye: she failed to attract even one good house. A very beautiful singer followed her, Caradora Allen, who appeared as Rosina, in "The Barber of Seville," Cinderella, Rosetta, &c. On the 14th of April, Miss Mary E. Maywood made her first appearance upon any stage, as Angela, in "The Castle Spectre." She gave no evidence of genius, and not a spark has been extracted from her since, although her father's influence procured her permission to act at the Haymarket Theatre in London, and he returned to Philadelphia to become the lessee of the Chestnut St. Theatre; yet all was vain—she is not, she never can be an actress of mediocre talent. Mrs. Sharpe, Mr. Browne, Mr. Brough, Madame Otto and Miss Wells, all played short and unproductive engagements. Mr. W. B. Wood played Claude Melnotte, in the "Lady of Lyons." As the original representative of that character in Philadelphia—65 for 25 won't do. But on the 1st of June, E. S. Conner

played Richard the Third at the Chestnut Street Theatre, to how many auditors is not recorded. Miss Davenport, a daughter of my old friend, Sophia Danby, also played Richard the Third, on the 11th. I never admired prodigies in such parts, unless the whole dramatis personæ were children. She has been fortunate in making money, and that is of more importance than my praise—and sincerely, for her mother's sake, do I wish her a continuance of such success. Murdoch played a few nights at the close of the season; and Burton finished it on the 9th of July, with one of his overwhelming houses in the shape of a benefit. This was the occasion on which he altered the title of a very popular farce, to ask all Philadelphia a question, "Does your Mother know you are Out." The *gag* answered the purpose, and put money in thy purse, William. The Woods, and the Bedouin Arabs did not appear, according to previous announcement.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Opening of the American Theatre—"The Destruction of Jerusalem"—Introduction to Captain Marryatt—Destruction of Cooke's Circus—Movement of Managers in his behalf—Pittsburgh again—Mr. Parsons, the actor and preacher—A Curious Letter—A Republican Lady—Madame Augusta—Bad management of her husband—A Letter of E. Forrest's.

ON the 15th of November, 1837, I opened the American Theatre in Philadelphia, with Booth as Hamlet, followed by the farce of the "Welsh Girl;" receipts, \$344. I had hoped, by remaining in Pittsburgh, to have escaped the run of success which Cooke commanded with his New Circus; my company, too, had undergone a change not much for the better; Conner had left me for the Chestnut Street Theatre. My force stood thus: James Anderson, stage manager, Messrs. Hadaway, Proctor, Wm. Warren, C. Porter, Addams, Rice, Joseph Smith, Kent, Herbert, Vaché, Grierson, Percival, F. Myers, Wemyss, Wilks, Jackson, McConachy, J. Van Stavoreen, Crouta, and Bannister; Mesdames Kent, Proctor (Willis,) Bannister, Herbert, Wilks; Misses Warren, Price, C. Price, Packard, White, and Ruth.

On Monday, the 20th of November, Bannister's play of the "Destruction of Jerusalem," nicknamed the "Destruction of the Walnut Street Theatre," was produced; the scenery, by Russel Smith, was grand and imposing; the temple of Solomon, and the market-place of Jerusalem, with the last scene, an exact copy of Martin's picture of Satan in Council, surpassed anything I had seen for effect. Unfortunately, I made Satan an angel of light; had I represented a devil, with horns, hoof, and tail, the piece would have succeeded; but a hue and cry was raised that it was the spirit of truth and not the spirit of evil I raised. This proved fatal; profanity, sacrilege, contempt of religion, and a catalogue of unheard-of crimes were laid to my charge. The Press thoughtlessly joined the foolish cry; and, after the sixth night, the piece was withdrawn—yielding, in six nights, \$1161 to pay \$2700, a loss, in the second week of the season, of \$1539. On the following Monday, by hard labor, a new drama, the "Demon of the Desert," was produced—*failed*. Mr. Booth was sent for, arrived on the 11th of December, and played Richard—*he also failed*. By the six nights' engagement I lost \$356, a very pretty beginning of a season. Marble played three nights—*worse and worse*; the receipts of the engagement, including his benefit, of which he received half, amounted to only \$321. Christmas night, another new piece, \$796; but "Thæuba" was not more fortunate than its predecessors. A host of benefits followed, most of them *loss-efits*—Proctor's and Mrs. Kent's the only profitable ones. I now tried Porter the giant, and Major Stephens the dwarf—*no use*. On the sixtieth night of the season I announced "Scotch Clans and Irish Chieftains," in which Mr. Anderson's stage arrangements were admirable; but the 23d of January *fixed their doom*. Nothing could succeed; the "Destruction of Jerusalem" had, indeed, spread a blight upon the theatre; \$30, \$40, and \$50 houses were more frequent than agreeable spectacles. The first glimpse of success was my complimentary benefit, the arrangements for which having been completed on the 8th of February, I had the pleasure of seeing \$1,084 in the house—the pieces being the "School for Scandal," and "State Secrets." The volunteers on the occasion were, W. B. Wood, R. C. Maywood, E. S. Conner, Mary Anne Lee, James Howard, W. C. Brough, W. E. Burton, Thomas Faulkner, H. G. Allen, George Taylor, Mrs. Hamilton, Mr. Walton, and Mr. Pearson. On this occasion I had the pleasure of an introduction to Captain Marryatt, who, be his faults what they may, is an excellent companion. Who brought him behind the scenes I do not know, but he did not leave the back of

the house as straight as he entered, sundry glasses of champagne having elevated him into a state of happy forgetfulness for the time being. This seasonable relief to the funds of the treasury, although not as large as I and my friends had calculated upon, was most serviceable.

On the 3d of February, a most appalling calamity took place in Baltimore, the destruction, by fire, of Cooke's Amphitheatre, and all his splendid stud of forty horses—not one saved! In twelve hours reduced, from comparative wealth, to want and misery in a foreign country. A meeting of the citizens was held in his favor, and resolutions passed to open books of subscription in his behalf; to apply for the use of the Holiday Theatre for a benefit—prices of tickets to be \$2 each; and a circular to be addressed to managers of the different theatres, to co-operate in measures for his relief.

Managers needed no prompting to such a deed. Before the resolutions were passed, Mr. Cooke was in possession of a letter from me, placing the Walnut Street Theatre at his disposal for any night he chose to name, without reference to my engagements, which I undertook to regulate, so that they should not interfere with any action for his immediate relief.

Hamblin, of New York, presented him forthwith with his original theatrical horse, Mazeppa; which induced others to offer him splendid horses; so that the great burnt-out was shortly on his feet again, and able to open his Circus, in Philadelphia, on the 6th of March. He met little or no encouragement; even the benefit at his own theatre was a failure. Oh, Philadelphia, this was not thy usual mode of treating misfortune!—where the sufferer, too, was admitted on all hands to be worthy of thy sympathy.

In answer to my letter, I received the following:

(COPY.)

February 8th, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am requested by Mr. Cooke to say that the anguish of his mind, and bodily illness, have jointly been the cause of his delay in answering your kind and welcome letter.

Mr. Cooke accepts your offer, and will be happy to hear when the night is appointed. If "Monsieur Tonson" will give you no additional trouble, I will come over and act Monsieur Morbleu, as I have never appeared in Philadelphia. Mr. Cooke acknowledges your kindness most gratefully, as the *first* manager who has stept

forward, and will always acknowledge the real obligation. Be kind enough to reply as early as possible, and probably I shall set off on the receipt of your answer, to make whatever interest I can among Mr. Cook's friends.

I am, for poor Cooke,

Your very obedient servant,

(Signed) J. W. AMHERST.

P. S. Address Mr. Thomas Cooke, Gay st., Baltimore.

To Francis C. Wemyss, Esq.,

Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia.

The benefit took place at the Walnut Street Theatre, on the 21st February, (Wednesday). "The Battle of Poitiers," Herr Cline, and "the Weathercock:" receipts \$660,25. Mr. and Mrs. George Jones acted three nights, and Booth once more—three nights, \$184, \$56, \$174. Oh dear! oh dear! "Battle of Poitiers," produced in lavish style, by Barrymore, with the ceremony of the Installation of the Knights of the Garter, on the 19th of February. *A more horrible failure than any thing yet!!!* Mrs. Barrymore, four nights, only \$220; and on the 21st of March I brought this ruinous season to a close, with the "Poor Gentleman," and "Sam Slick," for my benefit—\$279. Oh what a house.

Never did I turn my face towards my Pittsburgh friends with so joyful a heart, as I stepped into the stage, on the 26th day of March, to commence my spring season, which opened on the 31st of March, 1838, with "Faith and Falsehood," and "The Secret;" house, \$253. Monday, 2d of April, \$239—manager and actors elated by the view of full houses. Nothing raises the spirits of an army so much as a sudden victory. In the midst of gloom and defeat, the same result followed in the theatre. The actors seemed to have acquired new energy; and for eleven weeks, good humor, good houses, and good living made every one happy and contented. The benefits this season were all good. In this the citizens of Pittsburgh evinced good judgment. Nothing makes a clever actor more desirous of returning to a city than this attention to his interest on the night of his benefit. I wish the example was followed elsewhere. My good friends of Philadelphia, adopt this, even if it does proceed from the West of the mountains; the talent of your stock actors will be materially improved by it. On the 12th of April, Mrs. Watson played Diana Vernon, in "Rob Roy," and treated the citizens of Pittsburgh, for the first time, to an

opera : playing "The Barber of Seville," on the 16th, to a house of \$348. Dr. Valentine was the next star ; but his eccentricities did not seem to meet the expectations of his auditors. On the 7th of May, Mr. Parsons commenced an engagement : this gentleman was a favorite—but, on the following season, provoked the wrath of the Pittsburghers, by a very foolish speech, which they resented, by throwing a portion of one of the benches at his head. If I, as the manager of the theatre, could laugh at their fun, and turn the practice of hissing me at the end of each season, into a good-humored joke, perfectly understood between the audience and myself, surely he, as my representative, should have possessed more sense than to notice as an insult what was intended as "a lark"—a foolish one if you please; but not a justification for the impertinent speech he thought proper to address to them, and which they so promptly resented. Mr. Parsons is now engaged in preaching the Holy Gospel, and has learnt, I hope, that soft words frequently turn away evil designs. May his ministry to his Heavenly Master prove more successful than his stewardship did to me, as his earthly one—and, above all, let him remember he cannot serve God and Mammon!!!

Here is a letter from a gentleman studying theology, with a view to being ordained a minister :—

(COPY.)

MY DEAR WEMYSS :—Mrs. Shaw's engagement, no go. First night, \$105 ; second night, "Lady of Lyons," \$126 ; third night, "Ion," \$80. What do you think of that ? This place of Pittsburgh is not worth the attentions of any manager. I am disgusted with it, and never again in my professional character, will I visit it. A monkey show, at a *flip* a head, is equal to their deserts, and fully adapted to their intellectuality—more is beyond their conception ; *blast them*. I am almost sick of the ways of management, if *such is to be my success*, and I think you will agree with me too. Therefore, if I was not already engaged to you, for Baltimore, I should, I think, decline the whole matter ; but as it is, I will do all I can to make things go right.

Please write me by return, and give such instructions as you may think proper.

Yours truly,
(Signed,) C. B. PARSONS.

PITTSBURGH, Nov. 16, 1838.

On the 18th of May, 1838, Bulwer's play of the "Lady of Ly-

ons" was acted, for the first time in the United States, at *Pittsburgh!!* for my benefit. Mrs. Proctor (Mrs. Willis, Miss H. Warren) was the Pauline, and Bannister the Claude Melnotte. On the 23th of May I met a heavy disappointment. Miss Ellen Tree was to have acted Constance, in the "Love Chace," but did not arrive. A letter from her, announcing to me that she should not visit Pittsburgh at present, was received too late to prevent the issue of the bills. I gave Captain James Addams, of the steam-boat Troy, a letter to Miss Tree, and empowered him to act as my ambassador on this occasion. This mission he fulfilled admirably, although his diplomacy did not succeed in obtaining the presence of the lady; he obtained her good opinion, and they parted mutually pleased with each other. The object attained was proof to the citizens of Pittsburgh, that I had used every means within my power to induce Miss Ellen Tree to act at the theatre. Jim Crow Rice was the last star of the season, which closed on the 16th of June, 1838, with Mrs. Kent's benefit, "The Rent Day," and "The Pet of the Petticoats,"—amount of house, \$306. I returned to Philadelphia and opened the American Theatre in Walnut Street, on the 23d of June, 1838, commencing a season which lasted for three hundred and eighty-five consecutive nights, or sixty-four weeks and one night, unprecedented in the annals of theatricals—once more rising to the height of popular favor as a manager. Oh, fleeting fame! how evanescent! The "Comedy of Errors" and "Jim Crow in London"—the houses very bad, indeed. On the 27th, Miss Hamblin (no relation to Thomas Hamblin)—since become notorious on account of her trial for the murder of her husband in the Mobile Theatre, during the performance—acted Juliana, in the "Honey Moon." Although representing herself as an actress from London, it was evident she was a perfect novice: I told her so the morning after this performance, and advised her to go West for practice, if she intended to make the stage her profession. She acknowledged she had only played once a minor character for some minor's benefit. I told her to write to me next season, and I would, if she was attentive in the meantime, make an opening for her, as a walking lady. I never heard from her again, and had almost forgotten her name, when my attention was called to it, by the unhappy event which for a period placed her life in jeopardy. She was acquitted; but innocent or guilty, poor girl, the rest of her life will be miserable. Mons. Adrien, the magician; D. Marble, Booth, Scott, Conner, and Murdoch, shone forth in rapid succession; and now fortune, who had buffeted me incessantly for two years, seemed to have

changed her mind, and once more shook hands with me. On the 10th of August, in face of remonstrance from all quarters, I produced a pageant, entitled "the Coronation of Queen Victoria—IT WAS SUCCESSFUL. I followed, as nearly as I could recollect, the arrangement of Elliston's grand spectacle of the "Coronation of George the Fourth," refreshing my memory from the London newspapers, which were filled with the accounts of the coronation of Britain's youthful queen. It taught the audience once more the road to the Walnut Street Theatre, which they appeared to have forgotten; yet, Mrs. Bannister's (Mrs. Stone's) republican feelings were so much annoyed, that she so far forgot her position to the manager and the audience, as to hiss the last verse of God save the Queen for several nights, inducing a few in front of the theatre to follow her example—rather an hazardous experiment, and perfectly uncalled-for. Her livelihood depended upon the success of the theatre which she thus tried to embarrass. On the 16th of August, Bannister's play of the "Gentleman of Lyons," was performed, for the first time on any stage. On the 18th, Hada-way added to his reputation by his excellent acting of Rory O'More, which was played for seven nights; Charles La Forrest aiding not a little by his just conception of De Welstein. Parsons made his first bow in Philadelphia, as Caius Silius, in Bannister's tragedy of that name, on the 27th of August, and on the first of September acquired a share of popularity, by his performance of Roaring Ralph Stackpole, in "Nick of the Woods." He has not the slightest pretension to be ranked as a first-rate actor, although circumstances have occasionally permitted him to twinkle for a few nights as a star, from whom not much was expected—who could do no harm, and might by possibility do a little good. That is precisely the opinion of his ability entertained by managers.

Amherst wrote a ballet for the purpose of introducing Mary Anne Lee to the audience of the Walnut Street Theatre, bearing the title of the "Lilly Queen," in which she looked very pretty, and danced as well as ever. The crime of having received more money at her benefit than the manager's daughter was not to be forgiven; and "Our Mary Anne" became attached to the American Theatre on the 13th of September, and a most valuable acquisition she was. On the 24th of September,

MADAME AUGUSTA

appeared to a house of \$877, filled with ladies, wherever a seat

could be obtained. She was young, handsome, and possessed talent of the first order in her profession. The announcement of *La Bayadere*, under such circumstances, created an excitement which the folly and stupidity of Mr. St. James overturned. He engaged to furnish the services of his wife, (Mrs. Bailey,) as Ninka ; Mr. Bishop, as the Unknown ; and Mr. Archer, as *Olifour*, with twelve ladies as a corps de ballet. He arrived in Philadelphia with Mrs. Philips, in the place of Mrs. Bailey ; *no Olifour* ; and Mr. Horncastle, lent by Mr. Wallack, for one night, from the National Theatre in New-York. Mr. Pickering, at the last moment, stepped forward and read the part of *Olifour*, from the score : but for this act of kindness, the audience must have been dismissed ; yet Mr. St. James never offered him the slightest compensation. Horncastle being compelled to return to New York, Madame Augusta was announced in *Three Dances* ; the engagement destroyed ; for *La Somnambula*, as a ballet, did not prove acceptable in face of such a disappointment. The furious Count St. James, became involved in a quarrel with Mr. Johnston, which ended in blows, and I, in self defence, retained the proceeds of her benefit, subject to a legal decision. I agreed to leave the whole matter to arbitration, provided the award should be final and binding on both sides. Mr. Holden was selected by Mr. St. James, and Mr. Godey by myself ; but as the agreement necessarily contained a clause, that if the arbitrators selected should not agree, they were to select a third party, from whose decision there was no appeal, Mr. St. James came, provided with my good friend, Willis Gaylord Clark, as umpire, before the papers were submitted to the parties first chosen ; and felt very indignant when he found Mr. Clark was not at once admitted, although I assured him there was no person I would more willingly entrust the affair to, should the gentlemen appointed require the assistance of a third party. However, the engagement was too plain to be misunderstood, and the penalty awarded was half the amount of the money in my hands, which would have rightfully belonged to Mr. St. James, had he fulfilled his contract ; and, in consideration of this, Madame Augusta was to play three nights more, on terms therein stated. So ended a difficulty which ought never to have existed, which marred the prospect of an engagement from which brilliant success was anticipated : and, notwithstanding this lesson, Mr. St. James throughout his engagements was continually involving himself in difficulty, by promising what he had not the power to perform, and then endeavoring to excuse himself by saying the artists engaged by him had not fulfilled their promises ; and, instead of

trying to make everything smooth, by offering to forego a portion of pecuniary emolument as an offset, he insisted on the last dollar promised, while he offered in some instances less than half the number of persons he was bound to furnish for this consideration. The lady must have been annoyed by such proceedings; but business is business, and none of us like to pay for what we don't receive. But, to convey an idea of what the management lost, I will state the amount, and how received: first night, "La Bayadere," \$877; second night, "Bayadere," £405; third night, for want of "La Bayadere," \$163; fourth night, no "Bayadere," \$383; fifth night, no "Bayadere," \$261; sixth night, no "Bayadere," \$313. But on Monday, the "Bayadere," \$652. Recapitulation for three nights of "La Bayadere," \$4936; for four nights that it could not be played, \$1120, including the Saturday night, which was thrown away from the reception given to Madame Augusta. Had she complied with the terms of contract, she never would have played one night under \$500, and her attraction would have continued through the seven nights undiminished. *The manager, as usual, was to blame.*

However, if disappointed, I astonished the grumblers, by announcing Mr. Forrest to succeed the lady who pleased every body and dissatisfied every body. On the 19th of September, I received from Mr. Forrest the following letter, in answer to a question, why he was not announced as engaged at the Chestnut Street Theatre? where they had been so anxious to secure his services a few months before, when he so misled me as to his intentions.

(COPY.)

MY DEAR WEMYSS:—A press of business prevented my answering your letter yesterday.

As to J. R. Scott, I have a rule which forbids my playing for any benefit but the benefit of the "Theatrical Fund." I shall be most happy to pay him, out of my own purse, fifty dollars a-week during the engagement, and I have no doubt that a like sum paid by you, would secure his services.

In answer to your question, why I have not performed at the Park Theatre, listen—Mr. Price, to suit his own purposes, chose to infer that I would quit the profession this year, and so engaged the best of the season to foreigners, and to the exclusion of all native histrions. I always take pleasure in welcoming to our shores any exotic talent; but certainly not to the entire exclusion of that which is "native and to the manor born."

I went to the National Theatre, where I was offered my own time.

As for Maywood, he did not offer me an engagement, *of course*, as you must be aware that arrangements of the Chestnut Street Theatre are made in subservience to the wishes expressed or implied of the Park manager. Perhaps, however, his anti-republican principles were so shocked at my consenting to deliver a fourth of July oration before the democracy of New-York, that he determined to punish me for my offence, by excluding me from the Chestnut Street Theatre. But whatever motives operated with him or others, thanks to the "real people," I have, so far, been going on swimmingly.

Last night, my benefit was between \$1400 and \$1500.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed,) EDWIN FORREST.

NEW-YORK, Sept. 18, 1838.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Return of Forrest to the Walnut Street—"Amilie"—The Front Street Theatre and Circus in Baltimore—A Losing Concern—Parsons studying Theology—Bannister, as a Dramatist—Mr. Whitney's attempt to play Richard the Third—Miss Emma Ince—Carter, the Lion King.

ON the 15th of October, E. Forrest returned to the theatre, where he first received those exorbitant terms which swelled his fortunes ; and the patrons of which he had displeased, by breaking a pledge made by himself—unsolicited by the audience—that so long as the doors of this theatre, (the Walnut Street,) were open to him, he wanted no other home, &c., &c. (See his address, in 1829, at the close of his great engagement with Ainslee and Blake.) We have him here again, and so let *by-gones* be *by-gones*. He played Othello in a masterly style, to \$573 ; Damon, to \$515 ; Claude Melnotte to \$553 ; Macbeth to \$379 ; Metamora to \$654 ; Metamora to \$703 ; and Claude Melnotte and William Tell, for his benefit, to \$862. As the price of admission was only fifty cents to the boxes, and twenty-five cents to the pit, I may assert

that more persons visited the theatre during this engagement, than on any previous occasion for the same length of time. He repeated *Metamora* on Tuesday, the 23d, to \$413; *Gladiator*, \$589; *Claude Melnotte*, \$375; *Gladiator*, \$477; *Richard III.*, \$428; *Gladiator and Carwin*, for benefit, \$851.

So determined was he at this time, in his opposition to Maywood, that when I laughingly proposed to cut him out of "*Amilie*," if I could get the music, he turned jest into earnest, by stating he knew Simpson had it; and if I would really do it, he would undertake to get it from the Park Theatre. *Done*, and it was *done*—well *done*, on the 19th of November, in eighteen days from the time of this conversation. Forrest left Philadelphia for New York, on the 30th of October; on the 31st, I received this letter—

(COPY.)

MY DEAR WEMYSS,

Simpson has promised me the words, music, &c., complete, of the opera of "*Amilie*," with this provision, that I pledge myself that what he lends shall not be copied, or used in such a way, that any other theatre may appropriate it to its use. I have pledged myself to this, and I expect the same pledge from you. Mr. Brough will be the bearer of "*Amilie*" to you.

Yours, respectfully,

(Signed,) EDWIN FORREST.

New York, October 31, 1838.

This was, indeed, quick work. Brough returned to New York to engage Bishop and Mrs. Charles Horn; but some misunderstanding about terms with this lady, whose husband first demanded one thing, and then another, nearly overturned the whole arrangement. I proceeded to New York, and succeeded in obtaining Bishop and Madame Otto, engaged several chorus singers, and returning, commenced active preparations. The Walnut Street Theatre presented the appearance of a large academy of music—every room had a piano going; Mr. Taylor, Mr. B. Cross, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Bishop, each plied the chorus, from nine in the morning, until four in the afternoon of each day, while Brough and Madame Otto, with Bishop, devoted every hour to acquire their parts: the painting room was all activity, and the wardrobe presented a lively scene; and at half-past eleven o'clock, on Monday night, the 19th of November, I had the satisfaction to hear the curtain descend upon the finale, followed by cheers, and such applause as rewards

a manager for past labor, by the knowledge that the receipts of his treasury will be increased. Congratulations poured in from all quarters; for twelve nights "Amilie" retained triumphant possession of the stage, and was reluctantly laid aside, to make way for the second engagement of Mr. Forrest, which, by contract, commenced on the 3d of December. Bishop, as the Chamois Hunter, established himself as a tenor singer of taste and judgment; the broken English of Madame Otto threw a peculiar charm around the part of Amilie, while Brough did his best to aid the efforts of the other two: the chorus was excellent; and, the great object effected, the charm of novelty was gone, and the love-spell which held the city of New York captive so long, was broken before it was heard from the lips of Wilson, Seguin, and Miss Sheriff, in the city of Philadelphia.

The Front Street Theatre and Circus, in Baltimore, having sprung, phoenix-like, from its ashes, the stockholders undertaking to rebuild it for Cooke, whose misfortunes had induced him to return to England, the lease was offered to me; and on the 3d of December, 1838, one of the most beautiful theatres in the United States, erected by Minifee, was opened to the public, with a large dramatic, as well as equestrian, corps; the latter under the direction of S. Nichols,—the pieces, "Loan of a Lover," equestrian exercises, and the farce of "Raising the Wind"—amount of house, \$525; the company, Mr. Parsons, Mr. J. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. H. Eberle, Mr. and Mrs. Rowe, Mr. Russell, Mr. Winans, Mr. Perceval, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Proctor, Mrs. A. Knight, Mrs. Cramer, Plumer, Mr. Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Vanstavorren, Mr. Woodbury, Mrs. Groves, Mr. Barry, Mr. and Mrs. Foster, Joe Murphy, and a strong corps de ballet; the equestrians, J. Aymar, Whittaker, Nichols, H. Nichols, Knap, Hows, Andreas and Son, Miss Nichols, Mr. and Mrs. Cole, R. Myers, Lipman, Mr. Woolford, ring-master, and a corps of Lilliputian dancers, under the direction of Amherst; Gossin, and Mr. and Mrs. Gardner were engaged, but did not come. My nightly expenses were three hundred and twenty-eight dollars; the consequence was, in nine weeks I lost \$2768: the whole equestrian department, horses and riders, were a dead weight upon the stage performance; the "Bronze Horse," for ten nights, averaged \$400. I despatched the horses to Philadelphia, and endeavored to retrieve losses by a succession of show pieces. Parsons, who was the acting and stage manager, at a salary of fifty dollars per week, was studying theology in the theatre, neglecting the business, and caring about nothing but receiving his money from the treasury, in which he

was, punctuality personified ; I gladly cancelled his engagement, and have never met him since. In the pulpit his labors may be more successful ; but from his career—his sudden return to the stage—I fear the love of notoriety, not religion, is the guiding principle.

I ought to have known Baltimore better ; but I thought a *dash* with everything of the best around me, would have made at least one brilliant season. It was a fatal error ; had I confined my efforts to the stage alone, and followed that season by a circus, without dramatic performance, I should have hit the right nail upon the head. At the end of a season of one hundred and twenty-one nights, they made me a benefit of \$751, for which they have my thanks ; although they would not come to see Burton, Balls, J. Sefton, Marble, Wood and his dogs, Emma Ince, and Mary Ann Lee.

On the 3d of December, at the American, in Philadelphia, Forrest, Oxley, and Mrs. Shaw, played seven nights, yielding to Mr. Forrest \$1457, but to the treasury of the theatre—*nothing!* deducting the amount paid for the services of Oxley and Mrs. Shaw. Mr. Forrest's second engagement entailed a loss upon the theatre.

On Christmas night, \$663—the “Friar's Oak,” and “Tom and Jerry,” John Sefton's benefit ; on the 31st, the “Fireman's Parade,” \$739, to Jemmy Twitcher, for the — time.

On the 30th, of January, 1839, Bannister produced an alteration of Shakspeare's play of “Titus Andronicus.” Had he never written a line as an author, this should have given him rank as a dramatist ; while he carefully retained the language of the immortal bard of Avon, he placed before the public a play of intense interest. Why Forrest, or some equally celebrated artist, has not attempted this part of Andronicus, in their search after novelty, is a question the public have a right to ask ; surely a new part—new to the audience, and written by Shakspeare, must be worth the attention of the first actors. Poor Bannister, nothing from thy pen, prolific as it is, meets the reception your talent merits, from those who could place a tragedy before your countrymen, with every prospect of success. Alas ! you are doomed to Rookwood, Putnam, &c., which put money in the manager's pocket, but produce little emolument to the writer.

On the 9th of February, Nichols and his horses, from Baltimore, commenced an engagement with the “Forty Thieves ;” and if in the Front Street Theatre they had proved a most unprofitable speculation, at the Walnut Street, for seven weeks, they continued to draw good houses, not only retrieving all losses, but leaving a

surplus in the treasury. This season was one of singular changes : commencing on the 23d of June, 1838, the middle of October found a deficiency of over five thousand dollars ; the 20th of March found the whole loss retrieved, and a continued gain to the termination of the season, on the three hundred and eighty-fifth night, the 14th of September, 1839 ; the best, and, in fact, the only great season I ever had in the Walnut Street Theatre, which was the sink that swallowed up all the gains of Pittsburgh, and continually cried *more, more!* The equestrian drama produced, was "Forty Thieves," "El Hyder," "Timour the Tartar," "Cataract of the Ganges," "Lodoiska," "Blue Beard," and the "Tiger Horde." During this engagement, my master-carpenter, James Landers, left me to build the stage of the new Bowery Theatre ; he was a loss, indeed : he is the best theatrical carpenter and machinist in the United States. The manner in which he left a theatre, to which he had been attached so many years, was culpable in the extreme. Hamblin had induced him to accept an offer to visit New York, which, when I heard, I agreed to give him the same terms : the stockholders also, being anxious to retain him in their employment, increased his salary. Everything was arranged apparently to his satisfaction, his word pledged to remain, and he actually drew two weeks' salary on the new arrangement. During the night he packed up his tools, started for New York by the early boat, taking with him the second carpenter, Thomas M'Clintock, and leaving me with the "Cataract of the Ganges," and "Nicholas Nickleby," two heavy scenic pieces, without a carpenter to direct the night hands, and the manager totally ignorant of this desertion until four o'clock in the afternoon, when it transpired by accident ; the consequence was, the car was upset, Mrs. Hield seriously injured : the following night a horse, valued at one thousand dollars, killed—falling from the top of the stage, and his rider escaping by a miracle the same fate.

On the 1st of April, Mr. Burton having left the Chestnut Street Theatre, commenced an engagement of six nights, in "Peter the Great," "Killing no Murder," and the "Printer's Devil." So great was his popularity at this time, that there was \$623 in the house, to witness his first appearance, and his benefit, on the following Monday, yielded \$536. Burton, Hadaway, and J. Sefton, played for three benefits : Hadaway's, on the 29th of April, \$944 ; J. Sefton's, on the 6th of March, \$702 ; and F. C. Wemyss, on the 7th of May, \$735 ; and during the present season the sum of *ten thousand and twelve dollars* was given by the citizens of Philadelphia at the Walnut Street Theatre, in benefits, to twenty-two fire

companies of the city and county. Mr. Whitney, the lecturer and teacher of elocution, attempted the part of Richard the Third, on the 18th of April; he had the good sense to acknowledge that it was beyond his powers, and I have not heard that he has since attempted to act, although very popular as a lecturer. Miss Emma Ince made her *debut* as a dancer, on the 22d of April; on the 11th of May, Hadaway, Burton, and Sefton, commenced an engagement, which failed, because they did not appear in the same piece. Which was the attraction? I was in Pittsburgh, and Mr. Warren complained to me bitterly, that he could not get them to act in the numerous plays, where all could have had great parts, but each seemed to fear the other; Hadaway frightened them both off the course: Diavolo Antonio and his Sons, Finn, Parsloe, and Conner as a star! Booth played thirteen nights, yielding a profit of eight hundred dollars in the month of June. On the 8th of July, Mrs. Hunt became a member of the company, and also Mr., Mrs., and Miss Mathews, a portion of the Ravel Family, with a very clever tight-rope dancer, a Spaniard, Le Caraquena by name, who executed some unheard-of feats, to the delight of the boys in the pit, and the eminent risk of his own life—playing to good houses during the dog days. The 29th of July introduced something new, in the person of Mr. Carter, the Lion King, who drove a lion in harness across the stage, played with a tiger like a kitten, and in a piece called the “Lion King,” filled the theatre. He proceeded to the Front Street Theatre, Baltimore, where his success was interrupted by the Asquith Street Nunnery rows, and from thence proceeded to Europe, with John Sefton as the *Tiger Tamer* to *Nabob Raymond*. Chippendale made his first appearance in Philadelphia, as Sir Mark Chase, in “A Roland for an Oliver,” for the benefit of his friend, Mr. Hudson, on the 10th of August, 1839; on the 19th, “Romanzo,” with new scenery, by Hielge, was produced with success; interrupted by Mr. James Wallack, who, on the 26th, contrived to lower our \$250 houses to \$90, \$116, &c.: his benefit, with the new play of “Tortosa,” only \$193—always as a star fated to injure my business. On the 2d of September, I again appeared in the character of an author, having dramatised “Captain Kyd,” from Ingraham’s novel, Mrs. Lewis supporting the principal character. On the 10th of September, Mr. W. R. Blake appeared as Geoffry Dale in the “Last Man;” and the season closed on Saturday, the 14th of September, with “Anne Boleyn,” and the “Youthful Queen,” for Mrs. Lewis’ benefit, having been open for sixty-four weeks and one night—385 conse-

cutive performances—the first manager in the United States who ever accomplished such an apparent impossibility.

The Pittsburgh Theatre, this spring, opened on the 13th of May, 1839, with “Laugh when You Can,” and “Raphael,” Balls playing Gossamer. The citizens of Pittsburgh almost killed him with kindness out of the theatre, if they did not answer his expectations behind the curtain ; his head was not hard enough to attempt the game he nearly fell a martyr to ; to see a Pittsburgh *bon vivant* under the table, is a task few attempt who know them, and fewer succeed in accomplishing. My friend Balls was a child at this game, and they laughed at him for his folly, until an attack of *mania-a-potu* turned a joke into earnest, and both parties withdrew from the contest, equally ashamed of having participated in it.

On the 22d of May, the Bedouin Arabs astonished the natives, while Miss Mason, Mr. and Mrs. Sloman, John Sefton, and Mr. E. Forrest, kept up the ball most successfully ; the season closing on the 29th of June, with “A Lesson for Ladies,” and “Cramond Brig,” for my benefit ; a little hissing, as usual, and a splendid bottle of Champagne to wash it down afterwards ; this was my last visit professionally to Pittsburgh. Mr. Parsons superintended the following season, and Mr. Jackson finished the game, in 1840, with a loss of four thousand dollars in seventy-two nights, the greater portion of which, unfortunately, remained unpaid.

CHAPTER XXXV.

First Appearance of Miss Mary C. Maywood---The Walnut Street Leased to Cooke---Opening of the Chestnut Street---A Galaxy of Stars---Madame Vestris---A New French Corps de Ballet, and a Disappointment---Mr. Seguin ---Miss Sheriff---Charley Ward---Mrs. Sharpe.

ON the 3d of March, 1838, I played Captain Blumenfeldt, in “How to Die for Love,” for Conner’s benefit, at the Chestnut St. Theatre, where he contrived on this occasion, by the aid of numerous volunteers, to obtain a good house. On the 17th, “La Sylphide” was produced under the title of “The Dew Drop,” to give Au-

gusta Maywood another opportunity of reaping fame. I lent my artist, Russel Smith, who painted the scenery; and, for my kindness, I lost his services at the Walnut Street Theatre on the following season. Error, number two: in obliging Maywood and Co., who go upon the principle of, all fair in business; take any one you can get, provided you want them; breach of contract is nothing to us; let them settle that with their former employer. Go on, gentlemen; the time will shortly arrive when you will reap the benefit of your own system. When you find the people most serviceable to you leaving your theatre in the middle of a season, then you will regret the force of the example you have set, and which they will use as a justification of their conduct.

On the 14th of April, Miss Mary C. Maywood made her first appearance upon any stage, as Angela, in "The Castle Spectre." She exhibited no talent for the profession she was about to adopt, nor has a spark been extracted to the present hour, although the influence of her father obtained her permission to act at the Haymarket Theatre, in London, yet the magic words from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, had no effect upon her return to the United States. The dignified appellation of a walking lady is the only one she appears destined to wear. She attempted Bianca, in "Fazio," but possessed not physical power to give effect to her conception of the fiery Italian Wife.

On the 2d of April, 1838, by permission of the board of agents, I let the Walnut Street Theatre to Cooke, for the production of horse pieces. This consent, gentlemen, twelve months sooner, would have been worth several thousand dollars a-year to you, prevented the building of the Circus, and saved your tenant from ruin. Now it was a matter of indifference, and yielded by you for the sake of the income derived from the bars, the theatre being closed at the time. He produced "Mazeppa," in splendid style, followed it with "Napoleon," so well done by Barrymore, which failed; and on the 25th of April, the "Cataract of the Ganges" sharing a similar fate, he closed his doors on the 25th of May, never to open them again in America; returned to his native country with blighted prospects and ruined fortune, to commence a new career, at a time when age should have been rendered comfortable in retirement. He left behind him a name respected by all with whom he had the slightest business transactions. May success attend his future movements.

On the 28th of April, Mr. Vandenhoff appeared as Cato. A new piece entitled "Sam Weller," from the Pickwick Papers, seems to have been very successful at the Chestnut Street Theatre, ra-

ther an unusual occurrence there with that style of dramatic literature. On the 1st of June, Conner played Richard the Third, to how many spectators is not recorded ; and on the 26th, Mr. W. B. Wood claimed the honor of being the first representative in Philadelphia of Claude Melnotte, in "The Lady of Lyons,"—sixty won't do for twenty-six years of age ! Why did he not try Col. Damas ?

On the 25th of August, 1838, the Chestnut Street Theatre was announced to open with an host upon host of various attraction ; but one damper to the whole—*the prices were again to be raised*, of course to be again lowered. The list of stars ran : Mrs. Mathews, late Madame Vestris ; Miss Sheriff, Madame Celeste, Mademoiselle Stephon, and a corps de ballet ; Tyrone Power, Charles Mathews, Wilson, Seguin, Mons. Hazard, Bedouin Arabs, James Wallack, and Hackett. The pieces on the first night, "Wives as they Were, and Maids as they are," and "The Ladies' Man ;" a very good house. On the 27th, the Bedouin Arabs, whose performance astonishes if it does not please, but is better fitted for the arena of a circus than the stage of a temple dedicated to dramatic literature, and so thought the fashionable circles of Philadelphia, as they absented themselves until the 17th of September, when Power appeared as Sir Patrick O'Plenipo, and Pat Rooney, in "The Omnibus ;" the audience in a perfect roar of delight. On the 24th, he played Rory O'More ; but Hadaway had made so successful a hit in this part, that even Power could not shake the good opinion of the audience. My friend Hadaway may plume himself upon this circumstance ; but the compliment he richly deserved. Power continued to attract crowds, and finished his engagement with the "White Horse of the Peppers," retiring on the 6th of October—his pockets lined with dollars, his ears surfeited with praise.

The 8th of October brought before us

MADAME VESTRIS, (MRS. CHARLES MATHEWS,)

who appeared as Gertrude, in "The Loan of a Lover," and Julia, in "One Hour, or the Carnival Ball." Without entering into any defence of the faults of Mrs. Charles Mathews, to her the American theatres are indebted for the improvement so apparent in the arrangement of the stage, carpets, ottomans, grates, fenders, centre tables, &c., in drawing-rooms ; gravel walks, beds of flowers, hot-house plants, in gardens, are all her work. Among the number of ladies who have attempted the difficult task of managing a theatre, she alone has succeeded. Look at the perfect manner in which the light pieces were produced at the Olympic Theatre, in

London. Every thing requisite to complete the illusion of the scene *was there*—and she insisted, as a “*sine qua non*” with the American managers, that they should *be here also*. For this alone she deserves the gratitude as well as admiration of every visiter of the playhouse. As an actress in the varied extent of the drama, I boldly proclaim she has *no superior*: and any auditor who could listen unmoved to her Clara, in “The Barrack Room,” may forever renounce all claim to taste or judgment in theatrical matters. The prejudice excited against her by an unfortunate expression, said to have been uttered by her at Saratoga, prevented her from receiving an impartial hearing at the hands of an American audience; her engagement was a failure both in money and reputation. But this is not to be attributed to want of talent in her profession. The absurd cry that she was no actress, and unworthy of the reputation she enjoyed, was raised by prejudice, and was anything but creditable to the judgment (which was never used) of the American public. The manner in which she resented the mortification she experienced was ill-judged; and her attack upon Jim Crow Rice, although not intended as ill nature, was so construed, and gave him an opportunity to lampoon her with effect, in what he termed his own lyric style, turning all her efforts into ridicule. Every body joined in the hue-and-cry against her, and seemed determined to prevent her success: every opportunity was eagerly seized to wound her pride. How well this succeeded her speedy return to England proclaims; but this result was the effect of accident, not design. A brilliant campaign was anticipated for her, and her failure is to be attributed to occurrences which took place out of the theatre. To her husband, Mr. Charles Mathews, the audience were better disposed: every thing he did was appreciated, and the praises lavished upon his professional efforts were intended as another thorn to be planted in her side, by building up a reputation for him upon her downfall. His merit I am fully willing to admit; but I question whether he felt flattered by the approbation he received in the United States. He made his appearance in Philadelphia as Peter Spyke, in “A Loan of a Lover;” Motley, in “He would be an Actor;” and Charles Swiftly, in “One Hour, or The Carnival Ball.” Their engagement was a succession of houses, *bad, worse, worst*; and on the 20th October, they brought it to a close with “The Welsh Girl,” “Clatter versus Patter,” “The Handsome Husband,” and “The Carnival Ball.” They declined visiting either Baltimore or Boston, and returned forthwith to London, where Madame, no doubt, has recovered the equanimity of her temper and arrived at the conclusion, that the

Yankees are uncivilized brutes, who cannot appreciate good acting. In truth, she has good cause for her spleen.

Celeste followed, as Madeline, in "St. Mary's Eve;" and to oppose Forrest's career at the Walnut Street Theatre, played nightly in two pieces, and, on the 3d of November, announced positively her last appearance (until the next time.) Her farewells have become truly laughable; but they seem always to answer the purpose of a full house.

Power played on the 5th, Rory O'More; and on the 13th, after his usual success, announced his benefit, Paudheen O'Rafferty, in "Born to Good Luck," and Larry Hoolagan, in "More Blunders than One," when his rich brogue was no longer heard within the walls of Old Drury, but was transferred to the Haymarket, London.

On the 14th of November, the city was on the tiptoe of expectation to see the new French corps de ballet, imported by Hazard from Paris, at the request of the managers of the Chestnut Street Theatre—Josephine Stephan, Madame Hazard, Rosalie, and Sophie Mallet—the piece, "La Deliverance des Grecs." The principal characters were good, especially Stephan; but the corps de ballet were as awkward a squad as it ever fell to my lot to behold: they were Philadelphians instead of Parisians, and not a goodly selection either. The audience at once discovered the cheat, and then farewell to all prospect of success from the ballet. One night, and adieu to the "Deliverance of the Greeks." If managers can blush—and being one of the fraternity, I have a right to say I think it difficult for them to do so—the directors of the Chestnut Street Theatre must have felt their cheeks tingle at the expressions of contempt so freely used upon the present occasion. Double price for inferior talent. If ever a failure was merited, this corps de ballet sealed their own doom. To the artistes who understood their business the failure must have been doubly mortifying. This was a penny wise, pound foolish scheme. The Philadelphians were prepared to support the ballet, and would have done so; but the parsimony of the management marred the very expectations they had raised. Ten or twelve dancing girls from Paris would have triumphantly travelled throughout the United States; three really clever artistes were uselessly sacrificed. Stephan returned to Paris, and half a season dispersed the *should-have-been ballet corps*.

Mrs. H. Cramer played Mrs. Haller, on the 26th of November; a really clever stock actress. And, on the 4th of December Celeste again—Toujour Celeste! another farewell benefit on the 22d

of December. Wallack, now the popular manager of the National Theatre in New-York, played the Brigand ; Mrs. Walstein, an humble but useful member of the company, took her farewell of the stage, on the 8th of January, to seek retirement in the arms of matrimony—may she be happy. On the 14th of January, 1839, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Seguin, and Miss Sheriff opened in “La Son-nambula.” Of Mr. Wilson, it would be superfluous to say more than that he supported his high reputation as a tenor singer, and warbled himself into the good graces of the audience. Of

MR. SEGUIN,

I may add, there is a vein of rich, comic humor flowing through every part he undertakes, which would have made him a favorite as a comic actor in the best days of the drama, without the aid of the rich bass voice which reaches your ear in a full tone of melody. He is the buffo par excellence of English opera, a position he will long retain ; and strong indeed must be that rival's pre-tension to fame, who can wrest the title from him.

MISS SHERIFF,

although the last named, by no means the least of the trio in the list of songstresses who have visited the New World. She stands second only to Mrs. Wood ; and the success of the opera of “Amilie,” at New York, has given her fame and reputation throughout the United States superior to any she enjoyed in London. Aided by Wilson and Seguin, she accomplished the usual tour of European artistes, returning to England with pleasant reminiscences, a purse well filled with dollars, the result of Yankee admiration of her talent ; not having been involved in any theatrical *fracas*, so fatal to the popularity of stars, who frequently permit their tempers to get the better of their common sense, and by one hasty expression of anger mar all their future prospects.

On the 18th of January, “Amilie,” the music of which had enchanted the New Yorkers, and held possession of the stage to the exclusion of any other opera, was produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre. I had presented it sufficiently well at the Walnut Street to destroy any great excitement ; the airs had become familiar, and, notwithstanding the full force of the chorus from the National Theatre, it failed to draw money. If I am asked for my proof, behold it in the fact, that neither Miss Sheriff, Mr. Wilson, nor Mr. Seguin would venture to take it for a benefit. It was one

of those fair (unfair) movements in management, which frequently overthrow well-laid schemes. That the opera was better done at the Chestnut Street Theatre, as a whole, nobody will be fool-hardy enough to deny ; but there were detached portions better executed at the Walnut Street, while the scenery was far superior to that presented at Old Drury ; and many preferred the counterfeit to the genuine "Amilie."

Herr Cline, Mrs. Watson, and Miss Clarence Wells filled up the month of February ; and the 4th of March astonished us with the presence of my old friends, the Slomans. She opened in "Isabella," he in "Sam Savoury"—attraction gone, never to return ! While their numerous personal friends rejoiced to see them once more, the public in general cared nothing about them ; and even Sloman's ten comic songs failed to produce a house on his benefit night that he would have been willing to pay five hundred dollars for, before the doors opened, as he did to Mr. Warren, for his first benefit in Philadelphia.

On the 23d of March, John Butler, Esq., translated a French drama, under the title of "Gaspardo, the Gondolier," for the Chestnut Street Theatre. The piece had been printed, with an English version, some time previously, and I played it a night or two before, thus robbing Mr. Butler of half his honors. The piece is a good one of its class, and was successful ; Mr. Harrington, as Gaspardo, deserved the thanks of the translator. On the 25th, Balls played a round of light comedy ; and on the 1st of April, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Seguin, and Miss Sheriff returned.

POOR CHARLEY WARD.

Is there a play-goer in the city that does not know the name of Charley Ward, for forty years the property man of the Chestnut Street Theatre ? an humble but useful character, without whose aid, tragedians, comedians, singers, dancers, all must be at fault. When your name was announced for a benefit, the proceeds to cheer thy old age, were there no stars to volunteer their aid ? Surely Mr. Wilson, Mr. Seguin, and Miss Sheriff should have tendered their services, if Mr. Wallack paid them a certain amount, receiving the proceeds of their engagements. I know his generous heart too well to doubt that such an offer, on such an occasion, would have pleased him. Why was it not urged ? The "Wheel of Fortune," and "Turn Out," was not attraction sufficient to induce the public to notice thy appeal ; a beggarly account of empty boxes, and a still worse filled pit, was thy reward

for years of service! A few days more, and their sympathy or support will matter little to thee, for thou wilt have passed that bourne from whence no traveller returns.

The opera closed on the 27th of April; and on the 11th of May, for the benefit of Mrs. Sharpe, Mrs. Seguin appeared as Cinderella. This lady may be termed an American actress, and her fame justly belongs to the American stage, she never having appeared in England except in the concert room. Delightful warbler! thy friends rejoice in thy success; each succeeding engagement plants thee more firmly in the hearts of thine audience, and opera without thy aid loses half its charms. All who remember the modest diffidence of thy first appeal, see with pride the prima donna of the American stage rising above all competitors, cultivating a voice, whose mellifluous tones reach all hearts, and by thy correct demeanor in private life, gaining the affection and esteem of a large circle of acquaintance, until Mrs. Seguin is pointed out as the model of what an actress should be. Pursue thy career; and if life be spared, thy reputation will be the envy and the pride of the whole profession, and the plaudits which greet thy appearance a just tribute to thy worth.

On the 19th of May, Madame Augusta played at the Chestnut Street Theatre, without notice, good, bad, or indifferent; time had not obliterated the recollection of disappointment. On the 21st, Bulwer's play of "Richelieu" was acted, Harrington being the original representative of that character in the United States. Miss Tree played an engagement, also Mrs. Gibbs; and Monsieur and Madame Paul Taglioni, on the 10th of June, appealed in vain for support as dancers of eminence. The theatre closed for the season on the 22d of June, for Lindsay's benefit, with the "Lady of the Lake" and "Hasty Conclusions."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Season of 1839-40—Increase of the Prices of Admission—A Disastrous Step—A Compliment from a distinguished source—Forrest, as "Richelieu"—Return to the Old Prices—Barnum—Booth—Reason of Forrest's Refusal to Accept the Nomination for Congress—Richings—Browne—The Belgian Giant, and the Monkey Man—Booth in a Crazy Fit—A Letter, but no Answer—Mrs. Seguin—Mrs. Fitzwilliams—Miss Vandenhoff—Charles Kean—Mademoiselle Fanny Ellsler—Celeste—Death of her Husband.

THE late season at the Walnut Street Theatre having in some measure retrieved the losses of the previous one, and my arrangements for the campaign of 1839-40 giving me confidence of a continuation of success, having secured the services of E. Forrest, Burton, Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Horncastle, and Latham, Nichols and his horses to commence upon. Mr. Henry G. Freeman, after these engagements were made, gave me notice that the board of agents had come to the conclusion, not to renew my lease unless I agreed to raise the price of admission to the Pit (the support of the house, that nothing but this stupid arrangement could drive away,) to thirty-seven and a half cents. Never having previously charged more than twenty-five cents, and having resisted every argument of Forrest, Augusta, and others, to tamper with the prices, I was compelled to yield my judgment to the dictation of gentlemen who, understanding their own business, might, at least, have given me credit for understanding mine, after, with care and labor, having raised their theatre to a reputation it had never, since Blake's time, enjoyed. Remonstrance, argument, all was vain—the alternative, leave the theatre. Would to heaven I had done so. But throughout my whole business connection with Mr. H. G. Freeman—(for the other gentlemen of the board were but his satellites; they might oppose his views, but, on the system of freedom of election, if they did, next year they could not retain their seat in the board, his overwhelming vote and interest placing any puppet he chose to nominate in the position of an agent)—the more I yielded, the more he demanded, until at last worn out by the positive injustice of his demands, and the insolent contempt with which a letter addressed to the board of agents was treated, I resolved to give up the theatre. Forced to drive away the staunch support of the house, by levying an advance of fifty per cent. upon the admission, for no other reason than that the Chesnut Street

Theatre had advanced their prices; and Mr. H. G. Freeman being also a member of the board of agents of that theatre, sacrificed me. What was the Chesnut Street Theatre, or its arrangement of prices to me, or to my audience? *They* had continually trifled with the prices of admission, *I* never—maintaining that one fixed price was the way to insure steady patronage. The consequence was, when, as it had always happened, the Chesnut Street managers reduced their prices to the old standard, *I* was charging seventy-five and thirty-seven and a half cents, the same price, and possessed not the power to reduce to my old prices, without the consent of the board of agents, (that is, Mr. H. G. Freeman.) After having ruined the engagement of every star, and played fifty-seven nights under the expenditure of the theatre, fifteen of which yielded only fifty dollars, and in one hundred and fourteen nights having lost six thousand dollars, on the 25th of January, 1840, *I* graciously received permission to do as *I* liked, with regard to the prices. *I* did not lose one night in availing myself of it. Closed for a week, hoping to make the audience forget it—but they were not to be whistled back—my *ruin* was sealed—the doom irrevocable. The board of agents of the Walnut Street Theatre, who should have been my support, the cause, the only cause. During a season of two hundred and sixty-one nights, one hundred and fifty-five produced less than half the amount of the nightly expenses required to keep the doors open. The seven worst weeks ran thus: \$320, \$284, \$261, \$292, \$339, \$313, \$251, not the amount of a single good house to pay the expenses of a whole week. Whoever is familiar with the expenditure of a theatre may make a calculation of the losses entailed upon the poor manager, by gentlemen attempting to conduct *his* business according to *their* notions of right and wrong. What a debt of gratitude *I* owe to the committee of the Walnut Street Theatre stockholders—which *I* found a barn, with scarcely sufficient scenery to act a plain comedy, tragedy, or farce, and which *I* left the best stocked theatre for melo-drama, with machinery, &c., in the United States.

Endeavoring, if possible, to stem the tide which *I* thus early saw must bear me immediately on to ruin, *I* had prepared appropriate decorations, by Hielge; and although *I* closed on Saturday, the 14th of September, the longest theatrical season on record, *I* opened on Monday the 16th, with the theatre renovated, newly painted, seats re-covered, proscenium altered, and kept my curtain down exactly *half an hour* beyond its time. So like magic did this appear, that it was three nights before the audience could be

assured that such a thing had been accomplished. On the Wednesday evening, while seated in the green-room, my ears were assailed by three hearty cheers, which I at first supposed were meant for approbation to Mr. E. Forrest, in Damon, but on walking to the stage, I was told the audience had just discovered the decorations, and were calling for the manager. Upon this effort, so well arranged against time, the press were perfectly silent; a proof what attention their reporters pay to the affairs of a theatre, where the manager does not request a notice. I was anxious to avoid the notice of any change of price in the admission, and leave it to its own course.

Forrest commenced the season with "Virginius," to \$398; played the "Gladiator," "Damon" twice, "Metamora" twice, and "Othello" and "Carwin" for his benefit. On Tuesday, September 24th, 1839, I produced "Richelieu" in a style that surprised everybody. The dresses cost me six hundred dollars, and were made by A. J. Allen. The costume the exact age of Louis XIII. of France, the scenery new, the chairs and tables of the same style and date; so perfect was everything, that after the first night Mr. Forrest called me into his room, and after many compliments, concluded thus: "For what you have done for the honor of the profession I will play one night gratuitously for you at the end of this engagement; select any play you think proper." Such a proffer, on such an occasion, from such a man, was a feather in the cap of a manager, which no one has been able to pluck away from me. I never heard of his being equally liberal to any of my contemporaries. The play was cast thus: Richelieu, E. Forrest; De Mauprat, Conner; Banadas, Mathews; De Beringhen, Wemyss; Joseph, Vaché; Francois, J. Smith; Louis XIII., Grierson; Huguët, Porter; Gaston, Burgess; Clermont, Myers; Captain of Archers, McBride; Governor of the Bastile, Kemble; Jailer, Horn; Julie Mortimar, Mrs. Hunt; Marion De L'Orme, Miss Mathews (now Mrs. Eddy). Although the play was thus well acted, the receipts of the first night were only \$385; second, \$368; third, \$367; fourth, \$342; regularly falling off slightly every night. The blight of the prices had fallen upon this whole engagement, and every star engagement that followed throughout a season which promised so much. Forrest's benefit was \$852, but at fifty cents, and twenty-five cents, he had last season \$862, and \$851, instead of \$578, at increased prices. I declined taking "Richelieu," and selected "Metamora," which was acted to \$289. The offer was a liberal one on the part of Forrest, although not so productive as we both anticipated. This first engagement, at the commence-

ment of fifty-six nights during the year, left the treasury a deficiency of about seven hundred dollars, including the expenses of producing the play of "Richelieu." Of Mr. Forrest's performance of this part I can scarcely find words to speak in terms of sufficient praise; it was one of those masterly efforts of genius that sets criticism at defiance, full of beauty, full of faults; but an endeavor to analyze the latter would lead your pen into a strain of panegyric before you had completed half a dozen sentences, by the discovery of a flash of genius so brilliant, as to make you doubt the correctness of your judgment, and pronounce the fault you had determined to expose, a necessary foil to the excellent effect which followed. He evidently devoted no time to the study of character, but committed the words of the part to memory in a hurry; appeared in it before the public in a hurry; before them, to polish his crude ideas of the author as chance might direct; giving full scope to his imagination—an effort no one but a great actor would have dared to attempt. That Richelieu was not in years an old man, even at the time of his death, history informs us, but having been a roué in youth, his impaired constitution became too feeble to support his extraordinary vigor of thought and mind. Forrest represented him as a feeble, tottering old man, thus availing himself of stage trick to give greater effect to his outbreak of passion, and the anathema pronounced on Banadas at the end of the fourth act, was equal to any of Edmund Kean's best efforts, of a similar nature; taking his audience by surprise, and charging onward, until their admiration broke forth into an involuntary acknowledgment of his excellence, continuing several seconds after the fall of the curtain hid the actor from their view. His sudden appearance before the king and the conspirators, who are congratulating themselves upon his death, and the overwhelming agony of his tone and countenance, when refused the pardon of De Mauprat, by his sovereign, was the perfection of art—but his *ha, ha, ha, Count Baradas—ha, ha*, in the last scene was not deserving of the applause it received, and unworthy of Forrest—in my opinion the greatest blemish in the whole play;—but as a whole, Richelieu will never find a better representative. Macready and Vandenhoff both fall infinitely below Forrest, by comparison, in this character. The former gentleman shows the effect of long application and intense study thrown at once into the shade by genius; yet, it is strange, that while every body admits Richelieu to be one of Forrest's greatest efforts, the receipts of the treasury when he acts it, fall short of his average houses. The cause of this must be in the play, which is devoid of interest to a common ob-

server, and too classical to suit the taste of that class of society who form the majority of visitors to the theatre.

Burton, on the 5th of October, played "Paul Pry and Billy Lackaday." For six nights his houses averaged only \$165; his benefit was \$653. Hill followed with no better success; two hundred people in the pit, which used to average \$600 nightly, was the result of the oppression on the part of the stockholders, and forced submission to it upon mine. On the 4th of November Mrs. and Mrs. Seguin and Mr. Horncastle, appeared in "Der Freischutz." I have Mr. Seguin's written testimony, that out of London he had never seen the scenery of this opera so well put upon the stage; yet the second night produced only \$170. Mr. Seguin's benefit only \$247; Mr. Horncastle's \$138; Mr. Latham's \$194, and Mrs. Seguin's \$401. "Damn all stockholders and their interference, as Goldfinch damns all dancing masters and their umbrellas, when flung into the ditch." Forrest returned on the 25th of November; his houses worse than on the former occasion. It was during these twelve nights Judge Cornad's play of "Jack Cade; or, Aylesmere," was to have been produced, but was postponed until the third visit, and then as far as I was concerned *sine die*. The horses, to whose exertions I was so much indebted last season, commenced on the 11th of December, and although "The Forty Thieves," "Marmion," "The Secret Mine," "The Siege of Tripoli," "Kenilworth," "Blue Beard," and "Billy Button," were offered as attractions, empty benches—and why don't you lower the prices?—what did you raise them for?—were the only objects that met my eyes and ears. The 1st of January, New Year's night, only \$259: instead of an overflowing pit, three hundred and twenty-four tickets were all that I could sell, with two new pieces, in which the horses appeared. Seven benefits, to fire companies alone, yielded the amount of the nightly expenses, up to the 25th January, 1840. Never was a bright prospect so cruelly killed, murdered, as my arrangements were this season. On the 3d of February, I announced a return to the good old prices, and a new piece, "Sadah and Kalasrade." Mr. Sefton having engaged for me in London, Mr. Macintosh, the stage carpenter of Madame Vestris' Theatre, a complete alteration at my *own* expense, was again made, and gas introduced to light the theatre, from the borders instead of the old plan of wing-ladders. The American Theatre, in Walnut Street, under my direction, was the first to introduce this method, now so universally approved and adopted in the United States. Towards these alterations the Board of Agents liberally contributed *one hundred dollars*, leaving

me to pay eight hundred, in making an effort to escape from the slough of despond, in which they had plunged me. All would not do—"Sadah and Kalasrade," with all its beautiful scenery and dresses, failed; the first night yielding only \$277, \$109 of which was in the pit; but my pit customers were too justly offended to forgive the past, and left me to extricate myself, if I could, without their aid, although to see Master Diamond and Sandford, they did once honor me with their presence, to the amount of seven hundred and four tickets, in a house of \$740. My friend, Barnum, now of the New-York Museum, knows better than any body how to gull the public: witness, Joice Heth, the reputed nurse of General Washington, and the redoubted Tom Thumb, &c., &c. On the 13th of March, Booth commenced an engagement, and on the 16th, for the first time, in all our engagements, failed to appear as "Richard the Third," assigning as his reason, that I was neglecting my business, by playing for Mr. Murdoch's benefit, at the Chesnut Street Theatre, and until I came, he would not go upon the stage. This closed our engagement, as I would not permit him to appear on the following night. Burton played twelve nights to more money at the reduced prices, than was received during his previous engagements. E. Forrest, aided by J. R. Scott, commenced his last engagement for the season, on the 22d of April, in "Damon and Pythias," to a house of \$241—ruinous work; giving him fifty per cent on the gross amount received each night at the doors. He played "Metamora" to \$111, and his benefit \$224, "Richelieu," and two acts of the "Gladiator;" his last benefit \$359, "King Lear" and "Pizarro." The public felt they had been trifled with: the new play was again announced, and was again not forthcoming. Thus an engagement of fifty-six nights in Philadelphia and Baltimore, was concluded, yielding something over \$10,000 to Mr. E. Forrest, and entailing a loss of between three and four hundred dollars on the management. "Jack Cade" had been counted upon for this last engagement, and after so many disappointments, Mr. E. Forrest wished, twelve months afterwards, to know what possible claim I could have to a play written for him by Judge Conrad. If a jury had been put in possession of the facts, they would have made Mr. Forrest repay to the manager losses incurred for non-fulfilment of promised attraction, if they did not award damages in addition. That Mr. Forrest intended to have acted the play for the benefit of himself and the Walnut Street Theatre, his letters on the subject, furnished ample proof; his manner of requiting me for the disappointment, was to make an arrangement with Pratt, of the Chesnut

Street Theatre, for the following season, leaving me to learn it from Mr. Pratt, instead of himself. He had a right to act where he pleased ; but courtesy demanded from him a notice to that effect, when I asked him what time I should keep vacant for him, during the following season, instead of the non-committal reply, "I will write to you upon that subject—time enough." It was at my desk he penned the letter, refusing the nomination of the democratic party of the City of New-York, to run for Member of Congress. When I asked him why the honor conferred upon his profession, by his election, was not a sufficient inducement to run the hazard of the die, the reply was characteristic of the man—"I want no further honor, and can't afford to give my time for \$8 a day, when I can make two hundred out of it. The day may come, when I shall make the game of politics my study ; and then it will be time enough to present myself to the suffrages of my fellow-citizens." Like Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost, he prefers to reign in hell, rather than serve in heaven. We shall see whether time will bring about his wishes. Money he will always be able to command, and in that, possesses an influence from which all results, large or small, most flow.

"A Faint Heart never won a Fair Lady," so favorite a part with Mr. Richings, was first acted on the 9th of May. Ruy Gomez was to have been personated by Mr. Lennox, but in consequence of his illness, I had to play the part ; and a very good one it is. On the 12th of May, Mr. Browne commenced an engagement—\$54, \$48, \$66, \$54 ; benefit \$164 ! Mr. Freer made his first appearance as Edgard, the Idiot, on the 14th of May, 1840 ; and Miss Rock, after an absence of many years, on the 18th ; Mr. Freer playing on the same nights, \$52, \$54, \$40, \$52 ; Freer's benefit \$118 ! Miss Rock's benefit \$99 ! Can such things be ?—They have been. On the 27th of May, Monsieur Bihin, the Belgian Giant, essayed his fortunes ; and on the 1st of June, the Monkey Man, Monsieur Klishnig. Booth, who promised reformation, and professed penitence, played Hamlet on the 15th of June ; and on the 24th, Oronooko, in bare feet. His benefit, on the 27th, Octavian, Shylock, John Lump, and the first act of Richelieu. Throughout this engagement, he had been crazy ; and his Richelieu never will be forgotten—imperfect, drunk, and dressed like an English chimney-sweep—on the 1st of May. I found I could no longer place the slightest dependance upon him. He kept faith with me, when he had broken it with almost every manager on the continent ; and when taxed with his folly, would say—Ask Wemyss if he believes these stories—he knows I never

break engagements. Alas! Mr. Junius, I can no longer, with truth, assert you never did. His twelve nights yielded, including his benefit, \$1412, or \$117 per night, for which I paid him, as usual, taking the proceeds of the benefit, \$1200. Quere; how much did I gain by the operation? While ruin stared me in the face, and Burton was converting Cooke's Circus into a theatre in my immediate neighborhood, on the 1st of July I addressed the Committee thus—

(COPY.)

PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 1840.

GENTLEMEN,

The present position of theatricals in this city, and the very heavy loss of the present season, having placed me in a situation to require some little aid from you, I am induced to lay before you the reasons why I think myself entitled to expect from you some consideration.

It appears from the books of the theatre, that I have expended in lumber, canvas, paints, cordage, and tin-ware, extra carpenter wages, (not including my regular bill for carpenter-work of \$42 per week,) upwards of \$7,000, independent of my rent, which, in six years, has amounted to \$20,900. You have likewise received during the same time, from the bars for rent: viz., twenty-five weeks for the first seven months, say \$50 per week, \$1250; forty-five weeks for the second year, at \$50, \$2250; thirty-five weeks for the third year, at \$50, \$1100; thirty-three weeks for the fourth year, at \$50, \$1650; fifty-two weeks for the fifth year, at \$70, \$3640; forty-eight weeks for the sixth year, at \$70, \$3360. Total, \$13,250. Thirteen thousand two hundred and fifty dollars in addition to the \$27,900, making the gross amount of \$41,150 for the five years and seven months, nearly fifteen per cent per year, reckoning one hundred and seventy-five shares at \$275 each.

The house has been twice decorated by me since it was done by the stockholders in 1834; moreover, half the papering and painting of the lobbies.

A mistake of my own, not discovered until too late to rectify it, caused me to pay five months' rent before the theatre was ready for performance; and although I can make no complaint upon that subject, it made to me a difference of \$1700 in my expenditure during the first year.

I now proceed to state what I solicit you to do, and what I trust you will accede to.

In the first place, to require from me no payment in advance for the following year, but to receive the \$200 per week, from the usual time of opening. Thus making a difference of five weeks in the time for the payment of the whole rent. Second, to paint and paper the lobbies and vestibule, (a new dome if you think proper,) and also the panels of the boxes, according to a design which I will submit for your approval. Thus giving to the house a fresh appearance to enable me to compete with the other theatres.

Having labored industriously for five years and seven months, to make the theatre what it is, in point of scenery and machinery, I trust you will not think I have made any unreasonable demand on your courtesy, and by your early answer to this letter, enable me to guide my future movements accordingly.

There is one subject more to which I would direct your attention—the *police*. It is necessary that at least one half of this burden should be borne by those who receive the emoluments of the bars, from which, (particularly the third tier,) all the disorder in the house arises.

Yours most respectfully,
(Signed) F. C. WEMYSS.

This letter remained unanswered. Mr. Freeman met me in the street, and told me a committee would be appointed to wait upon me;—none came. The Arch street Theatre was pressed upon me by many of my friends, at half the rent I was paying for the Walnut; and as Mr. H. Freeman, Mr. Montelius, Mr. Lagies, Mr. Wickersham, Mr. Peddle and Mr. Donaldson, after blighting my prospects of almost certain success, treated me with contempt, I thought it time to shake off the slavery, which had become too irksome, to the will of these gentlemen, and sent them notice of my intention to resign the theatre on the 31st day of July, when my lease expired. These consistent gentlemen suffered Mr. Dineford and Mr. Marshall, my successors, to open the pit at twelve-and-a-half cents, and upper boxes twenty-five cents admission; giving them also the rent of the bars, and charging them no more rent than they required of me without them! Thus, in fact, making them rent free. Thank you a thousand times, gentlemen, for your kindness. You caught hold of a fool when you got hold of *me*, and having me in your clutches, you made me pay the price of my folly. Not satisfied, like Shylock, to have your pound of flesh, you continually demanded more than your bargain. Your lucky stars, in my insolvency, saved you much inconvenience. Could I have prosecuted the suit commenced, for justice, I have

no doubt the result would have been gratifying to me, but mortifying to yourselves; and that I should have received some few thousand dollars as a salvo for all you made myself and family suffer. The rich man always will oppress the poor man; but retribution sometimes, though rarely, overtakes him; powerful friends arise when least expected. I leave you to enjoy the honor of the money obtained for bar rent, and the knowledge that you, and not the manager, should have been indicted for permitting nightly, the laws to be set at defiance within those rooms, for your exclusive benefit. The theatre closed on Saturday, the 25th of July, for Hadaway's benefit, "The Floating Beacon" and the "Turnpike Gate," never to be opened by me again. In leaving it for the Arch street Theatre I may have committed an error; but in six years, two only yielded any profit; the other four entailed upon me severe losses. Had I been left to follow my own judgment, without the interference of the stockholders, or rather their committee, I should have contrived to have redeemed all mishaps. Fettered in all my movements, I sank beneath the pressure.

Celeste commenced with "St. Mary's Eve," on the 26th of August. On the 9th of September Miss Mary Maywood was announced as Pauline, in "The Lady of Lyons," her first appearance since her late successful engagement in London—ha! ha! ha! Manager Maywood, that won't do. Julia, Letitia Hardy, Mrs. Haller, Juliet, Beatrice, have been too well acted in the city of Philadelphia, to be attempted by less than mediocrity, which is all your daughter can lay claim to. You have placed her in a false position from which she must fall, and if she continues in the profession, it must be in the humbler walks of it. She can alone seek for praise or sympathy from her audience. Mr. Wilson, Miss Sheriff and Mr. Brough, on the 16th, in the always pleasant opera of "La Sonnambula." Mr. Seguin had withdrawn from all connection with Wilson and Sheriff, for the purpose of bringing his wife more prominently before the audience. In this he acted wisely, and in attaching himself permanently to the American stage, has laid the foundation of a fortune equal to his most sanguine wishes. Make money, my good friend Seguin; and above all, keep it. A thousand accidents may happen to deprive you, or your wife, or both of you, of your voices. Remember nothing is so evanescent as the popularity of favorite actors; but if your coffers be well filled, you will never be in want of friends. You have my good wishes for a prosperous career; and I hope a long one is before you. On the 30th of September Mr. Charles Kean reappeared as Hamlet. It is fortunate for his repu-

tation he has paid us a second visit, for the Americans did not admit his claims to rank as a first-rate artist when among us a few years ago. He has evidently improved in his style, but there is much room for improvement left. His father's name is a charm around his career which opens all hearts in his favor; the recollection of his excellence must act as the strong inducement to prove himself worthy of his sire's reputation. The best part he acted, during his present engagement, was Claude Melnotte. He looked the part better than any representative I have yet seen, and that is at least half the battle. On the 15th of October Miss Inverarity, Miss Poole, Mr. Manvers and Mr. Martyn, appeared in "Cinderella." Miss Poole was decidedly the favorite; Miss Inverarity is ungainly in person, makes horrible faces when singing, and will never be a favorite in Philadelphia. They produced a new opera, entitled "Fidelio," with some success. On the 4th of November,

MRS. FITZWILLIAM—

little Fanny Copeland, whom I had seen a child in Dover, whom in London I remember as the Madge Wildfire—alone capable of succeeding Mrs. Egerton, the essence of fun and drollery in female form—made her appearance as Peggy, in the "Country Girl;" therein showing her judgment, making the audience believe she was nothing more than a tolerable actress, until, in Widow Wiggins, she sent them out of the theatre delighted, to talk of nothing else until they could induce a friend or companion to return to the theatre the following evening. Never did an actress make so great a hit on her first appearance, and nightly she continued to win upon the favor of her audience. In twelve nights she acted Peggy, Widow Wiggins, Albina Mandeville, Widow Brady, Sally Scraggs, Helen Worrett, Madam Manetta, Kitty Skylark, and Louisa Lovetrick. In broad farce she is irresistible; and now and then a little touch of pathos falls beautifully from her lips; but in elegant comedy there is too much of the chambermaid. Helen Worrett was too much for her; and even Albina Mandeville would have been as well let alone; but it is unjust to find fault or quibble about one or two parts, where so many were acted in a manner to make her audience anxious for her return. Mrs. Fitzwilliam will make more money in the United States than any lady who has ever visited it, with the exception of Miss Fanny Kemble.

On the 15th of November, Miss Vandenhoff appeared as Julia,

in "The Hunchback;" played Julia in "Richelieu," to the Cardinal of her father, and won some favor in Ion. Her character, as an actress, is not yet formed. Study and practice may hereafter assign her a rank in the profession, which she cannot, without danger of total failure, assume at present. What could induce Mr. Vandenhoff to act Young Wilding, in "The Liar;"—heavy lightness—serious vanity. Macready I have seen play Felix, in "The Hunter of the Alps," capitally; but gentlemen upon stilts should be careful how they descend; tragedy heroes and light comedy bucks won't assimilate. On the 25th, Christmas, Maywood & Co. attempted "Mother Goose," with Wells, Jackson, Mulligan, Collingbourne, and Misses Vallee. Whatever is worth doing, ought to be worth doing well; and certainly the Chesnut street Theatre is not the place for badly acted comic pantomime. What was Foster about, to suffer this?

On the 30th of December, R. C. Maywood announced his intention of withdrawing from the firm of Maywood & Co., and leaving his partner, Mr. L. T. Pratt, alone in his glory. Maywood had been becoming daily more and more unpopular, but that need not have forced him to lay down the sceptre he had wielded so long. Every manager is popular and unpopular, according as the breeze of public favor sets in; and if the stockholders drove him from the helm, at least he had a sweet revenge, for they sent for him to cross the Atlantic and take charge of the theatre, as the only person capable of stopping its downward course.

Mr. Pratt announced Mr. W. B. Wood as his acting manager, Mr. G. F. Jervis as his stage manager, and reduced the price of admission to seventy-five cents boxes, and thirty-seven-and-a-half cents pit. This, more than all other causes, has ruined the prospects of the theatre, being an acknowledgment that talent of superior order must always be charged for at a higher rate; consequently when the boxes are seventy-five cents it is generally admitted there is nothing worth seeing, and the theatre is deserted; when, on the contrary, a dollar is demanded for admission, it is paid unwillingly, with many comments on the rapacious disposition of the manager. In the present instance what an agreeable situation for me; the Walnut street Theatre demanding the same price for admission as the Chesnut street. My boast had been, superior talent at less prices; what chance, with equal attraction, had I for success—none; yet Mr. Freeman stuck like a leech to the bond, until all the blood was gone, and then allowed a short breathing time before final execution. And this gentleman pre-

tended to be actuated in all these dealings by a friendly disposition towards me.

Charles Kean commenced the career of the new management on the 30th of December, 1839, as Hamlet; Celeste, on the 6th of January, as the Child of the Wreck in the "Wept of the Wepton-Wish;" but horses were drawing better houses now than any two-legged animals. On the 11th January she took a benefit, at which poor Finn acted, for the last time, Monsieur Jaques—left New York for his home after a long absence, on Monday afternoon, in the steamboat Lexington, and was one of one hundred and seventy-five who perished by fire, by ice, and by water, on that dreadful night.

Celeste's last benefit, if she does not take another, was fixed for the 18th of January; on the 20th, Mrs. Fitzwilliams returned, hailed with delight by every true lover of genuine comic acting; Miss Elizabeth Wood, a daughter of the veteran, W. B. Wood, made her first essay as Amanthis, in "The Child of Nature." The time was when such an announcement would have filled the Chestnut street Theatre. The audience, on the present occasion, might be select, but they were not numerous; the success of the young lady, very doubtful. However, on the 4th of February, she appeared as Amelia Wildenheim, in "Lovers' Vows." Like Miss Mary Maywood, I am sorry to be compelled to say she promises nothing that can for years be termed mediocrity. A Mr. Ranger, a gentleman whom it would puzzle a conjuror to place in his proper rank as an actor, appeared in a stupid, indifferent piece, entitled "The Romantic Widow." His own appearance was romantic; his departure equally so. He came from nobody knew whence, and went to nobody knows where. On the 8th of February, Miss Poole, Manvers and Giubelei. A benefit was given for the purpose of raising a fund to present to the widow and children of Henry J. Finn, an actor of whom America should have been proud; but like all such attempts, unless taken up voluntarily by the citizens, they but add mortification to grief: Madame Celeste played the Maid of Cashmere, on which occasion I lent the services of Plumer, and would have lent the aid of the whole company, and closed the Walnut Street Theatre on that night, could I have aided the good intentions of both manager and actors towards the family of the deceased.

Celeste took another farewell benefit, playing Vanderdecken, in the "Flying Dutchman," Susanne, and the Frontier Maid. What an indefatigable lady she is—nothing tires—nothing daunts her. She nurses a sick husband all night, and appears as fresh

as a lark at rehearsal again in the morning. We are forever permitting her to say good bye, and always glad to see her return to say good bye again.

Vandenhoft and daughter succeeded Celeste, and Maywood's benefit took place on the 9th of March, when Mr. Wilson, Mr. Giubelei and Miss Sheriff lent the retired manager their aid, in "Sonnambula," he playing Jack Howieson, written by Lockhart, the son-in-law and biographer of Walter Scott, for Mackay of Edinburgh, to whom the great unknown first revealed himself, at the "Theatrical Fund Dinner," in Edinburgh, as the author of the Waverley Novels.

On the 16th of March, a complimentary benefit was given to James E. Murdoch, by his townsmen; the play selected "Speed the Plough," and the farce of "Naval Engagements;" the volunteers, Mr. and Mrs. Watson, Miss Wells, Miss E. Wood, Miss Lee, Mr. Wemyss, Mr. Hadaway, Mr. Quayle, Mr. Howard, Dr. Cunningham. I have good reason to remember this night, for while playing Bob Handy, Booth refused to act Richard the Third, until, as he was pleased to say, I thought proper to leave the Chestnut Street Theatre, and attend to my own business, in my own theatre. I also had an appointment to meet Harvey Leech, (Hervio Nano) the Gnome Fly man, at 10 o'clock. Not arriving in time, Mr. Pratt had an interview with him before I saw him, and transferred the arrangements which were settled all but signing, to the Chestnut Street Theatre, thus losing what would have been to me a trump card, but which proved little addition to the attraction of Old Drury; and, to add to my mortification, this affair was laughed at behind the scenes of the Chestnut Street Theatre, as a good joke. The house was a good one, and to an actor of rising talent, a very pleasing compliment. May it not be the last favor he receives from his fellow-citizens. I like him as an actor, although I could not make him succeed as a star.

On the 23rd of March, a novelty was offered for the benefit of Mr. Pratt, the manager, in the shape of "Der Freischutz," in the German language, by a company of German actors. On the 20th, Hervio Nano appeared as the "Gnome Fly," to a very good house. On the 15th of April Charles Kean; and on the 26th, Wilson, Giubelei, and Miss Sheriff produced the new opera of the "Postillion of Longjumeau." Mrs. Fitzwilliam, Herr Cline and Balls terminated the list of stars, and the theatre closed for the season, on the 13th June, with "Laugh when You Can," and "A Good Night's Rest."

On the same night Mr. Arann's Garden opened with a loud flour-

ish of trumpets, under the direction of Mr. Ward, with an attempted "Eruption of Mount Vesuvius," planned by Macintosh, who evidently did not know what he was about; he was straining to produce an effect of something which he had seen or heard of, but which he knew not how to accomplish. The laugh of derision, at the end of the exhibition, at once annihilated all hope of future success. Unpaid bills, assignment for the benefit of creditors, and a hasty departure from Philadelphia, the result of months of preparation, and a system of puffing carried beyond the usual bounds; a fortunate escape, that the deluded spectators did not demolish the canvas and boards, which constituted the only value of this "Eruption," which was to astonish the city—and it *did* astonish our citizens so much that they have not yet ceased to wonder how they could have been so gulled. This failure was succeeded by a success as extraordinary. On the 17th of June, 1840,

MADemoisELLE FANNY ELLSLER,

the divine Fanny! the glorious Fanny! the astonishing Fanny! of the light fantastic toe—who turned the heads of all the ladies and the hearts of all the gentlemen, who produced a perfect mania for dancing, until the citizens of Baltimore danced into the traces of her carriage, proud of the honor of dragging the immortal Fanny from the theatre to her hotel—made her first appearance in Philadelphia, as Lauretta, in the ballet of "La Terantule," and afterwards danced the "Cracovienné." She was to the ballet what Mademoiselle Garcia had been to opera, creating a taste which awaits only development to make a good corps de ballet a necessary appendage to every well-regulated theatre. It is not too much to predict that a theatre appropriated to opera, Italian, as well as English and French ballet, will be found rising up among us, annihilating every species of dramatic amusement which attempts to rival it. Why the press should have assailed the private character of a young lady whose career had not been marked by profligacy, black mail editors alone can answer. However their paragraphs may have wounded a delicate and sensitive mind, they had no effect upon her power to attract crowded audiences. So brilliant a career, in America, has never been recorded. Her price, five hundred dollars per night, prevented the possibility of a manager making money who had a company of actors to pay at the same time; but it wound up Mr. Pratt's season with an éclat that promised to benefit his future arrangements. Elliot had in New-York played off the admitted attraction of Celeste with

good effect against her all-powerful rival, and made an engagement with me for her to play on the same nights at the Walnut Street that Ellsler appeared at the Chestnut. This was the first engagement between us ever concluded, but destined to remain unfilled: in the middle of preparations for her reception, I received a note from her husband, stating, she had abandoned him, and it was out of his power to comply with the terms of his contract. Sick, and deserted, appealing to my forbearance, and asking commiseration, I could not find it in my heart to oppress a man so stricken. I returned the agreement, cancelled, and never saw poor Elliot but once again. Deep must have been the provocation that could have induced a woman so devoted as Celeste appeared to be to him, to cast him off forever, and on a bed of sickness—yes, of death, for he did not long survive the blow. Abandon husband and child and fortune, to seek protection in a land of strangers! Many rumors injurious to her reputation were circulated, but not one received credence from those who knew the parties intimately. She returned to the United States, on his death, to claim her child, and left America, so long her home, heart-broken, to think her dearly beloved daughter—whom to clasp once more to her heart, she had braved the perils of the ocean—had been taught to harbor thoughts derogatory to her mother's honor, and refused to leave the protection offered to her by her father's relatives. Poor Celeste! thy case was indeed a hard one—thy last farewell, a mournful one. May your future career be happy and prosperous.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The season of 1840-'41—W. E. Burton—Charlotte Cushman—Her perseverance—Buckstone—Opening of the Arch Street Theatre—Difficulties upon difficulties—Mr. John Braham—Power's last engagement in Philadelphia—The loss of the steam-ship *President*—The Manager's last kick—The opera of "*Norma*" produced in splendid style—Unjust treatment of Mr. Wood—His letter to the Editor of the *Herald*—The Walnut Street, under the management of Dinneford and Marshall—Hervio Nano—Mitchell in Philadelphia.

THE season 1840-'41 is one which never will be forgotten. What hopes, what fears, what wishes, what threats did it give rise to—to crush in one short year the whole contending powers, each voice of whom, at the commencement, declared for open war—four Richmonds in the field, and all annihilated. Burton had been ac-

tively engaged in altering Cooke's circus into a theatre, to be christened *The National*, with the avowed purpose of ruining the managers of the Chestnut Street Theatre, little dreaming that his own ruin would precede their downfall. As an actor, Mr. W. E. Burton has no superior on the American stage; but it is not always the best actor who makes the best manager; his faults here are: first,—want of nerve to fight a losing battle; in success he is a great general, to be dreaded by all who come in opposition to his interest. Here his enterprise and energy cannot be exceeded; but in any sudden reverse, his first thought is not to maintain his position, at all hazards, but to retreat—to fall back on his powerful resource as a popular actor,—to accept a star engagement, and leave the waning business of his theatre in charge of a deputy, restricted in power, as well as deficient in means; covering his fall by—“Had I been there this would *not* have happened.” Then why were you not there? Why did you desert your post when you clearly perceived the danger? Again, he always troubles his head too much about what his opponents intend to produce, and how he can undermine their projects, instead of boldly pushing forward his own well-formed plans. Look at the folly of laying aside the “*Naiad Queen*,” in the full tide of success, to produce “*Norma*,” for which he was totally unprepared, either in talent, scenery, or costume, having no object in view but to oppose the Woods, against whom he felt some managerial displeasure, and to crush, at one blow, both them and the managers of Old Drury. How fatally this proceeding recoiled upon himself, he has felt too severely; yet experience has not altered his tactics, which he maintains are right, and still pursues the same course; the same result must follow again. He dislikes the actors attached to his theatre to be on terms of intimacy with those belonging to another establishment in the same city, forming a chasm between them, over which no actor can pass, but at the hazard of forfeiting the good opinion of his manager. “*Divide and Conquer*” may be an excellent motto for managers, but “*Union is Strength*” should not be forgotten by the actors. Burton also entertained the opinion, that his popularity as an actor, would induce the sprigs of fashion to forsake their old cherished theatre, for his newly erected one, bringing with them their mothers and sisters; so did I think my popularity, as a manager, would induce my warmest supporters to follow me from the Walnut Street Theatre to the Arch. We both discovered our mistake, when too late to rectify it, that it was not to the manager, but the theatre, that the attachment (if at all) existed.

His theatre, on the opening night, Monday, the 31st of August, 1840, presented a scene of splendor never witnessed in America. In decorating a house for the amusement of the public, if any fault could be found, it was excess of ornament, the gilt moulding on a pure ground of white being too much crowded; the eagles supporting the drapery of the proscenium boxes, were the most chaste and beautiful things I ever saw. Mr. Foster, who came among us with Cooke, and whose experience at the Adelphi Theatre, in London, gave him all the requisite knowledge, seemed to have bent all his energy to this one purpose, and succeeded perfectly. Burton was fortunate, too, in securing the aid of Haviland to superintend the alterations. His opening pieces were the "Rivals," and "A Roland for an Oliver;" his company, Mr. P. Richings, stage manager, J. R. Scott, James Thorne, Shaw, Whiting, Graham, Neafie, T. Placide, C. Porter, Becket, Brooke, Quayle, Herbert, Oakey, Stafford, Boulard, Woodbury, Master Reed, J. Van Stavoreen, Bright, Ince, and Reed; Misses C. Cushman, Melton, S. Cushman, E. Petrie, Porter, Fanny Ince, Jones, Wilson, Delsmere, Collingbourne, Flannigan, Wilkins; Mesdames Brooke, Becket, and Ferrers; a strong and judiciously selected stock company, to which his own name added a tower of strength; yet he did not give his company a fair chance. In over anxiety to commence the starring system, he checked their rising popularity. Hacket was the first star—the weakest he could have selected—and Abbot, who followed, was really, as far as attraction was concerned, no star at all. Graham failed, but appears to have had no favorable opportunity to display his powers, and, in returning to England, showed that he, at least, possessed a quality most rare in actors—common sense. Of the actors new to the Philadelphia public, whom Burton introduced,

MISS CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

deserves more than a passing notice. This young lady is a proof of what perseverance, steadily directed to one object, will accomplish; more especially where genius, giant-like, proceeds hand-in-hand along with it. She commenced her theatrical career as a singer, announced as a pupil of Mr. Maeder, her voice pronounced to be of a most extraordinary nature, rarely possessed by a female. She failed, whether from loss of voice, or deficiency in her musical education, or both, I cannot record; but nothing daunted her. Repudiated as a singer, I find her grasping at once at the honors of tragedy—attempting the part of Lady Macbeth, (since so admira-

bly sustained by her,) but at this time beyond her powers. Not discouraged by this second failure, if it is not too harsh to term it so, I find her descending from the stilts of the Bowery Theatre, under Hamblin—occupying the humble station of a walking lady at the Park Theatre, in New York, cheerfully performing any part allotted to her by the manager, at the same time closely studying the manners and peculiarities of all the European actors, male or female, with whom her position brought her in contact; and, as subsequently appears, carefully hoarding the knowledge of her art thus acquired for future action, yet not advancing with rapid strides in the favor of the audience, by whom she was tolerated, but not supposed to possess the talent which they afterwards became proud to honor. Her masculine mind at once perceived, that the only means of success was to cultivate the acquaintance of the gentlemen conducting the newspapers; fugitive pieces of poetry appeared in the papers, and in the popular periodical magazines, under the signature of “Charlotte Cushman.” These answered the double purpose of placing her name before the public, as a lady of literary talent, and securing the notice of the publishers to her dramatic career. At length, Nancy Sykes, in “*Oliver Twist*,” gave her an opportunity of proving what she was capable of accomplishing. As a portrait of female depravity, it was painfully correct: and in all her future career, she never surpassed the excellence of that performance. In leaving the Park Theatre, to join Burton in Philadelphia, she at once opened the road to that fame which she rapidly acquired; here she had a field for the prosecution of her abilities, which was at this time filled by older and abler favorites in New York. The success of the “*Naiad Queen*” carried her name triumphantly along with it; and at the end of the season, she had assumed a position, which enabled her to return to the Park Theatre, as the leading actress of the American stage; and her ambition will not be satisfied, until she can add the leading actress of the English stage, as she progresses in her future career. The visit of Mr. Macready to the United States, and the high opinion he entertained of her merit as an actress, opened the road to London, where her success will secure not only renown, but fortune, on her return to her native country.

Of late years it has become the fashion to place theatres under the direction of ladies, and Miss Cushman has figured as the manager of the American Theatre, in Walnut Street, under my successor, Mr. Marshall; but even the popularity of her name could not command success in such an undertaking,—here she proved incompetent. At the end of one season, W. R. Blake was an-

nounced as her assistant, (but, in fact, her manager,) to give her an opportunity of retiring, without wounding her feelings, sufficiently mortified by the knowledge, that the reins of power must pass from her hands, or the doors of the theatre be closed for want of patronage. Here is another defeat to be over-mastered ; and I risk little in prophesying, if ever a National Theatre is erected in New York, upon purely American principles, Miss Cushman will be one of the great promoters of the design, and not unlikely the lessee and manager ; she is fully impressed with Richelieu's motto—" *There is no such word as fail ;*" and in the spirit of good feeling I say to her, go a-head.

The Chestnut Street Theatre was opened under Pratt and Dinmore, (the late treasurer,) on the 29th of August. One night previous to the opening of the National, Murdoch was announced as the stage manager ; the performance, the " *School for Scandal*" and " *Popping the Question ;*" stars announced, Fanny Ellsler, E. Forrest, Power, Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and Buckstone. The last-named gentleman made his first appearance on the 7th of September, as Jemmy Wheedle and Selim Pettibone ; one of the few authors who have proved themselves also good actors. Buckstone's reputation depends more upon his writing than his acting, yet there is a quaintness of manner and peculiarity of voice, which renders him, without any claim to greatness, a valuable member of a theatrical company. As a star, he has no pretensions to notice, and wisely joined his fortunes to Mrs. Fitzwilliam, who found in him an able assistant, and thus maintained a position which alone he never could have held with success.

On the 7th of September, I announced the opening of the Arch Street Theatre, under my direction. Hielge had re-decorated the house ; the gas had been introduced ; scenery painted for a new piece, entitled the " *Provost of Paris ;*" Hadaway had been appointed stage manager, and every thing wore the aspect of a prosperous commencement. Mr. Thomas Newton marred all my prospects ; he had promised me faithfully, if I would permit him to take off the hands employed at the Arch Street Theatre for two days, to enable Mr. Burton to open, whose gas fixtures he was also making, he would bring down all the force from the National Theatre on the Tuesday, and be ready for me in time. I assented ; but the gas fixtures were so incomplete, on the first night, at the National, Burton would not permit a single hand to leave his place until all was finished. In this he was perfectly right ; but the two days lost on my work were attended with most disagreeable consequences. At six o'clock, on the evening of the 7th of September,

Mr. Nicholson, the Superintendent of the Philadelphia Gas Company, sent me word that the pipes had not been proved, and the gas could not be turned on. In vain I pleaded the ruin which must follow such a disappointment; he replied, the rules that governed him were imperative, and could not be departed from. The crowd, assembled before the doors, waiting for admission, became clamorous; they were sufficiently numerous to reach across Arch Street, in front of the theatre. I was compelled to inform them that the gas could not be turned on. While I addressed them from the piazza, Mr. Hadaway performed the same kind office on the opposite side of the street. We persuaded them quietly to disperse; and thus, instead of opening to five or six hundred dollars, which appearances indicated, on the 7th of September, I opened on the 8th, with Rice (Jim Crow,) to \$152. Who can control the uncertain chance of fate? Had I known or dreamed of the possibility of such an occurrence at twelve o'clock, I would have ransacked the city of Philadelphia, and been prepared with oil to light the house upon this unfortunate night. It was the first time in my managerial career I had ever appointed a certain night for any certain event to come off, and failed to accomplish it, (excepting only Addams as Jack Cade.) If Mr. Newton had been an actor, such an occurrence would have been impossible. Why he deceived me, who had obtained for him the contract, in opposition to the opinion of several of the members of the board of agents—who procured for him the job from Burton, and also the alteration of the fixtures of the Walnut Street Theatre, is a problem I have attempted to solve more than once, but it is inexplicable to me. The consequence was, ruin. My resources had been crippled by my last season in Walnut Street; the aid of my friends taxed to the utmost, to enable me to prepare for a campaign, which terminated, as far as I was concerned, without a blow. On the following night, the gas was very imperfectly lighted; and it was half an hour after the time of beginning before the lamps in front of the theatre could be lighted, giving to those who presented themselves to purchase tickets, ideas that we could not be ready for performance. The 8th of September yielded \$152, the 9th, \$61, the 10th, \$93, the 11th, \$98, Rice's benefit, on the 12th, \$195—the receipts of the five nights, \$601; out of which, Rice, by contract, was to receive \$250. On the Monday, a new piece, and a very good one, entitled "The Sixes; or, the Devil is in the Dice," produced only \$90, Tuesday \$43, Wednesday \$30, Thursday \$18. On Friday morning I assembled the company in the green-room, told them

that a contest like this must be useless, entailing misery all around ; that they had better, before it was too late, provide themselves with situations for the winter ; and thus disbanded those who were willing to depend upon my exertions. They deserted not me, even in these apparently desperate circumstances ; I deserted them, conscious that distress, starvation, and misery alone could attend a further attempt to prosecute such a commencement. The ladies and gentlemen deserve my thanks, which I am proud thus to tender them, for their kind intentions. On Friday, I did not attempt to open the doors ; and strolling into Burton's theatre, found myself much amused by a good representation of a piece in which old Time had provided a safe receptacle for all managers. Moyamensing Prison, my friend Burton, it is dangerous to tamper with ; true jokes ; a few months found you, among others, ready to avail yourself of this same sanctuary. Who would have thought that I, who felt myself strong in the affection of a certain portion of the play-going community, should have been the first to run, before a shot from the enemy had reached me, a victim to the treachery of a friend. I went to Baltimore, where no better fate awaited me. There politics had turned the heads of the whole population, who were themselves nightly engaged as actors in large processions, bearing lanthorns, banners, and soul-inspiring mottos. Harrison and Van Buren night after night engaged the minds of all, either as active partakers in the exciting scene, or as passive spectators, admiring the splendor with which each party strove, in this contest, to outdo the other. Theatres, or any place of public amusement, were superfluous ; even those who possessed the right of free admission would not honor us with their presence. Thus it proceeded from bad to worse, until, on the 30th of November, I returned again to the Arch Street Theatre, and opened with Hill, having reduced my prices to twenty-five cents, boxes, and pit, twelve and a half cents, to contend against a similar movement on the part of Marshall and Dinneford, at the Walnut Street Theatre. I opened this time to an excellent house, although Mr. Newton had not completed his gas fixtures, and I had been obliged to call in another to finish his work. I had \$246 ; the pieces, "Sudden Thoughts," "The Green Mountain Boy," and "O. K." Booth opened in Richard, on the 12th of December, to \$300. All promised hope of success, when he again placed the thermometer below zero by appearing upon the stage drunk. Down went the houses to \$70, and \$80, then to \$24, and \$18. The theatre continued open until the 30th of January, when I requested the stockholders to release me from all engagements, cancel the lease, and

I retired, heartily disgusted with every thing connected with the Arch Street Theatre, which to me had been one source of annoyance after another, entailing a loss upon my already crippled resources of three or four thousand dollars.

Rice, Hill, Booth, Sandford, Williams, Wood and his dogs, and Tom Flynn, were the stars. "O. K." "New Notions," "A Wife for a Day," "the Lion of the Sea," "Norman Leslie," "the Serpent Lady," "the Convict's Child," and "the Brazen Drum," the new pieces; the whole season sixty-three nights, ten weeks and a half; the whole receipts, \$5630, of which \$1000 were paid to the stars, leaving an average of seventy-three and a half dollars per night. During the last few weeks, arrest for debt followed arrest, execution followed execution, until, to keep my person out of gaol, I was compelled to apply for the benefit of the insolvent laws, a discharge under which I received at the March term of the court in 1841. My large establishments were completely broken up. Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh Theatres, all passed from my hands—my property disposed of under the sheriff's hammer, at a time when real estate would hardly be taken as a gift—ruining me, without aiding my creditors. A theatrical wardrobe, the most extensive in the United States, which ten thousand dollars could not replace, sold for one hundred and thirty-six dollars!!! The Pennsylvania Theatre, which cost me fifteen thousand dollars, exclusive of the mortgage of five thousand dollars, sold, subject to the same mortgage, for sixty-two dollars. The month of April, 1841, found me without one cent, crushed, heart-broken and degraded in my own estimation, by the white-washing process I had been compelled to undergo. I have never been the same man since. Difficulties which, previous to this epoch in my life, I gloried in surmounting, have been suffered to master me. My energy of character, which gave me nerve to face any emergency, seems to have deserted me, and I have lived to be refused an engagement in the Philadelphia theatres at one-fourth of the amount at which my services therein were formerly eagerly sought for. In all this, let me not forget my obligations to *my good friend*, Mr. Samuel Hays, the grocer, at the corner of Eleventh and Water St. He was the first, as early as June, 1840, to place the sheriff upon my back, in return for the exertions of myself and all the members of the Strembeck family, to recommend him customers, when he first located himself in the neighborhood of Eleventh and George Street. I had paid him yearly several hundred dollars, and refused to avail myself of the law's delay in discharge of this claim: he was the first to cry mad dog, and loose the officers of the law upon my falling,

but not then hopeless fortune. It was a greater satisfaction to me to pay him than it could have been to him to deprive my wife and children of the few comforts which years of untiring industry had placed around them. For the attempt, he has not been, or will he be, forgotten in our many pleasant recollections. Should he ever be placed in a similar situation, may he meet with no such urgent creditor. As a foil to this, thank God, there is one bright spot which cheered me in misfortune. Mr. Wilson, and the carpenters of the Walnut Street Theatre, when they heard of the distress which existed in my family, entered into a subscription from their hard-earned wages (although they were also my creditors to a larger amount than a mechanic ought to lose by his employer,) and tendered it to me. Although I did not accept the offering, the kind feeling which dictated it is imprinted upon my heart; and to those men I feel grateful for the first really pleasant hour I experienced from the time of my failure: it was a balm which soothed my feelings and turned them once more into their proper sphere of action. Mr. Wilson had been placed in his present position by my recommendation to the stockholders, and thus proved that his heart is in the right place.

Having thus brought my connexion as manager of a Philadelphia Theatre, for the present to a close, let me return to the rivals whose movements now occupied the public attention. Mr. E. Forrest was at the Chestnut Street from the 21st of September until the 3d of October, when Power succeeded him, retaining possession until the 24th. On the 27th, Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and Mr. Brough, with Mr. Leffler, commenced an opera season. No sooner was the name of the Woods seen on the play bills, than Burton announces in large capitals, the engagement of Miss Clifton, Mr. and Miss Vandenhoff, Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Braham, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, Mr. Power, Mr. Guibelei, Miss Poole, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Mr. Hackett, Mr. Browne, and the promise of an Italian opera. The steam was evidently rising fast—boilers preparing for expansive action, to burst with a terrible explosion, scattering dismay on all around. Either these announcements were a managerial device to attract attention from Old Drury and the Woods, or the managers must have fallen into a sleep, or have been guided by wrong counsel, to loose thus their hold upon these stars, who alone could enable them to resist the energetic movements of their younger opponent: On the 10th of November, Fanny Ellsler and Mons. Silvain, followed the Woods. Half of Fanny's attraction is gone—the houses good, but not great—the treasury gasping in agony, and the theatre evidently *in articulo*

mortis, playing only four nights a week, not opening the doors the nights on which the graceful Fanny did not appear. Forrest comes once more to the rescue—a powerful ally, but unable to command success. Then *Le Compte* and a *corps de ballet*; and, finally, an announcement that the theatre will be closed on the 4th of January, to prepare for Bellini's opera of "*Norma*." No want of amusement in this our Quaker City—four theatres open; the Chestnut, the National, the American, and the Arch Street; Raymond and Waring's Circus, with *Le Fort* and *Otto Motty*; Promenade Concerts at the Museum *a la Musard*, by Frank Johnson and his celebrated band, to usher in the year 1841.

Burton produced "*Nicholas Nickleby*," for the purpose of giving Richings an opportunity of displaying his powers as Mantalini, and Miss C. Cushman, as Smike. Mr. Henry Knight was a better representative of this part, and had the advantage also of the first impression; yet Miss Cushman, if not equally successful, proved she possessed powers of great versatility, a quality of rarest value to an actress. Buckstone played *Tim Twopenny*, in "*Poor Jack*," at the National, on the 28th of September. Browne also was here. Miss Josephine Clifton, increased in size if not in reputation, and played *Pauline*, in "*the Lady of Lyons*," on the 26th of October. Oxley also assisted Burton. On the 7th November, Burton and Buckstone, two funny gentlemen, announced their intention of appearing in the third act of "*Othello*," in the most serious manner, and requested the people not to laugh at them.—Who could help it, to see Burton as *Othello*, and Buckstone as *Iago*? Whether it answered the manager's purpose, or the announcement was so preposterous as to prevent the people from visiting the theatre at all, is not matter of record; but on the 9th of November, the citizens of Philadelphia gave Mr. Burton a proof of the high estimate they placed upon his exertions, by a full attendance to see "*Ups and Downs*," "*O. K.*" and "*Le Dieu, and La Bayadere*," announced for his benefit, for the first time at his own theatre. Lots of applause—a call for the manager—a speech—and a few hundred dollars in the treasurer's hauds more than usual, and you have the result.

On the 16th of November, Tyrone Power, so long the able support of the Chestnut Street Theatre, deserted Old Drury, for the newly erected National, where he appeared as *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo*, and *Doctor O'Toole*. Whether he profited by the change in a pecuniary point, is not the question if he lost "caste:" Burton gained credit for indefatigable exertion to annihilate Pratt and Dinmore, who seem, in Murdoch, inexperienced as he was in ma-

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agement, to have placed the reins of government in hands too weak to compete with such an adversary as Burton. On the 30th of November, 1840, one of the brightest names in the annals of English Theatres was announced at the National—

MR. JOHN BRAHAM,

who appeared as Henry Bertram, in "Guy Mannering." In his best day, he was a miserable actor; but singers—and *such* singers, so rarely heard—are not expected to be actors. His fame as the first tenor singer of the English stage had long been undisputed: the "little orange boy" was received with acclamation wherever he went—his name sufficient to fill the largest theatre; and no musical festival was considered worth attending where Braham was not. Cathedral, concert-room or theatre, he was the magnet of attraction. Who that heard "Jeptha's Rash Vow" could ever forget the volume of voice which issued from that diminutive frame, or the ecstasy with which "Waft her Angels through the Skies" thrilled every nerve of the attentive listener? He ought to have visited the United States twenty years sooner, or not have risked his reputation by coming at all. Like Incledon, he was only heard by Americans when his powers of voice were so impaired as to leave them to conjecture what he had been, and mourn the wreck that all had once admired. His very fame prepared his condemnation, and he committed a fatal error in selecting a concert-room for his debut in North America; thus dulling the edge of curiosity which would have filled the theatre to overflowing on his first appearance. Then, in visiting the city of Philadelphia, he should have gone to the Chestnut Street, which, like the Park in New-York, can alone give an actor lasting reputation. This every star has discovered, who, in their eagerness to secure better terms at any other place of public amusement, dig the grave of their reputation. No failure to attract an audience was ever more apparent than his; while but one opinion—that of disappointment—was heard from every body. Whatever sum Burton promised to give him was intended to be fully paid; but the artist failed to draw the crowds anticipated, and the manager could not fulfil his contract. He took his benefit on the 14th of December, as much displeased at the result of his engagement as any auditor with his efforts to amuse. Braham, as a composer, enjoys a reputation which will survive even the recollection of his American failure. Some of his ballads, for simplicity and beauty, have never been excelled.

On the 19th of December, Burton produced, under the direction of Foster, "the Naiad Queen," the success of which for some time eclipsed all other theatrical attraction; the whole public was directed nightly to the doors of the National Theatre. As a spectacle, it has never been equalled in the United States; but the great charm was "the Fifty Female Warriors," headed by Miss Charlotte Cushman and Eliza Petrie. Such a display of ladies legs, no mortal man could resist the opportunity of seeing—the theatre was crowded nightly—Mr. Burton in the high road to reap the reward of all his exertions—fortune lay before him. But the dogged spirit of opposition, and a determination not to be content with his own success, unless he could blight all chance of recovery to the Chestnut Street Theatre, induced him to lay it aside, to produce "Norma," on the 11th of January, for which he was not prepared either in scenery or dresses. In offering Mrs. Sutton, Mrs. Mardyn, and Miss Inverarity, in opposition to Mr. and Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Bailey, and Mr. Brough, he only exposed his own weakness; and, notwithstanding Mrs. Wood's sickness, after the seventh night, gave him a chance which he could not have calculated upon, the failure of "Norma" more than counterbalanced the success of the "Naiad Queen," the dresses of which were pressed into the service of the former piece, and gave Mr. Burton a blow from which he never recovered. The public cried out against this course, and his popularity as a manager was gone—the charm of his name had vanished, and with it, all his future exertions—his doom was fixed. The splendid theatre he had called into existence was destined to pass into other hands. Yet, after all the row, which closed the opera at Old Drury, he produced a capital piece, in which the hit at failure of "Norma," the supernumeraries, taking the battle chorus for their cue to strike, and place the theatre in an uproar, caused shouts of laughter and applause every night. It was giving himself *one* blow, while he dealt to his adversaries *two*—and very hard, uncharitable blows they were.

On the 25th of February, 1841, Tyrone Power commenced the last engagement he was ever doomed to act in Philadelphia. He proceeded to New York, where, on Tuesday, the 9th of March, he made his last appearance on the stage of any country, as Gerald Pepper, in the "White Horse of the Peppers," and Morgan Rattler, in "How to pay the Rent." On the following day he sailed from New York in the steamship President; his fate, to this hour, a sealed book—not a vestige of the ship, her crew, or passengers, have either been seen or heard of. Farewell, Power:

long will it be ere thy memory is forgotten, and longer ere thy place will be supplied, upon the stage, which mourns thy loss.

Hackett attempted Falstaff, King Lear, and Hamlet. A few spectators endured this infliction without murmuring. Rip Van Winkle, Nimrod Wildfire, or Jonathan in England, to which list I will add Monsieur Mallet, and Monsieur Morbleu—these are enough, and prove you, Mr. Hackett, a man of talent; but do not hazard your well-earned reputation, by attempting, what I should suppose you meant as a joke, did I not perceive you persist occasionally in repeating—forcing me to repeat, “vanity, vanity, and all is vanity.”

On the 10th of April Burton produced “Tippoo Saib, or the Storming of Seringapatam,” with thirty horses, which proved the manager's last kick—who departed for the National Theatre, in New York, bearing me along with him, as his aid-de-camp, and left Foster to produce the “Seven Champions of Christendom,” on the 10th of May, which closed the first season of W. E. Burton's management in Philadelphia, not much to his satisfaction.

On the 11th of January, 1841, Messrs. Pratt and Dinmore, aided by the Messrs. Fry, Mr. and Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Bailey, and Mr. Brough, produced the opera of “Norma,” in a style so superior as to pluck the feather from the cap of so able a manager as Mr. Wallack, who, until this day, could boast of “Amilie” as the only opera which had been presented to the American public, as an opera should be represented; but Philadelphia now took the lead. The chorus, sixty in number; the orchestra equally full and complete; the dresses, scenery, properties; and lastly, the principal singers, the best the English stage could boast. “Norma,” as produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre, was a dramatic representation to be proud of. What a pity it should have involved all concerned in difficulty. For seven nights the theatre presented an array of fashion, pleasing to the spectator, as well as profitable to the manager, when Mrs. Wood, from the nightly exertion required, broke down under the effort, and the theatre was closed from the 20th until the 25th of January. On the 4th of February it was played for the last time, for a complimentary benefit to the translator, J. R. Fry: tickets of admission on the occasion, two dollars each. The whole affair exploded in a grand row. It appears the receipts nightly taken were not sufficient to pay the nightly expenditure, and Messrs. Pratt and Dinmore wished to make the Woods the last party to be paid, while they expected, and insisted upon being the first. The theatre closed abruptly, and a tempest in a teapot followed; the managers came out in a printed state-

ment in the *Courier and Inquirer*, from which I quote. They go back to transactions which had previously taken place, admitting that in former engagements there was an unpaid balance of \$546, for which they gave a note; but before it reached maturity, urged upon Mr. Wood the propriety of giving up the note, and taking for it the picture of Mrs. Wood, in the lobby of the Chestnut Street Theatre, which cost \$660—the price it appears they paid Mr. Thomas Sully for the picture and frame. Mr. Wood finally consents to this arrangement, and bore off a picture, which Maywood & Co., when “*La Sonnambula*” was filling their treasury to overflowing, insisted upon having painted, to be placed in the most conspicuous part of the theatre, as a mark of admiration for the talent of Mrs. Wood, and to perpetuate the memory of her great success. Now, gentlemen, had you spared yourselves this abject piece of flattery, you would have escaped the mortification which followed, and the proof you gave to Mr. Wood of the high value you placed upon the work of art, you so anxiously pleaded to Mrs. Wood for the privilege of being allowed to have painted, at your expense.

In order to excite public resentment against Mr. Wood, the managers further stated, in previous engagements, (without mentioning how many,) they had promptly paid him, \$21,377—a large sum of money; but, upon mercantile principles, certainly no reason why Mr. Wood should lose by defalcation upon present payments, because he had made money by previous dealings between the parties. They acknowledge a balance due to Mr. Wood of \$421, but do not consider this a sufficient cause for stopping the opera, which on their own statement, it appears, does not pay. The long and short of the matter is—they agreed to give Mr. Wood for the services of his wife, and other artists, one half of the receipts each night; the other half was not sufficient to cover the expenditure of an opera, produced upon so large a scale, and in so perfect a manner. They wished Wood to reduce his terms, and if he refused his assent, they had no objections to reduce them for him, by an unpaid balance, which he resisted. It appears further, by a card from Mr. J. Reese Fry, that the complimentary benefit was accepted solely as the means of meeting responsibilities to certain performers, assumed by his brother, in consequence of the unexpected stoppage of the opera, after the first week's representation. The proceeds of that benefit have all been disbursed for for such purposes. “Neither myself, nor any one in my interest, (so writes Mr. J. R. Fry,) received any further reward from the production, than the delight shared by the public in witnessing the proper performance of the work of a great master.”

The newspapers, on an *ex-parte* representation, attacked Mr. Wood, who, smarting under former experience, in handling a gentleman belonging to the press too roughly, wisely resolved to give up the contest, and sail for England. Here is the letter he despatched to Mr. Bennett of the *New York Herald*, on leaving the shores of the United States.

(COPY.)

At sea, ship George Washington, }
February, 8, 1841. }

DEAR SIR,

I cannot leave these shores without expressing the sincere respect and esteem which Mrs. Wood and myself entertain for the American public, while at the same time I make known my sentiments towards those of my own countrymen, who have been the cause of the principal anxieties and annoyances which we have suffered in this country. I can assert, and with the most heartfelt satisfaction I do so, that some of the warmest and best friends I have on earth, are Americans, and beg that it may be distinctly understood, that had my intercourse and business transactions been confined to them alone, no difficulty, I feel assured, would have ever taken place between myself and any portion of the public. Every perplexity in which I have been concerned in this country, has originated with my own countrymen, and I am sorry to add, with Englishmen belonging to my own profession—a profession unfortunately degraded by many belonging to it—who, instead of using the honest means which they possess to dignify and exalt it, find a delight in seeking to bring down to their degraded level, all who aspire to respectability in its ranks. Permit me, sir, also to observe, that the *offences* laid to my charge have been of a strictly private nature, and arising out of my business, with which the public have assuredly no more right to interfere than with the private transactions of a merchant. It appears to me that much ill-feeling, and consequent annoyance, might be spared, both to the public and the stage, if those who profess to be friends of the latter, would pay less attention to the stories circulated by the envious and dissatisfied of our profession; and that the press itself would not become less dignified by criticising justly, without fear or favor, the performances of the stage, and by completely discarding from their employ the services of such reporters as entirely neglect, or totally destroy the prosperity of an actor, because he is not inclined to *pay* for extra puffs, or to play gratuitously for the benefit of their favorites, or by any other method to conciliate their good will. I have lived long enough in the world, to entertain the con-

viction that a plain, straight-forward course is the best, and will not, on compulsion, be forced into singing gratuitously for every complimentary benefit which a few *disinterested committee-men* think proper to *patronise*, by compelling all performers who may happen to be in the country, to "*volunteer*" their services, or suffer their high displeasure.

With many thanks to all my friends, I respectfully take leave for the present, without ever intending again to attempt to pursue my profession in this country. I hope to return, after a brief period, with Mrs. Wood (whose health is at present too feeble to allow her to exercise her art) and shall bring with me several new operas, with one or more singers of established reputation, to support Mrs. Wood, who have not experienced the displeasure of any one in America, professionally, or otherwise.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) JOSEPH WOOD.*

This may be some consolation to you, Mr. Burton. If Braham proved too strong for *your* pocket, "*Norma*" and the Woods silenced for a time the batteries of your adversaries altogether. On the 19th of February, the Chesnut Street Theatre opened for the benefit of Miss Alexina Fisher, when W. R. Blake, who had been unceremoniously ejected from the Walnut Street to make room for Tom Flynn, played a short engagement, Henry Placide appearing on the same nights. What a shame the theatre should be deserted when such an actor plays—all proved useless—and the Chestnut Street quietly expired, until the first of May, when it once more attempted to raise its head, with Richings as stage manager—a bad doctor in a desperate case, but with the aid of opera, Miss Poole, Mrs. Seguin, Miss Marshall, Messrs. Manvers, Giubelei, and Seguin, Mr. and Miss Wells, he contrived to keep open until the 21st of June, closing with "*Norma*," (which had revived with Mrs. Seguin, Miss Poole, and Giubelei, with a reduced orchestra and chorus,) and "*Faint Heart never won fair Lady*," for his own benefit.

I must now say a word or two about the American Theatre, Walnut Street, which since I resigned the lease, when the exactions of the agents became too onerous, had been taken by Messrs. Dineford and Marshall, Mr. H. G. Freeman allowing them to open the theatre, with the upper boxes, at twenty-five cents, and the pit twelve and a half cents—an importation of low prices from New-

* Published in the New York Herald, of Thursday, February 11, 1841.

York, not required by the state of theatricals in Philadelphia, but to which even the Chestnut Street was reduced in 1845. Rare consistency, forcing a man who had worked hard for six years, to improve their property, to increase his admission to thirty-seven and a half cents to the pit, and now permitting it to be reduced two hundred per cent; the income of the bars was also surrendered to the new tenants. Am I to believe, gentlemen, that you designedly forced me to abandon the theatre, or that a feeling of anger, now prompted your actions towards me, by your liberality to my successor? At least I know, while they have been rent free, you have lost five thousand a year, by sacrificing your previous tenant—no consolation to me I assure you; although I think I had a claim to a little more favor than ever was extended to me, and was by no means sorry to get rid of the frivolous complaints, continually uttered by Mr. Freeman upon some subject or another. On the 14th of October, the announcement met my eye, while at Baltimore:—thus it ran:—Under the sole direction of W. R. Dinneford; W. R. Blake, stage manager, Fredericks, Charles, Howard, W. H. Williams, J. Barnes, Harrington, Hadaway, N. Porter, Ewing, Curtis, B. Williams, Henry Colvin, Wells; Miss Mitchell, Mrs. Flynn, Miss Rock, Mrs. Charles, Mrs. Kinloch, Mrs. La Forrest, Miss Murray, Miss A. Kinloch, Miss J. Kinloch, Mrs. Brittenham, Mrs. Myers; Collingbourne, Prompter, and eight corps de ballet girls. The play "Honey Moon," and the farce of "A Roland for an Oliver." Prices of admission—lower boxes 50 cts.; second and third tier, 25 cts.; the pit 12 1-2 cents. *Jubilate!*

A very strong company who continued to play with success many of the old comedies, but managers never can let well enough alone. I have done the same thing often myself; but a looker-on sees more than a gamester; and in stopping the career of the company for Mr. Hervio Nano, the Gnome Fly, the manager committed an error, which the sudden falling off of his houses soon gave him intimation of. On the 24th of December Booth played; and on the 28th, with a long flourish of trumpets, Blake produced his own play of "Norman Leslie," a very badly constructed tedious melo-drama—long enough for three. I never saw Miss Medina's piece upon the same subject; and do not plume myself upon my own; but comparing the two, and the very effective manner in which it was placed upon the stage, I wonder that any body ventured to look at it after the first night. Hard sentence this—but true. Shortly afterwards, Tom Flynn assumed the management, producing "Mazeppa," "Rookwood," and other

horse-pieces, and *The Old Walnut*, as the newly-created rulers of the pit termed it, progressed steadily—now pretty good, now very bad, until the end of June, when Dinneford and Marshall closed their first season, cordially hating each other, and determined to separate, each endeavoring to procure the theatre for the following season, without reference to the other. Now it was, I was importuned to make an offer, which my friends assured me would be accepted, to resume the reins of management. I refused steadily to listen to any overture which did not come directly from the Board of Agents; and even then, hinted that I did not think we should agree twelve months. I felt my grievance at their hands, and smarting under it, should have pursued a course so diametrically opposite to my former one, that it is fortunate we did not come together again at this time. We can now maintain an armed neutrality, from which proposals may hereafter issue from either party, with the certainty that they would be respectfully received, and carefully considered. On the 7th of July, for three weeks, I assumed the stage management for Dinneford. Here I met Graham, from Mitchell's Theatre—a very good actor, whom I should be happy to have with me. While here I lost my father-in-law, Mr. Jacob Strembeck, placing my family in mourning, and gladly closed the theatre, under orders, on the 21st of July, for Dinneford's benefit—"Luke the Labourer," "Don Giovanni," and "The Village Lawyer."

On Wednesday the 24th of March, 1841, William Jones, and W. R. Blake, opened the Arch Street Theatre, with "Wives as they Were, and Maids as they Are," and "Of Age To-morrow." Mr. Jones had been of age long enough to keep out of such a speculation, even with the powerful aid of Forrest's talent, the chief inducement. He seems to have forgotten one thing, that this talent has at all times to be powerfully paid for. In this, Forrest makes no distinction to friend or foe—if any, he treats his foes in business, with more consideration than his friends. Henry Placide, Rice, E. Forrest, Murdoch, Mrs. G. Jones, and even Judge Conrad's new play of "Aylesmere," which should have been acted by agreement during his last engagement with me at the Walnut Street, and was now played at the Arch Street, on the 14th of June—nothing could save the management from dissolution, which lingered on to the 25th of June, when, in spite of all the care and all the attraction that could be offered, its doors were once more closed.

Mitchell, of New-York, resolved to try the National in Philadelphia for a month or six weeks. He injudiciously doubled the

price charged at the Olympic, and gave it up at the very time the citizens of Philadelphia were beginning to appreciate the burlesques so admirably performed by his company. He is an able drill-sergeant, and has reaped a handsome reward for his persevering zeal in the city of Gotham, where his audiences enter into all the fun and glee of his pieces, with the *gout* of the most enthusiastic admirers of Hudibras. He commenced his trial here on the 12th of June, 1841, and departed from the city, not very favorably impressed with the judgment or taste of our citizens.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Discharge in the Insolvent Court—Stage Manager of the National Theatre, New York—Mutiny among the Stage Carpenters—A Dilemma—Mr. Park Benjamin vs. the Philadelphia Critics—Burning of the National Theatre—The Bowery Theatre Closed by order of the Chancellor—Thomas S. Hamblin's Address to the Public—Hamblin's Generalship.

HAVING received my discharge and my protection from the Judges of the Insolvent Court, on the 6th of April, Burton, who had taken the National Theatre from Wilson, in New-York, offered me the stage management, which I accepted, and proceeded to New-York, on Sunday afternoon, April the 10th. On Wednesday, the 13th, we opened with the "Naiad Queen." Of all the scrapes I ever was placed in, the opening night at the National Theatre was the most difficult and trying. The mechanics seemed to work unwillingly; and among the theatrical carpenters there was a feeling, that Philadelphia managers had better stay at home, they had no business in New York. Every order was obeyed with a grumble; and, finally, while Burton, who had observed this, was speaking to me upon the subject, one of the men replied to him, when he justly observed, that he had not addressed his conversation to him—that the men had made up their minds not to be humbugged. He told him he could leave the theatre. He said he would, and take all the other hands with him too; on which, Burton called for the master-carpenter, and said—"Mr. Johnston, pay these men whatever may be due to them, and turn them every one out of the building." Away he walked into the manager's room, when we both burst out laughing at the pretty predicament we

were in. This was Tuesday afternoon—the piece was to be produced on Wednesday. He said “Was I not right?” Decidedly so. The only thing now to be done is, without loss of time to supply their places.” Ben Hamilton and little Marks, the property men, were at once set to work. I was despatched for Mr. Hitchens, Niblo’s master-carpenter, and Burton went in search of Professor Mapes, to ask his assistance, as to where or how a few carpenters could be obtained. Jake Johnston, who had been with me at the Chestnut Street Theatre, in Philadelphia, was staunch to the interest of his employer. Mr. Hitchens promised his own assistance and one more hand in the morning, and so we had to abide the result. Mr. Burton’s conduct was prompt and judicious; and if we only got through this difficulty, good government and discipline throughout the theatre would be established at once. He drilled all the ladies in the military evolutions; and with a determination that every thing should be done well, we both went to work.

On Wednesday morning, the rehearsal, was got through tolerably well, although Miss Charlotte Cushman would not find her way up to the theatre until I was despatched in a cab to bring her there in style—wishing her, in my heart, any where but bothering me. Here a new difficulty arose: Miss Eliza Petrie, who had been sent for from Philadelphia, had not arrived, and there being now no possibility of seeing her before five or six o’clock, we were compelled to make ourselves as easy as possible with the assurance received, that she would be with us in time. Oh! the horrible confusion of that afternoon. Nothing ready—everybody hurrying everybody. Five o’clock came; down I hurried to the steamboat, and returned with the cheering news that Petrie had arrived, and I had safely left her at Miss Cushman’s lodgings, to prepare for the theatre. I believe this news spurred us both on; it was now past the time when the doors should open. Not a transparent water for bath hung or a truck either made or mounted. Burton now came to me with a face full of anxiety: “Can we open? Don’t give it up until the last moment. Have a placard painted, stating that some of the machinery has not arrived from Philadelphia. If the worst comes to the worst, dismiss them with a promise for to-morrow evening; we are on the horns of a dilemma. If we play, in all probability we damn the piece; if we do not, we damn the prospect of the season. Now, where is Johnston? Jake, can you get us through this, if we make an act, to set the bath scene? For the honor of old Philadelphia, don’t see us beaten this way.” “Mr. Wemyss, I will get you through

it; all I ask is the act drop before the bath scene. "Burton, he says he will do it; what will you do?" (a pause.) Then he said, "Have you nerve to try it? it will prove your stage managership. It is for you to say, you are the master; I am ready, if you will run the risk." "Go ahead!" In two minutes, the doors were open, and in half an hour the house comfortably filled; and at half past seven o'clock, up went the curtain. I had but one bell that would ring, to give the carpenters warning for all the traps. I had to run below to see every trap ready, and give the cue. Nixen, the prompter, worked well; and never did man aid another as Burton did me on this occasion. The awful bath scene was passed, without disapprobation—for a most scandalous affair it was—but that over, I felt assured all would go right. After Burton had finished his part, with a banner, he headed the procession on the stage, acting as the fugleman. Charlotte Cushman's admirable method of commanding her female warriors, whose dresses and manœuvres made the theatre resound with applause, brought the third act, or, on this occasion, the fourth act, to a close, amid a peal of approbation. The last act took care of itself. I had the pleasure of hearing Burton called for; and black, tired and begrimed, he took me by the hand, and thanked me. Off we started, in due time, to Windhust's, where, over a hot supper, we laughed at our fears of the morning; and thus ended my first night of management in New-York. To those unaccustomed to theatres, it will appear marvellous, but it is not the less true.

On the 29th of April, I made my first bow in New-York, at the National Theatre, (since the summer of 1824, when the Chatham Theatre, under Barrere, was in the full tide of success,) as Belmour, in "Is He Jealous?" Miss Charlotte Cushman playing Harriet, and Eliza Petrie, Rose. As this little piece depends entirely on the dialogue, these young ladies amused themselves at my expense; if they ever read their parts, it certainly was not with any intention of committing the words to memory. Before an audience with whom I was familiar, such an occurrence might have been of no consequence, but on this occasion, I not only felt mortified, but expressed my feelings in no very measured terms. My reputation as an actor, having some character to uphold, was placed in jeopardy by way of joke! and it was not until I played Flexible, in "Love, Law and Physic," I had an opportunity of proving my pretensions to histrionic fame were well founded.

The next difficulty in management, was that Burton, always on the look-out for novelty, and as if in defiance of the dearly bought experience of his late season, in Philadelphia, laid aside the

“Naiad Queen,” to announce Booth, J. R. Scott, and Miss Clarendon, in “Othello,” for Monday night. He went to Philadelphia, on Sunday morning, and on Sunday evening, about 10 o’clock, Mr. John R. Scott came into my room, at the American Hotel, to give me personally information he could not act on the following night. In vain I endeavored to persuade him to remain in New-York, as he was here, and if disappointment must accrue, to let it fall on the Philadelphia managers. He said no, he had pledged his word to return, on Monday, and by the first train in the morning he intended to start. Why he took the trouble to show himself in New-York, on Sunday evening, to say he could not play on Monday, is a question more easily asked than answered. In management, I used to boast I never suffered myself to be placed in a situation from which, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, I could not extricate myself with credit. Finding argument useless, I told him to sleep upon the matter, and so would I, and in the morning I trusted he would change his opinion. My first enquiry, on Monday, was for Scott. My messenger returned with the intelligence that he was gone. Burton away—no Othello—and an Iago, of whom I had more doubt and misgiving than all the rest. Booth was evidently not himself, and the information I had to impart to him was not calculated to improve his state of mind. I despatched a courier to Mr. Wilson, at his farm, on Long Island, with a request that he would play Othello, to which he assented; and thus prepared, I made my appearance at rehearsal. The audience received the apology for the absence of Mr. Scott with very good humor. Naturally expecting it, Mr. Booth, who was to cause the disappointment, the play went on. Not much to my satisfaction, at the end of it, the audience called for Booth, who refused to go on; imposing upon me the necessity of making a second speech, and giving to Mr. Park Benjamin an opportunity of exercising his wit, by calling me in the newspaper, the tall gentleman in black, mourning the murder of his friend Roderigo; which part I had acted in the play, and the critics of Philadelphia used to say I acted it well. But there is no accounting for difference of taste; and when we are in Rome, we must do as Rome does; and the opinion of the editor of the New World is entitled to ———. Fill that space up to suit yourself, good reader.

This tragedy, which had been heralded as a combination of talent, with Booth, J. R. Scott, Wemyss, Shaw, Miss C. Cushman and Miss Clarendon, was the worst performance presented at the National Theatre, under Burton’s management; and his *friends*, on his return from Philadelphia, did not forget to tell him of it.

For a metropolitan theatre, it was disgraceful. Wilson's Othello put the audience to sleep; Booth's Iago was almost as bad; and Miss C. Cushman, as Emelia, and Shaw, as Cassio, was the only approach to acting seen upon the stage that evening.

At the close of Booth's engagement, Burton wisely replaced the "Naiad Queen" upon her throne. She fortunately proved again triumphant; but the hiatus in her reign had not been profitably filled, and had nearly overthrown her power, which yielded on the 24th of May, to "Semiramis—The Daughter of Air," a clever alteration of a play, by Burton, in which Isherwood painted some scenery which entitled him to be placed in the rank of the first artists. Miss Cushman also, took the city by surprise, in a part which, if it had been written for her peculiar style, would scarcely have hit the mark as well: to this part is she indebted for all the reputation she shortly gained throughout the United States. This was the stepping-stone to the ladder of fame she has rapidly mounted.

On the same evening, May 24, 1841, Mr. Simpson, at the Park Theatre, produced Judge Conrad's play of "Aylesmere, or the Kentish Rebellion," (the re-written "Jack Cade" of the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia,) Forrest as Aylesmere, Murdoch as Earl Clifford, and Mrs. G. Jones as Marianne; its success was of the doubtful order, and the house by no means well attended; but it has become very popular since, under the title of "Jack Cade," to which it appears it also returned. By reference to the papers upon the subject, it will be seen I christened A. Addams' play by this title, when delivered to me as the "Noble Yeoman."

On the 2^dth of May, "Semiramis," and "Love, Law and Physic," was the performance, the last which ever took place within the walls of the fated National Theatre. In the afternoon of that day, as was my custom when I expected Burton, I walked down to the steamboat-landing to await the arrival of the Philadelphia boat. On touching the wharf, I was joined by Burton; we walked up West Broadway, to Leonard Street, and as we entered the theatre, Mr. Oakey called me, and asked, "If that was Burton?" I said "Yes." "Do you know, Mr. Wemyss, the theatre has been on fire?" "No; how long ago?" "Not ten minutes since." He pointed my attention to the place, and on examining the prompter's box, I found three distinct marks of fire in as many different positions. While thus engaged, Shiers, the gas man, passed through from the interior of the house, with his torch not lighted; I said, "George, do you know anything about the theatre being on fire?" He treated the matter so lightly, hurrying

past without even looking at the spot, which was the object of curiosity to every one else present, that when we discovered fire in more places than one, still burning, my suspicions were directed towards him. Burton, who had been talking to Oakey, now gave orders that all the doors should be shut, and said to me, "The man who did this is in the building now." "You go one way, I'll go the other; with a strict search we may find him." We had neither of us any suspicion of further danger. We met at the painting room, and proceeding to the flies, I stopped suddenly and said, "Burton, I smell fire here; he replied, "That's nothing: it proceeds from the scorched wood in the prompter's box just below you." "No, it's too strong for that—it comes in the direction of Wilson's rooms." While speaking, the door leading to these apartments was opened by Mr. Russell, who informed us they were on fire. The water closet had been fired; Wilson's desk, and many of his papers were on fire, while the room was littered up with old play-bills and newspapers; down stairs fire was discovered under one of the ottomans in the Turkish saloon, with a box of lucifer matches, from which about one-third had been extracted, no doubt for the purpose of igniting waste paper wherever it might be found. The ticket-office belonging to the third tier, was the last place where fire was discovered; making in all seven fires, which, in a few minutes longer, would have rendered all aid to the National Theatre vain. Mr. Smith, who kept the refectory under the theatre, brought me some matches, which he stated had been thrown from a window. This led to another search; and marks of fire which had smouldered and gone out, were found in the room next to Mr. Russell's bed-room. I went by Burton's desire to the police-office, when an officer, on hearing the particulars, questioned Shiers closely, who denied having any key that would open the door leading to Mr. Wilson's rooms; but upon trial, it was found the key he used opened those doors readily. On this Mr. Shiers was taken in'o custody. The performance went on as if nothing had happened; a double watch was placed upon the premises, and all supposed to be safe. Burton and myself left the theatre together, resolving to return before we went home for the night. We desired the city watchmen, as we passed, to keep a bright look out for any suspicious character that might be seen lurking around. Between one and two o'clock we returned to the theatre, and found the watchmen and Mr. Russell on the alert. They reported all safe, and we retired for the night.

Between six and seven o'clock, Mr. Shaw came to my chamber door, and desired me to get up as quick as possible, the National

Theatre was in flames. I ordered a cab, while I hurried on my clothes, and arrived at the corner of Leonard Street and Broadway with Shaw, just in time to hear, not see, the roof fall in. The rapidity of the flames had been such, that scarcely an article could be saved. When the watchman left the building, he declares everything was safe ; yet he had not proceeded to Broadway, when on looking towards the theatre, he saw flames issuing from the artist's private room, the last window in the upper range. Mr. H. Lewis was the first actor on the spot belonging to the theatre, and on seeking admission at the stage door, he was prevented by Thomas Hurd, or Heard, a man in no way attached to the theatre, from entering ; and thus Burton's property and my own, in the manager's room, which might have been saved, was doomed to destruction. On the examination, at the police-office, this Heard was committed to take his trial. Why these two men, Shiers and Heard, were permitted to escape without trial, is a mystery. Had I been placed in Mr. Burton's situation, the most searching investigation into the cause of the destruction of this theatre, should never have been abandoned by me, until I had lost all power to proceed farther. It now remains enveloped in mystery, and a thousand conjectures, with rumors of all kinds, have assailed the reputation of several of the gentlemen who should, like Cæsar's wife, have stood above suspicion. For my own part, I am fully convinced, if Heard had been tried, whether convicted or not, the truth would have been discovered, and the guilty brought to punishment. A clearer case of incendiarism was never brought to public notice ; but who was the incendiary, or incendiaries, if more than one, is now a secret, which will descend with them to the grave.

This fire destroyed for me the few private dresses I yet retained from my whole stock, and made me, as an actor, a beggar indeed. On Sunday morning I started for Philadelphia, there to remain until summoned by Mr. Burton, to whom I was pledged until the 4th of July. How faithfully I redeemed that pledge, refusing every offer made to me, Mr. Dinneford, and others, can bear witness ; and with surprise, although not anger, I received the intimation from Burton, that for the following year he intended to attend to the business of the stage himself, and would not make me an offer of the highest salary he should give to any one, as he considered it totally beneath my notice. I told him that was all I wished ; I should take the Front Street Theatre, in Baltimore, the stockholders of which were only waiting for my arrangements with him to be brought to a close. "The very thing for you ; go, and anything

in the way of attraction I have, command freely. I have no doubt you will do well." And so we parted; and so remain the best of friends.

It is somewhat curious to remark that at this period the theatres in New-York were all at their lowest ebb;—the property of Mr. Simpson in the Park, advertised for sale, as under seizure for rent, by Messrs. Astor and Beekman;—his process in all probability intended as a protection, instead of an oppression to Mr. Simpson;—the National burnt, and not likely to be re-built again; and the Bowery closed by an injunction for non-payment of license, on which subject Mr. Thomas Hamblin thus addressed his fellow-citizens:—

BOWERY THEATRE CLOSED—By order of the Chancellor, on the complaint, and at the request of the managers of the society for the reformation of juvenile delinquents.

TO MY FELLOW-CITIZENS,

It is with the most painful feelings my duty compels me to announce to you, that the Bowery Theatre is closed, in obedience to a mandate from the Court of Chancery, sued out and issued, at the instigation of the managers of the society, for the reformation of juvenile delinquents. Some nine years since the Legislature of this State inflicted a yearly tax of \$500, on the performance of the Legitimate Drama, represented in the New-York Theatres only; and on this law I have already paid upwards of \$4000, which has been applied to the support and maintenance of juvenile thieves and other offenders.

It will not surprise the public to be informed, that in these times of universal depression, I am unable to meet this demand on the instant, nor that I should solicit the indulgence usually granted in the payment of other taxes. Last week I addressed a respectful letter to the gentlemen above designated, soliciting a delay. To my astonishment, this reasonable request has been answered by a suit at law, and an injunction, commanding me to close my doors. Harsh and hasty as the measure is, I feel it nevertheless my duty to obey it. Like a good citizen, I shall bow to the majesty of the law, although "I cannot kiss the rod that smites me."

I trust, without offence, I may be permitted to regret the act, and question the necessity that may be thought to exist, for proceeding to such harsh legal measures, for the recovery of a tax due but on the 1st instant; more particularly when the complainants were aware that their proceedings would deprive most unexpectedly upwards of one hundred persons, employed in this estab-

ishment, of all means of obtaining bread in these times of universal distress. Armed for the present, with a little brief authority, the managers of the juvenile delinquents have struck a blow which must be severely felt by the honest and laborious persons in my employ, their wives and families; a blow which I think every feeling and manly heart will designate as uncalled for, unprovoked, impolitic and oppressive.

(Signed,)

THOMAS S. HAMBLIN.

BOWERY THEATRE, May 18, 1841.

My friend Hamblin is a good general, he made capital of closing for one week; raised the ire (dander) of the Bowery boys, who would not stand their theatre being closed. They determined that Tom Hamblin should go a-head, and they pushed him a-head. He opened on the 24th, and played to better business than he had seen within the walls for two years. The National burning down, removed the dangerous rivalship of Burton, who had compelled him to reduce his prices, and gave him once more a fair field of exertion, which he soon improved, and placed himself again in a position free from pecuniary embarrassment.

In bidding adieu once more to New-York, I leave it with a hope to return some day, and take up my residence there. My prejudices in favor of Philadelphia have been removed, and I am compelled to admit that New-York is the first City in the Union for business of every kind. Different expressions these, to those that may be found in the earlier part of this work; but "a wise man corrects error, while a fool perishes in his folly."

On board the boat, which carried me to Philadelphia, I found Miss Cushman; the burning of the theatre, and the proceedings of the previous day, were of course the topic conversation. Her suspicions pointed to a party yet unimpeached, but who could have no motive for such a diabolical act.

On my arrival in Philadelphia, Mr. Blake tendered me the Arch Street Theatre, for a benefit in the name of himself and his partner, Jones. Mr. Lewis Pratt offered me the Chestnut Street for the same purpose; and lastly, after much prompting, Dinneford offered the Walnut. Here I confess, I would rather have received condolence, and with a better chance of success. However, I accepted the first offer, had hosts of volunteers; and on the 10th of June, had the mortification to find that an actor really in want should never be patronized. A few dollars would have been most acceptable, but the citizens of Philadelphia were not disposed at this moment to give them to me; I lost money by the benefit of

condolence. On the 17th, Miss Charlotte Cushman, with the aid of a committee of arrangement, at the Chesnut Street Theatre, did not fare much better; and Burton also on the 19th, at his own theatre, was made to feel how little sympathy the misfortunes of managers or actors meet from the great body of our citizens. It would be difficult to find three actors standing higher with the public in professional reputation, than Miss C. Cushman, Mr. Burton and Mr. Wemyss; yet on this occasion, all were mortified that they should have been induced to make attempts which proved so abortive. *Vanitas, vanitatis, et omnia vanitas!*

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Opening of the Front Street Theatre, Baltimore—Addams's Engagement—Charles Eaton, another Temperance Man—"The Manager in Distress"—A Good Joke—Liberality, characteristic of Sailors—Booth and Addams in the same Piece—Buckstone and Mrs. Fitzwilliam—"London Assurance"—Correspondence of Forrest and the Author—A Laughable Affair—The Press, its Assumptions,—and Treatment of Actors.

I COMMENCED my season at the Front Street Theatre, in Baltimore, on Monday, the 6th of September, 1841. The directors had thought proper to let it to Mr. Ward for a short season, who suffered sad havoc to be made among the scenery and properties; to replace which put me to much trouble and inconvenience, and the stockholders to some expense. The opening pieces were, "Carpenter of Rouen," and "Simpson & Co."—the company, Wemyss, Mathews, Philips, Thorne, Ash, Eddy, Brittenham, Kimber, Newton, Brennan and Bowers, Mrs. Philips, Mrs. D. Anderson, Miss Mathews, Miss Helen Mathews; to whom were afterwards added, Harrison, D'Angelis, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Weaver, Lyne, Clemens, Williams, Eytinge, Gourlay, and four ballet girls. The first stars were the Hungarian Singers, followed by A. Addams, whom I had not seen for three years. He played an excellent engagement, but in the renewal, his old failing ruined our rising reputation:—would it were death, without benefit of clergy, for an actor to appear upon the stage drunk. On the 2d of October I perpetrated a deed of horror, in attempting to alter Shakspeare's tragedy of Macbeth into a melo-drama, under the title of the "Three Witches of the Blasted Heath." If it did not

succeed, at least it gave me an idea of what might be done with the play by the judicious introduction of the pageantry, by which I shall profit hereafter. On the 7th of October, a new play, entitled "The Black Knight," possessing some merit, and written by a gentleman belonging to the press, was produced. What its fate might have been if the citizens of Baltimore had given it a fair hearing, cannot now be guessed at. So little curiosity, or so little inclination, to support an American author, was exhibited on this occasion, the receipts taken were only forty-four dollars and fifty cents! damping the spirits of author, actors, and manager—the worst house of the season. On the following night the receipts were doubled, the audience appeared much gratified, and the author's night might have produced a tolerable house, but the first night cooled his ardor, and he declined the risk of further mortification. On the 9th of October, Booth and Addams played in "Othello;" after which they appeared in "Venice Preserved," "Jane Shore," "Pizarro," and "Douglas." Charles Eaton, another *temperance man*, played a very good engagement singly, beating the two great tragedians who preceded him. Eaton was always popular with a certain class. Poor fellow, he went from Baltimore to Pittsburgh, where he ended his mortal career, having, in a fit of intoxication, walked over the ballustrading of the Exchange Hotel, falling eighteen or twenty feet, and being picked up a mass of bruised and broken bones: he breathed and lived a few hours, but never spoke after the fatal accident.

On the first of November, for my benefit, I produced "Zanthe," to \$369, with "The Manager in Distress;" during the performance of which, many persons, imposed upon by the seeming reality, vacated their seats, in compliance with my address, and applied at the box office for the return of their money, to be laughed at for their credulity, losing good seats to take their chance of catching a glimpse of the stage from the dress boxes, as best they might. The joke had almost ended in earnest; it was some time before the officers could restore good humor. It is almost incredible that, in Baltimore, where theatres have existed for fifty years, the citizens could have been so practised upon: the joke must remain in force for many years; and none enjoyed it more than the dupes themselves, when the first feeling of anger had subsided. A celebrated slack-wire dancer, Madame Romanini, added to the attraction of the Bal Masque, in "Zanthe," astonishing the good people of Baltimore by the agility of her movements.

This was a season of wonders, in Baltimore. While playing "Jane Shore," an unsophisticated son of the Ocean was so wrapt up in the play that, as Mrs. Philips lay down to die in the last scene, of want, suddenly sprang over the boxes, and with the activity of a cat, placed himself at her side upon the stage, saying he would be damned if any woman should starve in that manner while he had a shot left in the locker; and he actually insisted upon forcing upon her the contents of his purse. An explanation ensued, and he was conducted back to his seat in the boxes, where the audience gave him three cheers; and I shall never forget the honest smile that lighted up his weather-beaten face. He was the magnet of attraction for the remainder of the evening, although he had turned the last act of the tragedy into a farce highly relished by the audience.

On the 18th of November, A. Addams attempted Cardinal Richelieu. The fame acquired by E. Forrest, in this part, should have stimulated his pride;—*drink had done its work*—the mind of the actor is gone; he is incapable of committing a new part to memory: there was not even an attempt to produce effect; a schoolboy who should have read the play as a task, and read so badly, would have been whipped. At the conclusion, the feeling of the audience was not one of pity, but of contempt; a few of those present, hissed; but respect for what he had been, restrained the majority from joining in this insult. I know of but one very slender consolation, his friend Booth, butchered this part more cruelly; he was laughed at—Addams despised. There was \$364 in the house; he repeated the part on the following evening to \$32; further comment is useless.

Mr. Buckstone and Mrs. Fitzwilliam played an excellent engagement, terminating on the 10th of December. Reports now reached me, from Philadelphia, that Burton's pecuniary embarrassments increased so fast, it would be impossible for him to keep his theatre open; that his scenery, wardrobe, and other property, was under seizure for rent, to be sold by the sheriff. This actually took place; Mr. Newton becoming the purchaser, and Mr. Burton being allowed to proceed, under a new arrangement with Mr. Wharton, the ground landlord, giving him one chance more to recover his losses.

On Monday, the 13th of December, "London Assurance," which Madame Vestris, by the aid of furniture alone, had made successful; and which, for a few nights, revived the drooping fortune of every theatre in which it was acted, was produced at the

Front Street Theatre, in Baltimore, in a style which will be remembered as long as comedy is talked about at all. I played it fourteen nights, ten of which were in succession: the weather was very inclement, hail, rain, snow and frost, yet the house was well attended; if the clerk of the weather-office had been my friend, its success would have been equal to my expectations. To my friend Tom Flynn, was I indebted for the copy, although in a few days afterwards I received a marked London book, from Mr. Meadows, of Covent Garden. Mr. Samuel Butler was the next star, and then the horses in “Rookwood” and “Mazeppa.”

I had written to Mr. E. Forrest, whose play of “Jack Cade” being now an established favorite, hinting that I certainly possessed some slight claim to have it played in a theatre under my direction, and therefore offered him the same terms he had twice previously received at the Front Street Theatre; here is the reply:

(COPY.)

NEW YORK, NOV. 22, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,

I duly received your letter of the 16th instant, proposing an engagement for Baltimore. I have no objection to this, provided you have a sufficient company to sustain me, a list of which I beg you will furnish me by return of mail. As to terms, I shall expect the undivided half of the nightly receipts. I wish you would also specify in your next, what that “little claim” is that you think you have upon the play of “Jack Cade.”

Yours very respectfully,

(Signed) EDWIN FORREST.

To F. C. Wemyss, Esq.

I wrote to him, with the list of the company, to which, wonderful to relate, he made no *objection*, and specified the reasons of “that little claim to ‘Jack Cade,’” which my readers will find by turning to the origin of the play, in this volume. Here comes letter No. 2.

(COPY.)

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 26, 1841.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter, post-marked 24th instant, has just come to hand. To do the play of “Jack Cade” you will need a leading woman.

I cannot consent to the deduction of ten per cent. from the receipts [by the author—*he always did before.*] You have, I presume, as much control over this as any other manager has over his nightly rent.

In the six specifications which you offer, I am not in the least convinced that you shew the slightest cause for your alleged claim upon the tragedy of "Jack Cade," which Judge Conrad wrote for me.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) EDWIN FORREST.

To F. C. Wemyss, Baltimore.

My answer to this was—

DEAR SIR,

Yours of the 26th received—you say you presume I have as much control over the ten per cent. as any other manager has over his nightly rent. Not so. For if I pay you half the receipts, I pay *twenty per cent* on *my* half, instead of ten. This is very different from a stated rent, the amount of which I could calculate. Suppose, for example, a house of \$300; one half to Mr. Forrest, is \$150; one half Mr. W., \$150; to pay, not ten per cent. on \$150, but ten per cent. upon \$300, making \$30 instead of \$15, leaving my undivided half \$120, instead of \$150: the ten per cent. paid before division, each party would receive \$135.

You will perceive at once that it is out of my power, without courting a loss, to consent to such an arrangement; nevertheless, I should be glad to see you upon the old terms, one half the sum received by me. The matter rests now with yourself alone.

As regards a leading lady, few theatres possess a better, and you once strongly recommended this same lady to me for the Walnut Street. I presume that you are not aware that Mrs. Philips *was* Mrs. Rogers of the New York National. If you think Baltimore worth your notice at present, let me hear from you. You say you cannot consent to the deduction of ten per cent; I say I cannot consent to receive you without this concession. It now rests with yourself.

Jack Cade again. In answer,—

"The man convinced against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

Until you can convince me that none of the dialogue of *my* play of "Jack Cade" is used in *your* play of the same name, you will find it difficult to alter my opinion. But for me, no play of "Jack Cade" would have been thought of by Judge Conrad for Edwin Forrest. I resigned the play to be altered for you, leaving the Judge to make his own terms with you, stipulating only for the first performance in Philadelphia. Had I, in the early

and successful career of "Metamora," or the "Gladiator," altered *a portion* of the dialogue, and acted them without your aid, employing a tragedian of equal fame in the principal character, *you* would have been easily convinced I was converting your property to my use, and the dishonorable conduct would have been sounded from Maine to Georgia, or Florida;—and so I dismiss the subject of a play, written for Mr. A. Addams, and altered for Mr. E. Forrest.

F. C. WEMYSS.

BALTIMORE, November 27, 1841.

To this letter I received no reply, but Miss Clifton in a few days arrived in the city, and took the Holiday Street Theatre, which had during the winter been without a tenant, and on Monday, the 31st of January, announced to open it in conjunction with W. E. Burton! Mr. Forrest played here, and as if in defiance of all proper feeling, produced "Jack Cade." His terms with Mr. Burton were neither the one undivided half of the receipts, or two hundred dollars per night; but he could afford to relax a little to punish me, for daring to tell him the truth. To Mr. Burton the speculation at the Holiday Street was the final act in the drama of his management. I had been open one hundred and twenty-seven nights, on the 31st of January, 1842, when I had contrived to fulfil all my engagements—actors paid in full of all demands—not by signing receipts to that effect, but receiving their money—all the demands of the season, out of doors, discharged, when Mr. Burton, who had promised me every assistance, but refused every request for pieces, &c., that I made to him, appeared in Baltimore to oppose me as manager. In the first week, with the aid of Miss Charlotte Cushman, and Mr. Chippendale, I received only \$403; Chippendale's benefit amounting to \$54, and Miss Charlotte Cushman's to \$105: this was a hard blow, but the week that followed was worse, \$166 being the amount of the week, or \$47 per night for the two weeks, in which the Holiday Street Theatre had been playing to tolerable houses. Finding I could not support this conflict, I called General Welsh to my aid, and placed the horses in my circus, first giving a Dress Ball in honor of Washington's Birth Day, on the 22nd of February. If Burton had cause for exultation in the commencement, the horses had the power to draw away all his customers but those represented by that curse to all theatres, the stockholders' tickets. He retreated from Baltimore, routed and dismayed. leaving his

actors to find their way out of the city in the best manner they could, his own fortunes completely prostrated, to be only relieved by the benefit of the Insolvent Court, or the Bankrupt Act. On the 4th of April, the horses having succeeded in vanquishing the foe, I again opened the theatre. Mr. Proctor, whom I ought never to have announced as a star, fixed the fate of the season. On the night fixed for his benefit he was so intoxicated, I was compelled to dismiss the assembled audience. Even the grand encampment, which commenced on the 16th of May, was, by bad weather, rendered unavailable. Governor Porter and suite of Pennsylvania, and Governor Thomas and suite of Maryland, could not induce the ladies to turn out through torrents of rain, and the encamped soldiers looked like so many half-drowned mud-larks. I closed on the 23d of May, but cannot now say all the bills were paid. Printers, actors, officers, even *musicians!* were in arrear.

One anecdote before I bid farewell to Baltimore: it occurred at the Holiday Street Theatre, during Walton's management. "La Sylphide," under the title of the "Dew Drop," was got up for the purpose of introducing Our Mary Anne (Miss Lee) to the visitors of the fashionable theatre. It is rather a complicated piece, but having been played by "The Ellsler," all the properties and music were in the house, but the audience were treated to the following unrehearsed stage effect. Every body knows Ambroise, the clever tutor of Master Burke, who was at this time the leader of the orchestra. As Miss Lee entered with a bundle of faggots, expressive music should accompany the action of the scene: a salamander gives the cue, but *no music* responds, the Sylph stands still, the fiend repeats the words, "*no music,*" Ambroise looks *demi-semi-quavers*, everything at a stand still, when the audience begin to hiss—the manager, from behind the scenes, in a voice of thunder, "Why the devil don't you go on?"

Leader.—I will tank you for ze cue.

Here Cassolani throws down the double bass, and with Joe Duggan leaves the orchestra, but nothing can move Ambroise, who will have his cue.

(The manager steps forward in a rage, and addressing the leader.) "What is the reason you do not proceed with the music?"

Leader.—I have play him overe tree time.

Manager.—Sir you are wrong, and by heaven I will make you repent this. You have had the cue, over and over again.

Leader.—I hav not hear him, Sir, at all.

Manager.—You have, sir: attend to your business, and play your part.

Leader.—When I shall hear de cue.

(Here the manager, seizing the MS. from the hands of the prompter.) “Now sir, take your cue from me.”

Leader.—(With his bow ready, the manager gives the cue.) Ah! ah! dat is him, I hear him now for the first time.

The piece concludes amid the laughter of the audience, ending with an apology from the manager, and “*a scene*” behind “*the scenes*,” on which I forbear to raise the curtain.

Mr. Thomas Wildey, Colonel Myer, Mr. Hyde, and Mr. Sanderson, form a pattern worthy of imitation, as members of a board of agents, always willing to aid instead of crushing their lessee. In any difficulty in which I was placed as the manager of the Front Street Theatre, I never asked for either advice or pecuniary aid, that it was not given, and cheerfully. To those gentlemen, and the other members of their board, I return my grateful thanks, not only for favors received, but for others of greater magnitude, offered, but declined by me, because I could not see the justice of placing these gentlemen in a position which might have compelled them to assume many of my debts, as a reward for their kindness, and the good opinion they entertain of me both as a man and a manager. It is a proud satisfaction to me, in surrendering the theatre into their hands, to know that they appreciate the motives which guided me in that determination.

I have now arrived at the time when my friend Joe Cowell informs the world he found me in a “*cellar*,” (and a very comfortable basement it was,) selling pills and periodicals, where, could I have commanded a little more money to have continued my system of advertisements, I should have done well enough, but the funds did not come in fast enough, and the moment I ceased to advertise on a large scale, a very small purse would contain all my receipts. This leads me, in a theatrical point of view, to the influence of

THE PRESS.

Generally, upon all subjects connected with the daily affairs of life, I know that I here approach a tender subject—one which, like a hornet’s nest, the more you ruffle it, the greater number of stings will be inflicted upon you. No man has been more indebted to editors of newspapers for kindness than I have, and few have had more abuse lavished upon them from a similar source, or have been at times more harshly treated. My object, therefore, is to

direct the attention of my readers, most of whom I presume are visitors of the theatre, to the manner in which the press is subsidized to deceive them; but let them speak upon this subject for themselves.

This circular bears date, Philadelphia, April 2d, 1835. Here it is:—

(COPY.)

With a view to avoid some of the inconveniences which result from a diversity in the charges of advertising in the several newspaper establishments in this city, the publishers of the daily papers have recently adopted a scale of prices by which it is their intention hereafter to be regulated. It has, therefore, been thought due to you, as well as to themselves, to present for your consideration the following item which relates to theatres, circuses, and *other* places of amusement; and we take the liberty of suggesting, that the first of the present month presents a suitable period for commencing this arrangement.

EXTRACT FROM THE REGULATIONS:

Amusements.—On bills of performance of theatres, circuses, &c., not exceeding one square per night, shall be charged two dollars per week; and no card of any person shall be inserted on any other terms than those of the regular rates. All *puff* communications to be charged the same as advertisements, by the square, at the same prices.

JASPER HARDING,
MUFFLIN and PARRY,
N. SARGENT,
JOS. R. CHANDLER,

WM. FRY,
EDWARD CONRAD,
Z. POULSON,
PETER HAY and Co.

To Mr. F. C. WEMYSS, Manager.

At this period there was an agreement with those newspapers in which I advertised, to insert the daily advertisement of the Walnut Street Theatre, for sixty dollars per year. But these gentlemen, in the plenitude of their power, fix a day for a new arrangement, one day antecedent to the date of their printed card. Mr. Joseph R. Chandler, being the only one who qualified the notice, so as not to involve any breach of previous contract. Instead of the first of the present month, his notice ran—at the expiration of existing contracts. This was honestly done, and like himself, although he sanctioned by his name and influence the new arrangement.

The continued puffing fostered by this system has had a most malign influence upon the interests of the theatre, and a still worse one upon the private character of the actor; it enabled managers to place before the public a class of persons who in former times would not have been tolerated beyond a first appearance.

There was a time when the opinion of a well-educated man (whose refinement of taste in classic literature rendered him capable of writing a criticism both upon the merits of the author and actor) was received by the latter with deference; his faults judiciously pointed out, induced him to apply a remedy, while praise from the same source urged him on to future exertions. The pit, then frequented by men whose judgment the actor most relied upon—whose censure they dreaded—whose good opinion they courted, and who decided, *viva voce*, upon their merits, during the performance of a part—these opinions the press echoed, rarely modifying, and from which decision, so confirmed, the actor had no appeal. This power the press has lost over the mind of the actor, who knows that for a few dollars he can have his own opinion of his abilities paraded in the newspapers, to procure fame at a distance from the circle where his merit is known and classed. It is the actor's pocket, not his mind, that is taxed. "How much will it cost to enable me to travel through the United States as a star?" That is the calculation—not, have I the ability to maintain such a position—but have I the money to secure it by the puff preliminary in certain widely-circulated newspapers. The success—like that of all quacks—depends upon the constant iteration of puffs upon merit, which has no existence but in the columns of these purchased newspapers.

Again, how frequently a critique upon the able manner in which an actor has supported a principal character, appears in the newspapers, when no such performance ever took place, some accident causing a change of pieces, the knowledge of which never reached the reporter, whose article was in type, although he had not been at the theatre during the evening—and, when discovered, who thinks of it beyond the momentary laugh raised against the editor, thus caught in a trap, except some minor actor who, having been unceremoniously abused for acting badly a part he never appeared in, is silly enough to seek an explanation or demand an apology which, if given, is couched in such language as to be more offensive than the original paragraph. Who has forgotten a certain gentleman belonging to the Chestnut Street Theatre, who, indignant at being termed "a thing," instead, upon an apology from the editor, which being promised, appeared, the following morning, thus—"Mr. —

called upon us, and requested we would correct the statement of yesterday, wherein, speaking of his merit as an actor, we called him 'a thing.' We sincerely ask his pardon, and thus publicly inform our readers, that Mr. —, of the Chestnut Street Theatre, is NoThing." The wit of this is no apology for its baseness; but it is a fair specimen of such redress as actors receive for such offences.

There are found low-minded men in all trades and professions. When a manager meets a low-minded editor, his insolence is intolerable. I can quote an instance in which an editor, having been excluded from the free list for a long course of unprovoked abuse and hostility towards a theatre where he was an invited guest, had the impertinence the following morning to ask in the column of his own paper, which he termed the medium of the press, by whose authority he was refused: he would show the arbitrary manager, that "the liberty of the press" was not to be controlled by his caprice or pleasure.

The press, politically, should be free as air; it is the safeguard of liberty, defending at the same moment the rights of the governed and governors; but the moment it enters the domicile of a private citizen to destroy the peace of his family, it should be bound with chains of adamant. What right has a man, who, more fortunate in pecuniary circumstances than his neighbor, can command money sufficient to publish a few thousand printed sheets daily, in form of a newspaper, to utter expressions therein as items of news, calculated to provoke a breach of the peace, and which, uttered in the presence of the aggrieved party, would subject this same editor to personal chastisement? I ask, what right has such a man to shield himself from the consequence of such an act, under "the liberty of the press?" Bah! This is the tyranny of the press—a worse tyranny than any despot ever exercised, the fear of which is felt in the jury-box and on the bench. The law of libel is no protection to the citizen from such an assault as I have described. The jury cannot agree, legal prosecutions are expensive; and if, surmounting all these difficulties, a citizen obtains a verdict, the judge inflicts the mildest sentence the law permits him to record, to shield himself from columns of abuse, which he has no desire to see launched against him for the discharge of an unpleasant duty. The convicted editor, in the first sheet which follows the sentence, triumphantly records the result, in which he probably states with truth, the character of the prosecutor was valued by the court and jury at *one cent*, which *we* (Lord Byron says, these gentlemen always use *we* for *I*) paid, and wish the gentleman joy

of the opinion his fellow-citizens entertain of him. This is the redress the law affords a defenceless man against one armed with a daily press to renew the assault. I ask any one who has been bold enough to tell these self-constituted censors of his morals and all his actions, that they should not assail him with impunity, and appeals to the law to suppress the aggression, whether this be not a true picture of the result? But reverse the case. Let a citizen, goaded by repeated insult, commit an assault and battery upon the sacred person of an editor, he will find the law, which will be resorted to, has the power not only to fine but imprison him, while the judge, in pronouncing sentence, will read him an homily upon the enormity of his offence, and assure him that the court is determined at all hazards to protect the liberty of the press.

As a source of advertising *business*, a newspaper is invaluable to the community, and is now extensively used by all who wish to prosper; but why the proprietor of a popular sheet for this purpose should claim the right, by virtue of *the liberty press*, to regulate all places of public amusement to which they demand free admission, under the penalty of refusing to notice them in the reading matter, and sometimes even refusing to insert the paid-for advertisement, unless accompanied by tickets for the editor, is a practice subversive of the correction the press should exercise (if at all) over these very places of amusement, all of which are eulogized until some unfortunate cannot pay his advertising bill; and then his place of amusement, already tottering, is doomed to certain destruction. Now let me show the amount of money which the tickets demanded and given by a theatre would produce, if paid for, as they should be, if the editor charges for his advertisement:

The proprietor, a season ticket, valued at the minimum price, is \$15; the reporter, ditto, \$15; the editor, ditto, \$15; an order to admit four persons every Saturday—this is to treat the devil and the journeymen, at the manager's expense. All this has been submitted to, rather than provoke the ire of an editor. And these orders, which in the year amount to \$104, have actually been sold at the doors, stopping the money which would have been paid into the treasury for admission. I must do the proprietors the justice to say, this last arrangement met with their decided disapprobation; but the evil to the theatre remained unabated—the same request for orders was made on the following Saturday. I have now shown that each paper received one hundred and forty-nine dollars in the course of the year, over and above the two hundred and eight dollars for puffs and advertisements, with the extra cards for actors' benefits, amounting to at least fifty dollars more. Now as

twelve newspapers, some daily, some weekly, enjoyed these privileges, and four theatres open, it follows, that the enormous sum (excluding the fair business part of the transaction, in paying for the advertisements and puffs) of seven thousand one hundred and fifty-two dollars is annually paid by the theatres of Philadelphia, to purchase the good will of the gentlemen who direct the liberty of the press, which, with the receipts for advertising, &c., amount to nineteen thousand one hundred and fifty-two dollars. A great deal has been said about black mail : this is a private affair, altogether independent of the management ; if it exist, the actor or his friends pay that ; but, certainly, nobody will doubt the *freedom of the press*, after reading this chapter, in its supervision of public amusements.

The following, written by Leigh Hunt, of the *London Examiner*, nearly fifty years ago, forms so good a glossary for reporters, that I cannot avoid transcribing them :—

A crowded house.—A theatre, on the night of a performance, when all the back seats and upper boxes are empty.

A good actor.—The general term for an actor who gives good dinners.

A fine actor.—One who makes a great noise : a tatterdemallion of passions ; a clap-trapper : one intended by nature for a town-crier.

A charming play.—A play of dancing, music, and scenery : a play in which the author has the less to do the better.

Great applause.—Applause, mixed with the hisses of the pit and gallery.

Unbounded and universal applause.—Applause mixed with hisses from the pit only. This phrase is frequently to be found at the bottom of the play-bills, declaring the reception a new piece has met with.

Leigh Hunt must certainly have had before him “the vision” of the present newspaper critics, making allowance for progressive improvement in the art of puffing.



CHAPTER XL.

Opening of the Pittsburgh Theatre, by Dinneford—A Failure—Burton—Forrest—Mr. Tasistro in Hamlet—Fanny Ellsler—Miss Jane Sloman—Tom Flinn—Risley and Sons—A Wanton Act—End of the Season of 1841-'42.

DINNEFORD, who had become lessee of the Arch Street Theatre, opened the winter campaign of 1841, on the 7th of August, with "Pizarro," and "Simpson and Co." His business for several months very good; but, as usual with the Arch Street property, it was a promise of success, to be succeeded by failure and abandonment. He produced "Rookwood," the "Bronze Horse," &c.; finally departed for Pittsburgh, where the last season had been so disastrous to me, notwithstanding the Slomans, Mr. Jones, Brough, Madame Otto, Miss Lee, (with La Bayadere,) Eaton, H. J. Finn—all put forward claims to the support of the Pittsburghers. The weather was so inclement, that the stars, both from the east and west, met half frozen at the top of the Alleghany mountains, which was the barrier beyond which none could proceed for three weeks. Mr. Jackson, the present proprietor of the Bowery, was the manager. The theatre was open for seventy-two nights, the average receipts sixty-two dollars!! which, deducting the money paid to stars and actors for benefits, would make the treasury receipts about forty dollars. For the first time since the theatre was built, the actors returned to Philadelphia and Baltimore, with a balance due to them for salary, which was afterwards paid; at least one-half the company were arrested, and bailed by my friend, George Beale, who started them on to me as another batch of *chased actors* from the Pittsburgh Theatre. This was the second losing season at Pittsburgh. The weather, and my own folly in yielding to the wishes of a few, in converting the pit into a parquette, (which the gallery were determined should not be so occupied in peace, jeering every one who took a seat in it, until it was replaced as a pit,) were the chief causes in bidding farewell to the theatre, which I made several attempts again to occupy. I bade farewell to the last link which had any hold upon my regard as a manager. My old Pittsburgh friends condescend to call upon me,

*+ Memoirs with an English friend, Wellington, the son of - called
seals - and Madeline - the two military -
while - today respecting the morality of actors in
company - Afternoon - Memoirs, appeared in -
the way of - they were not as - and other in
her - 18 - - - - - there never*

when business brings them to Philadelphia, and we laugh at the happy times we have passed within the walls of the now smoky palace—the Pittsburgh Theatre, to which and its proprietor, Mr. E. Simpson, I wish success, most sincerely hoping it may repay to him all losses he has sustained by others, as well as myself.

Burton opened his National Theatre on Saturday, the 21st of August, disappointing the audience on the first night, Conner being unable to proceed with the play of "Money." I was called upon to act Belmour, which I did cheerfully to oblige Burton. On Monday, the 23d, E. Forrest commenced an engagement. How he runs from one theatre to the other, like the fox, doubling, until he reaches his first starting ground again; more attractive by his temporary absence. It is a dangerous experiment, which his popularity alone enables him to pursue with success. Managers rail at it as an ungenerous course, but they are all eager to make engagements with him, knowing that he pockets "*more as all de profits*," as the French dancers used to say. Hackett was the next star. He then produced "Valsha," and the "Ocean Child," followed by "Cleopatra," which failed to draw, although well put upon the stage. On the 18th of October, Forrest returned, and with Murdoch, C. Mason, and Mrs. Jones, played "Aylesmere," under the title of "Jack Cade," thus completing the assumption of my play to his entire use, even to the title selected by myself, under which it was first presented to the public. Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Buckstone followed. Burton produced "London Assurance," on the 15th of November, with Browne, himself, Buckstone, Miss Clifton, and Mrs. Fitzwilliam, five stars, determined to eclipse the Walnut Street, where Flinn had been too quick for him. He added an aviary of living birds, and fountains of real water, to the other attractions of scenery and properties; and thus closed the year 1841.

The Chestnut Street Theatre, still languished under the management of Mr. Pratt, Mr. Dinmore having retired, opened for the season with "Much Ado about Nothing," and "Faint Heart never won a Fair Lady," on the 28th of August. On the 31st, Mr. Tasistro, a gentleman well known in the literary world, attempted to act Hamlet. He can handle his pen much better in a newspaper paragraph, than he could guide his tongue upon the stage through such a part. What is there so terrific in those footlights, which tongue-tie the most loquacious who appear before them, while those behind them see no difficulty in the player's art? Let them try it, Mr. Tasistro, and they will be more lenient in their strictures upon you.

On the 3d of September, the "queen of dance," Mad. Fanny Ellsler, appeared in "La Sylphide," and then "La Bayadere;" but all in vain—the novelty over. The attraction which could enable a manager to pay such exorbitant terms, had ceased; this last engagement, bringing the Chestnut Street Theatre nearer to the crisis which all could now predict. Richings attempted to revive several of the very old comedies; but there is now, alas! no audience in Philadelphia to appreciate such plays; and it was only a waste of money, for no good purpose. "Barnaby Rudge" was next tried; but melo-drama rarely succeeds at this theatre, and never, as the principal attraction—the scenery, stage, and machinery, want modern improvement, before, in this, any manager can compete with the Walnut Street Theatre, where everything is perfect for such pieces. On the 5th of October, Miss Jane Sloman appeared as a pianist; she did not produce the sensation expected. A theatre is not the place for such an exhibition, which belongs to the concert-room. Mr. and Mrs. Sloman performed on the same evening, but the house was not worthy of the occasion; her benefit took place on the 9th. On the 21st, the Ravel Family failed to attract even money enough to defray the current expenditure; and on the 27th of October, the theatre closed for the season—a very short, and very unprofitable one—with Richings' benefit. Alas! poor Chestnut, Burton has sealed your doom, dragging himself down in the ruin he has created around him.

On the 31st of August, the Walnut opened under the management of Thomas Flynn, Marshall the lessee, with a new piece—a mixture of "Undine" and the "Naiad Queen"—entitled the "Water Queen." It failed, and merited its fate, the transparent sea being the only redeeming feature in the piece; tiring the audience, until their patience was exhausted; and half of them left the theatre before the great scene was brought before them. If Flynn failed in this, he shortly converted a defeat into a triumph, by producing the "Naiad Queen," and throwing down the gauntlet to Burton,—making a great noise about this piece, when he was quietly preparing "London Assurance;" and took both Burton and the city by surprise, on the 6th of November, by a display of carpets, cushions, pianos, candelabra, chairs, tables, flower-pots, and statues—all real: played the comedy without the assistance of a star, and took the gold off the gingerbread, while the two other houses in Chestnut Street were dreaming upon the possibility of getting it ready. Had Flynn done nothing more during the season, the tact he displayed in this, proved his capacity to manage the theatre in a manner most likely to ensure success. Burton,

with all his energy, could not recover from this blow,—the stock company of the Walnut Street returning more money to the treasury, than his five stars, in the same play. As to Mr. Pratt and Mr. Richings, they seem to have gone to sleep; and after both Burton and Marshall had surfeited the city with the name of “London Assurance,” they announced the Chestnut Street Theatre to open with this play, throwing away hundreds of dollars, without the chance of any return to the treasury. Who paid for this folly—the lessee or his manager, or both? It was a deserved punishment. What will the world say, Captain Tarrididdle, that P. Richings will never win a fair lady, with such a faint heart? What say you, Ray Gomez? Even the reduction of prices could not save thy fortunes: the fashionables want no reduction—the mechanics won’t enter your doors gratuitously; you have too often excluded them, by raising the prices, when there was any actor of eminence they wished to see. Samuel Butler, an actor who deserved a better fate, closed the year at the Chestnut, while Steele, with “Old Ironsides” at the Walnut, gave a new impetus to commence the year 1842. Flynn revived “Zanthe” and “Thalaba,” and produced a capital farce on the 5th of February, entitled “Bill Stickers, Beware,” in which, as Mr. William Stickers, he kept the audience in a roar; but on the 7th of February, Tim Turner and his celebrated circus company, were announced to appear at the Walnut Street Theatre, in a moveable ring erected upon the stage. How was this, Mr. Freeman? After the declaration of the stockholders, did Mr. Marshall pay you one thousand dollars extra for this permission, the sum asked to permit Mr. Cooke to occupy it thus, when I was your tenant? The horses proved attractive; yet the season closed on the 7th of May, 1842, with Mr. Flynn’s benefit; re-opened for a short summer season on the 14th of May, —A. Addams, Eaton, Browne, Booth, and Herr Drisbach, (successor to Carter, the Lion King,) whose performance, if not so novel, is equally daring.

The Arch Street Theatre opened, under the management of Mr. Charles Porter, as *The American Theatre*, in contradistinction to the Walnut, which leaves out the article; but soon tired of such folly, Mr. Porter resumed the old title of Arch Street Theatre. He commenced on the 28th of March, and lingered on till the 4th of July; the season only remarkable for having introduced upon the stage Mr. Risley and his sons, since so well known to fame in Europe. The performance was here merely termed neat—so neat to him, it has produced a fortune *nett*. He has many imitators, but no successful competitor. His performance is both pleasing

and elegant ; the ease with which the boys accomplish most astonishing feats, adds to the pleasure as well as the amusement of the audience.

The National Theatre, under Burton, closed on the 29th of January, 1842, never again to open as "his" theatre. He proceeded to Baltimore, where the last nail was driven into the coffin that was to bury all his ambitious hopes of being alone the director of dramatic taste in the city of Philadelphia. The beautiful scenery was wantonly destroyed ; chopped to pieces, to prevent it falling into other hands ; and whether done by Burton or Newton, or by both, Mr. Burton's reputation as a man suffered severely, without attaining the object ; for Welsh and Mann converted it into a splendid Circus and Amphitheatre, in a short time after the destruction, intended to have been complete, was perpetrated. Welsh and Mann have reaped the harvest which Burton planted ; to them his ruin has been the source of emolument. There is also a story, which was made the subject of judicial proceedings, in Baltimore, against Hielge, the artist, of wantonly destroying the newly-painted scenery, at the Holiday Street Theatre, Baltimore, by priming it over with smudge, and also against Mr. Newton, for so carelessly ripping out certain gas fixtures underneath the stage, as to endanger the safety of the house. The artist escaped by pleading orders received to prepare the canvas for repainting in some new piece, which never made its appearance, and the manager's conduct became the subject of discussion. Miss Clifton also, who, it appears, only lent her name for the purpose of obtaining the theatre for Burton, but who was never interested in the proceeds, was summoned, to answer for certain unpaid bills, which, it is to be hoped, will teach her prudence for the future. Marshall was persuaded to unite his forces with Pratt at the Chestnut Street, and, by acting in concert, to save both theatres. The amount of money agreed to be furnished by the former gentleman, was speedily swallowed in the losses sustained ; and Marshall, frightened from the course, wisely resolved to devote his attention entirely to the Walnut Street. Dr. Lardner commenced his scientific lectures, with great success ; and Pratt announced, on the 2d of March, 1842, that he had formed a coalition with W. E. Burton, and, with a double company, would open Old Drury, with the play of "Money," and the farce of "State Secrets." This alliance, offensive and defensive, between the belligerents, *both ruined in the contest*, was made too late. Nothing could save either the managers or the theatres, which were both in the agonies of death. Hackett, E. Forrest, Miss

Clifton, Signor de Begnis, all lent their aid in vain. The theatre closed its short season, passing out of the hands of Mr. Pratt, who had been engaged in the management from the commencement of the partnership of Maywood and Co., in 1833; and thus ended the eventful season of 1841-42, in which all the theatres supported themselves longer without the aid of any European star (newly imported) than had happened for twenty years. To this circumstance is to be attributed the downfall of the Chestnut Street Theatre, and the failure of Burton at the National. The Walnut can always do without this foreign aid, and the Arch Street never will do, with or without it, for a longer period than one season, under any one manager.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Era of Petticoat Government—Mr. and Mrs. Brougham—Concerts *a la Musard* at the Chestnut Street—Charles Thorne at the Olympic—The Black Raven—The Failure of the Lady Manageresses—Pills and Periodicals—The Author opens the Olympic—Forrest and Macready—Letter of Forrest to the Editor of the *London Times*—The Right to Hiss.

I now record the era of petticoat government; and as the world is so governed, directly or indirectly, let sovereign man say what he pleases in denial, I see no reason why the theatres should not be placed directly under the influence of the fair sex. The Chestnut Street Theatre was opened on the 7th of September, 1842, by Miss Mary Maywood, as lessee; and as the stockholders had attributed the unpopularity of their theatre to the mismanagement of Mr. Robert Campbell Maywood, it was but a just triumph that they should offer him this lease, as the only person they could think of to redeem their interests. He wisely declined all responsibility, placing his daughter at the head of the establishment, he assuming the acting management only. The first performance under the new arrangement was the "Man of the World," and "State Secrets:" the company—Richings, stage manager; Maywood, acting manager; W. B. Wood, Andrews, Mathews, Thomas Placide, Charles, Stanley, Watson, Eberle, Jervis, Bowers, Godden, Hines, Henrie, Perring, and Kelly the prompter; Misses

Maywood, Ayres, Helen Mathews, Jones, Thompson, Norman, Seale, George; Mesdames J. G. Porter (Miss Duff,) Maywood, Charles, Thoman, and Rogers.

To checkmate this move, Mr. Marshall, on the 22d of September, announced that the Walnut Street Theatre would open, under the direction of Miss Charlotte Cushman, with the "Belle's Stratagem," and "A Nabob for an Hour." I regret I have no list of the company.

The first effort of the rival queens was Dr. Lardner, at the Chestnut Street, with "Historical Sketches of the Revolution," and "Tableaux Vivants;" and John Sefton with "Sixteen-string Jack," and the "Golden Farmer," at the Walnut Street. On the 17th of October, Miss Maywood received the powerful aid of Madame Celeste, while Miss Cushman offered, on the same night, in opposition, Mr. E. Forrest, at the Chestnut Street. On the 31st of October, Mr. and Mrs. Brougham made their first appearance, the lady as Lady Teazle in the "School for Scandal," and Mrs. Fitzgig in the "Irish Lion." She was a very beautiful woman, but, as an actress, inferior to any one I call to mind, as a leading stock actress, in any of our large theatres. Her success was greater than her pretensions entitled her to, but most unsatisfactory to herself—but vanity must sometimes meet with rebuke. Of her husband I am prepared to speak in a far different strain. Mr. Brougham is the best representative of Irish characters who has ventured to appear since the loss of poor Power; and even in Tim Moore, which Power rendered so irresistible, he made a most favorable impression on the audience, retaining to this moment their good will whenever he appears before them. He was the original Dazzle in the play of "London Assurance," and as a light comedian, he possesses the first great requisite—he looks and moves like a gentleman upon the stage, a quality in which most of our actors are very deficient; he has, likewise, all the spirit necessary to support the sprightly dialogue of a comedy. I do not think his starring engagements have aided his purse, but they have given him popularity, which will for ever render him a most valuable member of a good stock company, while in Irishmen, he may occasionally indulge, as a star, with success.

On the 5th of December, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, and Mr. Shrivall, commenced the longest opera season ever continued by an English company, during which they produced "The Israelites in Egypt," and only suspended their performances for a few nights, on account of the domestic calamity of the Seguins, in the deaths of two children, by scarlet fever; until the 17th of February, when a

complimental benefit was given to Mrs. Seguin, whose worth as a woman, no less than her talent as a singer, deserved, under the circumstances, such an expression of feeling by the ladies of Philadelphia. The performances were "Norma," and "Zampa," two of the best operas which the troupe acted, and the receipts were worthy of the occasion. I must not forget to mention, that on the 27th of January, 1843, the "Stabat Mater" was produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre; first and second parts supported by Mr. Seguin, Mr. Shrivall, Mr. Richings, Mr. Archer, Mrs. Seguin, Mrs. Bailey, and Miss Coad. The Chestnut Street closed for the season with Mrs. Seguin's benefit. The receipts of this opera season, which must have paid the stars, does not appear to have satisfied the fair manageress, whose unpaid bills and actors' salaries became, thus early, a source of annoyance. She published a very foolish card in the newspapers, stating the sum received by the opera troupe, and the amount lost by the theatre. If the object was to excite sympathy or commiseration, it failed to produce either. Could she have done better, she would not have pursued the engagement, and few stars, (Booth and Jim Crow only can I call to recollection,) ever abate one cent of their demand, in favor of the theatre they may ruin, but to which, when the engagements are formed, they are expected to attract not only money enough to pay their engagement, but to yield a handsome surplus to the treasury. If they fail to do this, the public will only laugh at the manager for any complaint he may be foolish enough to utter, either in the play-bills or the newspapers, both famous for the *truth of their assertions!*

On the 13th of May, Miss Maywood attempted to retrieve lost ground, by fitting up the Chestnut Street Theatre as a grand Promenade, and giving Concerts *a la Musard*. The statues, the shrubbery, and the fountain were all in good taste; but the orchestra, placed in the centre of the stage, destroyed all the effect. It broke the charm of the scene on the very threshold; and, in attempting to promenade, a lady and gentleman could scarcely pass abreast of this ill-shaped lumbering contrivance. The band was under the direction of Mr. Watson, Bellini Smith, Mrs. Watson, Miss Clarence Wells, Mr. Clirehugh, the Misses Cummins, and last not least, the lion pianist, Mr. Wallace. All proved failures; the fashionables made their appearance on the first night, and, to speak technically, the thing did not take. Miss Maywood kept it open thirty-three nights, the band diminishing every week, and finally closed, to resign the theatre, on the 31st of July, into such other hands as the stockholders should dictate.

On the 9th of January, 1843, Mr. Charles Thorne, of the Chatham Theatre, in New York, opened Welsh's Olympic Theatre, (late Burton's National,) with "Boots at the Swan," "Hell Upon Earth," and "Kill or Cure." The very title of the second piece was enough to startle the citizens, and raise a hue and cry about the morality of the drama. However clever the piece might be, it was an injudicious selection for an opening night. Burton appeared here as a star. Right—that my friend is the proper way to redeem your fortune. Your talent as an actor is appreciated and sought after; abandon all thoughts of management, and five years will find you in a better condition than when you commenced your alteration of Cooke's Circus. Whether the atmosphere of this house rendered him petulant, or Mr. Thorne did not yield that courtesy which every manager should show to a brother manager, in distressed and broken circumstances, or Burton really neglected his rehearsals, as alleged, he refused to go on with his engagement, and on the 13th of January, I find him announced at the Walnut Street, with Booth and Hill, in "Town and Country." Thorne, in one week, abandoned the city, leaving actors, carpenters, &c., to shift for themselves.

On Saturday, 10th Dec., 1842, Marshall produced the "Black Raven," founded upon one of Ravel's successful pieces, at Niblo's, in which Barnes and Miss Walters acquire fame. In attraction, this piece has exceeded any other ever played in Philadelphia, having been twice revived, and with greater success, if possible, than upon its first production. It was the first scenic piece produced as it should be, with every requisite, since I retired from the management of the theatre, and taught Mr. Marshall a lesson he has wisely profited by, that these pieces, well got up, will always pay; but neglected, are better not attempted at all. The expense incurred, is, I know, enough to stagger a man not acquainted with theatrical business; but it is only by liberal outlay a theatre like the Walnut can look for success. This "Black Raven" averted many misfortunes, which all the efforts of Booth, Burton, E. Forrest, or Miss Clifton could not have aided; and on the 10th of July, 1843, the season was brought to a termination, by a complimentary benefit, given by the actors to Mr. Marshall.

Miss Charlotte Cushman, like Miss Mary Maywood, discovered that they were out of their proper sphere of action; that the energy of a Madame Vestris, the only female who ever successfully conducted a theatre, did not belong to either of them. W. R. Blake relieved Miss Cushman, at the Walnut, the following season; and, divested of the cares and annoyance of management, she

surprised Mr. Macready, by the vigor of her performance in the Queen, in "Hamlet," Lady Macbeth, &c., which opened to her her present good fortune and high reputation.

What has become of the Arch Street all this time, scarcely worthy of notice, but for the fact that Mr. Porter associated Mr. Pratt, so ungenerously ousted by his former friend and partner, Maywood, from all participation in the management of Old Drury. But it required longer heads and stronger purses than P. & P. possess, to make anything of such a hopeless property. Pratt retired, and the doors were as usual closed long before the period a season should be brought to its regular conclusion. A Mr. Russel was the next lessee, who, strange to say, is reported to have made money—if he did, he is the wisest man who ever entered the doors for — he kept it, refusing to pay his actors. One lady honored his shoulders by the application of a cowhide, for this deficiency, but I did not hear that this castigation produced the desired effect. The money he retained as liquidated damages for the assault upon his person.

During this time, I was quietly occupied behind my counter, selling my pills and periodicals, furnishing my friends with a capital cigar, and refusing offers of the most advantageous kind to assume the management of various theatres; one from my friend Simpson, of Pittsburgh, so liberal that I fear to record it, not only because my veracity might be called in question, but that everybody would exclaim—what a fool! if he refused such an offer, he deserves every evil that may hereafter fall upon his head. But I was determined never again to place my foot upon the stage, while there remained a possibility of obtaining a living by any other method. Day by day, I saw the amount of my sales decrease, for want of means to maintain the system of advertising I had commenced, and which proved so successful; yet I despaired not, until I found that the profits, so far from supporting my family, were so small, that we were eating up the goods belonging to other people. Then I came to a full stop, while the deficiency was within the power of control.

My old partner, Lewis T. Pratt, now made a proposal to me to unite with him, and make application for the Chestnut Street Theatre, which, after the failing season, under Miss Maywood, was advertised to let. Macready, and other stars of name and talent were known to be engaged for the Park Theatre, New York, and with such aid, Old Drury generally had been successful; *without it*, for the last twenty years—*never*. We made the application, which was favorably received; but before we for-

warded the signatures of those gentlemen we had proposed as security for the payment of the rent, Mr. Marshall, of the Walnut Street Theatre, made an offer, which, by the payment of a few hundred dollars in advance, secured the lease. So ended that; but as I never suffered myself to be defeated in any project upon which my mind was bent, when perseverance could secure the object of my wishes, I at once determined to obtain the National Olympic; and turning over in my mind the best means of obtaining possession of a theatre, which, as such, had failed under Burton, Thorne, Amherst, and Richings, Mr. John H. Oxley presented himself suddenly before me, to ask my advice upon the subject of business. I told him I had made up my mind to take the National. He proposed joining me in the speculation, and in three days from our first conversation, the lease was signed, and possession obtained. The difficulty was, to obtain a company at so late a period; in this we succeeded beyond our expectations. We had Wemyss, Oxley, Mathews, Shaw, Mossop, Lewis, Winans, Faulkner, Flemming, Becket, Jervis, Collingbourne, F. Myers, Edwards, Colvin, Brown, Bowers, Horn and Neal; Mrs. A. Knight, Madison, Abbott, Cantor; Misses Thompson, Wheeler, Norman, E. Moore, Downs, Porter and Smith—a very good array of names. We opened on the 23d September, 1843, with "The Honeymoon," and "Perfection." Receipts, \$66; not a very flattering prospect of success. Oxley was anxious to obtain the aid of James Wallack, who had just returned from England. Although I agreed perfectly with him, that the name in our announce bill would add strength, I cautioned him against expecting much in the way of attraction from Mr. Wallack; yet I supposed, after an absence of two years, we might calculate upon engaging him without loss. His first night was only \$117; his whole engagement, second night, \$62; third, \$79; fourth, \$60; fifth, \$60; his first benefit \$108!!! then, \$48; \$64; \$34; \$43; \$52; his second benefit and last night, \$80; whole amount, \$677. Paid Mr. Wallack \$276, for twelve nights. This disastrous commencement, although it disarranged our plans, did not frighten me, knowing that E. Forrest, with whom we ought to have commenced our season, and who was engaged expressly to oppose Macready, at the Chestnut, was to follow. The plan was, not to act on the same night the same play, but to follow each performance; if Macready played "Hamlet" to-night, we acted it the following night, &c. By these means, we succeeded in creating an excitement to witness the different style of two actors, at the head of their profession, in the same parts. We had the

best of the contest, until the petulance of Mr. Forrest's temper upon trifles, induced him to leave hastily for New York, and gave him the appearance of running away from a contest in which he was really the victor. If regret could have availed, he expressed himself freely upon the subject, repenting at leisure the hurried action of a moment. "*Ira furor brevis est,*" used to be a copy at school for Latin beginners; Mr. Forrest would do well to translate and consider it; it would have saved him from the very ridiculous position he occupied in the mind of every thinking man, for the petty malevolence which, for injuries, real or supposed, he exhibited in hissing Mr. Macready, in the Edinburgh Theatre. Let me ask my American readers what would have been the fate of Mr. Macready, if he had *dared* to hiss Mr. E. Forrest, in any theatre in the United States? He would have been turned out, if not otherwise maltreated; certainly never have been allowed to act again in America, notwithstanding the *undoubted right* he might claim as an auditor to express his disapprobation. Lucky it was for Mr. E. Forrest that John Bull rarely troubles himself about these trifling matters. The quarrel of *two buffoons* is of no consequence in Great Britain to any but themselves; and he was not even able to make capital out of it for his native America—which, in charity, I am compelled to suppose, must have been his motive. His own good sense assures him he is wrong, and having failed to produce even a newspaper excitement beyond a passing paragraph, he is ashamed of the littleness of his conduct. What a pity great men should thus expose their weakness.

I copy the following letter from the New-York Spirit of the Times, of the 9th of May, 1846 :

FORREST AND MACREADY.

To the Editor of the London Times,—SIR,—Having seen in your journal of the 12th instant, an article headed "Professional Jealousy," a part of which originally appeared in *The Scotsman* published in Edinburgh, I beg leave, through the medium of your columns, to state, that at the time of its publication, I addressed a letter to the Editor of *The Scotsman* upon the subject, which, as I then was in Dumfries, I sent to a friend in Edinburgh, requesting him to obtain its insertion; but as I was informed *The Scotsman* refused to receive any communication upon the subject, I need say nothing of the injustice of this refusal. Here then I was disposed to let the matter rest, as upon more mature reflection,

I did not deem it worth further attention ; but now, as the matter has assumed " a questionable shape " by the appearance of the article in your journal, I feel called upon, although reluctantly, to answer it.

There are two legitimate modes of evincing approbation and disapprobation in the theatre—one expressive of approbation, by the clapping of hands, and the other by hisses to mark dissent ; and as well-timed and hearty applause, is the just meed of the actor who deserves well, so also is hissing, a salutary and wholesome corrective of the abuses of the stage ; and it was against one of these abuses that *my* dissent was expressed, and not, as was stated, " with a view of expressing his (my) disapproval of the manner in which Mr. Macready gave effect to a particular passage." The truth is, Mr. Macready thought fit to introduce a fancy dance into his performance of " Hamlet," which I thought, and still think, a desecration of the scene, and at which I evinced that disapprobation, for which the pseudo-critic is pleased to term me an " offender," and this was the only time during the performance that I did so, although the writer evidently seeks, in the article alluded to, to convey a different impression. It must be observed also, that I was by no means " solitary " in this expression of opinion.

That a man may manifest his pleasure or displeasure after the recognized mode, according to the best of his judgment, actuated by proper motives, and for justifiable ends, is a right, which, until now, I have never once heard questioned, and I contend, that right extends equally to an actor, in his capacity as a spectator, as to any other man, besides from the nature of his studies, he is much more competent to judge of a theatrical performance than any *soi-disant* critic, who has never himself been an actor. The writer of the article in *The Scotsman*, who has most unwarrantably singled me out for public animadversion, has carefully omitted to notice the fact, that I warmly applauded several points of Mr. Macready's performance ; and more than once I regretted that the audience did not second me in so doing. As to the pitiful charge of professional jealousy preferred against me, I dismiss it with the contempt it merits, confidently relying upon all those of the profession with whom I have been associated, for a refutation of this slander.

Yours, respectfully,

EDWIN FORREST.

March, 1846.

—*Times*, 4th of April.

Did ever man occupying the position of Mr. E. Forrest, pen so many lines of bombast and egotism, as are here paraded for publication. The audience of the Edinburgh Theatre are fully able to appreciate the talent of Mr. Macready, without taking their cue from Mr. E. Forrest; nor can his opinion of Mr. Macready's acting, alter the position he now holds of the first Tragedian belonging to the English stage, any more than could Mr. Macready's opinion of him wrest from Mr. E. Forrest the proud distinction he justly wears of being the first Tragedian of the American stage—a title sufficiently honorable to gratify the pride and ambition of any man. Let him gain "bays" in a foreign land, if he can, but he can win no prouder station than he now holds, among his own countrymen. Mr. E. Forrest is evidently smarting under the hisses directed towards him at the Princess' Theatre, on his first appearance there. His vanity forbids him to place these to the account of want of talent in himself, or error in judgment of those who exercised a right (a very doubtful one) so to express their opinion. But Mr. Macready was accused in the newspapers of having paid persons to insult Mr. E. Forrest. Mr. Forrest believes no such nonsense, but appears to have been over-anxious to repay Macready a supposed debt of this kind. As a stage director, few possess the tact and judgment of Macready; and if he *did* introduce a fancy dance in "Hamlet," (in what scene we are left in the dark,) his mature judgment no doubt could give a sufficient reason for the introduction. If it was on the stage where the tragedy is enacted before the Court of Denmark, I can, as a stage manager, see no objection to such a dance, as the prelude to the performance which follows, rather tending to remove suspicion of the trap he (Hamlet) has designed to "catch the conscience of the king." Be it as it may, Mr. Forrest, as an actor, was wrong in the theatre to express an opinion at all. He is too old an artist not to have witnessed more than once an auditor or several auditors, turned out by the mandate of the pit for interrupting the performance, by hisses to the annoyance of the majority assembled to witness a play, although they were only exercising a right "which until now, he has never once heard questioned." Why, in the Chestnut Street Theatre, in 1826, during the performance of Kean in "Othello"—"Mr. Wood told the audience he had despatched officers to expel such as disturbed the audience, and that they should be prosecuted to the utmost rigor of the law. The officers did their duty, and the play went off without the slightest noise. It is generally believed that the disturbance was occasioned by some apprentice boys, who were hired

to express that dislike to Mr. Kean, their employer was fearful of exhibiting himself."—*United States Gazette*.

If this proceeding was correct, what becomes of *the right to hiss?*

I think it was pretty strongly questioned, although I agree with Mr. E. Forrest, that it is the best corrective of the abuses of the stage, and judiciously exercised, of service to the actor. It is the only censure he dreads, and is most sensitive upon; but should never be exercised by *one actor* towards *another*.

We have received the following note from our fellow-citizen, Mr. Hackett, says the *Courier* and *Enquirer* of May 9th, 1846, to which we give place with pleasure:—

To the Editors of the Courier and Enquirer,—Will you afford me the medium of replying to various inquirers, who are desirous to learn whether either of my old editions of Shakspeare's "Hamlet" contains any authority for Mr. Macready's having introduced a "fancy dance" before the play-scene in that tragedy.

Imprimis—I presume curiosity upon the subject to have grown out of the republication here of the following paragraph from a British journal:—

"MR. MACREADY AND MR. FORREST:—Mr. Edwin Forrest, the American Tragedian, has written to the *London Times*, justifying his conduct in hissing Mr. Macready during his performance of 'Hamlet,' at the Edinburgh Theatre. He states, he frequently applauded parts of which he approved, and had an equal right to hiss at passages which he thought erroneous. The truth is, says Forrest, Mr. Macready thought fit to introduce a fancy dance into his performance of 'Hamlet,' which I thought, and still think, a desecration of the scene."

I will venture to exclaim, what I suppose, Forrest meant by a "*fancy dance*."

Hamlet, after his instructions to the players, and his confidential remarks to his friend, Horatio, just before the play-scene commences, observes to him—"They are coming to the play—I must be idle—get you a place." Consequently, I have always understood Hamlet to mean by the word *idle*, in this situation, that he must seem to have no fixed motive or industrious object, during the performance of the play about to be represented, policy dictating the expediency of his father appearing listless and unoccupied, in order that his guilty uncle, the king, might disregard his presence, attend closely to the play, and become entrapped into some exhibitions of compunction and remorse.

Mr. Macready, however, when *I* saw him act "Hamlet" at the Park Theatre, in 1843, appeared to construe the word *idle* very differently; for the reason that he immediately assumed the manner of a silly youth, tossed his head right and left, and skipped back and forth, across the stage, five or six times before the foot-lights, at the same time switching his handkerchief, held by a corner over his right and left shoulder alternately; indeed, making gyrations not unlike those fire-ribbons, which I have seen idle and thoughtless urchins cut in the air, with a stick burnt to a live coal at one end, until the whole court have had sufficient time to parade, and be seated, and until Hamlet finds himself addressed by the king, who enquires after his health.

I therefore submit whether this manner of Mr. Macready's rendering the scene upon the stage, is not what was only *comparatively* referred to as "*a fancy dance*," by Mr. Forrest, being elsewhere, also alluded to as "*a pas de mouchoir*." At all events, I beg to state, that in no edition of Shakspeare which I own, or have ever seen, is there any pretext for the introduction of *a dance* before the play-scene, or upon the stage erected for the performance before the king and court of Denmark.

The public's obedient servant,

JAS. H. HACKETT.

Astor House, April 29th, 1846.

Who made Mr. Hackett "*sole judge and umpire*" of another's thoughts? He has no pretension to be admitted as a tragedian. His attempt to act a few characters written by Shakspeare, always give rise to a sneer and a smile by the actors; while contempt would be a better word to express the feelings of the audience, who are rarely numerous upon such occasions. In his own sphere, Hackett is an actor above mediocrity; but as a tragedian—good lack! good lack!—yet he writes as if he would say with the immortal bard—

“——— I am Sir Oracle,
When I ope my lips, let no dog bark.”

He knows enough of the business of the stage, to know that two actors rarely play the same part in exactly the same way—surely, nobody will think of hissing Mr. Charles Kean for the great improvement he has presented to the public, in the display introduced into the tragedy of "Richard the Third;" yet Mr. Hackett will look in vain at his two old editions of Shakspeare, or his twenty-two modern ones, if he possesses them, for the authority for such melo-dramatic display. Every actor, occupying the

high station claimed by Mr. E. Forrest or Mr. Macready, has always been allowed to regulate the stage business of those scenes in which they are engaged; and unless, while all around is progressing, we are prepared to let the stage stand still, every effort of a master mind, although it may not be successful, is worthy of a fair trial, and should be protected from all assaults from the profession, jealous as they always have been of the success each obtains over the other. Forrest's calculation no doubt was, that, as in America, at Boston and Baltimore, they drove Mr. Kean from their stage, for an impertinence they would not brook, so the Edinburgh people would chastise his insolence as a foreign artist. If they had driven him from the stage in Great Britain, the excitement and sympathy of the citizens of the United States would have secured such a succession of triumphant engagements in the theatres in America, as never could be dreamed of by an actor, and he would have closed his professional career, (if such really be his purpose, as he stated in Dublin,) in a perfect blaze of glory.

Let me now leave England, and return to the National Theatre in Philadelphia where after Forrest's departure, the "Mysteries of Paris," dramatised by John Sefton, F. C. Wemyss, and James Gann, was placed upon the stage with a celerity which astonished every body. "The King of the Mist," scenery by Russel Smith, kept up the attraction, until, on the 28th of December, we had recovered lost ground, and appeared to have the tide of success full in our favor, with Silsbie, the Ellsler Brothers, the Virginia Minstrels, &c. Booth offered to play, but I confess I was afraid of him; he had been playing his usual antics in Boston and New-York. I was decidedly opposed to making an attempt, which, if followed by a failure, would have again ruined all chance of the success which now seemed within our grasp; unfortunately, Mr. Oxley yielded to my opinion. Had I permitted him on this occasion to exercise his own judgment, Booth's triumphant engagement at the Walnut Street, which turned the tide of popular favor back to that theatre, would have been ours. Never did Booth act better, behave more steadily, or draw more money than during this engagement in Philadelphia, (which I had thrown away.) A singular piece, under the title of "Blud-a-Nouns," in which the actors were all frogs, possessing much merit, was produced, from the pen of Dunn English. Several scenes were much applauded; but it was too long, and became tiresome—the curtain fell, not to rounds of applause, but to a shower of groans and hisses. "Oseola," a play by Col. Sherborne, "Handy Andy,"

“The Enchanted Lake,” “Yara,” “Linda,” “The Imp,” “Rookwood,” “Mazeppa,” “Robert Emmet,” “Tom and Jerry in Philadelphia,” and another drama by Dunn English, entitled the “Doom of the Drinker,” failed to produce money. Our hard fought and dearly gained battle, was snatched from our grasp in the very hour of victory and triumph, by one false move. We closed on the 27th of April, after a season of 185 nights, from which the lessees, Welsh & Mann, were the only parties who derived any benefit. Oxley retired from the management, and I made preparations to re-open on the 11th of May. I sent for Landers from New-York, and with the aid of John Wiser, the artist, produced “Fortunio” in a style which, under any other circumstances, must have succeeded. The unfortunate riots in May, 1844, when bloodshed and murder roamed throughout certain portions of the districts, placed the city under martial law. The proclamation to that effect, was issued on the very day I purposed opening—the consequence—nobody could attend the theatre for thirteen nights. I struggled on, to close without a hope of future effort. The theatre was surrendered to General Welsh, who determined to establish an amphitheatre upon the scale of Astley’s in London. He has succeeded, and with the enterprise and capital he possesses, must succeed. Welsh & Mann’s amphitheatre in the city of Philadelphia, is destined to become a conspicuous place of public amusement, whose fame will resound through every city in the Union.

CHAPTER XLII.

The Chestnut and Walnut United—Miss Cushman Resigns—J. M. Field—G. Vandenhoff—Wallack—Forrest—Macready—Burton Opens the Arch Street—Mr. Anderson—Pratt and Wemyss again together—The “Monks of Monk Hall”—Fear of a Row—Mr. Crisp—Mrs. Mowatt—The Ethiopian Opera Company—Mr. Fry’s Opera of “Leonora”—Conclusion—*Finis Coronat Opus*

THE Chestnut and Walnut Street Theatres being once more united under the same management, Marshall opened the Old Drury on the 7th of September; W. R. Blake announced as *exclusive* stage manager; C. Cushman acting manager—thus giving the lady an opportunity of resigning her dignity, without wounding

her professional reputation. "Man and Wife," and a "Lover by Proxy," in which J. M. Field, an actor whose reputation depends more upon the skill with which he writes for a newspaper—(belonging to the corps editorial, we must support him)—than dramatic tact or genius, played Charles Austencourt and Harry Lawless. He appeared among us, and departed again without an enquiry made. On the 14th of September, the Walnut opened with "Laugh when you Can," and "Woman's Life"—here the error committed by Maywood & Co., of charging seventy-five cents and fifty cents at the Chestnut Street Theatre, to see the same company who, in removing from the corner of Ninth and Walnut Street, were only worth fifty cents for the boxes and twenty-five cents for the pit, was committed. G. Vandenhoff was the only star. The Chestnut Street was occupied by the French Opera company until the 23d of October, when Macready opened as Macbeth, (Forrest playing Jack Cade on the same evening at the National,) then Hamlet, Werner, Richelieu, Othello, and Benedict. On the 13th of November, the Italian Company, under Vattellini, played Bellini's "Norma" in the original language; produced "Bellisario," "Il Puritani," "Lucia di Lammermoor," and "Gemma di Vergy." Wallack played on the 29th of November, followed by Hackett on the 7th of December. Ole Bull astonished the audience by the wonderful execution of his bow. On the 18th, Macready returned, playing "The Bridal," and the theatre closed for the season on the 26th; minus, how many dollars, Mr. Marshall? This is the first taste you have had of the bitters of management; your actors unpaid; your credit out of doors for the first time sullied; your legitimate sphere of action, the Walnut Street Theatre, occupied by Howes as a circus; the folly demonstrated of one man attempting to conduct two theatres in the same city at the same time. Your good star prevailed, or you never would have recovered from this blow. On the 1st of January, 1844, you again obtained possession of the American Theatre, where the horses had, wonderful to relate, proved a losing speculation. "George Barnwell," and the "Last Days of Pompeii," in the afternoon, and the "Bohemians of Paris," "Dumb Belle," and "Boots at the Swan," in the evening; the houses not encouraging; the managers in a fright, until Booth arrived to the rescue on the 17th, when success once more alights upon Mr. Marshall's banner. Blake revived with success the old comedies, and following or aiding them with the "Black Raven," Burton, Wallack, and Booth, with Foster and his Maunchausen, and E. Forrest in the month of August—very warm tragedy weather,

sir—brings the season, which had thrown a shade upon Marshall's fortunes, to a successful termination—a consummation devoutly to be wished, but by no means anticipated during its progress, on the 31st of August, 1844. The only effort made at the Chestnut Street Theatre, was the opera with the Seguins in April, for a very short period, and a second attempt at the end of May, which failed entirely. To a "Political Ball" alone, did Mr. Marshall owe one gleam of success during his reign at the Chestnut Street Theatre.

Mr. Burton, not contented with the success which crowned his efforts as an actor everywhere, again grasps the truncheon which had fallen from the hands of Russell and Deverna, and assumes the management of the Arch Street Theatre, on the 3d of June, 1844. Chance threw into his hands some excellent actors: George Barrett, Burke and wife, and others, returning from the south and west, enabled him, after the first week or two, to carry on a war with some prospect of success; and where success attends him, he is always indefatigable in his exertions. Finally, he obtains the theatre from Mr. Lovatt, and opens for the fall season, on the 9th September, with Mr. Macready as Hamlet; E. Forrest playing on the same night, at the Walnut Street, whose season he commenced on Saturday, the 7th, as Damon, determined to have one night to himself before commencing the contest a second time, in which he was so successful before—the chance had fled. Macready, and at the Arch Street Theatre too, had this time the best of the battle, it being announced as his farewell engagement in Philadelphia. Throughout his tour of the United States, he encountered Mr. E. Forrest, either on the same night, or immediately preceding him, or announced in the bills to follow him. Mr. Macready uttered no complaints upon this determined dogging of his track, which proved detrimental to his purse, if not his reputation. Then why should Mr. E. Forrest or his friends charge Mr. Macready with unfairness of conduct to him, in England? I do not believe Mr. Macready suffered the movements of Mr. E. Forrest, in London, to engage his attention for an instant, although the course of conduct Mr. Forrest pursued towards him, in the United States, might lead Forrest to expect some retaliation, where the tables were changed, and the American tragedian was the foreign artist.*

* In these remarks, I have no intention to defend the conduct of Mr. Macready: on the contrary, I know his conduct to the actors who are unfortunately compelled to play the minor characters is, if possible, more brutal than that of Mr. E. Forrest. They both endeavor to lose sight of the character of a gentle-

The season 1843-44, was noted for the number of musicians of talent who visited America, Ole Bull, Vieux Temps, Wallace, Nagel, &c. &c. Ole Bull was the only fortunate one; wherever he played, the enthusiasm of the dilettanti filled his pockets, while the Concerts of all the others were thinly attended.

MR. ANDERSON.

Mr. Anderson, a young man unknown to fame, of the Macready school, without servile imitation, appeared as Hamlet, in the Arch Street Theatre: his engagement was not profitable to Manager Burton, who terminated it rather abruptly, to produce "Putnam;" but on a second visit to the Chestnut St. Theatre, under Pratt and Wemyss, and a third one with Burton, his talent has been more justly appreciated. The attempt made to hiss him off the stage, in retaliation for Forrest's reception in London, was frowned down, and what might have proved an unpleasant termination of his career in Philadelphia, became the means of fixing him firmly in the estimation of the public. His greatest merit as an actor is the earnest manner with which he enters heart and soul into the assumption of character, and never flags from the commencement to the termination—thus carrying his audience, once enlisted in his favor, with irresistible force, along with him. There is something too much of vehemence in his Claude Melnotte; and it is only the earnest manner in which he performs his task that covers the glaring absurdity of the termination to the fourth act. His personation of the Stranger is the best I can call to recollection, since Edmund Kean, who was in this character unapproached by any artist of his day. Mr. Anderson's future career in the United States will be similar to that of Mr. James Wallack at the same age—triumph upon triumph awaits him—his reward, a fortune in a brief space. But, to return to his first engagement, by which, having reaped neither fame or money, he was so loud in his denunciation of Burton's treatment, as to publicly declare nothing could induce him to act in any theatre over which Burton had the slightest control. Burton's *good luck* overcame this obstacle, when Anderson

man on such occasions; and it is hard to say who is the most successful—the necessity of the actor compelling him to brook insolence which he may not resent,—and the petty tyrants avail themselves of this knowledge, to inflict such wounds upon their feelings, that time can never efface—they are neither forgotten or forgiven. I appeal to the whole class of the profession alluded to, to say whether the remark is not true. I only wish to place a decided negative on the right claimed by one actor to hiss another while before the public, which, if tolerated, must lead to riot and confusion, before as well as behind the curtain.

was a card worth contending for. Mr. Rodney engaged him to act at the Holiday Street Theatre in Baltimore, but could procure no actors: his first two nights gave promise of such a brilliant engagement, that when Rodney was unable to keep his theatre open, he was induced to bury the hatchet, and act with Burton, at the Front Street Theatre, where, once reconciled, he induced him to return to the Arch Street Theatre, much to our regret. There is now a strong desire to see him again; and his next engagement in the Quaker City will be a great one, act at which theatre he may—the Arch, the Chestnut or the Walnut.

My old partner, Pratt, having obtained the lease of the Chestnut Street Theatre, after delays which rendered success all but hopeless, made me the proposition to try our fortunes once more together—and on the — day of October we opened with “Simpson and Co.,” “Love in Humble Life,” and “The Blue Domino.” John Sefion, stage manager; the company—W. Chapman, Jameison, Charles Howard, Wemyss, C. Smyth, Jordan, Byrne, Mossop, Forrest, Stafford, Dawes, Mathews, Brunton, Anderson, Grierson, Kemble, Solomon, Sullivan; Miss H. Mathews, Mrs. A. Knight, Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. Kemble, Mrs. Smith, Miss M’Bride, Mrs. Forrest, Mrs. Hautonville, the Misses Waggstaff, Miss Archer, Miss Sinclair, the dancer Petite Gertrude, and Madame Celeste. In the commencement we were doomed to disappointment; Miss Nelson, who was engaged to open the theatre, did not arrive; the Saturday night was lost, and the bill announced for Monday, which we determined, Miss Nelson or no Miss Nelson, should commence the season, was changed from “La Sylphide” to the three farces named; and on Wednesday, when the lady did appear, she played to a beggarly account of empty boxes—yet insisted on playing the six nights, which yielded her nothing and kept the people out of the theatre. Jim Crow Rice was the next star, and the admirable manner in which he acted the burlesque opera of “Otello,” made his engagement profitable to himself, and of course acceptable to the managers. His re-engagement was not so successful; but thus far, despite all opposition, we were successful in the main point—that is, paying the actors regularly. A Mr. Lippard was publishing a book entitled “The Monks of Monk Hall,” in which he exposed, right and left, the profligacy both of the rich and powerful and the poor and worthless of the city of Philadelphia. By the advice of my worthy friend, Ashbell Green, at that time one of the Deputy Attorney Generals, I procured an interview, and he drew up a contract, for which, under certain considerations, Mr. Lippard agreed to dramatise his own work for the Chestnut Street Theatre,

and to furnish me with a copy of the play in fourteen days from the date of our agreement. The scenery was painted, the properties arranged, the piece announced for representation. No sooner had the bill been placarded, than young Mercer, tried and acquitted for the murder of Heberton, assaulted the bill poster, somebody having told him that he figured conspicuously in it. Judge Conrad, my old and good friend, came up to my house in a state of excitement, to say that somebody had told him he figured in the play. I told him he ought to know me better than to suppose I would tolerate such a thing against a friend, and handed him the sheet to which he alluded, his name having been struck out by my hand from the play. This satisfied him, and he departed, with his good opinion of me, I am sure, not lessened by our interview. Down I went to the theatre—here there was excitement upon excitement—every body believed there must be a fling at them—some laughed, others swore—some threatened,—and Mr. Singleton Mercer actually applied for two hundred pit tickets to give away, for the purpose of a grand row, which my treasurer was fool enough to refuse to sell him : he afterwards purchased *twenty-five!* and when the play was withdrawn, actually had the impudence to request the return of this money. My friend Green, now with me, looked over the play, and on Saturday night gave me his opinion that there was nothing that could reasonably be objected to in it—he and those connected with the theatre alone had only seen the manuscript. Threats of tearing down the theatre, sacking it, &c., were now openly heard ; and to all applications my answer was—this play will certainly be acted on Monday night. So closed the Saturday performance ; at least an assurance to the manager of a full house on Monday, let the result be what it might. The play bills, on Sunday were the magnets of universal attraction ; wherever one was posted, there was a crowd perusing it. At two o'clock, I received a note from Mr. M'Call, the mayor of the city, desiring to see me at his house, at four o'clock, upon a subject that would not brook delay. I presumed it was the "Monks of Monk Hall," and repaired with a play bill, at the time stated. His honor met me with bland courtesy, and informed me that my play bill was libellous—directed me to see Mr. Green, (deputy attorney general,) with whom he had a conversation on the subject, and to see him again at his office at nine o'clock on Monday morning. Away I hied to my friend Green. "What could we do ? We both laughed. "Well," said he "this is a pretty affair—I approved your suggestion—I advised you to try this affair ; and now as a public officer, I may be called upon to try you for acting it.

I tell you there is no power to prevent your doing so ; but I would rather you should see your friend, Constant Guellou ; his head is cooler upon this subject than mine, and you know you can rely upon the advice he will give you being both sound and legal, and, moreover, guided by good feeling for your welfare. Do nothing in this business rashly : I will meet you at the mayor's office on Monday morning." My friend Guellou had caught the excitement, and he had been to my friend Louis A. Godey, to request he would see me upon the subject—the excitement increasing every hour. Godey would not advise me one way or the other, after hearing my story, but left the matter to a night's reflection and the interview with the mayor in the morning.

I met the mayor, according to appointment, and offered him the play to read ; this he declined. I then proposed that he should walk up to the theatre and see the rehearsal, that he might judge whether there was any thing objectionable ; this too was declined. He said he did not doubt that every thing was as I had represented it ; but that we had just escaped from riot and bloodshed—were in the height of a popular election—the blood of all parties warm—[the news was just coming in of the defeat of the whigs in New-York, on the other side of Cayuga Bridge, in the presidential election]—that he appealed to me as a good citizen and the father of a family, not to commit an act which might cause me regret during my natural life, should riot and bloodshed flow from it—that if I persisted, he could afford me no protection from the police of the city. My partner, Mr. Pratt, being out of town, I told him, in such a case, I was unwilling to take the responsibility of withdrawing the play, upon my own shoulders—that in all probability Mr. Pratt would arrive in the city by two o'clock—to let matters rest as they were until then, and I would see him again. In the meantime, the rehearsal went on—message upon message, threat upon threat, was communicated to me upon the stage. At twelve o'clock, a note came from Mr. Evans, the president of the board of directors, advising the withdrawal of the play. My friend Guellou's opinion was, I had an undoubted right to act it ; but were he in my place, he would not, under the circumstances, run the risk. This opinion (as his opinions always have weight with me) did more towards the final determination than all the rest. Indeed, to Mr. Guellou belongs the credit, if any be due, of having prevented the performance ; he knows I always follow his advice when asked ; and I did not dare to let my own opinion weigh as a straw in the balance, after his decision both as a lawyer and a friend. At one o'clock, General Cadwallader, one of the board of agents, who had been sent

for by the mayor, made his appearance at the theatre, to request the play might not be acted. In half an hour afterwards, I received the following letter from his honor the mayor:—

(COPY.)

MAYOR'S OFFICE, November 11th, 1844.

MESSRS. WEMYSS AND PRATT—

Gentlemen, as mayor of the city, I have to request that the exhibition of the piece called the "Quaker City," advertised for this evening, at the Chestnut Street Theatre, may not take place, for reasons I have verbally communicated to Mr. Wemyss.

Respectfully your obedient,

P. McCALL.

NOTICE.—In obedience to this request, the public is respectfully informed that the performance will *not* take place. The entertainment for the evening will be "Grandfather Whitehead," the "President Incog.," and "He is not a-Miss."

PRATT AND WEMYSS.

Chestnut Street Theatre, Nov. 11, 1844.

I once more repaired to his office. I proposed to him that the curtain should rise, and the performance be suffered to proceed, scene by scene; that on the slightest opposition being manifested by the audience to stop the play, the curtain should instantly fall, and some other piece be substituted. He replied, that would be just as bad as acting the whole play; the mischief, if any was really intended, would by that time be fully accomplished. He stated, that this young man, Mercer, had purchased tickets, he was informed, for the avowed purpose of putting down the play. "Then," said I, "why not arrest him, and bind him over to keep the peace?" "Because, Mr. Wemyss, I really think you have struck the first blow in your play-bill." Ere we parted, I yielded the point, and consented to withdraw the play, on the condition that he would give a statement to the public, which should exonerate the managers from all blame. "Grandfather Whitehead" was substituted for "The Monks of Monk Hall;" and now the difficulty was to prevent a row, because the piece was *not* performed. An excited populace filled the whole square from Sixth to Seventh street; all the police of the city could scarcely keep order. The play-bills on the boards, in front of the building, had to be torn off before any thing like quiet was obtained; the doors of the theatre were closed by eleven o'clock, and not till then did the crowd gradually disperse.

My opinion has never been changed upon this subject. Had the play been acted, no row, or at least no more than takes place when any favorite actor disappoints an audience, would have occurred. The play was really a good one; once heard, it would have secured a run. Had its satire been aimed at the low and vulgar, it would not have been assailed; but it struck at governors, judges, members of Congress, editors, as well as thieves and murderers. I saw a mass of filth and obscenity played at the Chatham Garden as the prohibited play; I could not recognize a line. It is sufficient to say, my play was in five acts, this in two; that is proof enough they were not the same, although Mr. Lippard furnished the MS. of a portion of it. He so far forgot himself as to assault Mr. Asbell Green, the only real friend he had in the whole transaction, as the author of the suppression: no opinion was ever more falsely adopted.

Having complied with the request of the city authorities, at a sacrifice of pecuniary interest, at least the managers should have been protected from the slime and filth of the press, which, from Maine to Florida, harped upon the fiddle-string offered to them by the *Spirit of the Times*, in Philadelphia, of obscenity. The mayor never read nor saw the play; no such reason was ever given for the request to withdraw it. I yielded a point of right, to a request from the authorities of the city, and what was my recompense?—abuse and slander. Why do the gentlemen reporters, or editors of the public press so delight in *scandalum magnatum*, that if a man be arrested for murder, or some hateful crime against the laws, they are not content to lay the revolting details before their readers, but couple it with remarks such as, “we understand this is not the first murder he has committed; he killed a man in Arkansas, poisoned a woman in Cincinnati,” &c., until the indignation of his fellow-citizens is so aroused against him, that the poor wretch is unable to obtain a fair trial. The minds of the jurors are so poisoned against him, that it is next to impossible to empanel a jury to try him. Surely the courts of justice possess the power to shield an unhappy criminal from such treatment. It may be necessary to inform the public of the commission of crime; but comments, before trial and conviction, without a possibility of reply, are so base and cowardly, as to appear like parricide of old—no punishment provided for a crime thought to be impossible.

I have laid the whole of the affair before my readers, yet newspaper after newspaper reiterated the libellous falsehoods, and, in future ages, as reference, will be received, as truth of holy writ, in deep damnation of the managers of the Chestnut Street Theatre,

who deserved the thanks of the whole community. That Mr. McCall did not, under his signature, as mayor of the city of Philadelphia, protect us from this injustice, I have ever felt the hardest part of this altogether hard business. The idea of prohibiting a play without even reading it, is new indeed! The most intolerant censor of the public press reads an article before condemnation.

The effect of this upon the interest of the theatre, was a loss of seven hundred dollars in two weeks, for until Mr. Anderson appeared, no one visited the theatre at all. We owed the actors one week's salary, and this they made a plea not only for neglect of duty, but to leave the theatre when they pleased, and how they pleased. To Mr. Anderson an apology was due; it was not until his two last nights that he found we had really a good company, when they chose to work. Mr. Crisp played a few nights—defend me from such stars; he afterwards played with Mrs. Mowatt, at the Walnut Street Theatre, when the address of that lady to the audience alone permitted him to finish the part of Claude Melnotte. He is a clever, bustling actor, and one who thoroughly understands his profession, but has no weight beyond that, to attempt to assemble an audience. As the attraction of the evening, on the 22d of December, we produced the "Bohemian Girl," with Mr. Fraser, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Monsieur Martin, and Julia Turnbull. Marshall produced a melo-drama of the same name at the Walnut, concocted by Burton and Foster; he went still further: he impudently announced Balfe's opera, with scarcely a note of the music. These were good advertisements for our theatre, and the "Bohemian Girl" was played thirteen nights out of an engagement of eighteen, and afterwards revived in the spring. The bitter hostility of the *Spirit of the Times*, and the succession of libels, day after day, which appeared in its columns against the Chestnut Street Theatre, induced Pratt and Wemyss to prosecute for libel,—the first time in my theatrical career I ever troubled myself to notice legally the slang of a newspaper. Mr. Hill followed the opera, but was no attraction. In order to induce the fashionable circles to continue their visits, we made an arrangement to produce the comedy of "Old Heads and Young Hearts" with the Park company of New York. Mr. Chippendale, Mr. John Fisher, Mr. John Povey, Mr. Dyott, Mr. Crocker, Mr. Gallott, Miss Clara Ellis, Mrs. Henry Knight, Mrs. Duvenal, Mrs. Dyott, and Mr. Lewis, the prompter, were added to our own company; and it will be scarcely believed, they could not play to an average of a hundred dollars per night, benefits included. It therefore became obvious, that the best plan would be to close the doors, first trying Mrs. Shaw, and

a portion of the Bowery company : Mr. Clarke, Mr. Milnor, Mr. Dyott, Mr. John Fisher, and Mr. Crocker,—*all* would not do ; and the Chestnut Street closed its doors, minus two thousand dollars. The Park company, united with the Chestnut Street, were worth one hundred dollars per night ; but the Bowery, the Park, and Chestnut Street—all these, with the aid of Mrs. Shaw, the best actress of the American stage, were worth only fifty dollars per night ; the stockholders, as usual, loud in their denunciation of the management, and Dr. Lehman complaining that they had no amusement.

Young Murphy, who had been my call-boy, and who commenced his theatrical career with me, called to know if I would make an arrangement with Palmo's Ethiopian Opera Company. We proposed terms, which they accepted, and commenced with "La Sonnambula," to \$326. This success continued for a month, the only profitable one during the management of Pratt and Wemyss : so that negro-singing and dancing, after all, is the amusement best suited to the audience of the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. While we were making arrangements to produce a piece called the "Fall of Kisichack," by General Harlan, the news of the burning of the Bowery Theatre, on the night of the 15th of April, reached us. I at once offered to place the Chestnut Street Theatre at the disposal of Hamblin, if nothing better offered. Mr. Jackson, whose individual enterprise has erected the present Bowery Theatre, and brought successfully to its present condition, answered this letter, declining for the present. Hamblin issued proposals for a large theatre in Broadway, but failed in bringing his project to bear. This last misfortune seemed to have paralysed all his energy, and he wisely resigned to younger hands the task of future toil. That Mr. Jackson has proved himself worthy to succeed Hamblin, his spirited career bears witness in face of all difficulties ; he has placed the new Theatre, which he opened on the 25th of August, 1845, as firmly in the affections of the audience, as it ever was in its palmiest days. Long may he continue to enjoy his good fortune.

"Kisichack" was played two nights, and then lost to the public for ever : author and piece both departed at the same time, Mr. Richings being the only gainer by the piece, the General having presented him with a new dress, splendidly embroidered. This piece cost Pratt and Wemyss two hundred dollars. We reckoned without our host, when we calculated upon the General's notoriety being able to command one house. Few were present at the first representation, and still fewer on the second.

The Seguns now returned, and opera resumed its sway to very indifferent houses, for three weeks ; but on the 4th of June, 1845, an opera, by Mr. Fry, was placed before the public, in a style of which Messrs. Pratt and Wemyss have reason to be proud : every scene, every dress, every property, was perfect ; sixty choristers, and forty-two musicians ; the principal characters supported by Mr. Fraser, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Mr. Richings, Mrs. Breenton, and Miss Ince ; the subject of the libretto, the " Lady of Lyons," the title of the opera, " Leonora." A great deal has been written and said about plagiarism, and want of originality of thought and execution ; but I appeal to any musician, whether such an opera be not a creditable performance to a composer. Had Mr. Fry selected New York, instead of Philadelphia, for the first field of his operations, the whole United States would have teemed with praises—praises, long and loud, would have greeted the eye of the composer from all quarters. The sin he committed was daring to present the first lyrical drama ever composed in America to the citizens of Philadelphia for judgment, before the New Yorkers had an opportunity of passing upon its merits. Should it be played with success in Europe, how altered will be public opinion in its favor here ! Mr. Fry may plume upon it as a work of art, to be proudly cherished. I know no greater gratification, as a manager, than having been the means of placing it before his countrymen. It was acted sixteen nights, and although the expense attending such a production, rendered it unproductive both to the author and the managers, the Seguns reaped both money and fame.

Of Mrs. Seguin's performance of Leonora, I can only say it was the most perfect thing I have seen, since Miss M. Tree's Zaidé, in Coleman's play of the " Law of Java," and I can hardly magnify such unqualified praise. On the last night, she was presented with a silver pitcher, bearing a suitable inscription—a well deserved compliment ; a similar one should have been made to Mr. Chubb, the leader of the orchestra of the Park Theatre, to whose aid much of its success was due.

The theatre closed on the 6th of July, never to open again, under Pratt and Wemyss. Our application for a renewal of the lease received no answer from the *gentlemen*, Mr. Evans, Gen. Cadwallader, Dr. Lehman, and Mr. Philips. We walked out, and Burton walked in, but to this moment we have not been informed by the gentlemen of the board, whether Mr. Burton was or was not their tenant.

Gentlemen are not bound by the common courtesies of life in their dealings with *vagabond play actors*—and why should they

be. They don't object to receive the player's money to swell their fortunes, by way of dividend, but treat him in all other respects like an outcast from society. Neither Mr. Pratt nor myself would have occupied the theatre at all, had we not expected the lease to have been renewed for the following year. It was a hopeless attempt for 1844-45, which we trusted 1845-46 would enable us to work upon. The stockholders had ample security for their rent, which, having received from our friends, justice to them, if not to us, required at least an answer to an application, and I may be permitted to add, the renewal at least for another year.

The Chesnut Street Theatre now changes hands every season. Better convert it, gentlemen, into stores, or into an hotel, it will pay you better ; while it stands, it will always be the theatre for foreign artists, without whose aid its doors must remain, as at present, *closed*. Burton says he lost there all he made by the Arch Street Theatre, and abandoned it at the end of the season. Marshall burnt his fingers with it. It might be made to pay as an Opera House, open, only for that purpose, a few weeks at a time ; but as a regular Temple of the Drama, its fate is sealed for ever.

The last act of kindness I received at the hands of my Philadelphia friends was a complimentary benefit on the 19th of March, the proceeds of which were most serviceable. To that public to whom I am indebted for many acts of kindness, (the last by no means the least,) which I still hope to enjoy, I submit the foregoing pages, and if a single individual has derived an hour's amusement from their perusal, I am repaid for the length of my task, and have but to add with pleasure,

Finis Coronat Opus.

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